the social contract

/THe /ˈsōSHəl/ /ˈkän trakt/

noun. 1: An agreement among the members of an organized society

Table of Contents

American

Canadian

Comparative

Identity

Table of Contents

Letter from the Editor

I began what is now a very fruitful and gratifying three years at the Social Contract in the fall of 2020. It was Thanksgiving weekend, and I was returning home from just over a month of virtual university. I had caught a glimpse of the journal's first "Call for Editors" and just remembered to submit an application for Junior Editor hours before the deadline. In my responses to the required prompts – asking "Why I want to join the team?" and "What assets I would bring?" – I highlighted my "passion" for political science, and my "ambition" to work "on meaningful projects with likeminded people."

Looking back at Covid university as if recalling a disjointed and prolonged fever dream, it is admittedly hard to recall exactly what my intentions were in submitting an application. For during lockdown, when the desire to feel included in one's university community was particularly pronounced, I may or may not have expressed my "ambition" to work "on meaningful projects with likeminded people" to a collection of other clubs who had also just issued their respective calls for members. What I can say for certain, however, is that I never expected my participation with the Social Contract to become as fulfilling as it has, nor did I foresee the Social Contract's metamorphosis into what is now one of Canada's premier undergraduate journals.

The progress that the Social Contract has made in just 3 years since its resuscitation by Amanda Gutzke in 2020 is truly remarkable. In this time we assembled three teams of over 50 editors, published 44 of Western's very best political science essays, established an independent social media presence with over 300 followers, developed a website where issues since the journal's founding in 2006 are available, introduced print issues of the journal, and partnered with the OJS to itemize each article in their scholarly database. One needs only to compare this most recent edition's cover with any before the journal's resuscitation to gauge how far it has come.

Bitter-sweet feelings accompany the release of this year's edition. Sweet because of my immense pride for the team and our work this year, yet bitter because Amanda, who breathed life back into the Social Contract 3 years ago, is graduating this April, and thus leaving behind 3 years at the helm of the organization. She, more than anyone, bears responsibility for its continued success. No words can adequately repay her for her tireless contribution to the journal. My best attempt is a mere: thank you.

As Amanda looks back on an incredible 3 years, Meghan Beswick, next year's Editor-in-Chief – another former junior editor I might add - looks forward to another two. I can think of no better person to continue Amanda's vision for the journal – as a repository for the very best of Western's Political Science faculty – into the future. I can't imagine how much further the journal will grow under her leadership.

And with that, I present you with the 15th edition of the Social Contract. Thank you to everyone on this year's editorial team for the countless hours spent in its creation – you will find in the following pages that your efforts were not without reward.

Max Livingston, 15th Edition Editor-in-Chief

Letter from the Undergraduate Chair

It is with great pleasure that I send my congratulations to the entire editorial team of The Social Contract for another engaging journal issue! This volume is a timely and well-rounded collection of essays that covers many of the important traditional sub-fields in the discipline of Political Science including International Relations, Global Politics, Political Theory, as well as Canadian-, American-, and Comparative Politics. Moreover, this issue also explores contemporary hot topics such as media, pop culture, and local governance. Best of all, this volume proudly shows what Western Political Science students can achieve when they embrace university life and work together to produce excellence.

On behalf of the entire Department of Political Science and the University of Western Ontario, thank you for your skill and effort.

Best wishes,

Dr. Nandita Biswas Mellamphy, Undergraduate Program Chair, Department of Political Science, Western University.

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Truman, Reagan, Exceptionalism and Exemptionalism in United States Foreign Policy

Written by: Josh Bernstein

Abstract

 This essay will show how The Truman Doctrine and Universalism were foundational in the inclusion of exceptionalism and exemptionalism into historical American foreign policy. It illustrates how the United States (US) Government created foreign policy that used the Reagan Doctrine to undermine the developing the socialist democracy in Nicaragua under the Sandinista regime. The work is divided into three sections. First, it contextualizes the Truman Doctrine to clearly show the Truman administration felt obligated to protect the world from communism by introducing a policy of containment. Second, it demonstrates how this policy of containment had universalistic undertones which were foundational in justifying American intervention globally to limit Soviet geopolitical influence. Third, it illustrates the ways universalism instilled concepts of American Exceptionalism and Exemptionalism into US foreign policy which led to the Reagan Doctrine's aggressive policy of roll back communism contributing to unjustified and unchecked international influence in Nicaragua and elsewhere.

Key Words: Truman, Reagan, American Exceptionalism, and Foreign Policy

INTRODUCTION

Between World War II and the beginning of the Cold War, the United States underwent a dramatic shift in its foreign policy. With Europe in tatters and the British Empire in decline, this once isolationist country assumed the mantle of the victor and re-imagined itself as one of the so-called 'leaders of the free world.' The competition between America and Russia to become the world's dominant superpower began on March 12, 1947. occurred when United States President Harry S. Truman addressed the United States Congress to outline his new policy to respond to the largest adversary of true, peaceful, sovereign freedom: Soviet Russia. Truman's speech laid the foundation for the Truman Doctrine. Truman called for containing the red scare, the spread of communism, and the Soviet sphere of influence. The origins and intentions of the Truman Doctrine are contentious; academics have interpreted Truman's universalistic tone in different ways. Since its introduction in 1947,

the Truman Doctrine set an ideological foundation and a precedent in American foreign policy

which led to increased imperialism and interventionist foreign policy throughout the twentieth century. This is especially exemplified by President Ronald Reagan, the Reagan Doctrine, and United States' intervention in Nicaragua in the 1980s. The United States foreign policy under Reagan advocated for democracy and capitalism, its use of exceptionalism and exemptionalism to justify its actions ultimately undermined Nicaragua's sovereignty. This was facilitated through violent anti-government sabotage and nascent democratic efforts which impugned America's reputation on the world stage.

CONTEXTUALIZING THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE

As the global influence of the British Empire waned at the end of World War II, Truman sought for the United States to fill the power vacuum. It appears that he believed the United States had an obligation to intervene and safeguard other nations. Truman communicated this intention at the Potsdam Conference in the summer of 1945. He proposed that trade routes in the Danube and Rhine River straits should be internationalized; he argued that their security would be guaranteed by Britain, Russia, the United States, and states who had jurisdiction over these waters. The United States was signalling that it intended to position itself as the leader of the World War II allies. Further, the United States was implicitly resisting Soviet communism and influence, a contentious issue for the Americans at the Yalta Conference in February 1945.[1] In 1947, Truman sought $400 Million from Congress to support Turkey and Greece's fledgling democracies and post-war reconstruction. The central tenet of his speech, the Truman Doctrine, was that

the United States had a duty to make policies that would promote democracy and contain communism in an international context.

Truman's universalist language emphasized his intention that such policies would apply globally. He stated: "I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."[2]

Over the ensuing decades, the Truman Doctrine was reflected in United States foreign policy; subsequent presidents became increasingly interventionist in promoting democracy and suppressing Soviet influence in Korea, East Berlin, East Germany, Vietnam, and Cuba. By the 1980s, Truman's universalist vision was expanded through foreign policies that disregarded autonomous United States state sovereignty and promoted intervention anywhere communism posed a threat. In his January 31, 1985, State of the Union address to Congress, President Ronald Reagan articulated that the United States would need to do more than solely contain communism. He argued that the United States would need to actively roll-back communism to suppress the threat of Soviet expansionism, stating:

"[W]e must not break faith with those who are risking their lives -- on every continent, from Afghanistan to Nicaragua -- to defy Soviet-supported aggression and secure rights which have been ours from birth… It is essential that the Congress continue all facets of our assistance to Central America. I want to work with you to support the democratic forces whose struggle is tied to our own security."[3]

Reagan's intervention in Nicaragua led to the CIA-backed arming of anti-Sandinista Contras, undermining the Nicaraguan democracy; this contributed to the deaths of thirty-thousand people and the arming of insurgents in Iran.[4] In a complex, secret arms sale, Iran paid the United States $48 million for arms in an effort to release American hostages held in Lebanon, of which $18 million was diverted to Contras in Nicaragua.[5] This essay will explore how the Truman Doctrine and universalism set a foundation for exceptionalist, exemptionalist

United States foreign policy that culminated in the 1980s with the Reagan Doctrine and the undermining of the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua.

THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE: AN IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR US FOREIGN POLICY

At the 1945 Potsdam conference and in his 1947 speech to Congress, Truman argued that communism needed to be contained within the countries it initially manifested. His objective was not entirely limited to supporting Turkey and Greece. Rather, Truman's universalistic tone implied that America had a responsibility to act as the protector of the "free world." This belief is demonstrative of universalism's role in founding the Truman Doctrine. Further, universalism contributed to the Reagan Doctrine. In the context of International Relations, "universalism refers to a desire to make the world over in the American image."[6] Truman equated capitalism and free trade with freedom and democracy. According to Jonathan Knight, in his article "America's International Guarantees for the Straits: Prelude to the Truman Doctrine,"

universalist perceptions were the foundation of American security;

Truman's goal was the establishment and embedding of universalist perceptions in American culture, especially as the tension between the United States and the USSR increased. Knight says that "America's security is equated with a world in which the United States occupies a major position in the international hierarchy to prevent forceful change by major powers, whether openly and directly or covertly and through intermediaries."[7] Knight underscores that there were no boundaries for America, and it would use any means necessary to contain communism.[8]

Truman's proposal at Potsdam served as a prelude to his doctrine, showcasing his "implicit belief that America was the model republican society which the world should emulate… the Truman Doctrine was unlimited and indiscriminate."[9] Truman believed he needed to contain communism wherever it was present, believing that the United States was a role model for the world. While it established itself as universalistic, the Doctrine reveals supremacist beliefs. As Jouanette notes in his work: "Universalism and Imperialism: The True-False Paradox of International Law?", "[t]he basic paradox within international law meant that it could combine a universalist façade with discriminatory and imperialistic practices."[10] This was demonstrated through the use of the Truman Doctrine. On the surface level, American containment policy like the Marshall plan was charitable but it was a new way for the United states to gain influence in other states trying to rebuild after the Second World War.

This universalist perspective also ignited the American exceptionalist belief that only the United States was able to contain communism. As Nayak and Malone explain in their work: "American Orientalism and American Exceptionalism: A Critical Rethinking of United States Hegemony" American Exceptionalism required "an unwavering belief in the uniqueness of the United States and a commitment to a providential mission to transform the rest of the world in the image of the United States."[11] This belief was expressed decades later by Reagan, when he asserted that a "national security strategy must fundamentally be based on American Exceptionalism."[12] Exceptionalism materialized in the Reagan Doctrine as the underpinning of a strategy to roll-back communism, orchestrated through interventionist and imperialist strategies.

Ironically, through their emphasis on a global transformation that sought to emulate the United States, both Truman and Reagan formulated nation-building policies that had the effect of destabilizing nascent democracies. In Nicaragua, the outcome of this policy was to destabilize a fragile government, leading to the deaths of thousands of unarmed civilians and economic collapse.[13] It consisted of the CIA backed Contra rebel forces deliberately destroying critical civilian infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, and shipping ports.[14] The Contras also deliberately killed children and employees planning their attacks during working and school hours as a means to stifle the growth of their struggling socio-democratic society.

The Truman Doctrine was rooted in American exceptionalism.

It was foundational for Ronald Reagan's foreign policy of socialist democracies and priming Central and South American states to become America's new theatre for geopolitical influence.

AMERICAN EXEMPTIONALISM

Truman's universalistic perceptions also provided a foundation for American exemptionalism to grow under Reagan. In "Comparative Exceptionalism: Universality and Particularity in Foreign Policy Discourses," authors Nicola Nymalm and Johannes Plagemann draw a parallel between exemptionalism and exceptionalism. They argue that despite their similarities, they each perceive their superiority asymmetrically. They define it as "the belief that the United States is not bound by rules and norms governing the 'unexceptional rest.' Exemptionalism the United States legitimizes the transgression of international law."[15] This builds on Truman's exceptionalist and universalistic principles and sends the same message:

> **The United States, by virtue of its power and responsibility for protecting the free world, believes it has global jurisdiction and justification for maintaining global liberal democratic order to counter the communist threat.**

This was seen in Nicaragua, especially during the Iran-Contra Affair, where Reagan directly ignored the Boland Amendment and tried to destabilize the Sandinista government through the mobilization of covert operations by the CIA. [16] This example illustrates the lack of regard the United States government had for its constitution and respective administrations of other countries, especially those in the developing world.

The assertion that, the Truman Doctrine was not as aggressive as the Reagan Doctrine in its policies to combat the global threat of Communism is a major misinterpretation associated with Truman's Doctrine. Although he used diplomacy and non-violence to achieve containment, does not imply he had different goals than Reagan. The universalist ideology that supported the Truman Doctrine provided a foundation and set a precedent for future presidents for American exceptionalism and American exemptionalism, two beliefs that underpinned the interventionist, imperialistic, unconstitutional and supremacist policies that resulted in the destabilization of Nicaragua.[17]

THE RESULTS OF EXCEPTIONALISM & EXEMPTIONALISM: INTERVENTIONIST & IMPERIALISTIC FOREIGN POLICY

Reagan's use of interventionist and imperialistic foreign policy undermined the sovereignty of nations in Central America by supporting guerilla warfare in Nicaragua. Ironically, it did so by using undemocratic methods to create a larger American sphere of influence at the cost of other nation-states. One way to understand this is to apply the five-characteristic exceptionalist framework by K.J. Holsti in his article: "Exceptionalism in American Foreign Policy: Is It Exceptional?" Characteristics two and four explain how the Reagan Doctrine's interventionist policies undermined the sovereignty of Nicaragua.

The second characteristic in Holsti's framework asserts that an exceptionalist state has specific responsibilities to save the people. They "should be free from external constraints such as rules or norms that govern or influence the relations between 'ordinary' states."[18] This exceptionalist and exemptionalist perception illustrated by the Reagan Doctrine had the corollary effect of undermining Nicaragua's sovereignty. Its absence of legal limitations on the powers of an exceptionalist state especially when freedom and democracy are in jeopardy. [19] Thus, this exemptionalist and exceptionalist perspective highlights the Reagan Doctrine's complete disregard for the legally binding United Nations Charter of the American States and the acknowledgement of their sovereignty.[20] Reagan rejected the notion that if an independent state had a developing democracy that did not resemble the European or American democratic systems, it was still democratic. Rather, it was viewed as a threat to the American sphere of influence. This was particularly true for Nicaragua's emerging socialist participative democracy.[21] In line with the Reagan Doctrine, the United States would respond by trying to

impose Americanism on Nicaragua because anything not American but democratic and free was seen as potentially communist.[22]

In Nicaragua, perceptions of democracy were different from the United States model. The Sandinista revolution led by Daniel Ortega provided people with more freedom than his predecessor, Anastasio Somoza. In Susanne Jonas and Nancy Stein's article, "The Construction of Democracy in Nicaragua," they show that the Sandinista government made "a long-range commitment to developing a revolutionary pluralism into the structure of the revolution."[23] This was particularly true in the 1984 Nicaraguan general election and the formation of its Constitution in 1986.[24] While their democracy was imperfect and corruption was still prevalent, there is evidence that this was a wholehearted effort by Daniel Ortega and the Sandinistas to make Nicaragua a more participative, democratic, and free society; it made space in society for the opposition to express itself.[25] But because of Cuba's support, and the socialist ideology Cuba followed, Reagan perceived Ortega and the Sandinistas as a threat to the United States. He undermined the sovereignty of Nicaragua and its nascent democracy by sending in the CIA to train and fund the Contras, an anti-Communist guerilla force. The US-backed Contras would wage war against the Sandinista revolutionary government from 1979 to 1990.[26] Not only did Reagan violate international law, but he also violated the Boland II Amendment, passed under his presidency to bar the United States from funding the Contras.

The Reagan Doctrine did not promote democracy and freedom,

but rather it perpetuated a globally hegemonic system that placed the United States above all other international actors.

The presence of exceptionalism in the Reagan Doctrines' foreign policy is well illustrated by applying Holisti's fourth characteristic, the need for a shared external threat Holsti says that "[G]overnments and societies of exceptionalist states develop a need to have external enemies; for this reason, threats are often concocted or, where minor, are inflated to extreme proportions."[27] Following the passage of the Boland II Amendment, which prohibited the United States from funding counterinsurgents in Nicaragua, members of Reagan's National Security Council and the CIA fabricated a narrative about the Sandinista threat and a Contra-led response that concealed Reagan's covert American support.[28] Reagan not only violated international and domestic law but he undermined the democratic institutions which he was supposed to be promoting around the world. This exceptionalist mindset to justify the use of undemocratic, violent, cruel, and abusive means to promote democracy ultimately tarnished Reagan's legacy.

THE FAILURE OF THE REAGAN DOCTRINE IN NICARAGUA

While Reagan's foreign policy espoused the promotion of democracy and capitalism, Reagan's use of exceptionalism and exemptionalism in Nicaragua tarnished America's reputation on the world stage. In his book "The National Security Doctrines of the American Presidency: How they Shape our Present and Future," author Lamont Colucci identified three criteria for American involvement in foreign insurgencies: "the insurgency had to be indigenous and independent; the government relied on arms and aid from the Soviet bloc;

the government denied the population governmental participation."[29] The first two criteria were met: Nicaragua was an ideal place for the Soviet sphere of influence to flourish and spread rapidly among neighbouring Central and South American nations.

The democratic system Nicaragua attempted to implement posed a second threat to the United States. It detracted from the American sphere of influence. It set a precedent for mixed market economies with real social institutions and socialist perspectives to flourish, potentially convincing other states in the region to consider adopting this method as well. This could harm the economic interests of the United States and make it less powerful in the global hegemonic sphere. The third criterion was never met, however, despite the narrative promoted by the Reagan administration. Clear evidence emerged during the Iran-Contra hearings that the United States had no grounds for this level of intervention.[30] Nicaragua was making efforts to become more democratic. This included free elections, participative democracy, a new constitution, and there was a place in society for peaceful opposition of government policies.[31] The mandate of the Reagan Doctrine aimed at rolling back communism. His willful misinterpretation of socialist democracy as a threat to capitalist democracy made his justification to undermine Nicaraguan sovereignty unacceptable and unjustified.

CONCLUSION

The Truman Doctrine's universalist roots set a foundation for Ronald Reagan's exceptionalist and exemptionalist policies that informed the Reagan Doctrine. Reagan contributed to sabotaging a developing democracy in Nicaragua. His foreign policy undermined and ignored Nicaraguan sovereignty disregarding the

legally binding commitments of the United States in the international community. The foreign policy choices of the United States following the Reagan doctrine undermined American democracy and the respect for the rule of law. The United States' foreign policy regarding Nicaragua was born not of the universalist principles first articulated by Truman, but of the United States' exceptionalist and exemptionalist policies that were manipulated to maintain its position as the global hegemon.

The Iran-Contra Affair will remain as one of the most infamous scandals of 20th century American Cold-War history. The ideologies of exceptionalism and exemptionalism that underpinned it have remained present into twenty first century American foreign policy and America's collective psyche. Whether it was George Bush's decision to illegally invade Iraq without approval or the deployment of United States Armed Forces in other jurisdictions, these cases illustrate the omnipresence of foundations of the Truman and Reagan Doctrine. Like Reagan, Bush later revealed the justification to invade Iraq because Saddam Hussein allegedly had weapons of mass destruction was later debunked.[32] If American foreign policy experts have learned anything about foreign influence, they have learned how to better disguise it using economic assistance or reliance on American corporations to help garner influence in state operated natural resource economies.

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When The United States Sneezes, Canada Catches a Cold: The Trump Effect in Canada

Written by: Melika Mansour

Abstract

This article examines the link between the era of the Trump administration and the rise of right-wing extremist movements in Canada. Coinciding with the rise of right-wing nationalist movements worldwide, Canada experienced a massive rise in alt-right movements from 2017-2021, as highlighted by the creation of the People's Party of Canada, the rise of hate crimes, and the reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of geographical proximity, shared culture and language with the United States, Canada is prone to absorbing U.S. political movements, even one as controversial as Trumpism. Overall, Canada is not immune to the rise of deeply divisive ideologies in spite of our progressive national values.

INTRODUCTION

The election of President Donald Trump in 2016 remains one of the most influential political events of the 21st century. Not only was America significantly changed, but it has forever altered the course of Canadian politics as well. Trump's populist right-wing rhetoric, which aimed to dismantle "political correctness," restore American values, and promote nationalism, led to the worldwide rise in populist and nationalistic movements, particularly in Europe. Additionally, the Trump Effect also refers to the phenomenon that Donald Trump's racial rhetoric emboldened Americans to openly share their prejudices.[1]

However, Canada was not immune to the Trump Effect. Through its geographical and cultural proximity to the United States, several aspects of Donald Trump's rhetoric were reflected in Canadian movements. Despite our national values, it has become evident that Canada is not a nation immune to the rise of right-wing extremist movements. Events such as the creation of the People's Party of Canada, the rise in hate crimes during Donald Trump's presidency, and the reaction to COVID-19 policies demonstrate that the election of Donald Trump galvanized an already existing extreme right in Canada.

CONTEXT

Donald Trump's presidential term served as one of the most polarizing eras of American political history. Inaugurated on January 20th, 2017, after an extremely controversial presidential campaign, Trump immediately instated three travel bans, withdrew from the Paris Accords and was the center of numerous controversies due to his brash attitude all within the first year of his presidency.[2] These actions reflected much of Donald Trump's political ideology: a brand of right- wing populism which promoted

isolationism, nationalism, restricted immigration, and a return to traditional American values.[3] Although Donald Trump remains an extremely divisive figure, his presidency coincided with the rise of right-wing populist movements throughout the world, particularly in Europe.[4] In fact, Donald Trump was so divisive and influential that researchers coined "The Trump Effect," which is the idea that Trump's usage of racial rhetoric throughout his infamous campaign and presidency encouraged his supporters to openly express their own prejudices.[5] Despite many Canadian's outspoken disapproval of Trump, Canada was not immune to the spreading of Trump's right-wing populist ideology.[6] From 2017 onward, there would be trends within Canadian culture and politics which would reflect this change.

PEOPLE'S PARTY OF CANADA

The creation of the People's Party of Canada (PPC) prior to the 2019 Canadian Federal election is arguably the largest reflection of Trump's political influence.[7] The party was founded by Maxime Bernier, a former member of the Conservative Party. After 12 years with the Conservative Party, he resigned in 2018, announcing that

> **"I have come to realize over the past year that this party is too intellectually and morally corrupt to be reformed."[8]**

The People's Party of Canada was then created in September of 2018, shortly after his resignation, appealing to Canadians who resented Canada's status as a multicultural nation and desired a return to "Canadian values."[9] Evidently, the PPC borrowed directly from Donald Trump's personal political ideology to appeal to Canadian Trump supporters. In their 2019 election platform, the PPC vowed to repeal the

Multiculturalism Act, substantially lower the number of immigrants, and refugees accepted into Canada, stop the flow of illegal migrants at the US-Canada border, restrict the definition of hate speech, withdraw from multilateral climate change agreements, and many other promises that reflect Trumpism.[10] In examining PPC election promises, it is evident that the PPC mimicked many of Trump's actions and used Trump's political ideology to appeal to right-wing Canadians. First,

the PPC's election promises align exactly with Donald Trump's actions as president.

As aforementioned, Trump's first acts as president include withdrawing from the Paris Accords in 2017, instating travel bans against citizens from specific nations, and seeking to reduce immigration rates to the United States. [11] It can be deduced that the PPC's platform was created to appeal to Trump supporters in Canada. In a poll conducted by Léger, it was revealed that 86% of PPC voters would vote for Donald Trump if given the chance.[12] The creation of the People's Party of Canada is proof that a demographic exists within the nation that desires the sort of changes associated with a populist right-wing ideology. With the PPC winning nearly 830,000 votes in the 2021 federal election, it reflects a concerning trend that those who identify with Bernier's troubling nationalistic and xenophobic attitudes are only on the rise in Canada.[13]

RISE OF VIOLENCE AND HATEFUL RHETORIC

Along with Donald Trump's election in 2017 came an explosion of hateful, white supremacist movements and a rise in anti-immigrant and xenophobic rhetoric.[14] As Trump himself

carried a number of anti-immigration views, as evidenced by several of his tweets, speeches, and actions as president, it emboldened his supporters to engage in hateful acts against those whom Trump deemed as enemies of the United States. [15] However, the rise of hate crimes was not unique to the United States.

In 2017, Canada saw a 47% increase in hate crimes.[16]

The number of hate crimes in Canada has continued to rise in recent years, peaking in 2021 with 3,360 incidents, an increase of 62% from 2017.[17] On January 29th, 2017, just nine days after Trump's inauguration, a 27-year-old male attacked a mosque in Quebec City, resulting in the death of six people.[18] According to the *Globe and Mail,* the shooter was alleged to be an anti- immigration, pro-Trump supporter.[19] Furthermore, this era marks a period in the rise of anti- immigrant sentiments and a rise in right-wing extremist activity online.[20] The rise in hatred and the spreading of white supremacist ideology that occurred during this time is often attributed to the Trump Effect in Canada.[21] As Donald Trump championed himself as the saviour of a group of white, working-class people who desired a return to a less inclusive period of history in which white people were the dominant group, this appealed to people worldwide who felt disenfranchised by notions such as multiculturalism.[22] Such groups, which range from Canadians who hold extreme-right political beliefs to alt-right groups such as La Meute, Soldiers of Odin, and the Proud Boys, were emboldened to share their beliefs.[23] In 2017, there was a reported rise in flyers posted throughout Canada encouraging white Canadians to visit alt-right white supremacist websites.[24] While a small demographic of those who held these beliefs likely existed long before Trump's election, with the sudden explosion of hateful

rhetoric in culture and politics, it had become more common for people who held such views to spread them and attempt to recruit others into the same ideological groups.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE FREEDOM CONVOY

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic appears to have galvanized the alt-right in Canada, manifesting itself through the Freedom Truckers Convoy of 2022. In 2019, when COVID-19 arrived in North America, governments in both the U.S. and Canada began acting by February 2019 to mitigate the spread. Each nation had a vastly different response to the pandemic. The Trump administration, which was suddenly tasked with dealing with the virus in 2019, was widely criticized for its response.[25] The former president repeatedly downplayed the severity of the pandemic and ignored advice from public health officials numerous times in order to re-open the United States sooner.[26] Furthermore, Trump often supported those who protested against COVID-19 restrictions, encouraging his supporters not to follow restrictions set in place by their states.[27]

> **Over a million U.S. citizens have died from COVID-19, causing the Trump administration to receive heavy scrutiny for their approach to the pandemic.[28]**

However, the Canadian response to COVID-19 was more restrictive. Lockdowns and curfews were often employed to curb the spreading of cases. Furthermore, the federal government mandated vaccines for federal government employees, as well as those using federally regulated transport.[29] By 2021, vaccines were widely mandated throughout Canada, with unvaccinated people being prohibited from entering establishments such as restaurants and movie theatres and using federally regulated transport.[30] However, the mandate of vaccines caused severe backlash among certain Canadian groups. In 2022, when it was mandated that truckers entering Canada must be vaccinated, a large protest was organized to draw truck drivers to Ottawa to protest the mandates, as well as create blockades.[31] While initially being a protest for truckers against vaccine mandates, the protest itself rapidly evolved into a protest against all COVID-19 restrictions. In January 2022, protestors began making their way to Ottawa, causing mass disruption in the city, and blocking off essential routes in protest.[32] Often referred to as Canada's January 6th [33], this incident is often regarded as a manifestation of Canada's alt-right.[34] Protestors were comprised of a mix of Canadian Trump supporters, white nationalists, conspiracy theorists, and Canadians disillusioned by the Liberal government.[35]

Additionally, the convoy itself was found to have several ties with the United States and was even supported by Donald Trump himself.[36] In the wake of the convoy, several online fundraisers were created to support the protestors in Ottawa. However, the Christian fundraising website GiveSendGo was hacked in February 2022, revealing the names of thousands of donors, along with the amount donated. It was reported that 56% of donors were U.S. citizens supporting the convoy in Canada.[37] At a rally in Texas in January 2022, Donald Trump proclaimed his support of the convoy, saying: "[t]hey're doing more to defend American freedom than our leaders."[38] He was also quoted saying: "[t]he Freedom Convoy is peacefully protesting the harsh policies of far-left lunatic Justin Trudeau who has destroyed Canada with insane Covid mandates."[39]

The Freedom Convoy protests of 2022 are a clear amalgamation of years of the Trump effect emboldening the right-wing in Canada. The alt-right rallied behind striking down COVID-19 mandates, however, the protest represents a much larger dissatisfaction with shifting values in Canadian society. Many participants in the convoy were not only protesting against COVID-19 mandates; they were protesting against the values heralded by Trudeau's liberal government, such as multiculturalism and social justice. As Fatima Syed, a Mississauga-based journalist, wrote:

> **"[t]hese largely white groups of protestors that have followed Trudeau have an unfair privilege... they largely get away with their hateful rhetoric and actions, and don't get called out or punished for it."[40]**

This primarily white, alt-right portion of the Canadian population has largely escaped punishment for spreading hateful rhetoric. However, with Trudeau's government heavily condemning hate, this group has become disillusioned and has come to hate Trudeau's government along with everything it represents about a new, Liberal Canada.[41]

CANADA-US RELATIONS

The link between Trump's presidency and the rise of right-wing extremism in Canada has been established; it is a result of the unique connection between both Canada and the United States. Both nations have a unique relationship, bordering one another, sharing the same language, and many aspects of their respective cultures. First and foremost, the United States and Canada belong to the Anglosphere:

a group of primarily English-speaking nations composed of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Given that the U.S. and Canada share a primary language, it is rather easy for ideas to spread, whether it's through media or the internet. Additionally, the anglosphere's population is predominantly the white middle class. With shifting values in the 21st century such as increased multiculturalism, immigration, and wider acceptance of various religions and sexual orientations, many have become frustrated with the change in the status quo.[42] As governments increasingly promote equal opportunity and tolerance, many frustrated members of the white middle class desire a return to a prior version of their nation that was more homogenous.[43] Furthermore, because Canada struggles to define its own cultural mediums, Canadians are especially prone to consuming American media. The internet is dominated primarily by American companies; thus, it is impossible for Canadians to avoid news regarding the United States. Social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook were key platforms in the spread of right-wing rhetoric online.[44] With the internet facilitating the spread of alt-right rhetoric, a large portion of Canadians were significantly impacted by ideologies emerging from the United States.[45] Movements such as "America First" prompted their own versions in Canada, a nationalist movement implying that native citizens of a nation should be a much higher priority than immigrants.[46] There is no single social media network used only by Canadians; thus, it is unavoidable to escape news regarding the United States. Given shared languages, culture, and the internet, it is understandable how ideas rapidly spread between both nations.

CONCLUSION

It is evident that the alt-right in Canada has made its presence very clear within the last few years. With the rise in right-wing populist movements worldwide, Canada was among just one of the many nations that saw a rise in nationalist rhetoric. As demonstrated by the creation of new Canadian political parties, the rise in hateful incidents and the significant backlash against governmental COVID-19 measures, it is clear that the alt-right in Canada is steadily growing. Despite Canada's image as a welcoming, multicultural nation, it is not prone to the rise of hateful rhetoric and dangerous right-leaning movements. Although Donald Trump is still scorned by a majority of Canadians who claim that Canada has absolutely nothing in common with the controversial figure, it is important to recognize that Canada is not exempt from dangerous right-wing extremist movements. It is important to understand that Canada is not immune to the rise of dangerous political movements in the United States; we are just as prone as the rest of the world to sinking into hateful rhetoric and attitudes.

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A Critical Dissection of the Conservative Party of Canada's Foreign Policy Towards Israel

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Abstract

This essay explores the relationship between Canada and Israel, and the foreign policy implemented to attempt to find a solution to the hostility between Israelis and Palestinians within their shared territorial region. It begins by arguing that Canada's Conservative party, in particular, has committed to a unilateral approach for decades, in which they grant priority to Israel's interests as a result of a long-standing allyship between the two countries, yet appear progressive under the guise of a desire for a two-state solution. Although the Liberal and Conservative parties disagree with the other's foreign policy approach towards the matter, both parties share highly similar views, whereby their platforms emphasize a desire for peace and a fulfilling livelihood for both Palestinians and Israelis alike, whilst simultaneously and exclusively advocating for the right of Israel to exist and defend itself. This staunch pro-Israel policy shared by both parties within Canada is examined and acutely criticized, with the support of various sources including other Canadian party policies and media outlets. The final part of the essay explicates the Canadian Conservative party's foreign policy, due to its failure to take both Palestinian and Israeli interests into account, and a failure to condemn the wrongdoings of the Israeli government and its policies which are committed disproportionately against Palestinians.

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between Israel and Canada remains one of the most salient features of contemporary foreign policy; in particular, the differing approaches that various Canadian political parties adopt toward the hostility between Israelis and Palestinians in the shared territorial region. Canada's Conservative party openly embraces a pro-Israel policy; they advocate for Israel's right to defend itself, determine where its capital is located, and its statehood.[1] The Conservative party claims to always defend Israel's interests at the United Nations, implying unconditional support regardless of Israel's wrongdoings.[2] However, the Conservative party released these statements in their 2021 platform, merely months following the unlawful war in Gaza during the holy month of Ramadan. Further, the Conservative party demonstrates no effort to initiate peace for both sides, solely taking sides for the sake of allyship. Ergo, the Conservative party fails to include a plan of action within their platform which involves working towards a mutually acceptable compromise that will satisfy both sides.

This essay dissects the history of Canadian foreign policy toward Israel, focusing primarily on the preceding Liberal and Conservative government policies. Next, a finer lens examines the Conservative party's staunch pro-Israel policy. Then, a critical examination of the Conservative party's position supported by differing party policies and media outlets. Finally, I will conclude by incorporating my own personal stance against the Conservative party's policy towards Israel, and why I believe that it is a poorly constructed plan of action destined for failure. The Conservative party of Canada's strictly one-sided approach to foreign policy towards Israel is a recipe for disaster due to its failure to take both peoples' livelihoods into consideration, as well as its failure to distinguish between the oppressed party and the oppressive party.

BASIC HISTORY AND RECENT POLICY

Particularly with the controversy regarding Israel and Palestine, political parties have a profound impact on shaping and altering Canadian foreign policy. The History Canada's Conservative party is entrenched with support towards Israel, being one of the first countries to recognize its legitimacy.[3] Stephen Harper, former Canadian Prime Minister and leader of the Conservative party, is a devout evangelical Christian who has a literal political belief in biblical prophecy.[4] There is a shared belief among some Christian Conservatives that the end-times begin when Jerusalem is rightfully restored to the Indigenous Jewish people, eventually culminating in the second coming of Christ.[5] Consequently, many Christian Conservatives opposed the operational framework of the United Nations; this is reinforced by their devoted loyalty to Israel and dispensational pre-millennialism, which is the belief that Israel and the church are distinct entities.[6] This could be traced to their dismissal of the United Nations' condemnation of Israel's illegal occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem due to major violations of international law as well as numerous UN resolutions, in which they support Israel regardless of these offences.[7] Upon founding the Christian right political organization Moral Majority in 1979, Baptist minister Jerry Falwell Sr. declared that "whoever stands against Israel, stands against God."[8]

Stephen Harper was the first Western leader to

cut aid to the Palestinian Authority following the democratic election of Hamas in 2006, and the first to withdraw from Durban II, which was the second UN World Conference Against Racism. [9] He withdrew under the claim that the event would "scapegoat the Jewish people," and would therefore paint Israelis living in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories as the harbingers of this racism.[10] Furthermore, when the United Nations Human Rights Council condemned Israel for invading Gaza in 2009, Stephen Harper publicly opposed the UN and backed Israel.[11] Harper's Conservative Canada has also openly sided with each of Israel's military operations since the Conservative party came into power in 2006.[12]

> ## This dedicated loyalty to Israel grew to become an entrenched feature within the Conservative party of Canada's foreign policy,

with Stephen Harper passing the torch to former Conservative party leader and 2019 prime minister candidate Andrew Scheer, who strongly advocates for a recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital in his 2019 party platform. He vowed to move the Canadian embassy to Jerusalem and to "finally recognize the city as Israel's rightful capital" if elected prime minister, further stating that "Israel is one of Canada's strongest allies and a beacon of pluralism and democratic principles."[13] He actively speaks out against the prevalence of anti-Semitism within Canada, and against groups and regimes who deny Israel's right to exist.

In contrast, Justin Trudeau's current Liberal government attempts to stay neutral and oddly vague about Israel and Palestine; a distinct absence of any mentions of both peoples in his 2019 and 2021 party platforms. Yet, strong pro-Israel sentiments are revealed through Trudeau's inclination to speak exclusively about anti-Semitism and the loss of Israeli lives when chaos arises. He fails to profess any sympathy or condolences to friends and families of murdered Palestinians, or racism targeted against Palestinians.[14] The Liberal government under Trudeau, therefore, takes a passive stance regarding foreign policy towards Israel, expressing a close relationship and bond with Israel as one of Canada's strongest allies, yet refusing to take action in order to advance interests for either Palestine or Israel. However, in opposition to this support for Israel, Trudeau's Liberal government warmly welcomed anti-Zionist and former Green party MP Jenica Atwin in June of 2021, following her disagreement with Green party leader Annamie Paul's neutral statement regarding the war in Gaza that occurred in May 2021.[15] Annamie Paul is a staunch Zionist, and has previously faced backlash for her views towards Israel due to a misalignment of her own views with her party's anti-Zionist faction. [16] Subsequent to Paul's statement calling for "an immediate de-escalation in the violence and a return to to dialogue as a means to seeking peace," Atwin was left dissatisfied and deemed this statement inadequate, calling for an end to Israeli apartheid instead.[17]

Prior to Trudeau's rise to power as prime minister, former Liberal party leader Michael Ignatieff expressed an ultimate objective for peace in the region shared between Israel and Palestine, firmly advocating for a two-state solution for two democratic states to co-exist peacefully in his 2011 party platform.[18] The Canadian Liberal party has always maintained close political, economic, social, and cultural ties with Israel, with prior Liberal Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent recognizing the State of Israel

as legitimate upon its founding in 1948, and establishing formal diplomatic relations the following year.[19] Canada and Israel had developed a mutually beneficial bilateral relationship thanks to the Canadian Liberal party, and this outstanding relationship extends to the foreign policies of both Liberals and Conservatives—the two dominant parties of the Canadian political system.

THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY POSITION

Canada's various Conservative parties have witnessed a revolving door of party leaders since Confederation in 1867, yet they commit to embracing a defensive stance of Israel's inherent right to exist and its policies. The predecessors of the 2003-formed Conservative party, the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, advocated for an unwavering commitment to Israel's integrity from 1984 onwards.[20] Brian Mulroney, party leader at the time, declared that this is a duty that must be indefinitely fulfilled by the party's position, Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, and the Government of Canada as a whole.[21] He further imparts that peace negotiations must be implemented concerning Israel's recognition by surrounding Arab states in the geographical region, as well as Israel's security concerns, and that settling the question of Palestine was critical in establishing overall peace.[22]

Although a staunch supporter of Israel, Mulroney acknowledges that Israel "must accept its share of the responsibility to resolve the plight of the Palestinians," and that "the nature of a Palestinian homeland within the West Bank and Gaza areas should be a principal subject of negotiations."[23] He later counteracts this sympathy by shifting the blame onto the Palestinians, promulgating that although

Palestinians must be represented in any peace negotiations, their representatives must forswear the use of violence and terrorism, recognize the State of Israel as legitimate, and commit themselves to a political solution, regardless of whether they were content with it or not.[24] Although a proud Zionist, Mulroney announced during a fundraising dinner for the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee in 2013 that, "this does not mean, however, that Israel should be immune from criticism. One can strongly disagree with policies of the government of Israel without being called an anti-Semite."[25] This is a viewpoint opposed by many Zionists, in which any criticism of the actions committed by Israel's government and its Defense Forces are frequently framed as anti-Semitism, hence treating Jews and Israelis as a monolith whose values and actions are one and the same.

From 1984 to 2015, Conservative party platforms have failed to include any mentions of either Israel or Palestine, despite their party leaders strongly advocating for Israel and building close relationships with Israeli prime ministers nonetheless. Stephen Harper, one of the founders of the Conservative party of Canada, finally addressed foreign policy toward Israel in his 2015 platform, pledging to defend Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state and to defend itself.[26] He further denounces Liberals and NDP as potentially undermining Canada's security, by abandoning Canada's principled foreign policy that stands up for Israel.[27] Harper was a firm believer that Canada's support for Israel was to be perpetual and that it was a duty that should be entrenched in Canadian foreign policy. In fact, he deemed Israel "a light of freedom and democracy in what is otherwise a region of darkness" and asserted that the Jewish state "will always have Canada as a friend" in an annual gala hosted by the Metro Toronto Convention Centre in late

2013.[28] Additionally, when former President of Venezuela Hugo Chavez ousted the Israeli ambassador due to the unprecedented violence committed by the Israeli government in Gaza in 2009, Harper opposed Chavez and volunteered to represent Israel in Venezuela.[29] The Harper government also proceeded to cease financial aid to the Toronto-based Canadian Arab Federation in 2009 due to the federation's disdain towards the government's extreme Zionist values.[30] It must also be duly noted that Jason Kenney, Canada's Minister of Citizenship, Immigration, and Multiculturalism under the Harper government, attempted to prevent former British MP George Galloway from entering Canada as a result of his sympathy towards Hamas as Palestine's only form of self-defence against the Israeli Defense Forces.[31] Ergo, It can be confidently established that Stephen Harper is profusely more right-leaning than any previous Conservative party leader in terms of Zionism.

Former party leader of the Conservative party and 2021 federal election prime minister candidate Erin O'Toole shares similar views on foreign policy towards Israel as his predecessors. In his campaign to run for prime minister in 2021, he pledged to move the Canadian embassy to Jerusalem, claiming it as the rightful capital of Israel, akin to prior Conservative party prime minister candidates.[32] In his video campaign, O'Toole adopts a similar policy to that of Stephen Harper's, condemning Trudeau's Liberal government for weakening and wavering Canadian support to Israel, and commending the prior Conservative government under Harper for establishing a trustworthy friendship with their allied Jewish state.[33] O'Toole further explains his plans for a two-state solution, yet reassures supporters of Israel of his plans to extend "exchanges and collaboration with Israel to partner," and that a two-state solution that takes

both Israel's and Palestine's interests into consideration does not prevent his Conservative government from striving to "do more for Israel."[34] Resultantly, there is no doubt that despite their history in aiming for peace for both Palestine and Israel, the Canadian Conservative party has an indisputable and unshakeable commitment to prioritizing Israel's interests above Palestine's, as well as providing the State of Israel with the moral, financial, and social support that they request.

CRITIQUES OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY POSITION

While it may appear through plans for a two-state solution that the Canadian Conservative party has a solid foreign policy regarding the issue of Israel and Palestine, the policies they have sought to adopt throughout history have a sole interest in advancing the benefits of the State of Israel, and then subordinately catering to Palestinians. Following the outbreaks of human rights and international law violations committed by the Israeli government as well as the Israeli Defense Forces, it is only fair to render the plight of Palestinians a genocide.[35] The classification of this behaviour as a genocide can be traced to the Sheikh Jarrah evictions, beginning in May of 2021, which were executed for the purpose of maintaining a demographic balance of 70% Israelis to 30% Palestinians.[36] This is a de facto instance of Israel encouraging an ethnic cleansing policy. Following these evictions, the war in Gaza involved an unlawful bombing of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, which is the third holiest place of worship for Muslims, during the holy month of Ramadan.[37] The Conservative Party of Canada's extension of unconditional support to Israel insinuates a dismissal of any and all crimes against humanity committed to Palestinians at the

hands of Israeli policy, chiefly emphasizing the Conservative party's major disregard for Palestinian life.

The Conservative platform, under all previous and current party leaders,

> **places immense focus on appeasing only one side of the hostility within Israel and Palestine, and actively fails to establish a plan of action that incorporates both interests into account.**

Conversely, the Canadian Green Party's 2019 platform outlines a clear belief that "any effort aimed only at one side in this conflict will not end the violent responses that exacerbate human suffering."[38] They further elucidate that "Canada's role in the Middle East should be to reduce tensions, find working solutions, and uphold international humanitarian law, not to take sides in this chronic conflict."[39] Elizabeth May's platform, therefore, endorses Palestinians' right to statehood within their internationally recognized borders as outlined in United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, adhering to pre-1967 borders that stipulate economic prosperity in both nations.[40] As a result of this endorsement of a two-state solution, the Green Party demands that Israel cease the expansion and annexing of illegal settlements on Palestinian-recognized territory, as well as a call for an end to the Israeli-controlled siege on Gaza so that Gazan residents can rightfully be provided with medical and humanitarian aid.[41]

Likewise, the NDP shares similar views as the Green Party concerning Canada's responsibility to ensure that the appropriate accountability is taken by both Israel and Palestine, but advocate

for a policy that Conservatives, nor any other party, has ever considered. Jagmeet Singh's 2021 NDP party platform outlines a vision for Canada to "play an active and constructive role in advancing peace, beginning by suspending arms sales to Israel until the end of the illegal occupation."[42] Singh, therefore, confirms the existence of an illegal Israeli occupation, and recognizes the role of arms exploited by Israel to exacerbate not only the suffering endured by Palestinians, but the evolution of the hostility between both peoples as well. Additionally, Jack Harris, a former MP of the NDP, draws attention to the fact that "now that the incoming government of Israel has committed to a plan to annex lands in the occupied territories, Canada must speak out and condemn such action. It would be a clear violation of international law and the Geneva Convention to which Canada is a party."[43] The NDP directly holds the Canadian government accountable for supporting illegal occupation and calls upon it to terminate its participation in aggravating this foreign crisis.

> **Both Liberal and Conservative parties have proven a failure to hold Israel accountable for this clear violation of international law, on the basis of protesting the singling out of Israel.[44]**

In an Op-Ed criticizing Erin O'Toole's alienation of Muslim Conservative party members, media outlets express a belief that "the Conservative leader has spoken out in support of Israel, but said nothing about wrongs done against Palestinians."[45] Articles published within the Globe And Mail further condemn Stephen Harper's staunch Zionism, stating that Harper's claim to support Israel "whatever the cost" is

"illogical and dangerous when talking about a country that violates the sovereignty of three other nations and the human rights of millions, and refuses to abide by international law."[46] The current Liberal government of Canada, as well as all previous and current Conservative party leaders, continue to look past these violations, highlighting a redundancy within the Canadian political system to fail to address the urgency of the development of Israel's confidence in committing a major infringement of Palestinian human rights.

CONCLUSION

It is severely discriminatory and inequitable for the Conservative party of Canada to refuse to admit to Israel's accountability and war crimes due to their unyielding support for the nation. The Conservative party's failure to attest to wrongdoings committed by Israelis on the basis of avoiding anti-Semitism and singling out Israel is a severely limited justification for Israel's violations of human rights, based on a warped understanding of distributive justice. The fact that Israel is a Jewish state should not absolve them of the blame for infringing upon the rights of others under a false claim of anti-Semitism. In failing to address the pivotal role played by Israel in exacerbating the hostility between Palestinians and Israelis, the Conservative party's foreign policy toward Israel can only be rendered substantially flawed and corrupt, and can therefore never contribute to ensuring peace and prosperity for both peoples as a result of this bias.

Although the Conservative party has incessantly called for a two-state solution, these plans do not negate the fact that the party disguises a desire for peace and a fulfilling livelihood for both Palestinians and Israelis behind staunch Zionist sentiments. These sentiments have a strong interest in solely furthering the interests of their

allyship with Israel based upon Christian values. These values inherently prioritize the rights of Israelis above Palestinians, and indefinitely disregard the value of Palestinian lives, which are lost at a considerably higher rate than Israeli lives.[47] This significant difference, therefore, stresses and distinguishes between the oppressed position of the Palestinians, in comparison to the oppressive position of the State of Israel, which is a settler-colonial ethnostate built on the apartheid and displacement of Palestinians.

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Comparing Canadian and German Healthcare Benefit Systems

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Abstract

Both the Canadian and German healthcare systems are regarded as examples of successful universal healthcare models. Each country provides comprehensive healthcare coverage to its citizens; however, the delivery varies significantly. In this comparison, we explore the strengths and weaknesses of both systems, financing methods, accessibility, quality, and patient satisfaction. Both countries have achieved excellent healthcare outcomes. The Canadian system is often celebrated for its accessibility and universality, but it has faced criticism for long wait times, especially for specialized care. In contrast, the German system is known for its high quality of care and advanced treatment methods but is sometimes criticized for its distribution of healthcare resources. Both systems have fostered low infant mortality rates, high life expectancies, and excellent disease management. Recently, ongoing debates in both countries are highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of both systems, mainly around primary care accessibility, wait times, and equal care standards for all citizens.

Key Words: Healthcare, Canada, Germany, Universal-Healthcare, Privatization, and Insurance

INTRODUCTION

The Canadian healthcare system has been a topic of debate for many years. The publicly funded system is either highly regarded or highly criticized. Since the 1970s, most Canadians have had access to public healthcare paid for by provincial governments, which throughout the following decades gained increased support from the federal government.[1] Canadians are proud of their healthcare system. However, the negatives can be overwhelming, such as long wait times, accessibility, and inability to pay for treatment. Because of these shortcomings, private healthcare has been periodically pitched to federal and provincial governments by citizens and interest groups. However, it remains set on keeping the current system.

Germany takes a different approach to healthcare. It has a public-private insurance-based system. The government provides statutory health insurance to all citizens who enroll. Private health insurance, as an option, is available to anyone self-employed or with a taxable income of over €60,750 a year. Because of the demographic effects of this option, with not as often chronically ill, well-off middle-aged professionals making up the majority of privately insured, the premium is usually lower while benefits are better.[2] However, once enrolled in the private system, it is very difficult to switch back to the public system. This is particularly problematic when people come to age. In retirement, the premium situation reverses, with the private system being costlier than the public one.

Interestingly, Canada and Germany have similar government healthcare spending statistics and comparable health outcomes for their citizens. Despite this, many studies show that the quality of service delivered in the German system is better, and often cheaper than what is available in Canada.[3]

BASIS OF COMPARISON

Comparing Canada and Germany's healthcare systems is logical because they are both developed countries with advanced economies, high standards of living, and similarities in their universal healthcare policies and practices. Both Canada and Germany have public healthcare systems that provide a range of healthcare services, including primary care, hospital care, and specialized care. Additionally, both countries have similar health outcomes, relatively high life expectancies, and low infant mortality rates. By comparing the two countries, policymakers in each country can gain sights into how to improve their respective system to become more efficient while also learning from each other's mistakes.

Furthermore, In January 2023, Ontario Premier Doug Ford announced the groundwork to expand Ontario's healthcare system to incorporate increased private care for specialized practices like MRIs, X-rays, and specialized surgeries.[4] The comparison of Canada and Germany is important when considering the implementation of private healthcare. Although Ford's proposal is far from a two-tier system, this comparison will provide insight into what Canadians can expect in the future, should Canada move in that direction.

In this essay, I suggest that Germany's system is currently more efficient than the Canadian healthcare system because of its economic model and quality of care. There are many factors leading to this conclusion, ultimately it will be policymakers who have the technical know-how and resources to either change or continue with the status quo of Canadian healthcare. I explain how allowing citizens to have the choice between private and public healthcare is beneficial for

32

running an effective system, even for those who cannot afford to pay out of pocket. I will also elaborate on how Canada can implement some of Germany's strategies and policies to better its existing system.

ECONOMIC MODEL: CANADA

Canada's health spending is expected to reach $308 billion in 2021 (including COVID expenditures), which amounts to 12.7% of GDP and around $8,019 per capita.[5] This is an astronomically high figure comparatively, coming only second in the World and only topped by Switzerland. Most of the funding for healthcare comes from provincial/ territorial (P/T) taxation. Around a quarter of the funding comes from the so-called Canada Health Transfer, the federal program that supports provincial healthcare systems. For P/T governments to qualify, they must deliver services specified under the Canada Health Act (CHA). The (CHA) outlines the basic care expected from provinces, including coverage conditions, billing practices, and private care restrictions.[6]

It is common to hear even non-Canadians praise Canada's system, often referring to it as "free." To be clear, Canadians individually pay between $1,000-$40,000 on healthcare through taxation. [7] In addition to the substantial amount of taxation required to fund Canada's system, many Canadians pay for private healthcare insurance to fund medical services not covered by the system. This includes services provided by chiropractors, physical therapists, orthodontics, some psychological services, and other specialty or wellness services. According to a study by the Fraser Institute, "the cost of medical insurance paid through taxes has slowed down considerably, now averaging an increase of 1.6% annually as opposed to 6.4% annual increases from 1997 to 2011."[8] This rise in cost, both on

the side of the government and the individual, can be attributed to trends in healthcare advancements, requiring new equipment due to the rapidly changing technological landscape in healthcare. A study by the Canadian Institute for Health Information claims that health expenditures due to technology has contributed to 35%-65% spending increases in the United States.[9] The study also states that Canada has similar statistics.[10] However, the massive expenditures cannot completely be attributed to these trends since other countries with public systems would face the same issues.

One of the main issues for the current system is that healthcare spending is outpacing GDP in most provinces by around 2% annually. This approach of spending more and receiving less or the same quality of treatment is not sitting right with most Canadians.[11] One could argue that, in general, more per capita spending and an increase in access and quality of care would be expected. The realization that this expectation is not being met is what is causing many to reconsider the system's effectiveness.[12] The way the system is set up does not really incentivize cost savings or a more frugal perspective on Canadian's financial positions.

ECONOMIC MODEL: GERMANY

The German healthcare system is based on public and private insurance. In 1883, under then-Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, it was the first country to ever implement a universal insurance plan for its citizens. It was the beginning of the modern welfare state. At first, it was limited to lower-class citizens and entitled them to a series of predetermined services.[13] This system slowly expanded to cover more and more essential and non-essential medical treatments. In 2007, mandatory enrollment in either public or private insurance was required for all citizens and

permanent residents. Despite the split, the mandatory requirement for either was an important point as it would ensure that everyone, even the rich or the perceived healthy, had to pay their share. The two subsystems of health insurance are statutory. Public not- for-profit, non-governmental organizations provide predetermined sickness plans and services with clearly specified fees that doctors can charge. Private health insurance provides care without government subsidies and a fee and services structure that exceeds the government's rates.[14] Despite the latter, the insurance premiums are comparable or lower for private providers.

The funding of Germany's healthcare system is much different than Canada's. However, some similarities exist when examining the role of individual states (Bundeslaender).

As in Canada, the federal government in Germany does not have direct power over the specifics of health care delivery, but it has regulatory power, including determining covered services paid for by the sickness funds

(the public insurers/underwriters). The states are responsible for hospital investments, infrastructure updates, and equipment purchases. While the federal government assists in these expenditures (especially when used for public care), federal funding is not a mandatory system requirement. Instead, decisions are made collaboratively between the federal government, state government, and sickness fund providers. The Ministry of Health (federal) and state governments supervise tax rates and the allocation of funds to the states and hospitals.

Private insurance is purchased by citizens personally, which is then billed by physicians and hospitals. Private insurance often allows the patient to have more advanced, faster, or more comfortable care due to the premium charged by the physician or clinic.[15]

When comparing Canada to Germany, one must consider a few differences. Germany has around 2.5 times the population of Canada. This allows some citizens to opt out of statutory insurance and does not affect the funding for citizens who choose not to go private or who do not have the means to do so. If Canada were to implement private insurance or the ability to opt out of health care taxation, funding for healthcare would dry up. According to the Fraser Institute, the top 10% of Canadians make up 40% of total tax revenue. Losing a substantial amount of funding would be a severe blow to the public funding model. Germany's numbers are comparable; however, the population is much larger, and tax rates are higher, resulting in a sustainable system.[16] Geography also plays a factor. Canada is roughly 28 times larger than Germany. Due to the geographical dispersion, resources are spread thinner and often allocated to places deemed more deserving by the federal government. These structural issues definitely make it tricky for Canada to adopt a similar system as Germany. From my perspective, Germany's system appears superior because of the freedom of choice between sickness funds and statutory healthcare versus private healthcare.

Some for my argument: Germany has reduced wait times for both public and private insurance holders, increased spending (indirect healthcare funding), and improved overall quality of care. [17] Canada should consider implementing strategies from Germany's model of funding its healthcare system and evaluate what needs to be

34

modified to work in practice.[18]

QUALITY OF CARE

Quality of care is hard to quantify. However, one can objectively look at waiting times, patient satisfaction, and available services covered under the systems of Canada and Germany. As a country, Germany is known for its technological innovations and medical technology industry. According to the U.S. Trade Administration, "The German medical device market is one of the most lucrative healthcare markets worldwide, accounting for roughly $35.8 billion annually, or 25.6 percent of the European market total."[19] This industry has made Germans more familiar with the cost of new medical technology. In-country manufacturing allows for the country to invest in more advanced machinery not immediately available to other markets. To truly compare the two countries, Canada and Germany, one must first consider both countries' basic care. Many may argue that Canada may not even provide sufficient basic care as services like psychologists, dental work, and many non-life-threatening procedures are not covered. Wait times are the most vexing issue brought up by critiques. Hospital and surgery wait times, family doctor availability, and voluntary procedure wait times are all things that can be compared between Canada and Germany.

WAIT TIMES

Canada is notorious for having extremely long wait times due to a shortage of doctors, specialists, medical devices (CTs, MRIs, etc.), and facilities. According to the Fraser Institute, wait times to see a specialist in Canada after a referral has gone up by 143% from 1993, and wait times from specialist to surgery have increased by 120% since 1993.[20] Finally, wait times for CT scans are around 5.3 weeks, and MRIs are 11.1 weeks.[21] These wait times are

not just an inconvenience but can cause serious medical problems and can have implications on a patient's mental and physical well-being. Furthermore, Canadians do not have the choice to pay to see a specialist sooner unless they go abroad—which they do—often to the U.S. This leads to Canadians losing some quality of care and even tax revenue (if there would be private local options) that could be going to their government rather than the U.S.

Germany has more physicians per capita than Canada: 2.6 vs. 4.2 per 1000.[22] The country also has a more robust specialty clinic network consisting of public and private hospitals and not-for-profit clinics. Germany has the second most hospital beds per capita in the world, with 7.9 per 1000. While 42% of the hospitals run on a for-profit basis, most beds and facilities are available to public health insurance holders.[23] Remember, one must have either public or private insurance coverage. Those who cannot pay are automatically enrolled in social services. Furthermore, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) and the Canadian Institute for Health Information, Germany has one of the lowest wait times in the world for all elective surgery. The infrastructure and the private options system have a huge part to play in the lower wait times in Germany.

COVERAGE

Both in Canada and Germany, basic care is covered. However, Germany has a broader sense of what "basic" means in terms of healthcare. For example, Canada does not cover Long- Term-Care, but in contrast, it is compulsory in Germany. In addition, Germany covers orthodontics (until the age of 18) and more complex dental procedures. The out-of-pocket payment of these procedures is what frustrates

many Canadians. Thus, the definition of what constitutes basic care is different from what most Canadians feel that should be.

I, therefore, suggest that Canada should look to Germany to reform its healthcare policy. Legislation that restricts patients from paying for quicker and more suitable care keeps the entire population from receiving quality care. As the evidence from Germany shows, it is not disadvantaging those in the public system at the expense of a few rich. For-profit options and cost-sharing in healthcare lead to less unnecessary treatment and lower wait times. In Germany, patients with pre-existing conditions and chronic illnesses would be exempt from payments. It makes, therefore only sense that private insurance or a private treatment service should be made available. These clinics would be available for use by the public needed in case of, for example, urgent specialty treatments. To increase the quality of care in Canada, policies directly hindering patients from receiving timely care must be reformed. One should not forget that delayed treatments have also huge indirect economic effects, mainly due to lower workforce productivity. A new system would not happen overnight. However, Canadians, on average, are feeling more unhappy by the year.[24]

FREEDOM OF CHOICE

One of, if not the biggest gripes that Canadians have with the current system is the inability to choose to pay for some healthcare services since they are simply not permitted to be provided privately. While most would certainly agree that the public system in place is too slow, outdated, and mismanaged, the reality is that without major reform of the entire system, meaningful change is unlikely. Germany is an example of how allowing people to have the ability to select private healthcare without abandoning the public system

creates a more streamlined and effective national healthcare system.

There is no question that privatization and for-profit healthcare treatments are controversial subjects. Examples of people being deeply in debt or unable to pay for basic treatment in the U.S have left a sour taste when discussing the possibility of a private healthcare system or even a two-tier system in countries with universal healthcare.[25] The fear of not having access to services like getting an ambulance when needed, access to a family doctor, or basic dental coverage scares some Canadians to the point of not wanting to discuss reforming the system. Canada's proximity to the U.S. geographically and culturally has many Canadians in fear of adopting a private system. Therefore, it is important not to look to our neighbors to the south for an example of how to structure healthcare, but rather look at countries like Germany and Britain to see what having non-compulsory Private healthcare looks like and what impact such systems have on the general population's health.

According to the OCED, "German citizens are particularly satisfied with their health care system. 85% express satisfaction, compared to a 71% OECD average".[26] This statistic cannot be attributed solely to the fact that Germany allows its citizens to choose public or private healthcare. Still, it most certainly can be linked to how Germany provides medical care. However, the fact that private healthcare (insurance) complements the public service benefits everybody, albeit arguably not to the same extent. As previously stated, around 40% or 1360 hospitals in Germany are for-profit enterprises. [27] But both public and private healthcare insurance holders can use these hospitals. The former upon pre-approval. It has to be noted that

only about 1% of hospital beds in Germany are reserved exclusively for private insurance holders. The very fact that this complimentary exists can be directly attributed to the increase in beds in general. Without private enterprise in healthcare, Germany would not have nearly enough hospital beds to sustain its population.

An example of how Germany's private system has helped recently is during COVID-19. While numbers have fluctuated, Germany has tackled the hospitalization rates quite well compared to neighboring countries or countries of the same economic status. Germany's high number of hospital beds, ICUs, and medical professionals have made it one of the most prepared healthcare systems, at least in Europe, to handle the pandemic. Germany consistently ranks top three among countries with the most ICU beds per capita, currently (at the time of the survey in 2020) second in the world only behind Turkey with 33.9 ICU beds per 100,000 people.[28] Thus, private funding of some of Germany's hospitals has directly affected the preparedness of the country during the current global crisis.

Moreover, many have criticized Canada's response to the pandemic, despite its now very high vaccination rates. Specifically, critics noted how unprepared the country was to take care of COVID-19 patients in need of intensive care.

Canada has only 12.9 ICU beds per 100,000 people.[29] Furthermore, Canadian ranks among the countries in the global north with the least amount of hospital beds (ICU or acute), with only

2.5 per 1000.[30] This figure compared to Germany's 7.9 per 1000 is quite shocking considering that both have a public healthcare system that—in times of crisis—will be relied upon to respond. The population density of Canada is much lower than Germany which makes this statistic even more problematic. Not only are there fewer beds they are also farther apart.

CANADIAN PRIVATE HEALTHCARE RECOMMENDATION: A WAY FORWARD

Healthcare reform does not happen overnight especially considering politics and bureaucracy. Not all has been bad. Canada made amendments to its Medical Care Act in 1966 and Canada Health Act in 1984. These include infrastructure updates financed by additional cash transfers from the federal government to the provincial governments in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Additionally, the federal government, in 2004, introduced a 10-Year Plan to Strengthen Health Care, which was supposed to provide hospitals with new equipment and also help with structural changes in each provincial healthcare system.[31] Unfortunately, even minor changes to Canada's system have taken decades to take place. Nevertheless, I do believe that there is hope for Canada's healthcare system. While each Germany's and Canada's geography, demographics, values, and needs are different, Germany can be looked to as a model for healthcare reforms in Canada. There are some easy wins and some more substantial ones, but also idiosyncrasies in Germany that cannot be directly adopted. Canada must address the issues that cannot be fixed by Germany's exact model and find a way to work around them.

First and foremost, Canada should not fully adopt Germany's statutory insurance program. Instead, it should allow for private insurance, which exists for things not normally covered by the government (dental care, prescriptions, physiotherapy, ocular expenses), to cover services already provided by the public system. This would include medical (not cosmetic) plastic surgery, family doctors, scans (CT, MRI, ultrasound, etc.), and elective surgeries. It should also allow for for-profit private hospitals. This way, the entire public healthcare system would not have to be dismantled. Private insurance should not be used as the sole means of healthcare for Canadians. Taxation for healthcare should remain the same and compulsory for all citizens. As previously discussed, Canada's population is not large enough to sustain its current public healthcare system, with even a small percentage of Canadians not contributing to it. As Canada is already under-equipped and behind in medical infrastructure, losing 10-15 percent[32] (Germany's percentage of citizens with private insurance) of healthcare-related tax revenue would be detrimental to assuring that all Canadians have access to medical services. Around 63 percent of Canadians are already enrolled in some form of private insurance program to cover health costs otherwise not covered. The list of permitted services under this system is, however, much too short.

POLICY REFORM

Furthermore, Canada should reform the Canada Health Act, particularly the requirement that the federal government has to match one-to-one what each province spends for services outside of hospitals.[33] This system leads to incentivizing expenses and not to an increase in efficiencies. A more effective way to fund the country's medical system is to create a committee that allocates resources where they are most needed or spread

too thin. For example, Ontario would still receive more funding than Saskatchewan due to its much larger population. However,

the federal government would have the flexibility to increase funding to provinces or territories with weak infrastructures that traditionally have not been able to self-fund hospital upgrades or improvements to general medical facilities.

An example of this would include Nunavut, whose population lives in rural towns with limited care being provided to its citizens. Indigenous nations could also receive more funding regardless of their geographical location in a specific province is recognized as an "independent" state under the committee. Germany's "Gemeinsamer Bundesausschuss" or Federal Joint Committee is an example of a possible Canadian committee outlined above.[34] The committee makes democratic decisions when assigning funding and regulates the ratio of private to public services. This system is egalitarian in that it distributes tax resources to the areas in the most need.

Privatization of traditional public services is nothing new in Canada. However, Dr. Brian Day is perhaps one of the loudest voices arguing for private care to play a larger role in the Canadian system.

"Canadians are allowed to pay for schools, libraries and even highways that exist outside of public systems, but all bets are off when it comes to medically necessary procedures like an MRI or heart surgery. Private clinics can sell cosmetic

procedures and dental surgery all they want, but if a B.C. doctor is caught selling a service that is covered by medicare, they could be fined $10,000 for a first offence."[35]

By allowing private clinics to operate, the Canadian economy will subsequently benefit from increases in jobs, tax revenue, and ultimately a healthier, happier, and more productive population. Private hospitals and clinics will also provide a much-needed increase in healthcare infrastructure, ensuring that more Canadians will have access to medical services. For example, Germany's health expenditures were around $475,750,000,000 per year.[36] Canada's private healthcare industry would not nearly be the same size. However, with increased private spending and domestic and foreign investment, Canada would see many economic and social benefits from this change.

CONCLUSION

Both Canada and Germany have universal healthcare systems that provide basic care for their respective citizens. Both share similarities like provinces or states overseeing taxation for their public hospitals and health services. However, Germany's system relies on funding models not solely managed by the government.

> **What pains here is that Canada's system does cost less than the German model but provides less basic care compared to the German system, leaving Canadian citizens with higher out-of-pocket expenses or, worse, a lack of services altogether.**

Germany taxes higher for its medical system and consequentially provides its citizens with more basic services under statutory insurance. It also allows for an individual to opt out of the public system if certain conditions are met. By implementing this system, Germany has positioned itself to be one of the leaders in Medicare worldwide, with top rankings in hospital beds and doctors per capita. Canada, having a much smaller and more dispersed population, could not implement Germany's exact system. However, with some modifications, Canada should allow for private insurance to cover care also provided by the public system. This would shorten wait times, increase satisfaction rates, create jobs, and stimulate the economy with new investments. Germany should be regarded as a great example of how a two-tier healthcare system should work. In conclusion, I suggest that it is important to study countries with more effective public services to make educated recommendations and changes to Canada.

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The Survival of Abortion Access in Canada

Written by: Lauren Waite

Abstract

The topic of abortion is fraught with intense debate across all people, especially in North America. With the recent Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization decision, abortion access is under renewed attack in the United States. Canada has made an identity for itself in its persistent defense of the right to terminate a pregnancy, one of the stronger stances against its historically overbearing neighbor. The R. v. Morgentaler ruling by the Supreme Court of Canada in 1988 decriminalized abortion and established a standard for the defense of reproductive rights. Later legal disputes and judgments have strengthened Canada's pro-choice position. However, there is a more malicious and complex history in both countries on this issue, and the future is beginning to look just as unstable. This paper aims to highlight the evolving attitudes and ominous impact of the changes in the United States for Canadian women in regards to their reproductive rights. Through a thorough comparison of the historic, political, and cultural ideas of both countries, I will present how the right to an abortion in Canada is being undermined and threatened by continued influence of the US.

Key Terms: Abortion, Instability, Canada, United States, and Abortion Access

INTRODUCTION

Abortion is one of the most controversial topics in the world, and it affects all aspects of society, socially, economically and politically. The United States (US) and Canada share the longest land border in the world and have a lot of overlapping interests, but on this issue, Canada has made a distinct political and cultural identity for itself. Reproductive freedom is a right enshrined in international law, initially outlined in the 1968 Tehran Conference on Human Rights; however, it continues to be destabilized in the US, particularly recently with the US Supreme Court decision *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*.[1] The shift away from the rights that have been afforded to women since the civil rights era of the 1960s indicates an ominous trend towards the rising religious right and further ideological proliferation across global borders. For Canadian women, this makes it a pertinent time to revisit the history of the issue in both countries and evaluate the politics and cultural attitudes that shape the debate now and moving forward. In this paper, I will present how the right to an abortion in Canada is being undermined and threatened by continued influence of the politics and culture of the US.

THE HISTORY OF ABORTION ACCESS IN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES

Canada and the US have a shared history of being a colony of Britain but are organized very differently today; the US is a democratic republic and Canada is now a constitutional monarchy, with the monarch of England still acting as the Canadian Head of State.[2] Revolutionary tendencies still inform US political decisions today, and it has created an environment where rights are more focused on the individual, and individuals are much more skeptical of the government. In contrast, Canadians focus on group rights and public order.[3] An in-depth analysis of this issue must begin with a review of the historic precedent that shapes the abortion debate in either country.

Rights in the United States have been based upon the experiences of white men since the nation's conception, and reproductive rights have only been at issue for the last 60 years. Prior to becoming the political and social issue it is today,

> **abortion regulation was used as a way to undermine midwifery and boost the male-dominated fields of medicine and science,**

advocated for by the American Medical Association.[4] Medical practices then began to call for therapeutic abortions when lives were endangered or in the case of rape. Again, no rights involved, just prevailing medical thought of the time.[5] The first case handling women's rights in the matter, *Griswold v. Connecticut*, came to the Supreme Court in the 1960s, in which it was ruled that couples had the right to agency over their marital affairs without involvement from the state. This, of course, infringed on the rights of single women to have access to family planning on the same basis as married women. This would eventually be codified into law in 1972.[6] *Griswold v. Connecticut*, which was helpful in that it enshrined the right to privacy, was the basis of the landmark US Supreme Court case of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973.[7] *Roe* gave women the right to an abortion, but not uninhibited. It retained the rights for states to restrict abortion based on a trimester system, to coincide with individual states interests on the matter.[8]

Today, there is no ban on abortion in Canada and attitudes against abortion are not as loud or politically provocative as they are in the US. However, until the mid 1900s, the history of the issue is not dissimilar from the case in the US. History of abortion access in Canada starts with the rights of the United Kingdom (UK). Since Canada was still a British colony, abortion rights mirrored the UK, which were extremely restrictive until attitudes started changing in the early 1900s.[9] Abortion was criminalized in 1869, and would be law until 100 years later, with the passage of the *UK Abortion Act of 1967*.[10] Pierre Trudeau would pioneer *Bill C-150* in 1969, which decriminalized abortion in certain instances, also referencing the act as a private affair that does not infringe on the public order that informs Canadian politics.[11] This was still very restrictive in terms of where and why you could get an abortion. Abortions were only authorized if the health of the mother was threatened (health was kept very vague purposefully), they had to be authorized by three doctors, and performed in accredited hospitals. [12] This was the most restrictive access of all three countries discussed, US, UK, and Canada. Thankfully, abortion was fully decriminalized in 1988, after the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in *R v. Morgentaler* that abortion restrictions violated the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.[13] Women no longer had to undergo scrutiny by doctors in hospitals or require authorization, abortion became accessible in many ways.[14]

The Supreme Court of Canada has been unequivocal in its reasoning in abortion decisions, often refusing debate due to the idea that they, as a legal body, cannot ascribe personhood and that any social, political, or economic debate on the matter is for legislative, not legal, matters. [15]

This makes them strong in their refusals to try cases on the matter,

> **but the vagueness and refusal to define personhood has left the rights afforded to women weak.[16]**

Additionally, the Supreme Court of Canada is not the reason abortion is legal; since it was a policy decision, the right is more secure.[17] The Supreme Court of the US, however, maintains abortion reform, and can retract the precedent set, which was done in the 2022 *Dobbs* decision.

CURRENT POLITICAL DIFFERENCES AND DEBATES

Differences in the debate and laws surrounding abortion stem from differences in the political processes of both countries. Federalism is a practice in which the political structure of a country is made up of two or more levels of government.[18] It is an important factor of the governmental structure of both Canada and the US, but they are used differently in regard to the topic of abortion. Due to the federalist structure of the US, the differences in the federal and state systems fragment the rights of women, making them a marginalized group in society. This is directly caused by gendered politics, which is easily seen in the abortion debate.[19] Since the 2022 *Dobbs* decision, the question of abortion rights has been directed back to the individual state level, meaning rights for women living in the US vary depending on the state in which they reside. This is problematic as it directly affects the mobility, economics, marginalization, and independence of women, while negating any negative effects on men.[20]

Federalism in Canada does work against women in some ways; however, since abortion is decriminalized on a federal level, the topic of abortion is currently not left to arbitrary moral arguments of different subsections within a country. These subsections, states in the US and provinces in Canada, are what federalism aims to make sure is fairly represented. It is used to make sure that all members of a democracy are fairly heard and represented, across cultural and ethnic lines within one country.[21] A reason that abortion is not as big of a discussion point in Canada may lie in the difference in attention on federalist lines. The criminality of abortion is and was a topic brought up in the legislature or courts of each individual state in the US; contrastingly, in Canada, the debate has never gone beyond the national level.[22] This may change depending on what citizens in different provinces start advocating for given that federalism does pose a similar threat to Canada as it does to the US.

Nevertheless, since 1988, federalism in Canada has negatively affected the funding of abortions. Most provinces, excluding Ontario and Quebec, removed abortion funding from their respective healthcare funding regulations. [23] One of the most infamous anti-abortion provinces in Canada is Prince Edward Island (PEI), characterized by their fraught history with abortion accessibility. After the Morgentaler ruling, PEI was able to keep access limited by forcing women to travel out of province to receive an abortion.[24] The province fought to keep itself abortion-free to "preserve its moral landscape."[25] It was also made a requirement to get an ultrasound and be referred by two different doctors before 15 weeks into a pregnancy to be covered by Medicare.[26] This presented an accessibility issue that fell along social lines as well, because these requirements are much easier to be fulfilled by women with higher socio-economic statuses. The requirement to leave the island also made women in need of medical treatment to confront feelings of neglect, shame, and disrespect.[27] The moral dilemma in PEI was exacerbated due to the fact that it is a historically rural and agrarian community, while abortion access and healthcare reform represents a very modernized and urban shift.[28] The PEI government finally improved access in 2016, 28 years after the federal government. Today, no legal barriers to abortion exist, but literal access to abortion is still varied in Canada due to the population sprawl and some areas not having the resources required.[29]

Gendered politics is at the heart of the abortion question in both Canada and the US, and they are being debated and threatened consistently in both countries. In Canada, the legislature often tries to avoid bringing forward any policy or political discourse on abortion to keep it from becoming too politicized.[30] Despite this, the basis of *R v. Morgentaler* is challenged quite often due to paternal claims.

Boyfriends and husbands bring court cases against their pregnant wives or girlfriends to prevent them from seeking an abortion on the basis that they have a legal claim to their offspring,

and the *Morgentaler* ruling did not adequately define the limits of fetal protection to prevent this.[31] Examples include the cases *Medhurst v. Medhurst*, and *Tremblay v. Daigle*, which were both decided in favour of the woman.[32]

The mission to define fetal rights in Canada is often spearheaded by fathers' rights groups or activists, wanting to enforce their parental claim, but also to keep the patriarchal society that is threatened by the expansion of women's rights.[33] Both the US and Canada are male-dominated societies – patriarchies – that want to be in control of women and the roles that they play. They are seen as vessels to create the next generation and be the keepers of the family unit. These ideas that women having more interest and control over their bodies is threatening to the hyper masculine familial ideals, and this plays a big role in the argument against continued abortion rights and access.[34]

The US and Canada are already economically integrated through NAFTA, and cultural influences are extending across borders.[35] The topic of abortion politics is important when thinking about the threat of the absorption of Canada into the US, as political integration would threaten rights currently afforded to Canadian women. The politics in the US have overstepped into other countries' rights and traditions as evidenced by the case of the Global Gag rule. This was a restructuring of the US Agency for International Development program, which provided funds to non-governmental organizations (NGO) in countries in the Global South that dealt with many issues, one including family planning. This policy reform took away funding from any organization that performed or advocated for abortion; many NGOs rely on international funding and this created a crisis in countries that could not afford to go against these restrictions.[36] Countries with their own political autonomy have been forced to abide by rules set by the US, so it is not impossible to imagine more aggressive political influence imposing onto Canada.

Much of this political enforcement for or against abortion stems from cultural debate and norms, to be further investigated in the next section.

CULTURAL ATTITUDES AND INFLUENCES

Cultural attitudes play a substantial role in the abortion issue, with many women who receive abortions being looked down upon and villainized, seen to be without morals.[37] This stigmatization of abortion, and people who receive them, has persisted due to many factors. There is concern in Canada about the continued protection for abortion due to the cultural shifts and influence from the US, given that the proximity of the two countries presents an inevitability of cultural influence. Author Geoffrey Hale compares the relationship between the countries as that of an elephant and a beaver, indicating that

> ## the domestic and international policies of the US affect Canada socially, politically, and culturally

while Canada continuously tries to defend an identity against its overbearing neighbor.[38] The defense of this identity was most adamantly called for in the Massey Commission Report, which warned Canada against becoming too American. Historically, abortion has been a large distinctive factor between the two countries, but the rise of the right and continued infiltration of American ideas is a threat to both Canadian identity and abortion access.

The changes in legislature introduced the rise of liberalism and autonomy for all people in the 1960s and 70s. This subsequently led to a rise in social conservatism rooted in religion to preserve the historic social frameworks that were perceivably being lost.[39]

Social conservatism is not new in US politics, but it did not ascribe itself to either party until the decision in *Roe v. Wade*. Social Conservatives founded the pro-life movement, which is the group's most defining element, and it became a beacon for Republicans to draw support from, turning abortion into the most polarizing issue in American politics.[40] The Massey Report warned against American cultural imperialism, and the case of social conservatism is a perfect example of the dangers.[41] In Canada, social conservatism is less accepted in mainstream conservative circles, but they ground their legitimacy in the success of their US counterparts.[42] Identifying the religious element of the US' cultural influence on Canada, introduces an interesting aspect of the intermesticity between the two countries that is usually only seen from economic decisions. Social conservatism has also seen an increase in popularity in Canada due to the recent rise of the Right that accelerated with the election of Donald Trump in 2016. The rise of the Right, in a way, can be attributed to the emergence of a "moral majority" in the US. Author Ronald Inglehart discusses this group of people as the citizens most concerned with the rapid changes in culture that we have been seeing. They are the people with minimal social and economic security and feel threatened by the change in societal norms.[43] Since social conservatism is a product of religious thinking, the role of religion in both societies must be analysed.

The role of religion plays a substantially different role in Canadian and US politics. Canadian politicians make almost no comment on their religion as a means to curry favour.[44] In the US, one of the most effective social movements and lobbyist groups is defined and organized around Christian extremism.

The Christian Right aims to exert its opinion in domestic and international US policy decisions through promoting and financially supporting conservative goals. It is reported that over 60 million Americans support or agree with the stances purported by the Christian Right.[45] Many of these Christians are Catholic, who vehemently oppose abortion and the Roman Catholic Church actively campaigns a hard pro-life stance.[46] Canadian Evangelicals do not hold the same position in Canadian political life, as evangelical politicians, most famously Stephen Harper, often do not refer to their beliefs.[47] Further, there are fewer Evangelicals in Canada than the United States, with most of the population being Protestant. Canada also has more Anabaptists, a sect of Protestant Christianity that avoids mixing politics and religion.[48]

Protestants in Canada have historically upheld and supported the right to an abortion,

which was seen in 1960 when the United Church of Canada started to endorse the right.[49] Religion in Canada has begun to be influenced by the US since the invention of the internet, which made cross border communication much easier.[50] This is a dangerous trend when it comes to abortion access in Canada, as different interpretations of the Bible and how that translates to stances on abortion are much more negative in the US. These ideas, perforated through the internet, are affecting and changing previously held religious views of Canadians in addition to infiltrating the more secular politics of Canada. [51]

CONCLUSION

There are obvious cultural and political influences from the US on abortion that are directly conflicting with the Canadian protections for the right. Although they are two different countries, the proximity of such a large and influential power to Canada has been claimed by authors and critics to be preventing a separate identity from emerging. Canada has been unrelenting in their protections for abortion rights in the past due to the political and social makeup of its citizens. This is a subject where the two countries truly diverge, but continued influence from the US can threaten the access afforded to women in Canada due to changing attitudes. Though it is imperative to the conversation to recognize the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision that has overturned the constitutional protection of abortion in the US, it was not a large point of discussion in this paper due to how recently it was decided; there is not much academic work on the matter yet. However, the decision will undoubtedly have effects on the ideas of many Canadians and the growing conservative movement that is mimicking the US. Additionally, it is important to recognize and respect that all people with a uterus may become pregnant, not just women. However, this paper largely referred to abortion as a woman's issue, to reflect the verbiage in most academic work on the matter. The topic of abortion and reproductive rights and freedoms can, has been, and should continue to expand beyond the gender binary, and there are many further issues that factor into an abortion access discussion that fall somewhat out of the bounds of this analysis.

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Untangling the Heteronormative Narrative of #MeToo

Written by: Sahar Talebi

Abstract

The #MeToo campaign gained traction throughout social media, demonstrating how ubiquitous and deadly sexual harassment and abuse are across all socioeconomic levels. Despite how widespread sexual harassment is, the #MeToo movement did not take marginalized people's experiences into account. Instead, neocolonial narratives were reinforced by the momentum's hyper-focus on wealthy, upper-class, white neoliberal feminists. This idea draws on intersectionality, which challenges masculinist or Eurocentric conceptions of oppression. According to this dualistic view of oppression, a person cannot be oppressed for both their gender and ethnicity. In other words, the heteronormative narrative undermines the #MeToo movement by limiting the variety of effective change agents necessary to eradicate many forms of oppression. Thus, this paper aims to expose the heteronormative rhetoric of the campaign as it homogenized the intersectional experiences of marginalized victims.

Keywords: MeToo, Social Media, Intersectionality, and Heteronormative

INTRODUCTION

The #MeToo movement was an attempt to bring attention to the universality of sexual harassment that has been perpetrated on millions of people.[1] In 2006, Tarana Burke pioneered the "MeToo" campaign to bring awareness to victims of sexual harassment and promote solidarity and support among marginalized Black women. Eleven years later, on October 5th, 2017, American actress Alyssa Milano broke the silence on Harvey Weinstein's sexual assault case when she used her Twitter account to urge female victims of sexual harassment, abuse, or violence to use the hashtag "MeToo" on the social media platform.[2] Within 24 hours, nearly half a million women embraced or shared their own stories of the challenge. #MeToo gained momentum all over social media, becoming evident that sexual harassment and violence are pervasive and lethal across all socioeconomic strata.[3] Despite the pervasiveness of sexual harassment, the #MeToo movement failed to account for the experiences of marginalized individuals. Thus, this paper aims to expose the heteronormative rhetoric of the campaign as it homogenized the intersectional experiences of marginalized victims. Firstly, this paper will introduce the movement in the context of intersectionality. Furthermore, Patricia Hill Collins's theory of the "matrix of domination" will be used to express how not all races suffer the same form of oppression. Finally, this concept will be applied to marginalized victims to distinguish their experiences from white females.

#MeToo AND INTERSECTIONALITY

While #MeToo aimed to expose sexual harassment as a common denominator among millions of women, the movement was scrutinized for its broad definition of gender-based violence. Indeed, the campaign made the

yearning for global change tangible by providing a platform for fresh voices and stories to be heard. [4] However, the space of #MeToo lacked inclusivity and failed to offer support for all genders to speak up about their lived experiences by placing white upper-class females at the forefront of the movement. Consequently, the solidarity incentivized by the movement was mistaken for a homogeneous identity for women that operated by eradicating all diversity.[5]

True, "something is corrupt in the state of heterosexuality," but Jack Halberstam, a scholar for the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality at Columbia University, criticized the movement for being heteronormative on its fixation on powerful men and their young, female victims.[6] This concept corresponds to the notion of intersectionality, which criticizes the Eurocentric or masculinist thought on oppression. This dichotomous thinking on oppression asserts that individuals can be oppressed either for their gender or race, but not for both.[7] In other words, the #MeToo movement is harmed by the heteronormative narrative because it restricts the range of productive change agents that are essential to eradicating different types of oppression. The movement unintentionally perpetuates heteronormative and patriarchal stereotypes about gender and sexuality by focusing solely on the experiences of cisgender, heterosexual women. The experiences of those who do not fall within these normative categories, such as LGBTQ+ people, men, and non-binary people, may be erased or minimized as a result. As an alternative, Collins proposes the concept of a "matrix of domination." Within this matrix, there are many distinct "axes of oppression" that are inextricably linked depending on one's position in various societal structures. For instance axes like, race, class, gender, and sexuality, become intertw ined in the U.S. to oppress Black women. [8] In essence, all individuals are not subjected to the same forms of oppression; however, all axes are part of a larger

ominance matrix. According to Collins, an intersectional analysis must properly create meaningful solidarity with and across oppressed communities.[9] This concept necessitates a reconstruction of the narrative of #MeToo to confront the matrix of domination, especially vulnerable people who are exposed to numerous and overlapping discriminations based on class, race, caste, sexuality, and other oppressive paradigms. Its unprecedented spatial reach necessitates feminist movements and scholarship to take a more revolutionary stance: to embrace intersectional perspectives, decolonial, anti-racist, non-binary, and ecological — over narrow, neoliberal, capitalist visions of equality.[10]

THE KILLJOY OF FEMINISM: "CRIPPLING OF #MeToo"

The Eurocentric identity of #MeToo overshadowed the overlapping discrimination disabled women experience. One in five women globally have a disability, and they are four times as likely than non-disabled women to face sexual assault.[11] Despite the fact that disabled women disproportionately face discrimination and gender-based violence, their voices are consistently marginalized in feminist advocacy and the current #MeToo movement. In her scholarship, disability rights activist Freyja Haraldsdóttir describes herself and others in her situation as the "killjoy" in feminism. She talks about the "Cripping of #MeToo," or the various ways in which a feminist movement that is blind to its own ableist privilege and co-opts disabled women without incorporating them.[12] The distinction between aggravated sexual assault and marginalized types of sexual abuse is used by Freyja to further expose the heteronormative narrative of the movement. She does so by emphasizing that while testimonial injustice is a fairly common phenomenon in all cases of sexual

some victims experience more severe forms of disbelief than others.[13] Additionally, women with disabilities who face gender-based violence are often perceived as an undesirable diversion from, or unrelatable to, the #MeToo movement's "collective" primary voice.[14] As a result, the unique ways women and girls with disabilities are subjected to abuse, discrimination, and breaches of their bodily autonomy have gone unnoticed and unexplored.[15]

Thus, the blind eye toward women with disabilities is a paradigm of the "axes of oppression," and the movement's failure to voice their demands ultimately stagnates collective action in confronting the matrix of domination.

Furthermore, the homogenous identity platformed by the movement distracts the broader audience from the underlying paradigms of oppression. In addition to women with disabilities, the voices of minority women were also appropriated and excluded from the #MeToo movement.

THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF #METOO: NEOLIBERAL FEMINISM

The #MeToo movement's hyper-focus on the rich, white and famous ignored the voices and experiences of marginalized identities and further imposed discrimination against minority women by denying them a platform and placing white Neoliberal feminists as the center of focus.[16] In this framework, a Neoliberal feminist is essentially a variant of Western feminism, where such "feminists" by default target their attention and resources towards the high society.[17]

The commercialization of oppressed narratives by white, neoliberal feminists is thus communicated through their campaigns, which serve to reinforce privilege through capitalist mechanisms of systemic oppression in order to gain financial and cultural capital. This feminist approach operates by "imposing" rather than "negotiating," which makes it overtly imperialist and colonial in nature. In other words, its goal is "dominate" rather than "liberate."As a result, mass mobilization or more traditional methods of achieving social justice are hindered in this process. Additionally, the capitalization of oppressed narratives ultimately renders the movement ineffective given its problematic nature, since every aspect of inclusion is solely motivated by market arithmetic and capital profits.[18] In this example, capital refers not just to monetary worth but also to cultural capital. While Tarana Burke, a young Black activist, invented the phrase "Me Too," white Neoliberal feminists like Alyssa Milano continue to claim credit for the movement's global expansion.[19] Now, privatized and individualized white, Neoliberal feminists make money off of #MeToo marketed DIY Rape Kits and necklaces.[20] This notion perpetuates discrimination as it exploits the traumas of marginalized individuals by overshadowing their experiences and placing white activists at the forefront of the movement. When white Neoliberal feminists use monetary and cultural capital as a criterion of success and empowerment, they measure progress through capital rather than true social action.[21]

Furthermore, sexual assault and harassment disproportionately affect women of colour; Black women were three times as likely as white women to be harassed at work per 100,000 workers.[22] Despite this, white and upper class women's resources are being prioritized in the #MeToo movement.[23] Thus, it is critical to recognize the intersectional forms of discrimination, oppression, and violence that oppressed racialized groups face in order to avoid reinforcing exploitative and colonial narratives.

#METOO AND WOMEN OF COLOUR

In order to expose the heteronormative rhetoric of the #MeToo movement, one must recognize that intersectional forms of oppression are systematic, multifaceted, and linked to power practices and struggles.[24] Institutionalized power structures are responsible for building gender norms and procedures and defining the boundaries for gendered subjects, which, in turn, creates a potential for power abuses such as sexual trafficking.[25] Stereotypes about African women's sexuality are frequently used to justify or underpin sexualized violence. Not only were African girls and women reduced to the status of chattel, considered subhuman, and differentiated from other peoples to justify their enslavement during the Maafa, but many colonizers also claimed that they were sexually exotic, lewd, and aggressive, contributing to their eroticization and abuse.[26] African women are frequently depicted as promiscuous, seductive, hypersexual, loose, whorish, lustful, and immoral.[27] In this case, race and gender are combined in generating stereotypes that justify and excuse the sexual exploitation of Black females, which began during slavery and continues to this day. This concept further proves that not all suffer the same forms of oppression. The inclusion of marginalized voices in the #MeToo movement is necessary to portray a more accurate representation of sexual harassment as a universal problem and address these detrimental stereotypes. In addition to Black women, a study has also found that the perma-temp status of Latina workers has also contributed to their sexual exploitation.

54

In a study conducted on Latina employees, the scholars indicate that the workers' perma-temps status interacts with their place in the "matrix of domination." This study comes to the conclusion that Latina employees are oppressed because of a combination of their gender, race, and class. The findings of this study also demonstrates that these women's experiences are similar to those of other vulnerable employees who have experienced on-the-job sexual harassment, occupational gender segregation, and uneven pay. This concept exemplifies the "multidimensionality" of these workers' experiences, since they are statistically more likely than white women to be subjected to workplace harassment.[28] Because of their low socioeconomic standing, the workers continue to work in the environment where they have been subjected to gender-based harassment, as they are afraid of losing their jobs if they report the occurrence. Their subjugated gender, racial, and class statuses become intertwined, restricting their autonomy.[29] Thus, societal structures that bind these women to experience a disproportionate amount of gender-based violence should have been exposed by the rhetoric of the #MeToo movement. Specific hierarchies are determined in modern society that places marginalized women at a disadvantage, ultimately facilitating their sexual exploitation. The movement's spatial reach should have uncovered this concept to confront the matrix of domination. In addition to Black and Latina women, Muslims are also misrepresented by the movement.

#METOO AND ISLAMOPHOBIA

The Eurocentric narrative of the movement has suited racists to further publicize Islamophobia and criminalize Muslims. While sexual assault can be stigmatized in the Muslim community, females have trouble advocating for the movement as it catered to imperialist visions of Islam.[30] Writers like Nawal El Saadwi have spoken about the misuse of Islamic laws regarding teaching and portraying relationships between men and women. Additionally, the western vision of Islam describes Muslim women's bodies as poor and oppressed, as bodies that need to be rescued by international aid operations.[31] Taken together, these narratives further perpetuate discrimination and stereotypes against the Muslim community by denying them the opportunity to platform and voice their own experiences.

However, it is also important to include Muslim men in the discussion surrounding the movement. The #MeToo movement is centered on the case of Aziz Ansari, an American-born Tamil Muslim, comedian, and actor, and Tariq Ramadan, a Swiss-born Muslim scholar. Ansari and Ramadan, like Harvey Weinstein, are protected as well-known, affluent straight males.[32] However, as brown males, Ansari and Ramadan's situations are distinct. While much is unknown about Ansari's case, Ramadan is at the hub of France's #MeToo movement, known as 'reveal your pig.' The war on terror and the growth of anti-Muslim attitudes on the extreme right in France make it difficult for the Muslim community to participate and campaign for the cause.[33] These instances have sparked a racist debate about Islam, exacerbating Islamophobia. In other words, denying Muslim people the opportunity to voice and communicate their lived experiences demonizes their faith rather than the individual conduct of powerful men.[34] This concept demonstrates the urge for decolonizing the rhetoric of the #MeToo movement, as it further encouraged racism and ignored the experiences of marginalized identities.

CONCLUSION

While initially 'me too' was used by Tarana Burke, a Black female activist hoping to promote solidarity among Black sexual assault victims, white Neoliberal feminists like Alyssa Milano were placed at the forefront of the movement. Additionally, the movement lacked inclusivity and failed to represent the voices of marginalized communities. #Metoo operated by creating a homogenized identity for women and eradicating all diversity, which necessitates untangling the movement's heteronormative rhetoric. This paper aimed to do so by considering Patricia Hill Collins's theory of the "matrix of domination," suggesting that not all individuals experience the same form of oppression. Thus, exposing the underlying institutions of oppression and systematic racism is crucial for the movement's ability to deliver change.

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Foreign Aid and Its Relationship to Ongoing Conflict

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Abstract

Foreign aid, despite its supposedly altruistic and noble intentions, has come under international scrutiny in recent years. High-income nations choose to participate in the aid process through their donations of money, services, and goods, which are allocated to countries perceived as 'underdeveloped', unstable, or experiencing hardship. With the case of Sri Lanka as a recent example of a country that has received mass amounts of this aid, this paper investigates the foreign aid industry and its priorities. In doing so, it demonstrates the contradiction that lies within what factors actually make aid effective. Following this, it discusses the multidude of ways that this aid can and has been detrimental to its recipients. Using this analysis, the paper provides a critique of the foreign aid process and the actors involved, demonstrating that foreign aid practices often work to disadvantage those that it is meant to save.

Key words: Foriegn Aid, Development, Competing Priorities, and Effective Institutions

INTRODUCTION

Foreign aid for humanitarian purposes has been a common practice among high-income countries and the international community since the latter half of the 20th century and often flows in the form of money, services, or goods. It is targeted towards countries seen as 'underdeveloped', unstable, or experiencing violent conflicts, with the goal of remedying these aforementioned issues.

> **Despite its good intentions, it has often been accused of worsening ongoing instability, instead furthering the violence, conflict, and insecurity plaguing these countries.**

However, it is an ongoing practice, which serves to prove that many governments and international organizations continue to assert that the aid they are providing is nothing but helpful for its recipients.

The following paper will examine this debate in an attempt to explain the relationship between foreign aid and violent conflicts. In doing so, this essay will argue that foreign aid frequently serves to worsen conflicts, specifically when aid is unable to take into account the individual needs of the recipients as opposed to the interests of the donor states. It will begin with a description of some of the pressing issues within the foreign aid industry, namely the frequently problematic motivations behind its allocation and the contradictions involved. This will be followed by a discussion of the multitude of ways aid then works to encourage conflict and instability, illustrated through a multitude of cases with a specific focus on Sri Lanka. The paper will then include a brief discussion of the opposing arguments and the ways in which these are not substantial in proving that foreign aid is consistently effective in achieving its objectives.

THE CASE OF SRI LANKA

Many of these inherent issues found in foreign aid and assistance can be articulated through the case of Sri Lanka, a country that has undergone one of the most violent and long- lasting civil wars of the last century. Sri Lanka has long been deeply divided into two primary ethnic groups - the Tamils and the Sinhalese, with the latter retaining control of the government following independence in 1948. Their politics were polarised by colonial powers discriminatory policies and practices, which led to the eventual outbreak of their civil war in 1983, and lasted until 2009. The country has also undergone multiple natural disasters, all inspiring mass amounts of aid from the international community - making it an excellent case in examining the long- lasting effects of foreign aid alongside the presence of many different donors and other political actors. This case supports the conclusions of the paper regarding foreign aid's contributions to the onset and prolongment of violent conflict, specifically when there are disparities between the interests of donor countries and the needs of the recipients. The Sri Lankan case study highlights the importance of these considerations, as well as discusses the consequences of overlooking them.

FOREIGN AID AS AN INDUSTRY

Foreign aid has steadily become a major tool of high-income countries in an attempt to promote security, growth, and equity in countries they have deemed 'underdeveloped'. These policies are intended to quell violence and conflict through economic development and promote democratically sound institutional structures.[1] Despite this, recent literature has begun to

59

recognize the association of aid with an increase in violence, specifically when support is fluctuating and unpredictable.[2]

Establishing a clear empirical link between countries receiving foreign aid and experiencing substantial growth has proven to be very difficult in contemporary scholarship. On the contrary, many studies have linked fluctuations in foreign aid with increases in violence - with this link being more clear than ever for the five years after the start of an aid program.[3] As an industry, developmental aid programs have been critiqued for their basis on utopian goals, with a tendency to be both unrealistic and vague. This umbrella of 'aid' has led to development programs made of all-encompassing roadmaps meant to lift nations out of poverty, with a centralized plan to do so.[4]

Further, the aid industry works primarily to serve its donors, ensuring that money goes where they believe it should, rather than working in the best interest of its recipients. Plans are shaped by donor countries' domestic and international interests, with the aid going to general countries, rather than with the needs of specific people in mind.[5] This motivation behind the distribution can be seen in several examples, from French donor money going primarily to their own ex-colonies, to American aid reflecting their foreign policy and being targeted towards those allied against communism.[6] Factors such as colonial ties, UN voting records, and business opportunities are often most salient in the allocation decision-making process.[7] These industry conventions then result in aid frequently being given to governments that have shown little interest in helping their populations, largely including those of autocratic regimes, with corrupt elites making their own decisions regarding its allocation.[8]

The financial support provided to Indonesia beginning in the late 1950s provides an illuminating example of these dynamics. Assistance from the United States began by establishing Indonesia's independent government, providing them with budgetary support. Military assistance began in 1959, meant to foster cohesion throughout the military so that it could check the President when he appeared to have pro-communist leanings. This support then allowed the country to build up a prominent military force, contributing to patterns of violence in the suppression of independence movements. [9] It further underpinned their 1975 invasion of East Timor, in which 90% of the military equipment used was provided by the United States. Though the U.S. was also providing economic and development aid to the country, the Indonesian government diverted this towards increased military expenditures.

> **This support allowed the country to become more aggressive, expanding its territory, and violently repressing internal challenges - carrying out mass human rights violations.**

Further, these resources allowed the government to buy the military's continued support through an extended network of patronage and coercive skills.[10] The co-option of these resources towards exclusively expanding the country's militarization occurred because of a unique set of conditions unique to Indonesia, reemphasizing the need for the aid industry to more critically consider the dynamics of their recipient countries. Further, the military's role in increasing the country's receptivity to Western political and economic institutions and practices demonstrates the strong impact of donor interests on the

60

allocation of aid.[11] Though the U.S. pulled their support following the 1975 invasion, this was likely a result of the negative international response.

With donor policies determining the structure of these programs, the unique features of individual recipients are often overlooked. Any influx of resources to a state will inherently interact with the existing power structures, and will therefore work to either reinforce or offset them. Different nations possess different motivations behind their allocation structures, with some being better at channelling aid flows to their own benefit. The international community is pushing planners to recognize that each society is constructed differently and will therefore require uniquely tailored plans, in which different factors are taken into account.[12] Those determining aid policies must deeply consider the recipients' demographics, internal composition, and relations among ethnic groups, in the design of their plans. It is ego-centric for high-income countries to believe that outside experts have the ability to structure successful development plans for foreign nations, in an attempt to 'fix' a country from the outside. Even an examination of success stories of development demonstrates a wide range of differences, with countless countries reaching similar ends, but via very different means.[13]

In post-tsunami Sri Lanka, the dynamic between humanitarian aid and the highly politicized environment it must function in was especially clear. Being one of the most significant natural disasters in history, having displaced 1.8 million people, the tsunami led to one of the largest humanitarian aid operations in history. Because of the sheer amount of donor money going into the country, there was lots of competition for its allocation, which was all negotiated between agencies, the government, and within the

humanitarian industry - while recipients were not acknowledged as key stakeholders. The country's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs said to the Asian Tribune in April 2005 that: "all these NGOs have a political agenda. I would like to dub them as organizations which are servile to the West. Some NGOs openly display their servility to their neo-colonialist masters."[14] Meanwhile, resident staff familiar with the demographic context of Sri Lanka were pushed aside by newcomers who were specialists in humanitarian emergencies. For instance, an aid worker confronted by a television crew that had come with a planeload of high-energy biscuits shortly after the tsunami. The worker refused to distribute them on the grounds that there was no malnourishment issue, which started a conflict that eventually led to his resignation.[15] Instead, professional international actors with less knowledge of the country managed aid allocation, and later surveys demonstrated a decline in public satisfaction with the aid they had received.[16]

CONTRADICTIONS WITHIN THE AID INDUSTRY

Further difficulties are found in the planning of foreign aid programs when examining a key contradiction - aid has a tendency to be most effective when it is least needed. The only establishment of a clear correlation between aid and growth occurs in countries that already possess sound policies and institutions, ones that are able to set up fair allocation patterns.[17] This contradiction is further articulated in saying that if the conditions for political and social development are present, then economic development will be developed naturally. Yet, if these conditions are not present, then aid is often ineffective. Poverty results from poor institutional quality and irresponsible governance - however, giving money to those countries with the highest poverty rates is likely to perpetuate these inequalities.[18]

An introductory study of our foreign aid industry presents one crucial contradiction: All of the factors that work to maximise aid's positive and politically stabilizing effects are the same factors so infrequently found in conflict zones. For aid to be successful, it must be distributed in a fair, transparent, and equitable way by a universally respected authority, with a coherent beneficiary group. These conditions are not synonymous with states experiencing civil wars, as discussed by Christoph Zurcher's 2020 working paper on development aid for the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation.[19] The implication of this contradiction is that

> **if aid is targeted where it is needed most, it is unlikely to make a significant difference because it is so easily co- opted by those in power.**

Haiti is known to have received mass amounts of aid over the last several decades, yet remains plagued with development issues. The country's poor sanitation, poor governance, and poor educational qualities have yet to be solved, with some accrediting this to the ways in which foreign aid is actually being delivered. This is rooted in the fact that development agencies are working with public administrative bodies despite their poor quality, and giving support to the elites that are responsible for the situation - this inevitably does nothing but strengthen the status quo.[20]

Other studies have made the same link to Sri Lanka. A 2013 study examined the effectiveness of aid in stimulating growth and development in specifically Sri Lanka from 1980 to 2008, coming to the conclusion that a good policy environment makes a significant difference in its effectiveness.

It further showed that aid has negative effects when interacting with a poor economy, especially in cases of high inflation. The study demonstrated aid's dependancy on the surrounding policy in proving that aid is only efficient when a country has good fiscal, monetary, and trade policies in place; Whereas, in a bad policy environment, aid does not effectively improve the quality of life of those most in need.[21]

AID'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO CONFLICT: ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE STATE

Moving forward to a discussion of specific factors that are exacerbated by foreign aid *but* also work to destabilize a country, one can begin with a discussion of the ways in which foreign funding has been proven to decrease the accountability of state institutions. This comes directly from the fact that it works to hinder the government's internal domestic collection process. So

> **reliance on international revenues then works to dampen any motivation to develop the public institutions that are required to mobilize internal revenues and foster long-term growth.[22]**

Without the need for financial support from its legislature of the citizenry, the government is no longer dependent on its consent to act.[23] States then become less responsive to their citizens' demands, simply because there is no more motivation to do so. The process weakens civic participation and in turn undermines the democratic process.[24] This phenomenon has

been likened to the impacts of the resource curse - a drastic influx of income to a fragile state enables irresponsible spending.[25]

AID'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO CONFLICT: AFFECTS BALANCE OF POWER

Further, a high influx of resources to an unstable country will drastically increase the value of owning that state, meaning that motivation for political control rises. Financial aid makes government control something worth fighting, increasing the spoils that can be won from a rebellion.[26] This demonstrates a direct link between foreign aid and civil war, as insurgent groups and government authorities are forced to struggle for power, with the motivation for exploiting these resources higher than ever. As government control has more and more payoffs, political instability increases, the quality of governance plummets, and corruption often rises. With the state becoming a prize worth fighting for, previously existent cleavages are mobilized behind a shared cause.[27]

> **The ability of foreign aid to either reinforce or offset existing power imbalances means that it strengthens the influence of those who control the aid.**

This is related to the above discussion of the importance of the aid industry recognizing the existing power structures in recipient countries. Reforms must be determined with critical attention to how they will alter the policy arena. [28] In countries that are unstable enough to receive aid, there is great potential for these funds to be misused by those already in power - those already contributing to the instability.

Governments can adopt prescribed developments in order to ensure they continue to receive financing, all while avoiding more fundamental reforms that will actually work to improve their institutional quality.[29] This essentially means that aid must be distributed in a non- contentious way - something very difficult to achieve in states with a variety of cleavages. This makes distribution problematic in societies that are divided by ethnic power relations, territoriality, and patronage systems. More specifically, these consequences are exacerbated when pre-existing patronage networks or ethnic dimensions are involved.[30] Returning to discussions of factors that allow aid to be as effective as possible, Zürcher establishes that the beneficiary group must be internally coherent and not fractionalized, making the process particularly difficult in states already experiencing conflict. [31] When applied to Sri Lanka, the sheer amount of international organizations that offered them aid tended to see themselves as apolitical - And without any expertise on the political delicacy of population relocation in multi- ethnic areas, it became easy for certain groups to receive more resources. [32]

AID'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO CONFLICT: HIGH POSSIBILITY OF PREDATION

The above description details the importance of considering existing cleavages when allocating foreign resources in order to maximize its effectiveness. However, there are also countless cases of resource distribution being obviously and purposefully skewed to benefit specific groups. The addition of resources to an ongoing conflict often means that distributive decisions are made by conflict actors, creating motivation for the misuse of these funds. This often works to either bring together conflicting groups that are unable

63

to peacefully interact or blatantly favour certain groups over others.[33] With those in power having stakes in the ongoing conflict, it further becomes difficult to exclude militia groups from being direct beneficiaries.[34] Through the process of predation, insurgents also have the ability to co-opt resources, and armed groups often gain access to humanitarian aid that must be transported through weakly monitored territories. So any potential benefits can be undermined by these groups, who are highly motivated to sabotage projects.[35] In humanitarian emergency situations, warlords are often even bought off to allow the transport of goods to their own people - this can be through money, but also often involves weapons. As these resources go to those involved in the conflict, it reinforces their power and can work to feed ongoing conflicts.[36] Because of these relationships, continued aid can facilitate coercion and work to cause more damage in the long run. This is further demonstrated in the empirical correlations between economic aid and an increased likelihood of state killings and government repression.[37]

AID'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO CONFLICT: MISUSE IN SRI LANKA

In Sri Lanka's post-tsunami reconstruction efforts, the Hambantotas, who happened to be the electoral constituency of the country's Prime Minister, received extra attention and support.[38] Political Scientist Kyosuke Kikuta's 2019 study, which examined the post-disaster reconstruction process across the country, found further discrepancies in the aid's allocation. He discusses the fact that the North and Northwest provinces of Sri Lanka received $13 million from the government, which led to the number of constructed houses in the region increasing 1.5

times by 2006. Meanwhile, the government gave their strongholds, largely in the Eastern and Southern provinces, $46 million in aid, with their number of constructive houses tripling in the same timeline.[39]

However, this was not the first example of the country's political ethnic clientelist system having such an effect on aid allocation - the first occurrence can be seen beginning in 1977, in an example that is often referenced when discussing the original onset of their long civil war. With the Sinhalese in control of the government at the time, they also had the purview of the allocation of foreign resources at the time. Much of this money went towards the Accelerated Mahaweli Project, which was designed to bring irrigation and power to dry parts of the nation. This accelerated pre-existing tensions as the project was designed to disadvantage the Tamil population, with a planned canal to a Tamil area being cancelled at one point.[40] From 1977 to 1982,

> **Tamil-populated areas became entirely excluded from foreign aid support, and discontentment along ethnic lines grew to a higher rate than ever before.**

When civil war broke out in 1983, many scholars attributed this largely to political competition and the ways in which it disadvantaged the Tamil population. The quick influx of resources worked to reinforce patronage linkages and corruption along ethnic lines, motivating rent-seeking among advantaged politicians.[41]

DETRIMENTAL AID SHOCKS

A final crucial dynamic in the relationship between foreign aid and the outbreak of conflict

results from the tendency of this resource distribution to be so volatile. Many arguments regarding the impacts of aid flows assume that it is steady and predictable. However, aid revenues serve as the most significant source of external fluctuations for many recipient states.[42] These so-called 'aid shocks' disrupt the existing power structures and dynamics of a country, which can weaken governing capacity, as well as encourage insurgents to challenge their governments for control. Fluctuations create rapid changes in bargaining power for the involved factions. This further impacts the state's ability to commit to agreements that preserve and encourage peace, as well as contributing to economic volatility, and overall instability.[43] Nielsen points to the case of Mali in articulating this dynamic, a country that went through severe periods of drought and desertification throughout the 1970s and 80s. This resulted in a government that was heavily dependent on the foreign aid they were receiving, which proved detrimental when these aid flows were suddenly reduced in 1989, leaving weak governmental institutions. With the bureaucracy no longer able to provide the same level of support to its citizens, Tuareg fighters in the North African Sahel were able to launch a rebellion against the government of Mali, leading to five years of fighting.[44]

OPPOSING VIEWS

Many of the key arguments in support of foreign aid are reliant on specific cases that illustrate its success - and they do exist. Following the Korean War, South Korea was in dire need of support in order to preserve its political stability and military capacity. Through the support of foreign aid, largely from the United States, it was able to rebuild its critical infrastructure and economy, as well as pump money into its defence sector.[45] This is just one example among many in which humanitarian and economic support for development from foreign countries was able to restabilize a country in need.

> **However, the key reason for this success lies in the support and accountability of the pre-existing government institutions, which happened to be compatible with the type of aid it received.**

In this case, the specific needs of the recipient were met, further allowing for success. However, this was only able to work because the interests of the donor state - in this case, the United States - aligned well with South Korea's needs. This is a common feature in cases often cited to demonstrate the benefits of foreign humanitarian aid. Though these benefits do exist and there are many cases to prove them, almost all contain many of the features described by Zürcher in his discussion of the factors necessary to maximize aid success. This works to demonstrate that though foreign aid comes with a high potential for providing development to its recipients, it only becomes likely when specific prerequisites are there to support it.

CONCLUSION

This paper has provided an in-depth examination of the clear link between foreign aid, for development and humanitarian purposes, and its contribution to ongoing violence and instability. These arguments were illustrated in discussions of Sri Lanka's relationship with foreign aid, a useful case because the country has received such a large amount of aid over a prolonged period of time, and with various different goals in mind. It began by explaining the inherent contradictions that lie in the aid industry

and its failure to prioritize the needs of individual recipients over the interests of donors, causing it to often work against its own self- described purposes. Through a variety of mechanisms, influxes of foreign aid can decrease the accountability of government institutions, while increasing the value of political control over the state. In addition, its high potential for the unequal distribution and even blatant misuse, along with the volatility of the industry, all work to further the pre-existing issues it was meant to solve. The paper then provided an outline of key arguments that support the use of foreign aid in order to further demonstrate its potential for violence.

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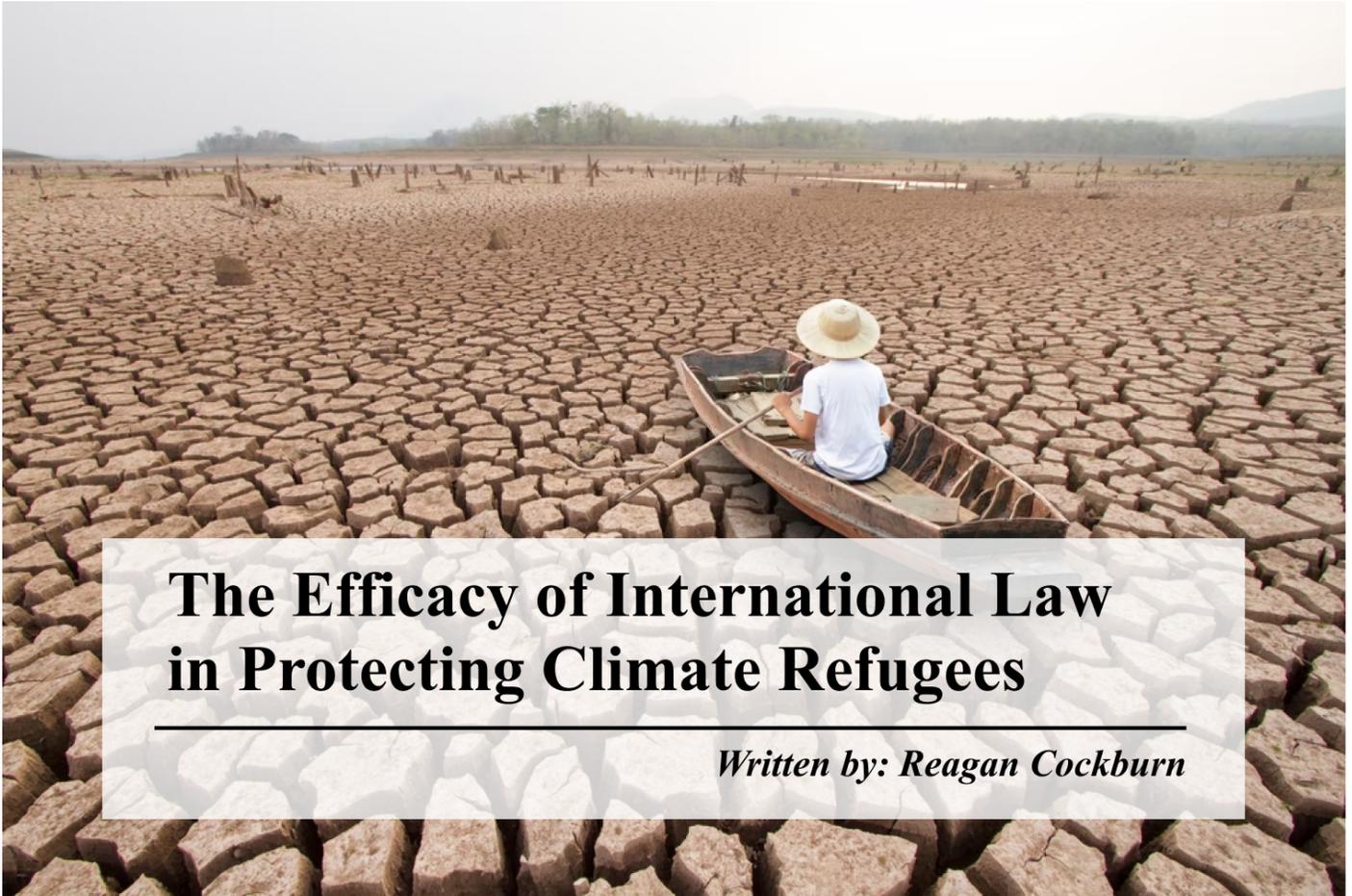
The Efficacy of International Law in Protecting Climate Refugees

Written by: Reagan Cockburn

Abstract

While the international community is well aware of climate change's catastrophic consequences, proposed state-centric solutions neglect a crucial aspect - the inevitable climate change-induced refugee crisis. While the strife of climate refugees deserves international recognition, a gap in the legal system currently renders them unable to seek legal protections. This paper will provide a critical analysis of the efficacy of international law in dealing with climate refugees. It will first explore international refugee law, revealing how its existing mechanisms do not recognize the refugee status of those displaced by climate change. Turning to international human rights, it is evident that this regime fails to provide a right for climate refugees to enter and reside in another state. Finally, by analyzing the international environmental law regime, it is contended that its foundational principles and financial mechanisms may provide a favourable route for climate refugees to seek international legal protections.

Key words: Climate Change, International Law, Refugees, and International Environmental Law

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1980s, it has been evident that the international community is well informed on climate change and its disastrous consequences. Many of the current climate negotiations and resulting plans focus primarily on two strategies – reducing the state's production of atmospheric greenhouse gases or discovering new ways of acclimating to changing environmental conditions, especially within vulnerable populations. However, these inherently state-centric solutions disregard a much more pressing, inter-state dilemma: the inevitable and large-scale climate change-induced refugee crisis.[1] The damaging by-products of climate change – the rise in ocean temperatures, sea levels, natural disasters, droughts, undrinkable water conditions, etc. – are estimated to render the homes of two billion individuals untenable by 2100.[2] The most at-risk states – the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) – are already experiencing climate refugee crises. In the Pacific alone, the Carteret Islands in Papua New Guinea evacuated their citizens, 6 of the inhabited Solomon Islands have lost anywhere from twenty to over sixty per cent of their land, and the islands of Kiribati and Tuvalu are expected to be inhospitable by 2050. [3] Even though combating climate change necessitates recognizing and providing protection for climate refugees, there presently exists nothing of a legally binding nature. There is a noticeable gap in the legal system that leaves climate refugees with no right to leave their home state and enter another. Additionally, there are no financial instruments to alleviate the associated price of caring for climate refugees, and no human rights mechanisms to protect their sociocultural status.[4]

In this paper, I will be exploring the efficacy of currently existing bodies of international law in addressing the climate refugee crisis. I will begin by considering the international refugee law regime, revealing how its existing structure does not recognize the refugee status – and the associated protections this status allows - of those displaced by climate change. I will then examine the human rights regime, arguing that – notwithstanding their universal nature – these laws do not provide an assured right for climate refugees to enter and reside in another state. Contrary to refugee and human rights law, by examining the environmental law regime, I will contend that its foundational principles and its already established financial mechanisms render it a more beneficial route for climate refugees to seek out legally binding protections in the international system.

THE REFUGEE LAW REGIME

Stemming from the atrocities of the Second World War, the displacement of millions of individuals from their countries of origin served as the impetus for modern international refugee law. By 1951, the UN had created both an Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR) and the *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (The Refugee Convention)*.[5] *The Refugee Convention* is significant in that it sets out a universal definition of refugees – clearly delineating four conditional requirements for granting refugee status. An individual must be:

(1)[…] outside their country of origin; (2) […] unable or unwilling to seek or take advantage of the protection of that country, or to return there; (3) such inability or unwillingness is attributable to a well-founded fear of being persecuted; and (4) the persecution feared is based on reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion. [6]

Additionally, Article 33 of the Refugee Convention codifies an existing principle of

customary international law – non-refoulement – to the specific context of refugees, stating that: "No Contracting State shall expel or return (refouler) a refugee […] to the frontier of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular group or political opinion."[7] Based on both the conditional requirements for refugee status and the application of non-refoulement to state obligations towards refugees, it is argued that the international refugee law regime is presently an inefficacious mechanism for addressing and protecting climate refugees. Evidence suggests that they do not satisfy the definition of a refugee. As such, states are not obligated to uphold the principle of non-refoulement in their relations with climate refugees. [8]

The term "persecution" in the UNCHR definition of a refugee is a seemingly minor – but significant contributor to the inefficacy of international refugee law in protecting climate refugees. This term is not defined in the Convention. However, it has come to be accepted through state use as "the sustained or systematic violation of basic human rights demonstrative of a failure of state protection".[9] Based on this definition, it is evident that – although climate refugees are demonstrably facing distress as a result of climate-induced displacement – their situation is unwarranted to be classified as persecution. It is unclear whether climate change is constitutive of a violation of human rights via the irresponsibility of the home state of the individual seeking refuge.[10] Furthermore, even in a hypothetical case wherein an individual's home state is directly responsible for causing their climate-induced migration, claiming refugee status per the Refugee Convention alone is insufficient. Their 'persecution' does not comply with the Convention's five conditional

motivations for persecution – that is, religion, race, nationality, membership in a group, or political opinion.[11]

Notwithstanding the inapplicability of persecution as a ground for protection for climate refugees, the application of non-refoulement to international refugee law presents another limitation in its efficacy. As a principle of customary international law, non-refoulement is intended as a significant limitation to sovereignty via exceptions to border control; a state cannot forcibly return an individual to a country where they would be severely mistreated.[12] At first glance, non-refoulement appears beneficial to climate refugees; it is not limited to solely those granted refugee status – as those with a 'prima facie claim for refugee status' are also included - i.e., the granting of refugee status based on a recognition by the State of the objective conditions giving rise to their exit. [13] However, by codifying it under Article 33 of the Convention, the tentative claims for refugee status are still conditional upon the five grounds – thus rendering it inapplicable in the case of those seeking protections for climate-based concerns. [14] Therefore, the international refugee law regime, by itself, is inefficacious in handling the rights of climate refugees. It neither provides formal recognition of the refugee status of climate refugees nor does it extend them the protections offered by the customary principle of non-refoulement.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

Since the narrowed scope of application offered by the international refugee law regime prevents climate refugees from acquiring adequate protections, one may purport that the universal nature of international human rights law renders it a more efficient route.[15] It is seemingly

intrinsic to consider the impacts of climate change as constituting a threat to human rights. Per the UDHR, involuntary displacement as a result of climate change can subvert the right to life, liberty and security; movement within the state's borders, and; the right to an adequate standard of living, among others.[16] In the case of individuals living in SIDS, complete submergence of land due to coastal erosion threatens their rights to nationality and self-determination, presenting the risk of arbitrary statelessness.[17] Despite the evident violations, the structure of the international human rights regime continues to be inefficacious in addressing climate refugees. It presently offers no legal protections once they leave their home state, nor does it recognize the threat of climate change as impending enough to warrant subverting the territorial sovereignty of states.[18]

The individualism ingrained in the international human rights regime is ill-suited to establishing legitimate claims to legal protection for climate refugees. Human rights law commits states to protect the rights of individuals. On the surface, this appears favourable; the UDHR creates a positive obligation for states to take actions to allow for the attainment of rights – which would imply granting admission of those displaced by climate change residence in safer territories. In practice, however, the UDHR produces negative obligations; states must withhold action that would prevent an individual from fulfilling their rights.[19] As such, the only states responsible for rectifying the harms of climate-induced migration are the perpetrators of those harms. In the case of climate change, however, ascribing individual blame is nonviable, as the effects are attributable to the polluting actions of many sovereign states – both contemporary and historical.[20] Therefore, it is evident that states' authority stands in conflict with human rights, such that a

climate refugee does not fall within the scope of exceptions to territorial sovereignty and border control.

As established over decades of state application, there is also an inherent time component involved in determining the validity of international human rights violations claims. As established by the UN Human Rights Committee (UNCHR), for a claim to be accepted, either the state must negatively impact an individual's exercise of the given right, or the threat must be impending.[21] Similarly, pertaining to environmental issues, it is found that the alleged harm must – on a balance of probabilities – be direct in its effect to constitute a genuine violation.[22] Applied to climate refugees, it is such that

> **apart from natural disasters, the threat of climate change is neither impending nor direct. While the potential adverse effects are substantial, they take an indeterminable amount of time to materialize.**

Consequently, difficulties arise in determining causality; it is uncertain whether specific environmental damages are instrumental in inducing an individual case of climate-based migration or if there are other under-examined factors.[23]

ALTERNATIVE MECHANISMS: THE INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW REGIME

As made evident, the individualism inherent to international refugee and human rights law presents a severe detriment to providing legal

protections for climate refugees. The legal gap persists in these regimes despite the State-centrism remains a significant inhibitor to adapting pre-existing bodies of law created decades before the threat of climate change displacement became a measurable reality.[24] Barring serious international reform, it is unlikely that either regime – taken separately – can be used in the present to justify a legal entitlement to refugee status or human rights protections based on gradual climate destruction with no single identifiable state offender.[25] However, that is not to say alternative means do not exist. The flexibility inherent in creating and sustaining climate change laws, a constantly changing phenomenon, may render international environmental law a favourable route for climate refugees to seek protection.[26]

One of the benefits of the international environmental law regime is the generalizability of its approach to environmental rights. One could reasonably argue that having international legal mechanisms with broad-based applicability is disadvantageous, as unspecified principles may impede tackling particular issue areas. However, in the case of those displaced by climate change, where there presently exists no specific support mechanism, embedding their entitlement to protection under the context of broader climate change principles presents as an efficacious alternative.[27] These guiding principles are written into the UNFCCC, but the most significant one is the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Article 3 of the UNFCCC codifies the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, which purports that – based on equity – adapting to and mitigating climate change is a global effort. However, developed nations have a greater responsibility than developing nations to provide financial and other resources.[28]

Applied to the case of climate refugees, this principle evades the notion of individual state responsibility inherent in the non-recognition of their rights in international refugee and human rights law. Through the notion of 'common responsibilities', it can be argued that all states have a responsibility to protect those displaced by climate change, irrespective of any direct causal link between the state perpetrator and the individual seeking refuge. Migration to safer territories is an inevitable result of a state becoming inhospitable due to environmental destruction, and it is thus the international community's duty to adapt to these changes.[29] The idea of 'differentiated responsibilities' further overcomes the establishment of direct causality for legitimating claims to protections for climate refugees. Rather than basing the responsibility to redress the harms of climate migration on a defined state perpetrator, it contends that obligation lies in those most willing and able to provide protections – i.e., developed nations.[30] When discussing the redress of harm for climate refugees through the mechanisms of international law, a fundamental and contentiously debated question is: how will resources for the state accepting climate refugees be provided, and who is responsible for their provision? Unlike international human rights and refugee law, the environmental law regime presents a substantial advantage in this area due to its breadth of already established methods and bodies of distribution.[31] Under the scope of the UNFCCC, the Warsaw International Mechanisms for Loss and Damage Associated with Climate Change Impacts is one of the efficacious financial mechanisms (WIM).[32] Created at the 19th Conference of the Parties (COP 19), the primary undertaking of the WIM is to "enhance action […] including finance […] to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change".[33] This applies to the case of

73

climate refugees, as their displacement can be considered an 'adverse effect' – warranting the allocation of sufficient resources. As a global financial instrument, funding climate refugees through the WIM rectifies the requirement of individual state responsibility for correcting harms.[34]

CONCLUSION

In this paper, I explored the efficacy of various international law regimes in addressing the issue of climate refugees. Through an analysis of international refugee law, it is evident that the 1951 Refugee Convention does not allow for individuals displaced by climate change to be given refugee status; climate change does not fall under the recognized definition of 'persecution', and the codification of the norm of non-refoulement in Article 33 places the territorial sovereignty of the state over the rights of climate refugees. Despite its universality, the state-centrism and requirement of the imminence of a direct threat in the international human rights regime are equally inefficient in protecting climate refugees. Alternatively, through an analysis of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the financial capacities of the WIM - it is found that the adaptability of the environmental law regime to changing climate circumstances renders it more efficacious in handling climate refugees. It revises the requirement of individual responsibility for environmental harms and places the protection of climate refugees under a broader strategy of climate adaptation and mitigation. The implications of these findings are significant. While the mechanisms traditionally thought of as appropriate avenues for acquiring legal protections have apparent gaps in efficacy, a newer body of law that is seemingly unrelated to the granting of refugee status or the protection of

human rights may be the new course of action as climate change produces more migration in future decades.

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The White Lotus: A Satirical Criticism for the Current Status of Decolonization in the International Order

Written by: Cecilia Cai

Abstract

The White Lotus is a satirical drama series that tells a theatrical story of wealthy vacationers and their interactions with their hotel staff at the White Lotus Resort. Unlike most drama series, The White Lotus lacks a distinct plotline in a sequence. The six episodes in the first season are a display of various fragments of characters' psychological states. The characters all have names in the show, but as the show progresses, their names become insignificant. Each character represents a group of people behind them, a certain race, a certain type. From this perspective, The White Lotus aims to display a universally common mental state of humanity under the highly developed social context – diffusion, bewilderedness, and liberation. The series offers sharp commentary on the complexity of privilege, power, and the American dream; set against the idyllic backdrop of the picturesque island. The White Lotus paints a vivid image of how the West avoids the consequences of their exploitative actions on all racial, economic, and cultural levels. This view highlights the colonized peoples' industrious yet futile attempt to establish a new order in society due to the path dependency of the international order.

Key words: *The White Lotus,* Decolonization, the 'West,' and International Order

INTRODUCTION

The White Lotus , written and directed by Mike White, is an American satirical comedy-drama television series produced by HBO. The show is a story that presents a week-long vacation of guests on a premium hotel resort in Hawaii.[1] The miniseries shows an encyclopedia of human relations in an American capitalist society and explores powerful issues like class conflict and identity politics. The writers also fill the show with discussions of racial prejudice and privileges of the rich, revealing the complex attitudes toward America's centuries-long colonial journey. *The White Lotus* paints a vivid image of how the West avoids consequences of their exploitative actions on all racial, economic, and cultural levels. This view highlights the colonized peoples' industrious yet futile attempt to establish a new order in society due to the path dependency of the international order.

THE STORY UNFOLDS

The story of *The White Lotus* unfolds to focus on three distinctive families. The family of Nicole, a strong She-EO mother, her husband Mark, their rebellious daughter Olivia, and geeky son Quinn. They represent the "new money" of the United States. As well, there is Shane, and his new bride Rachel. Shane comes from an old money family, with his mother being a philanthropist. Shane's mother's act of socializing indicates that they had already completed their initial capital accumulation and are relying on their prestige to maintain their wealth and social status. The third character unit comprises Tanya, a rich, neurotic widow who has just suffered the loss of her mother. Lastly, the show draws attention to the hotel manager, Armond, who is struggling with sobriety issues.

THE COLONIZERS AND THE COLONIZED

In the racially diverse Hawaii, one can clearly see the two-tiered nation, with the white dominions enjoying self-governance and independence, while the severely oppressed non-white peoples rely on white administrators. The White Lotus reveals a microcosm of the United States, founded through the ruthless invasion of the homes of Indigenous Indians by white civilization. The series portrays Hawaii's long history as a victim of colonial exploitation. Although Hawaii has become a vacation destination for upper-class, rich tourists, the economic rewards from tourism do not benefit native Hawaiians correspondingly. Native Hawaiians are hired at low wages to serve as waiters and put on dinner shows filled with an ethnic spin. The story arranges a theft, where Paula conspired with her two-day love interest Kai, a member of the Native Hawaiian staff, to steal a $75,000 bracelet to generate the means to hire a lawyer and sue the hotel for seizing the Natives' land.[2] While Kai's action was wrong, upon further analysis, it becomes clear that he is only retaliating against the resource theft that white colonizers have been committing against his people. The scene compels the audience to reflect on whether Kai's theft is childish revenge or an awakening of identity, and whether there is a moral justification to it. The idea of whether Kai's behaviour was righteous in attempting to rectify what was stolen relates back to the universal ethics of property.[3] The originality of decolonization in this plot unit critiques the myth of the grand Western narrative of modernity, revealing its role in the five centuries of colonial domination.[4] The behaviour that was rationalized by the white colonizers centuries ago is seen as a crime committed by the Native

Hawaiians today. The irony in the story demonstrates that Native Hawaiian employees like Kai must respect the private property of the clients because their status grants them the ability to safeguard their properties. However, as the white dominions walk away unharmed for taking the Natives' land, Kai suffers a penalty by trying to take back what was his. The conflict does not explore whether Kai's action of stealing can be justified, nor provides a transcendent imagination of possession as territory, which contradicts the ethical assumption of equality in property rights. Even though the show does not provide an answer to this, one can see that the dichotomous relationship between the West and the Native Hawaiians still manifests itself as the colonizer and the colonized. People in formerly colonized regions still need to shed their cultural and territorial legacy of colonial domination.

INTER-CLASS DIALOGUES THROUGH CLASS DICHOTOMY

The various narrative lines in the series follow the developmental framework of class exploitation through reference to the economic statues of each character. For example, Belinda, the masseuse who worked at the resort, believed that Tanya was going to invest in her entrepreneurial venture. Instead, Tanya withdrew the aid because she decided that " …the last thing I need in my life is another transactional relationship. It's not healthy for me."[5] Tanya's wavering attitude and carelessness crushed Belinda's last hope to detach herself from her life at the bottom. Money has become a universal tool for inter-class dialogue and confrontation. For the upper class, it is vital, but also irrelevant because of its excess, and they do not see any problem with manipulating others with money. The scene resembles the West in the way that they seemingly want to disassociate with the

imperialist narrative but fail to do so, because they do not understand what it is like to be a subaltern. The show's representation of class dichotomy is very thought-provoking. The affluent class could effortlessly return to their lives after the troubles they caused, leaving behind a group of subalterns who are either dead, confused or sentenced. In the last episode, Nicole also sharply points out that,

> **"…most of the social activists, they don't want to dismantle the systems of economic exploitation, not the ones that benefit them… they just want a better seat at the table of tyranny."[6]**

Under the social construct presented in *The White Lotus*, the binary characterization of the West and the non-West, as well as the rich and the poor, represent a way of dividing the world according to imperial assumptions.[7] These divisions not only exclude all groups, but also create a rationale for the West to support self-interested power structures. The plot details bury a second layer of discourse in the way that the rich use various ideological rhetoric to brand themselves in a politically correct environment. However, the rich have been able to walk away after causing trouble, leaving those at the bottom, who have been unable to "speak up" since the beginning, to suffer a price they should not have to pay.

CULTURAL EXPLOITATION - THE INSIDERS AND THE "OTHER"

Moreover, in *The White Lotus*, Mike White explores the cultural exploitation through the character traits and their dialogues. Olivia comes from a wealthy, middle-class white family, and brings her minority best friend, Paula, on vacation

with her family. *The White Lotus* analyzes the characters' political consciousness and cultural identity in great minutiae.

As humanities majors at top American universities, Olivia and Paula are familiar with post-colonial theory and the concept of the "Other", but they are not equal to "the Other". The jealous look they give to Rachel's appearance also shows that the two of them, who are familiar with all kinds of capitalist critical theories, are in fact still subordinate to the materialistic ideology of capitalism in real life. The two girls' friendship is a mutually beneficial relationship. Olivia needs a friend of colour like Paula to show her progressive attitude of respecting the underprivileged, while Paula needs a rich friend like Olivia to take her to experience various material pleasures. Another interesting detail in the show is when Olivia reads Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth by the pool.*[8] This is the masterpiece of Fanon's experience in the front line of the anti-colonial struggle in Algeria. In the book, although not explicitly, Fanon suggests that only by struggling, only by destroying as many of "them" (the colonized) as possible, can "our" (the colonized) voices be heard. In the face of Fannon's poignant and radical idea of struggle, Olivia's subversive act of reading becomes window dressing.

In parallel to Olivia's reading about colonial criticism, Paula reads Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. Paula symbolizes the intellectual grassroots of American society – social justice warriors that speak against all oppression. Paula also represents the contradiction that prevails in society. This is evidenced when Olivia confronts Paula in the season finale, "And you think you're like this rebel, but in the end… this is your tribe…"[9] As a coloured person who lives in a primarily white community, Paula is automatically living under many privileges, albeit that she does not recognize them. This scene conveys that, despite the strides academia has made in decolonization, most social science research remains confined to Western structures of knowledge that understand the world according to the logic of colonialism, capitalism, and white supremacism, which severely undermines the legitimacy of Native peoples' groups' ways of being and knowing.[10]

THE GRAND IDEOLOGICAL DIVIDE

The White Lotus resort symbolizes the disparity of class status on the one hand, and the ideological divide on the other. The topics that the rich seem to be passionate about, like gender and racial affirmative action, and social justice, have become disconnected in a way that no one really cares about. In *On Decoloniality*, Walsh points out that decoloniality is universal and permeates all aspects of people's lives and practices. National liberation movements, feminist movements, struggles in races, urban spaces, and education are all manifestations of decolonization movements in social practice.[11] *The White Lotus* reveals the details of the structures of cultural domination and recognizes how a personal discourse, purporting to be purely well-intentioned, provides the sensual material for imperial hegemonic colonialism.

THE DELIVERY OF MESSAGES IN MEDIA

The medium of *The White Lotus* as a six-episode miniseries perfectly expresses the realistic critique and the essential philosophical thinking that the writing team wants to display. Each main character in the series represents a group of people with distinct profiles, a certain race, class, and type. The writers and cast

successfully conveyed the profound messages in this suspenseful, absurd comedy through the accumulation of events and narrative threads. The White Lotus contains a series of bold disclosures of social problems through trivial but universal family problems and emotional conflicts, and ends with a grand "philosophical" reflection, which is not only radical in content, but also unique in narrative style. The show unveils the dark reality through dramatic expressions, while exploring life through the social psychology of Americans in the framework of colonialism, class conflicts, and racial problems. The ending of the show brings a pessimistic undertone with Armond's death and the maintenance of the status quo, both by the ones causing it and the ones too fatigued to fight it. In the finale, audiences can see another group of staff members lined up to welcome the new batch of rich guests, eager to cater to their every request. This conveys the message that the "colonized", in every aspect, are at the bottom of the service ladder, and are merely expendable.

CONCLUSION

In *The White Lotus*, Mike White constructed a decentralized narrative for the series, prompting the audience to rethink colonialism in a more radical light. This miniseries is not "serviceable" to the audience in any form or content; it is full of authenticity. It outlines the hypocrisy of capitalism, the destruction of culture, the occupation of the means of production, and the overconsumption of nature. It is a story about the power to shape stereotypical misinterpretations and existing social norms to show the searing pain that colonial history still brings to the present.

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The Taliban: From State-Sponsorship to Statecraft

Written by: Jet Li

Abstract

The comeback of the Taliban regime in 2021 largely results from the inability of states to eliminate the sources of funding and support that sustains terrorism. The reasons for why terrorism emerges and develops is better explained through contexts of state influence that create the environments to allow terrorism to become dominant in the first place. Using a case study of the Afghan Taliban, this paper argues states are the main contributors to terrorism by forfeiting security and economic needs to achieve political goals through weaponized ideology and manipulation of social bonds. The exploitable conditions allow terrorist groups to appeal to underserved populations. The origins of the Taliban are traced from state-sponsored influence during the Soviet-Afghan War and subsequent Afghan Civil Wars. The deliberate manipulation of politically salient social dynamics combined with poor economic infrastructure are identified causal factors of terrorism. The paper also challenges the view that terrorism is sustained through oppression and brutality, citing the evolution of Taliban rule where legitimacy and popularity can instead be derived from good governance and financial prosperity.

Key words: Taliban, Terrorism, State Terrorism, War in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Operation Cyclone

INTRODUCTION

Fueled by an economy worth trillions of dollars, Islamic terrorism has survived against global opposition for decades. Extremist interpretations of Islam have had tremendous reach and sympathy in nations with religious grievances, propagating radical ideology among thousands of vulnerable people. Ideology alone does not sustain terrorism. The groups often possess extensive resources and funding far greater than some governments. However, while the inability to eliminate these assets makes resolutions virtually impossible, it is not the reason why terrorism emerges and develops. There are contexts of state influence creating the environments that allow terrorist groups to become dominant in the first place. This extends beyond state sponsorship of terrorism, to manufacturing artificial grievances by states to manipulate the population for political goals.

Using a case study of the Afghan Taliban, this paper argues states are the main contributors to terrorism by forfeiting security and economic needs to achieve political goals through weaponized ideology and manipulation of social bonds. The exploitable conditions allow terrorist groups to appeal to underserved populations. Background information on the Soviet-Afghan War and subsequent Afghan Civil Wars explains the state-sponsored origins of the Taliban movement from US and Pakistani influence. The manipulation of politically salient social dynamics by Pakistan and poor economic infrastructure in Afghanistan are identified as causal to extremism through solidarity and desperation. In addition, the evolution of Taliban rule counters the view that terrorism can be sustained through oppression, where legitimacy and popularity can instead be derived from financial prosperity and better governance than the state. The term "Taliban" is not monolithic and is differentiated into two similar, but mostly separate movements: the Afghan Taliban which is exclusive to Afghanistan, and the other group, the Tehrik-i-Taliban (TTP), which operates within Pakistan. This paper specifically focuses on the Afghan Taliban and also covers its constituent regional authorities as one.

BACKGROUND: FROM THE SOVIET-AFGHAN WAR TO THE TALIBAN

The beginning of the Afghan Taliban extends from the context and characters of the Soviet-Afghan War. Afghanistan reformed under Soviet influence in 1978, and the new communist government began a persecution campaign against dissidents in the devoutly religious population. The Islamic majority mobilized as the mujahideen and launched an armed rebellion, prompting the Soviets to invade in 1979 and take over the defunct government. Afghanistan was established as a puppet state, and consequently began the Soviet-Afghan War between the communists and the mujahideen. The United States, seizing the opportunity to entrap the Soviets in a debilitatingly long and costly war, initiated Operation Cyclone: the covert supply of billions of dollars in funding, equipment, and training to the mujahideen.[1] For US involvement to remain plausibly deniable, funding was entirely delegated to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency (ISI) for distribution, ensuring no direct interactions between the US and the mujahideen.[2]

Pakistan, however, had also implanted their own surrogate mujahideen actors into Afghanistan to advance ulterior interests, and most of the funding was instead funneled to these groups.[3] The predominant agent of these forces, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, was an Afghan national

exiled to Pakistan years before, later becoming politically aligned with the ISI and tasked with capturing Kabul for Pakistan.[4] The surplus of US funding prolonged the conflict for a decade, to what the Soviets initially intended as a quick and easy annexation.[5] The Afghan government was significantly weakened when the Soviets finally withdrew in 1989, and the mujahideen armies toppled the communist regime in 1992. The instability among the mujahideen armies with Hekmatyar had led to frequent, often deliberate infighting and collateral damage. Tensions culminated in 1992 when Hekmatyar refused to form a coalition government with the other leaders and attempted to capture Kabul with the ISI, immediately commencing the Second Afghan Civil War.[6] Hekmatyar managed to maintain some territorial control in Afghanistan over the years, but the inability to solidify authority caused the ISI to become increasingly disillusioned.[7] Support for Hekmatyar eventually ceased, and the ISI had transitioned their focus completely towards their newest project, a militant group called the Taliban (the "students"), which was unleashed in Afghanistan in 1995.[8]

The primary goals of the Taliban were the cleansing of any and all foreign government influence from Afghanistan, dismantling the remnants of Soviet rule, and the return to an Islamic Emirate order.[9] From the tutelage of the ISI, Taliban forces were vastly superior in organization and firepower. They easily overwhelmed the mujahideen, capturing Kabul and significant territory within a year. By 2001, the Taliban controlled nearly all of Afghanistan, and the remaining mujahideen resistance was confined to a few isolated areas.[10]

Although the Taliban's religious and nationalist ambitions were exclusive to Afghanistan, the

group had also built an extensive international network of followers and allies. Most notable among them were Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda who were granted sanctuary in Taliban territory after being exiled by the Saudi Arabian monarchy.[11] After the 9/11 attacks, the refusal of the Taliban to surrender bin Laden and al-Qaeda led to the 2001 US invasion.[12] The US had also demanded that Pakistan terminate relations with the Taliban and assist the campaign, which they mostly complied with in return for financial aid and the lifting of economic sanctions imposed after the Soviet-Afghan War. [13] Within a year, the US Coalition had liberated most of Afghanistan, but fragmented and strategically unimportant territories under Taliban control still sparsely existed. Following the withdrawal of Western forces after the assassination of bin Laden in 2011, the Taliban started to recover and resumed their campaign. Small rural villages and towns were steadily annexed, and new followers were recruited from neighbouring countries. In 2021, the revitalized Taliban launched a full offensive and once again captured Afghanistan, marking the second establishment of the Islamic Emirate.

STATE INFLUENCES ON TERRORISM: WEAPONIZED IDEOLOGY

Ideological weaponization of Islamic fundamentalism is invaluable in achieving political goals across Afghanistan. The US had first exploited jihad sentiment with the billions in funding they granted to the mujahideen to use against the Soviets, leading to the most successful mobilization of Muslims in history.[14] Pakistan had further expanded on the foundation by manipulating ideological and ethnic dynamics to create the Taliban movement. Pakistani geopolitical interests in Afghanistan with the Taliban are grounded in the long-standing

hostilities with neighbouring India since the British Empire Partition in 1947.[15]

An alliance with, or control over an Afghanistan regime is strategically and politically valuable.

It removes the potential for India to establish military relations on the flank of Pakistan, strengthening the Western border.[16] In the case of a war with India, Afghanistan can be utilized by the Pakistani military to recover forces to launch counterattacks.[17] Furthermore, Islamic religious-nationalist movements among tense ethnic lines in Afghanistan would inevitably reverberate across Pakistan, causing conflicts that India could exploit.[18]

Taliban insurgents were the children of the Soviet-Afghan War that had spent their lives inside refugee camps in Pakistan.[19] They were heavily indoctrinated in radical Islam by war experience and traditional fundamentalist schooling financed by Pakistan.[20] The war provided a constant supply of vengeful youth with major grievances to be instilled with the necessity of jihadism as the only course of action for the destruction caused to their homes.[21] Pakistan further nurtured this movement with massive investments from its own military, even drafting its own citizens as "volunteers" to supplement the Taliban's manpower.[22] Pakistan's propagation of Islamic fundamentalism with the Taliban promoted national stability through religious unification. Although most of the early Taliban were Pashtuns, the ethnic majority primarily concentrated around the Afghanistan-Pakistan border; nearly a third were non-Afghans and many other shared ethnicities.[23] To avoid internal ethnic conflicts, Pakistan's

comprehensive Islamization program of the military, bureaucracy, and educational system had strategically transformed the Taliban into religious nationalists that transcended social and ethnic boundaries.[24] This salient bond was critical to encouraging recruitment, maintaining cohesion within the ranks, and evoking solidarity among the Islamic communities across the Afghan border.[25] This professional courtesy, however, did not extend to the remaining mujahideen who were collectively treated as foreign opposition.

The spread of the religious-nationalist sentiment during the US invasion of Afghanistan expanded and legitimized the ideological foundation of the Taliban.

The collateral damage inflicted on civilians and innocents, especially the result of the indiscriminate use of contemporary drone warfare, further motivates extremist mobilization.[26] Every unintended casualty caught in the crossfire catalyzes the "Talibanization" of the locals, where a frustrated and grieving individual seeking to avenge the killing of his family members is far more susceptible to recruitment.[27] Furthermore, the conquest to purify Afghanistan of foreign intruders seemingly resonated the most with jobless, desolate young men concentrated in rural tribal areas where the absence of critical government infrastructure and a political culture of rampant corruption creates desperation — the perfect environment for extremism to grow.[28] When large contingents of militant recruiters arrive, with each personally offering warm promises and the opportunity to fulfill a greater purpose, it is an easy choice against a government that is wilfully neglectful.

Education has been frequently quoted as the only alternative solution to prevent extremist ideology in rural areas.[29] However, the problem is that community teachers who reside in these isolated areas have always tended to be traditionally conservative, and have rejected the open and liberalized education of urban institutions, like universities and international commissions.[30] In addition, the lack of proper socio-economic infrastructure would prevent any meaningful development.

TALIBAN LEGITIMACY: FINANCIAL PROSPERITY AND LOCAL POPULARITY

The devastated condition of Afghanistan, virtually absent of any central authority, was greatly in the service of the Taliban's initial appeal in 1996. The billions of dollars in US funding proxied through Pakistan were decentralized and unsupervised, which leaked excessively into the environment.[31] The ease of access to the vast military surplus drastically lowered prices to the benefit of criminal elements, organized crime, and other militants, who soon were all supplied with an arsenal of US-funded munitions.[32] The weapons proliferation, combined with the additional billions granted directly at disposal of the Pakistani military, led to the "Kalashinovization" of Afghanistan (named after the pervasive Russian automatic Kalashnikov rifles).[33]

> **The Afghan population became one of the most heavily armed in the world, and the country rapidly degenerated into a state of complete chaos and anarchy. [34]**

The people were tired of decades of conflict, and thus many welcomed the Taliban's arrival because although oppressive, it provided some approximation of peace, security, and order. This sentiment, however, was short-lived, as the population began to realize the effect of the Taliban's brutal rule. Public executions, massacres, and purges were routine, and killed tens of thousands of Afghans in the early years. [35] International aid workers and divergent teachers were frequently targeted, schools that were deemed too blasphemous were burned, and questioning authority was punishable by death. [36] These measures were enacted to solidify the regime and deter dissent, leading to the establishment of the Taliban as the de facto central government, although few territories were still under mujahideen resistance.

The Taliban began to understand that further oppression was not sustainable in the long run, especially with the population left entirely impoverished after two decades of war. To legitimize and popularize the Taliban among the locals, there first needs to be economic prosperity. Taliban control of the economy was surprisingly modest in comparison to the rest of governance, as it was strictly enforced in accordance with Islamic law which naturally prohibits avarice and dishonesty.[37] The rentier taxing mechanism with Islamic principles levied a tithe, or ushr, on all formal and informal trade, and a only ten percent tax on all agricultural harvests for the majority of revenue.[38] Through ushr, the Taliban collected $75 million USD in 1997 from just regional trade in consumer goods. [39] Opium poppy production was also banned by the Taliban in 2000 on religious grounds, despite it accounting for a significant portion of income for many Afghans.[40] These economic policies were regarded as a more legitimate source of revenues for the Taliban, and helped ease tensions from the brutally enforced civil and cultural aspects of life.

After the withdrawal of Western troops, many Afghans appropriately feared the Taliban would double-down on radical ideology as retribution for being deposed. However, the mid 2010s observed a confounding transition in Taliban regime dynamics under new leadership. A new leader, Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour, moved the Taliban to be fundamentally less radical and more peace-driven as a strategy to prepare for sustainable post-war life.[41] Many of the old deputies had also resigned upon Mansour assuming power, thus bringing in a new incentive for change.[42] The Taliban's master plan for Afghanistan at this time focused, ironically, on good governance.[43] The US-backed central Afghan government was critically failing in state capacity and not fulfilling the needs of the population, especially in rural areas.[44] The new Taliban exploited this failure to legitimize their rule, increasing polarization and anti-government sentiment. Instead of destroying existing state institutions, the Taliban recognized they could co-opt and absorb the infrastructure to take the credit for providing the services.[45] The civil society in these regions, although at times harsh and unreasonable, were outliers in the country: honesty in administration, little crime, disputes between people were rare and quickly resolved, healthcare institutions were stocked, and jobs for teachers were fair and plentiful.[46] To further provide security, the Taliban had negotiated unofficial ceasefires within certain regions to at least foster some feeling of stability.[47]

The Taliban had lifted the opium ban and directly contributed to the exponential growth of the narcotics-based economy.[48] Opium production had served as the primary income for most peasants and local traders in the Taliban's absence, and now the illegal business was adopted to fund the insurgency.[49]

Afghanistan alone accounted for the massive global monopoly in opium-related goods.[50]

> ## Some estimates claim that the Taliban earned $400 million USD annually at its peak.[51]

The Taliban's income primarily came from just the ushr collected from opium harvests and occasional protection fees, with most revenues dispersed elsewhere in the country.[52] Furthermore, much of the ushr was often divided among local leaders, or directly to communities. [53] This economic strategy employed by the Taliban affirms the theory that comparatively wealthier the population, the more tolerant they are to authoritarianism, so long as their livelihoods are not infringed upon.[54] The peasant farmer majority eagerly supported the insurgency to ensure that the Taliban were in control because their income depended on the lucrative opium trade, thereby providing a friendly environment to base.[55] Through these socio-economic contributions, the Taliban were able to further garner support by posing as the guarantor of labour, and ergo, achieve political goals without violence.[56]

The 2021 Taliban is seemingly still committed to the pragmatic goals set a few years prior. The government is in the early stages of restructuring from the mountain of political deficiencies left behind by the previous administration. Afghanistan had lost three-quarters of its GDP from the withdrawal of all foreign investment after the Taliban came into power, leaving the major institutions, especially the banks, virtually bankrupt.[57] The military budget had been slashed in half, and ministries were defunct and empty, unable to pay service workers.[58] The Taliban has urged the international community to recognize its regime — not just for legitimacy,

but also for the economic sustenance of the Afghan citizenry.[59] As an effort to appeal to the international sphere, the Taliban have announced increasingly tolerant policies, equality of representation, and promises of international non-aggression, and there is slightly more support for rights for women.[60]

> **These pragmatic measures indicate that current Taliban policies at least align with the political agenda from a few years ago — sacrificing some ideological aspects of the movement for economic benefit and slowly increasing popularity among the population.**

CONCLUSIONS

The case study of the Afghan Taliban has found that state actors are the primary contributors to terrorism. Through the weaponization of ideologies and manipulation of social dynamics in achieving political goals, the security and economic needs are forfeited for underserved populations, creating exploitable conditions for terrorists. The origins of the Taliban and radical Islam are manufactured threats traced from state-sponsored influence during the Soviet-Afghan War and subsequent Afghan Civil Wars. The manipulation of politically salient social dynamics combined with poor state infrastructure creates solidarity and fosters extremism through desperation. The legitimacy of the Taliban has evolved over the decades, evolving from a brutal regime to one that relies on good governance and a beneficial economic system to garner popular approval among the Afghan people.

This proves that the subjugation of the local population hinders the support systems of terrorist groups, countering the argument that terrorism is sustained through oppression. Instead, terrorist groups supplant the state by offering better alternatives to the population. States either contribute towards terrorism, or the inability to address the problems enables terrorist groups to take advantage and develop off the flaws. In the case with the Taliban, the group would not exist without state support, both direct sponsorship and benefitting from a failing government.

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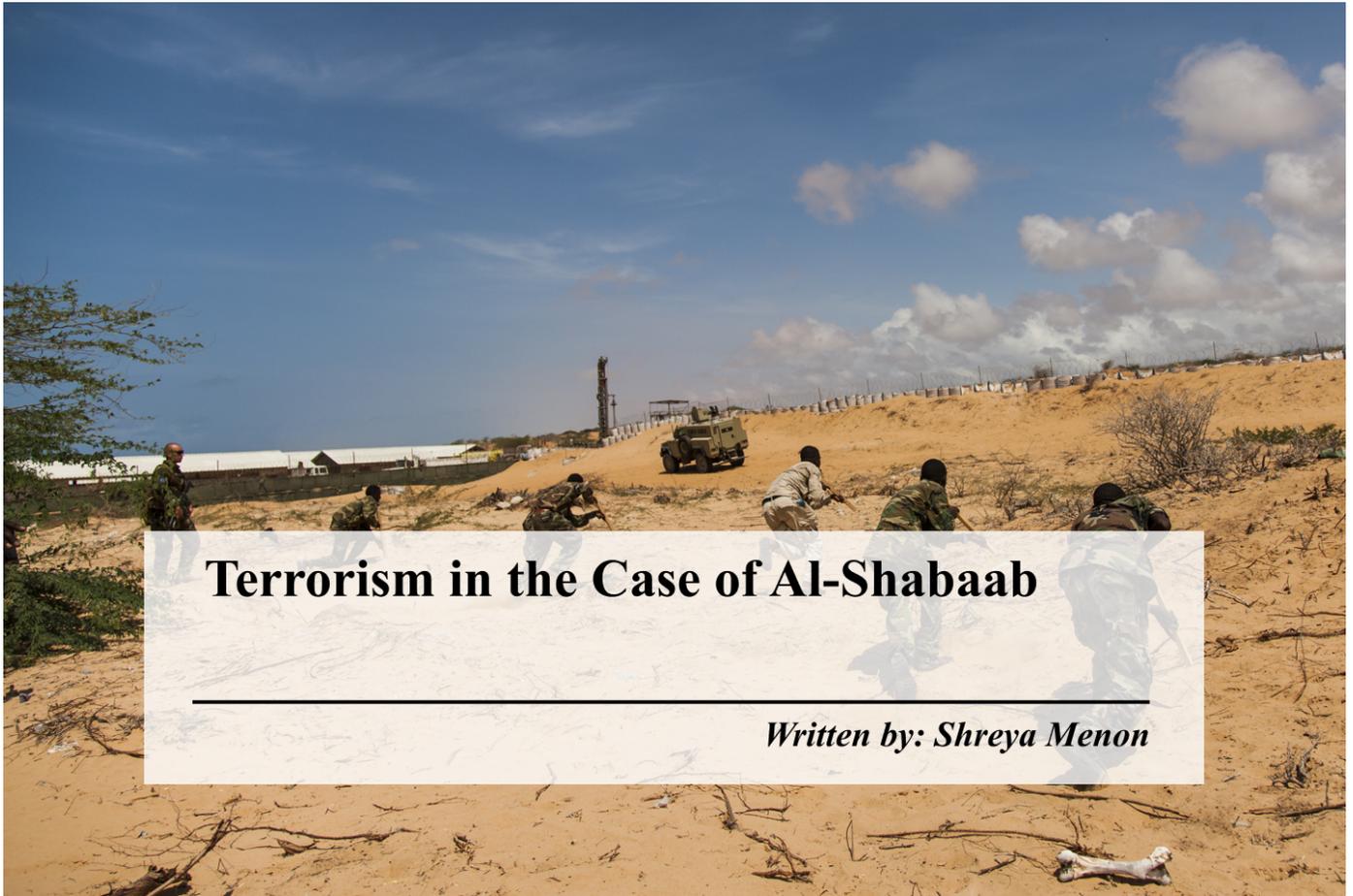
Terrorism in the Case of Al-Shabaab

Written by: Shreya Menon

Abstract

The rise of religiously motivated terrorism throughout the world is resulting in far more research being done regarding but the motivations of these groups, as well ashose who willingly enlist themselves. Furthermore, due to the elusive nature of these organizations, it is very difficult for governments and researchers to concretely determine how such groups are able to fund their expensive and highly illegal operations. Generalizations of Islamic fundamentalist groups can be drawn from the findinging provided as well as specific findings based on the provided actions of the Somalia based Al-Shabaab. This paper will investigate the experience of individuals who report feelings of social isolation in relation to their decision to explore religious extremism and the tactics terrorist groups use to exploit these individual's vulnerability. Moreover, analysis of various methods of revenue collection for Al-Shabaab such as piracy and the smuggling of charcoal shall be explored.

Key words: Terrorism, Africa, Islam, Al-Shabaab, and Somalia

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, terrorism and the formation of new terrorist groups have become increasingly prevalent problems throughout the world. Terrorism is defined as "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience".[1] Although the overarching goal of terrorist groups is to instill fear in a population, each terrorist group has its own unique features, objectives and techniques.

While the individuals who join terrorist groups come from all walks of life, research into the subject has revealed that there exists a typical category of individuals who are more likely to join such groups — these being young men who are considered social outcasts. These individuals seek camaraderie and are promised not only a community but a sense of purpose upon joining. As a result of the desire to belong somewhere, these individuals are easy for organizations to manipulate into radicalization due to pre-existing anger towards institutions and the world. In terms of funding, every group accumulates income from a variety of sources rather than an overarching one. Furthermore, the geographic location of terrorist groups greatly affects their methods of revenue collection as well. Due to the individual goals and connections that different groups have as well as their region of operation, some groups are able to generate income in ways that go beyond the traditional understanding of how terrorists fund themselves.

As a result, this paper will argue that individuals who experience feelings of marginilization through social ostracism or economic inequality, are more susceptible to recruitment by terrorist groups, as they may see it as an opportunity for camaraderie. Furthermore, this paper will also argue that terrorist funding cannot be attributed to one overarching cause and is instead part of a series of interconnected sources of revenue. This paper will focus on the actions of the Somali Islamic fundamentalist Salafi Jihadis group, Harakat Al- Shabaab Al-Mujahideen. For the purpose of this paper, the research shall only adhere to Islamic fundamentalist groups in order to draw conclusive findings. This paper will begin by providing background into Al-Shabaab, followed by an outline of the factors that contribute to individuals deciding to enlist, as well as the tactics groups utilize to manipulate individuals into joining. Furthermore, insight into key sources of revenue for these groups as well as specific sources of income for Al-Shabaab will be explored.

BACKGROUND

Harakat Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahideen, or Al-Shabaab for short, is a group that is mainly concentrated within Somalia but conducts operations throughout the Horn of Africa.[2] The group heavily jeopardises not only the safety of those living within the regions of their control but also international security as intervention from the United States as well as the United Nations is not proving effective at quelling the organisation's operations.[3] Al-Shabaab has a variety of different goals but can mainly be reduced to the following three: expelling foreign forces within their territory, overthrowing the government of Somalia and establishing Sharia Law.[4] Before discussing their present day operations, insight into the organizations's history must be understood first.

In 1991, the government of Somalia collapsed which resulted in the civil war that is still plaguing the region today. In 1994, the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) was created in order to fill the vacancies left by the government in terms of

security and civil services.[5] Upon the emergence of the ICU, Al-Shabaab formed a militant splinter group within the organization.[6] Upon the ICU seizing control over the capital city of Mogadishu, the city and surrounding areas fell into a state of warlord control. As a result, troops from Ethiopia were dispatched to the region to dispel ICU control, effectively resulting in the organization being overthrown.[7] Widespread public resentment of this intervention soon became prevalent as multiple human rights abuses were committed against the people of Somalia at the hands of Ethiopian soldiers.[8] Although the ICU exercised authoritarian rule over the regions it controlled, it did provide security to the region in terms of economic and military support.[9] As a result, the collapse of the ICU, in accompaniment with public resentment towards Ethiopia's invasion, became the perfect breeding ground for Al-Shabaab's emergence to power due to the instability that fell over the region.[10]

Upon the group's rise to power, Al-Shabaab began establishing territorial control across different areas of the Horn of Africa. After seizing control, the group officially pledged allegiance to Al-Qaeda and continues to keep close ties with the group.[11] In an interview with Al-Shabaab's deputy leader, Mahad Karate revealed that the group's goal is to overthrow Somalia's established government in order to establish Sharia Law.

> **In accordance with the group, democracy is not an acceptable form of government under Islam, and it is their duty as Muslims to oppose its implementation.[12]**

The group collects over 15 million USD a month in terms of revenue, making it more profitable than the government of Somalia itself.[13] As a result of the high level of influence and economic power possessed by the group, Al-Shabaab is able to fund programs that efficiently recruit vulnerable individuals from all over the world.[14]

RECRUITMENT

As discussed earlier, the nature of those most vulnerable to terrorist recruitment are those who are considered to be social outcasts.

> **In order to instill extremist ideology within these individuals, terrorist recruitment revolves around carefully constructed methods of propaganda.**

This propaganda operates upon different levels, but its goal is to target individuals and groups who feel socially isolated from their peers.[15] Furthermore, this propaganda has different mediums of delivery for those who are abroad compared to those who are in a close geographical vicinity to these groups. For those who are far away from the regime, recruitment is mainly done online.[16] For Islamic terrorist groups, this process is done primarily through the dark web as well as media channels.[17]

The tactics used in the propaganda provided can be reduced to two main themes: hatred of the West and promises of fulfillment. Al-Hayat Media Centre is a media branch of the Islamic State that produces content that specifically targets potential Western candidates.[18] The goal of the videos produced by this media outlet is to instill disdain toward the Western world by strongly enforcing the rhetoric that the West is

waging war against Islam due to foreign intervention harming Muslim communities.[19] The goal of content in this manner is to instill anger and feelings of sympathy for their fellow Muslims, which has the potential for individuals to begin the process of radicalization.

The other type of propaganda utilized by such groups aims at instilling the idea in potential candidates that joining the group will provide their lives with meaning and purpose. This type of content involves portraying their groups as a paradise in which recruits can gain brotherhood and a place of belonging, which for a majority of these viewers, is something that they lack and desperately long for.[20] These groups preach that no matter your race, all Muslims who are devoted to their mission will be accepted with open arms.[21] These factors are accompanied by the rhetoric that not only is it your duty as a Muslim to fight for this cause, but God will also reward the sacrifices you make throughout your mission.[22]

> **While the content is not sufficient to inspire full-on radicalization, the exposure is enough to form a mindset that is sympathetic to the actions of these groups as well as spread the message to other potential recruits. [23]**

As a result, a conclusion can then be drawn that those who are most susceptible to this propaganda are those who long for community.

In the specific case of Al-Shabaab, the recruitment for those overseas favours a specific demographic: Somalians who feel isolated from their peers who are also experiencing low employment opportunities as well as those who have grown up in single-family households.[24] The city of Minneapolis contains a large pool of these individuals, making it a great potential source for recruitment. An interview with a community activist from the region states that boys who leave the comfortable life of America to go fight in Somalia can be described as such "he lives in poverty, he does not have a father and does not feel like an American. They are promised by recruiters that they can go back to a country where everyone is like them, and they will have a good life".[25] Tactics that aim at creating this sense of community within potential candidates are used for recruiting those geographically close to Al-Shaabab operations as well.

As previously stated, recruitment for individuals that live in the Western world is done primarily through the internet. However, those in close proximity to the Horn of Africa typically experience recruitment on a personal level. Similar to Western candidates, many of those recruited from these regions have also claimed low social mobility as well as employment opportunities, and were promised salvation in the form of religion. This salvation is provided through religious leaders associated with Al-Shabaab, who initially reach out to these struggling individuals to give them a sense of purpose through Islam. Once the religious leaders gain their trust, it is then when the integration of these individuals into the Al-Shabaab network occurs.[26] This can be seen with the case of Azad, a Somali youth who was part of the organization but is now undergoing de-radicalization. He shared that before he joined the regime, he suffered from drug abuse and was

unable to find employment to sustain himself. He met a Sheikh who began to support him and his rehabilitation as well as provide him and his family critical resources to sustain himself. It was this trust the eventually led Azad into joining the Sheikh's organization.[27]

Azad's story is not unique;

it is a common tactic of terrorist recruitment to make those who are vulnerable feel as though they can save themselves by joining their cause. [28]

While there are many components that contribute to individuals wishing to join groups such as Al-Shabaab, the overarching factor is that they are in places of economic and social vulnerability and desire salvation and community. The weakness of this argument however is that not all terrorist groups utilize the same tactics in recruiting. As previously stated, each group has their own goals in mind, and as a result, could potentially be seeking out candidates who do not fall into this archetype of social outcast or those who are financially challenged. As a result, the rhetoric around propaganda and promises of reward can vary from what was described above. Similarly, there are a variety of wealthy, socially acclimated individuals who still feel compelled to partake in extremism as a result of the same propaganda provided to those who are considered to be vulnerable. The conclusion of this finding in relation to social outcasts with poor financial status should not be taken as the conclusive reason for why people feel compelled into extremism and should only be seen as an overarching generalization.

REVENUE

Revenue collection for terrorist groups spans across a variety of different sources. These include things like money laundering, human

trafficking, illegal exporting, and utilizing connections to other criminal groups.[29]

Another widely used resource is political corruption. Due to the nature of these groups, many of them hold great influence in the countries they operate within.[30] As a result, these groups are able to extort money from citizens in the form of taxation, as well as receive funding from politicians, whether this is through force or willingly handed.[31] Al-Shabaab utilizes many of the methods of revenue collection that are listed above. This paper will focus on Al-Shabaab's illegal charcoal trade as well as piracy.

In 2012, the Government of Somalia accompanied by a UN Security Council resolution created a ban on the export of charcoal. [32] This ban was due to the enormous environmental damage that Somalia was facing as a result of the process of sourcing charcoal, as well as the revenue Al-Shabaab was earning based on its production.[33] However, this ban has not hindered Al-Shabaab's illegal trade networks substantially.[34] The group still acquires an estimated amount of $25 million annually from both coal smuggling and taxation of the trucking of said coal.[35] As African families heavily rely on the use of charcoal in their homes due to the high cost and difficulty storing other resources such as natural gas and solar, many rural areas in the Horn of Africa rely on Al-Shaabab's delivery of said resource.[36] As Al-Shabaab holds the monopoly of this illegal trade within the region, all revenue collected from these villages goes directly towards financing the group.[37]

In regard to piracy, Al-Shabaab is unique as a result of Somalia having a large network of pirate groups.[38] The prevalence of piracy within

Somalia can mainly be attributed to the result of foreign overfishing within the region, resulting in many local fishermen resorting to piracy in order to provide for themselves.[39] While initially collaborations between these two groups were minimal,

> **due to Al-Shaabab seizing control of the various ports alongside the country's coastline, Al-Shaabab has been able to collect revenue from pirates through taxation.[40]**

A high- ranking pirate leader known as Ciise Yulux has publicly admitted to funding the group. This is achieved through the agreement of his pirates to pay "a development tax" of twenty percent to Al-Shabaab in order to keep their boats in Al-Shabaab-controlled ports.[41]

Another contributing factor of piracy-based revenue collection is that of ransom money. As Al-Shabaab has control over many ports, pirates must also provide the terrorist group with proceeds of the profits that they make from ransomed ships and supplies in order to ensure that Al-Shabaab will not interfere with their operations.[42] It was reported that pirates can pay up to $200,000 USD to Al-Shabaab per vessel they bring to port, as well as additional costs relating to supplies used by pirates to acquire such ships, such as ammunition. [43]

The weakness of the arguments listed above lies in the fact that terrorist groups are incredibly secretive in terms of their activities. As these groups are not reporting their sources of funding, as well as how much revenue they collect from their networks, all of the aforementioned research

is only what scholars have been able to obtain based on very limited insight. Therefore, scholars, as well as organizations like the UN, are unable to conclusively state exactly how terrorist groups are able to fund themselves, as well as how much they actually derive from the sources they are aware of.

CONCLUSION

It is entirely too difficult and naïve to be able to present one concrete reason as to why people are compelled to join terrorist groups. The individual experiences of a person are the most prevalent indicators of why people chose to join in the first place. However, as there are a variety of prominent overarching factors when examining individuals who join, this paper is able to effectively conclude that

> **those who are considered social outcasts, as well as those experiencing economic instability, are the ones who reach out for extremism as means of salvation.**

It is nearly impossible to effectively establish concrete answers as to how many sources of funding terrorist groups have, nor how much income these sources generate. However, the paper has effectively proven that terrorist groups receive their funding from a multitude of sources, with Al-Shabab favouring piracy and charcoal smuggling. Terrorist groups are secretive and illusive in nature, and as a result, much more research is needed to provide concrete solutions on how to prevent individuals from joining, as well as how to effectively prevent groups from accumulating revenue to fund their activities.

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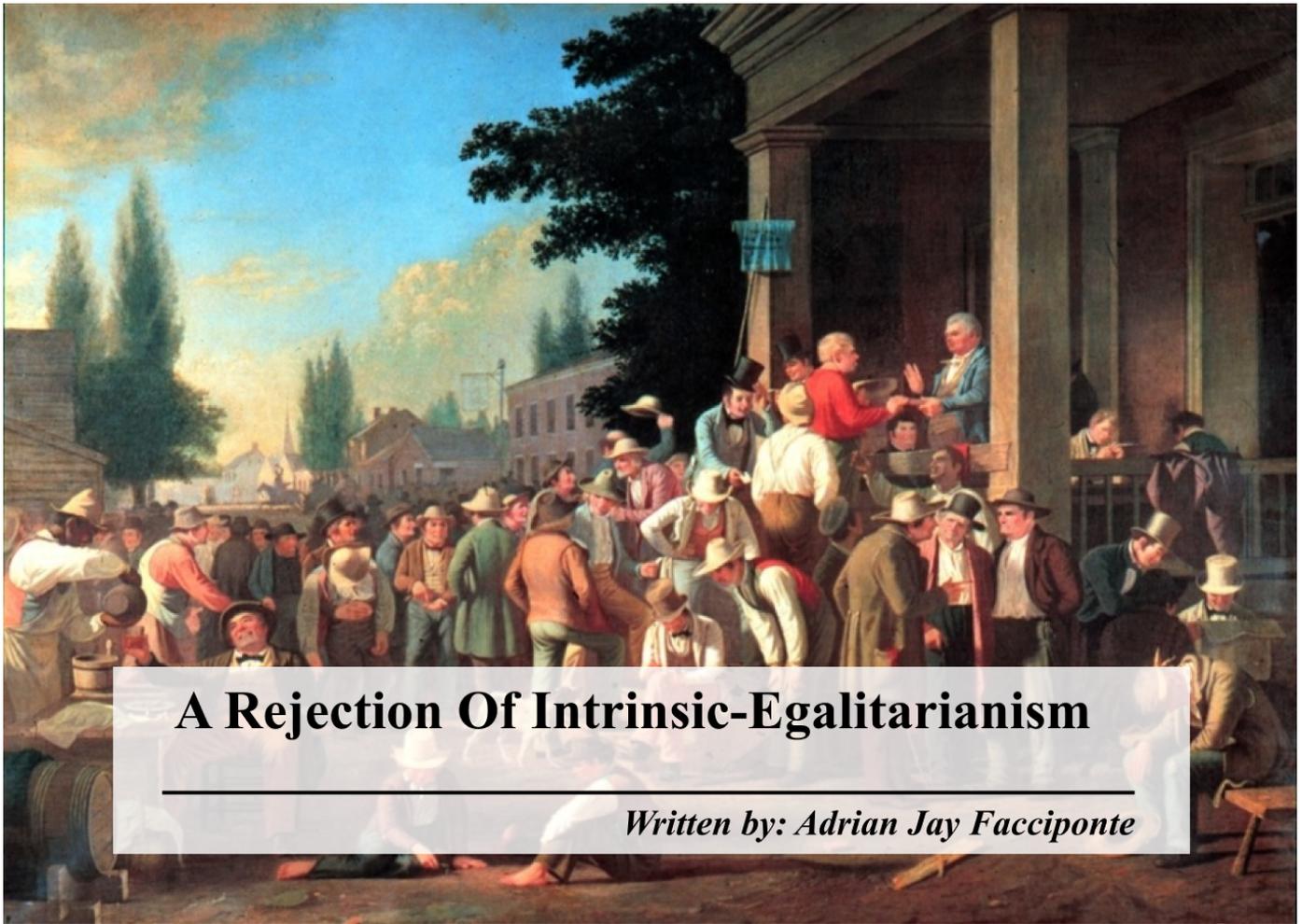
A Rejection Of Intrinsic-Egalitarianism

Written by: Adrian Jay Facciponte

Abstract

Equality has often been considered a staple of Western liberalism and may be thought of as a valuable social good in and of itself. This essay seeks to examine and reject the arguments put forward in favour of an intrinsic value of equality and posits that equality is only valuable within the capacity that it leads to other social goods. In this sense, we can think of equality as a means to achieve some sort of end, rather than an end in itself. This paper draws upon the works of John Rawls, Ronald Dworkin, Richard Arneson, Nils Holtug, and Larry Temkin, and discusses the use of various measures of equality to support the primary claim that equality is not intrinsically valuable.

Key words: Intrinsic-Egalitarianism, Equality, John Rawls, Ronald Dworkin, and Richard Arneson

INTRODUCTION

This essay will argue that equality is only valuable within the capacity that it leads to other social goods. In this sense, we can think of equality as a means to achieve some sort of end, rather than an end in itself. I make three major claims about the value of equality. First, I determine what currency of equality is being referred to when we discuss equality's potential intrinsic value. I argue that the debate amongst egalitarians over which currency is to be used suggests that the value of equality is conditional. Further, I also suggest the possibility that an increase of equality in one measure may lead to a decrease in another. Second, I determine what is meant by 'value' through the use of the popular levelling-down objection, in which equality is achieved but in benefit to no one - I argue this cannot be better in any respect. I analyze a situation of levelling-down using a person-affecting view on morality and compare this to a revised version of Larry Temkin's *The Slogan*, formulated by Nils Holtug.[1] Lastly, I argue that a person may deserve an unequal distribution of any currency based on effort and responsibility. I support this claim using Rawls' principles of justice which focuses on equality as a means, not an end.[2] I also suggest that equality without the concept of merit can lead to inefficiency and laziness within a society. All three of these claims lead me to the conclusion that equality is only valuable instrumentally and not intrinsically.

THE CURRENCY OF EQUALITY

When discussing equality, it's often debated amongst egalitarians what currency of equality should be considered, or in simpler terms, what exactly should be distributed equally?[3] I claim that the very fact this debate exists amongst egalitarians proves that the value of equality is conditional, not intrinsic. John Rawls' libertarian take on equality is that the currency which should be distributed equally is that of social primary goods, ie. rights, liberties, opportunities, etc., all of the things a person acting rationally would desire regardless of their particular position in life.[4] Here, Rawls views equality as a means, not an end. A resource-based egalitarian, such as Ronald Dworkin, would claim that we should focus on an equal distribution of resources (i.e. income or wealth).[5] These resources are instrumental in a person's welfare and, under his theory, would hold people accountable for their choices and expensive tastes.[6] On the other side of the egalitarian spectrum, alternative theorists may focus on welfare as the currency to be distributed equally, or at least, as suggested by Richard Arneson, an "equality of opportunity for welfare."[7]. For these egalitarians, resources are just a means for gaining welfare.

> **These opposing views over what exactly should be distributed equally lead me to believe that the value of equality relies on the value of these currencies.**

Both resource and welfare egalitarianism seem to place a conditional value on equality, insofar that equality is only valuable on the condition that it is applied to one of these currencies. An intrinsic-egalitarian may believe that equality is valuable regardless of a particular currency or, within all currencies. However, it seems as though an equal distribution of everything to everyone is impractical.

I find that the increase of equality in one currency is likely to result in an increase of inequality in another. Take for instance Dworkin's initial view on equality of welfare.

Dworkin (and many others) may intuitively feel as though equality of welfare is most important because all other currencies are simply a means to achieve welfare. He recognized, however, that different people will require different amounts of resources to be happy, perhaps due to illness or expensive taste, and thus equality of welfare must rely on an unequal distribution of resources.[8] This same situation arises when considering equality of resources. If resources are distributed equally, but people still require different amounts of resources to achieve happiness, an equal distribution of resources would rely on an unequal distribution of welfare. This seems to be the case when considering any currency of equality and egalitarians must place a value on certain currencies over others. I find this problematic for intrinsic-egalitarians because

> **if equality was intrinsically valuable, how can one justify that a particular instance of inequality is less concerning than another?**

Intrinsic-egalitarians would likely suggest that, although equality is intrinsically valuable, it is acceptable (and perhaps necessary) to take a pluralist view and weigh equality against other values.[9] Seemingly this would permit certain instances of inequality to be of less concern than others. However, there is still an issue regarding the currencies of equality that pluralism cannot solve. If all other values stay the same when regarding equality of resources or equality of welfare, the intrinsic-egalitarian still must choose which currency to distribute equally, and in turn which instance of inequality is less concerning. This grounds the value of equality as conditional to whatever currency is chosen. I will discuss the same pluralist ideology later in this essay in an

attempt to reject the common egalitarian objection of levelling-down.

LEVELLING-DOWN

If equality is valuable as an end in itself and not reliant on any other sort of value or benefit we may come across a situation where equality is achieved between two parties through the detriment of one party without any benefit to the other.[10] Consider two people in different parts of the world having unequal distributions of any given unit of currency, with Person A having ten of these units, and Person B has only five. There is a clear inequality here which an intrinsic-egalitarian would believe is inherently bad. A value of equality within itself would have us accept an outcome where Person A is reduced down to five units as being better than the previous inequality, at least in one respect. This is referred to as levelling-down. Intuitively though, this does not seem to be a better outcome and, according to Nils Holtug's revised version of Larry Temkin's *The Slogan*, this intuition would be correct.[11] Larry Temkin originally intended *The Slogan* to fail when faced with what he refers to as the non-identity problem, where two outcomes would produce different people and thus a person-affecting approach could not apply. [12] A simple understanding of Holtug's *Revised Slogan* is that an outcome cannot be considered better or worse than another outcome in any respect unless there is a person that it is better or worse for. Holtung adds that even simply existing can cause benefit or harm to a person.[13]

> **This is a person-affecting view on morality, in which what matters when considering the benefits of an outcome is the benefits of the outcome on people.**

In the previous levelling- down example there is no one who is benefited by equality, but there is someone who is worsened. Therefore inequality, in this case, is better than equality. I accept a person-affecting view on morality as superior because people are the very agents of morality itself. I find that any moral theory cannot justify the detriment of one person without any benefit of another? Here we'll likely be faced with the same pluralist objection seen in the previous argument.

A pluralist view of egalitarianism may permit the intrinsic value of equality to be weighed against other values such as fairness, utility, and liberty when considering levelling- down.[14] In the example given above, neither Person A or B was aware of the other, and the ten units held by Person A have no direct correlation with the five units held by Person B. A pluralist egalitarian may suggest that the value of equality, although valuable within itself, is not enough to outweigh the detriment to Person A. However, consider if Person A and B were coworkers of equal skill and experience, and those units were monetary values of income. Then the value of equality paired with the value of fairness may permit levelling-down in this regard. I still object to this pluralist view because it seems to uphold my main claim that equality is only valuable within the capacity that it brings about other social goods. In the second levelling-down example

> **the only reason the equal outcome is taken to be better is because of the additional value of fairness,**

but I suggest that equality is only a means to achieve fairness rather than an end along with it. It also seems that in the second outcome Person B has a direct benefit, in the sense that they will be

treated fairly in their workplace. This satisfies Holtug's *Revised Slogan* and a person-affecting view of morality which shows that the value of equality relies on its ability to bring about benefits and other values. In my next argument, I discuss how inequality can be acceptable based on merit and responsibility.

PRINCIPLES OF MERIT AND RESPONSIBILITY

An intrinsic positive value of equality would correlate to an intrinsic negative value of inequality.[15] However, I suggest that inequality is not intrinsically negative because people (in the essence of free will) may be deserving of a greater or lesser share of a given currency of equality. Most egalitarian theories are centred around limiting the effects of luck within a distribution.[16] However, inequality may arise based on merit and effort without the influence of luck. Imagine there are two people, each with an equal distribution of resources, health, ability, liberty, and according to John Locke's "Second Treatise of Government" equal ownership over their bodies.[17] Person A decides to make use of their body and ability in ways that will bring about more resources for themself, perhaps through self-employment or labour. Person B makes no use of their body or ability and instead decides to enjoy their original share of resources in ways that bring about quick welfare at the moment. If after one month Person A holds a greater amount of resources and welfare than Person B, would this inequality be unjust? Both individuals began with an equal share of resources, ability, opportunity, and freedom, which satisfies Rawls' Principles of Justice.[18] Since the inequality was directly produced by the free choices of each person, I believe that Person A is deserving of their greater resources and welfare, and Person B is responsible for being

worse off. This is a *responsibility-affirming* view of equality, which emphasizes that people should be held accountable for their choices.[19] Dworkin holds a similar view that people should be held accountable for their expensive tastes when he discusses equality of welfare.[20]

A common objection to the idea that a person may deserve an unequal distribution of goods is referred to as *responsibility-denying* egalitarianism. Those adhering to this school of thought claim that no one can be responsible for being worse or better off, because "…in order to be responsible for p you have to be responsible for those facts in virtue of which you are responsible for p."[21] This is also a common claim among moral theorists attempting to disprove the concept of free will. Galen Strawson refers to a similar formulation of the argument as the Basic Argument and uses it to defend her claim that no one can be held morally responsible for their actions.[22] However, I find the debate on free will to be insignificant when discussing applicable moral theories such as egalitarianism. For the most part, a functioning political or social body must act in acceptance of human free will and any application of values such as fairness, utility, liberty, and even equality, all rely, at least partially, on the accountability of one's choices and actions. Therefore, for the remainder of this essay, I will be assuming that human beings possess the ability to act freely and should be held accountable for their choices.

In the essence of free will and responsibility, I suggest that inequality is valuable within social institutions to preserve competition and industriousness to maintain a realm of capitalism that is necessary in the modern world.

Returning to the example I gave earlier in this argument, the result was an unequal distribution in favour of Person A. Perhaps we can imagine a situation where the socio-political institution in power decides to maintain equality by redistributing the excess of goods originally obtained by Person A amongst the rest of the population. In this situation, Person A is punished for their industrious effort and Person B is rewarded for their laziness. This is distinct from the levelling-down example in such that Person B actively benefits through an increase of goods, but in what sense is this a just outcome? This may satisfy a person-affecting view on morality in that a person benefits, but dissatisfies a responsibility-affirming view in that Person B is not responsible for and does not deserve their increase in goods. Any refusal of this responsibility-affirming view would likely lead to an increase in laziness throughout society. If Person B has no threat of ending up worse-off and Person A has no chance to become better-off, there is no need to act industrious. It may be more beneficial for individuals to act as lazy as possible and maintain a positive effort-reward ratio. It seems acceptable to claim that no society can function effectively this way, thus an intrinsic value of equality that refuses the idea that a person can deserve a greater or lesser distribution of goods cannot be accepted.

CONCLUSION

In this essay, I argued that equality is only valuable within the capacity that it brings about other social goods and supported my argument with three major claims. I first argued how the varying currencies of equality require that an increase of equality in one measure must be correlated with a decrease of equality in another measure, and thus an equal distribution of everything to everyone is impossible.

Then, I discussed the common levelling-down objection where equality is achieved but in benefit to no one and compared this situation to Nils Holtug's revised version of Larry Temkin's *The Slogan*. I argued in favour of a person-affecting view on morality in which the possible benefit of an outcome is reliant on its possible benefit for people. Finally, I argued that a person may deserve an unequal distribution of goods based on a responsibility-affirming view on equality. In this view, we accept people as having free will and hold them responsible for their choices and actions.

Therefore, through either an abundance or lack of effort a person may deserve being worse or better-off.

Using all of these arguments, I support my claim that equality is only valuable within the capacity that it leads to other social goods. I will add one last suggestion to be discussed in further works on the subject, that perhaps instead of intrinsic-egalitarianism a better option would be to focus on how inequality is promoted through oppressive social institutions, as argued by Derek Parfit.[23]

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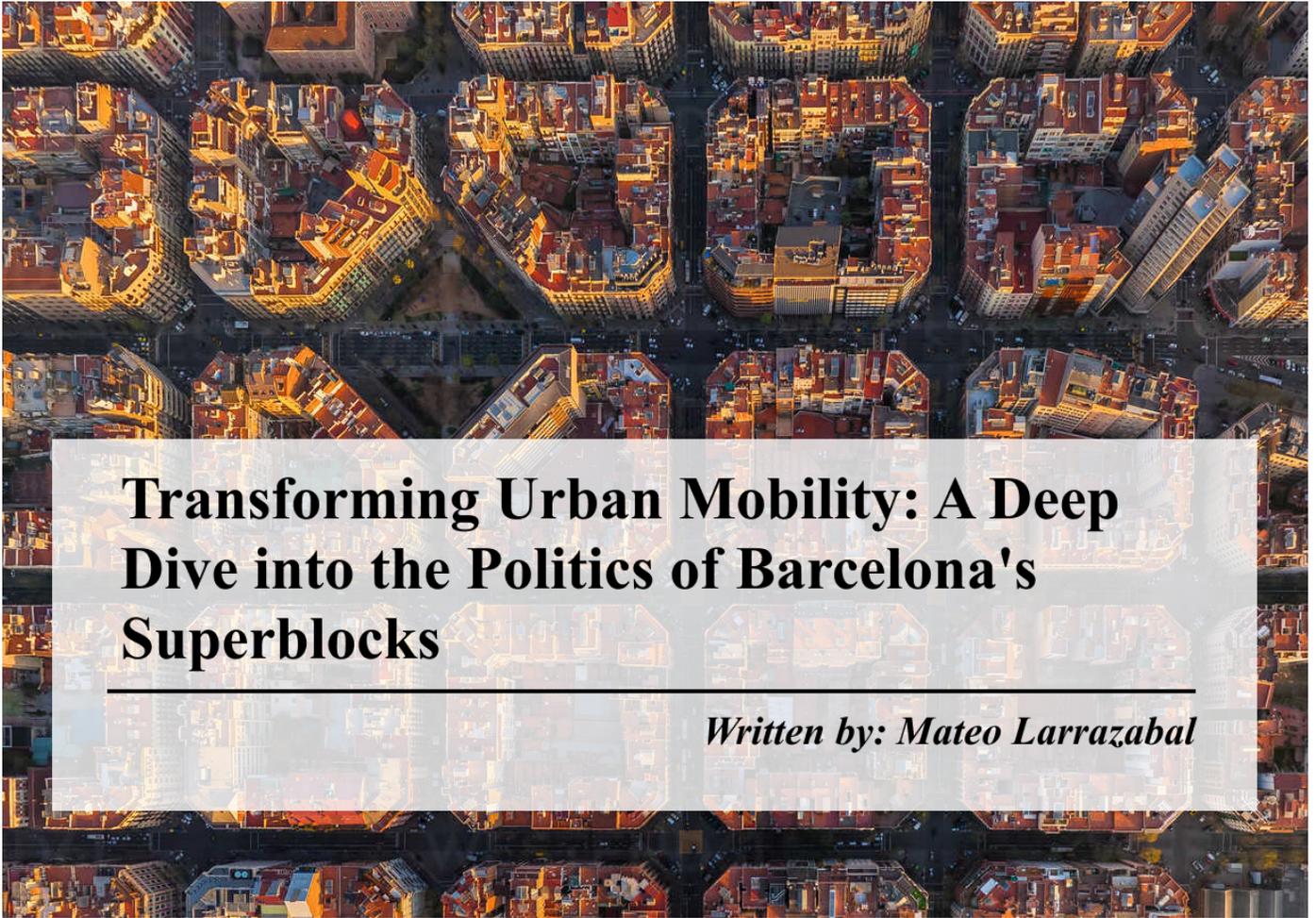
Transforming Urban Mobility: A Deep Dive into the Politics of Barcelona's Superblocks

Written by: Mateo Larrazabal

Abstract

The Barcelona Superblocks project is an ongoing urban transformation that is radically overhauling the face of communities and urban mobility throughout the city. It is a continuation of the city's rich culture of undertaking massive, city-altering projects, such as Ildefons Cerdà's ambitious plan that saw Barcelona expand beyond its medieval barriers in the 1850s. Furthermore, the city's status as a hotbed for social movements laid the groundwork for the rise of Ada Colau's government in 2015, which has pursued a distinct governance style as a means to construct a bottom-up urban regime. This change represents a stark change from the top-down regime dictated by an alliance between city council and business elites which promulgated a growth-centred planning approach that emerged in the planning of the 1992 Olympics. Hence, the success of the superblocks project is also a reflection of the fortunes of this new regime and its efforts to build a new form of governance in the city.

Key words: Barcelona, Urban Planning, Social Movements, and 1992 Olympics

INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, policymakers around the world have increasingly scrutinized how cities are planned for urban mobility. Specifically, greater focus has been devoted to how the daily movement of hundreds of thousands of urbanites can affect local economies, the environment, the cultural vibrance of communities, and the health of citizens. As a result, cities worldwide have taken upon ambitious projects to reshape how locals get around. One notable example of this is the city of Barcelona's mass pedestrianization project known as *Superilles* (Superblocks). The project's focus is to create nine-block grids of the city, or Superblocks, and banning the entrance of vehicles who do not originate or seek to stop within said area. For the traffic originating or destined within the Superblock, the speed limit is set at 10 km/hr, thereby prioritizing the interests of pedestrians and cyclists over those of cars.[1] The original intention of the project was to reduce the city's high air pollution levels, which can be partly attributed to vehicle traffic.[2] Following a successful pilot in 2016, the city massively expanded the initiative to ensure that one out of three streets within the city are part of Superblocks by 2030, setting a goal of making 80% of all trips in the city to be made on foot, by bike, or public transport.[3]

This paper seeks to investigate why Barcelona has pursued this ambitious strategy and the effects it has had so far. First, I will outline the historical context of Barcelona's urban planning and political culture. Following this, I will conduct an analysis of the rise of the political forces that advocated for the initiative and the movements that rose against the project through the lens of urban social movements. Additionally, I will look to understand the regime structures that shepherded this initiative through a tense political climate, seeking to understand if this was implemented in a top-down approach or through alliances with interest groups in the city. Finally, I will evaluate the project's effects on the city's pollution levels and mobility among other factors.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF BARCELONA'S URBAN PLANNING AND POLITICAL CULTURE

It is impossible to discuss the history of Barcelona's growth without the mention of Ildefons Cerdà, the urban planner who designed the 1859 extension to the city which created the present-day district of Eixample. Prior to this expansion, the city's population of 190,000 was almost entirely concentrated in the small historic centre, which created glaring needs to improve sanitary conditions and accommodate for the burgeoning demand for housing and industrial land.[4] Cerdà's expansion plan was ahead of its time as it focused on improving the wellbeing of urban dwellings by prioritizing access to ventilation and green space while striving to promote seamless movement of goods and people. Specifically, his grid-oriented plan allowed for uniform distribution of small plazas, large parks, and hospitals while additionally providing equal access to sunlight, air, and open space throughout the new parts of the city.[5] Such a radical plan received significant criticism from the Spanish central government, which prevented the full scope of the project to be built. Nevertheless, as urban planners refer to the advancement of spaces via the transformation of public spaces as the "Barcelona Model" of urban planning, it is difficult to understate the legacy of Cerdà's influence.[6] It is thanks to Cerdà's initial contributions in transforming the city into a vibrant hub with planning focused on local wellbeing that Barcelona's urban layout is held in high regard.

The Barcelona Model can be seen most clearly in the city's efforts to organize the 1992 Summer Olympics. Following decades of neglect and economic stagnation under the Franco dictatorship, the city government sought to use the Olympic bid as a springboard in attempts to escape this period of crisis. The city sought to achieve urban renewal using a three-pronged approach: conserving Barcelona's unique historical buildings whilst improving public spaces and facilities, strengthening service provision in underdeveloped districts, and a broader reconstruction of the urban network to reduce the amount of traffic congestion.[7] One of the major results from this process was the reclamation of the city's seafront, transforming it from a district characterized by run-down factories and abandoned buildings to a vibrant urban centre. Because the seafront was designated as an Olympic centre of activity, considerable spending was devoted to improving the infrastructure and public spaces of the area. Specifically, a new metro station was constructed, the sewage network improved considerably, beaches were developed, and new mixed-use complexes were built.[8] In terms of transport, the major change that came because of the 1992 games was the construction of a ring road, which significantly relieved congestion of the inner city. [9] Furthermore, the city's fleet of subways and buses were modernized and fare integration was implemented to allow locals to seamlessly switch between modes of transport.[10] Collectively, the focus on strengthening public spaces, service provision, and the traffic network helped rejuvenate a long-neglected city, thereby transforming its reputation.

The legacy of Cerdà and by extension, the Barcelona Model's vision of urban improvement through its grid design plans known as ensanches, is visible across other major Spanish cities. The

ompact grid design which demanded significant open spaces in city blocks and better provision of public services was replicated across the country's main cities, including Madrid, Valencia, and Bilbao.[12]

> **Thus, the creation of a built environment helped ingrain a consensus of improving the wellbeing of the urban dweller within the political culture of Spanish cities.**

It is important to emphasize how this line of thinking places the wellbeing of citizens at the forefront by striving to equalize the distribution of services and open space whilst also working to strengthen transport networks. Such a consensus on a focus of improving urban wellbeing could be perceived as unique to Spain and other European cities, as the political cultures of many cities worldwide can be characterized by clear fault lines in the interests of suburban residents and those who live in the urban core. Another example of this can be found in Paris, where Georges-Eugene Hausmann's renovation in the mid-1800s was a transformation of urban life whose reverberations can be seen today in the city's efforts to create a 15-minute city through self-sufficient neighbourhoods. Conversely, in many North American cities, a common issue is the opposition of the wealthier suburban base of voters that do not support higher taxes to finance improvements for urban cores, such as public transit lines and parks. In this context, it can be understood that the Superblocks initiative forms part of a rich history unique to Barcelona of ambitious urban renewal projects that prioritize all forms of wellbeing for urban residents. Hence, while to an outside observer the mass pedestrianization of a metropolis may appear

ambitious or radical, it is more politically acceptable in Barcelona. Granted, the project has been the subject of criticism by interest groups in the city, which will be discussed in later sections of the paper, but the fact such an initiative has moved from proposals to a built reality demonstrates the city's unique political culture. Having established the context of Barcelona's political culture regarding the planning of urban spaces and mobility, I will now move onto explaining the forces that formed to make Superblocks a reality and the groups that have formed in response.

URBAN POLITICAL FORCES AND A CHANGING URBAN REGIME IN BARCELONA

Following the 1992 Olympics, the city entered a period of unbridled prosperity as international investment increased and the tourism sector experienced explosive growth, with Barcelona becoming one of the most visited places on the planet. However, the 2008 Great Recession had a major impact on the economies of Europe, particularly in Spain. The period leading up to the Olympics up to the nadir of the recession in 2011 saw Barcelona and the regional government of Catalunya governed by stable coalitions of left-wing parties headed by the Socialist Party. Nevertheless, 2011 saw right-wing, pro austerity parties rise to power in Barcelona and the national government.[12] Notable policies include amending the Spanish constitution for the 2nd time to force governments to abide by a debt ceiling and produce balanced budgets for each fiscal year. The policy responses enacted by these governments and the city's history as a hotbed for progressive causes helps explain the sudden rise of the coalition of urban social movements that formed Barcelona Em Comù and later won the 2015 municipal elections.

The economic crisis of the late 2000s and early 2010s had a profound effect on the Spanish political landscape. A previously heavily de-centralized system that gave deference to the authority of regional and municipal governments began to be re-centralized following the 2011 elections to implement austerity policies on a national scale.[13] Before the crisis, Spain was characterized by a two-party system dominated by the conservative Partido Popular and the social-democratic Partido Socialista Obrero Español. Parties like Podemos and Ciudadanos emerged along with a plethora of anti-austerity social movements as new avenues for mobilization of Spanish society.[14] Because of this, a strong anti-establishment sentiment developed as dissatisfaction with the performance of traditional political forces mounted. Particularly, Barcelona proved to be a focusing area for many progressive outsider movements owing to its history as a staging ground for many left-wing groups. For example, opposition to the Franco dictatorship was strong in the city despite vicious suppression thanks to neighborhood associations of artists, intellectuals, and professionals.[15] These strong community bonds, while diluted as the city's character changed throughout the Olympic boom, contributed to the development of a myriad of movements and organizations opposed to the austerity which resulted in cuts to public services. Notable groups include the anti-eviction organization PAH and the 15-M movement, which saw millions of Spaniards protest high unemployment, cuts to welfare, and the political system that disenfranchised the lower classes. Members of 15-M later created the leftist Podemos party and chose to support Barcelona em Comù, a citizens platform composed of local social movements which later went on to win the 2015 municipal election. On the topic of urbanism, the party questioned previous

approaches to urban development which focused on a commercial, growth-oriented model that ignored the wellbeing of residents. The financial crisis and the city's strong networks of civic mobilization provided the requisite focusing event and the infrastructure to build social movements. Additionally, the support of Podemos helped provide institutional support in building a coalition of social movements into a political force in Barcelona's politics.

> **The rise of Barcelona Em Comù provided the impetus to implement a transformational mobility project, something that had been attempted under previous governments but never to the extent of Superblocks.**

The 1990s and 2000s saw several roads designated as car-free, but these plans were never part of a cohesive mobility plan for the city.[16] The first true transformational project was the 2016 Superblock pilot in the Poblenou district. While this was showered by support from the foreign press, local parties, neighborhood communities, and businesses rallied in opposition to the project because of its poor implementation and the lack of civilian consultation in the development of the pilot. Opposition to this mounted to such an extent wherein an unsanctioned referendum for the residents of Poblenou showed a majority in opposition to the project.[17] Granted, while this was characterized by low voter turnout, one cannot deny there was not opposition to the project despite its intentions on improving the quality of life for residents. One of the reasons behind the early criticism of the

project was the new outsider government being led by Ada Colau, who came from a non-traditional background as a female leader of the activist movement that questioned the viability of the business-centric status quo.[18] Given that Barcelona Em Comù was operating a minority government with other more established leftist political parties, there was major potential for other parties to gain in the polls at the expense of the mayor. It is also important to mention the preceding centre-right included an iteration of the Superblock project in its 2015 Urban Mobility Plan, which was accepted by the business community because of the mayor's good relations.[19] Because of this, the mayor approached the implementation of the Poblenou pilot with a priority to execute the project in a quick and successful manner and thereby mitigate the political damage.[20] While the mayor's office managed to weather the initial storm, the implementation and expansion of the Superblocks project was far from an easy ordeal, despite the grassroots origins of the government. Considering this, it is important to discuss the unique nature of an urban regime seeking to bring transformative change of the ilk of the Superblocks project.

Before the election of Ada Colau in 2015, the city's urban regime can best be characterized as a dogmatic vision of growing the city by adhering to the tenets of the Barcelona Model. Throughout this period, much of the criticism that the government faced was that its policies were increasingly out of touch with the needs of locals and was rather more of an alliance between city council and the business community.[21] That is, growth was pursued at all costs, with a particular focus on the tourism sector, which became a key component of the local economy.

> **Thus, one can consider the period that followed the 1992 Olympics and the 2015 election as a time wherein the city was governed in the form of a top-down development regime thanks to coordination between council and the business community.**

However, the election of Barcelona Em Comù and Ada Colau's rise to power represented the end of this regime in favour of attempts to shift to a lower-class opportunity expansion regime. One of the ways it has done so was by transitioning away from the top-down nature that characterized the previous era by making the municipal government more open to citizens through various participatory democracy mechanisms. One of these is Decidim Barcelona citizen engagement platform that was launched in 2015, which seeks to use technology to create a more vibrant local democracy in the city.[22] Decidim shifts away from merely listening to citizens and gives them a voice in council by inviting them to contribute their opinions and improve proposals, thereby improving the participatory nature of government. The open-source platform has been used for processes that have a high decision-making impact, such municipal action plans, and the city budget.[23] The result of this initiative has been a massive influx of proposals from citizens, showing a clear increase in democratic participation and collaboration between citizens.[24] Within the context of Superblocks, it also went through the participatory processes that Decidem Barcelona facilitated as it formed part of the city's broader climate strategy. Through these efforts, the city government is striving to build a

connection with its citizens and make local democracy a bottom-up, grassroots initiative. In doing so, it is trying to shift from an urban regime wherein policy was dictated by the coordination of elites towards a regime in which citizens are mobilized on a mass scale and enjoy a larger role in the policymaking process. The benefit of this initiative is that it is cost effective because of its free-of-cost and open-source nature whereas previous participatory democracy initiatives sponsored by the Catalan government failed because of budget cuts.[25] The major issue moving forward for Ada Colau's government is nurturing the growth of Decidem and making it an indispensable part of the city's policymaking process. While Barcelona has a history of supporting progressive causes, Barcelona Em Comù is unique in its grassroots origins and its focus on improving the participatory nature of local democracy. In summary, there have been clear efforts to create a lower-class opportunity expansion regime, but it is unclear if this transition will be completed as other parties are more traditional political actors less interested in nurturing citizen initiatives.

THE EFFECTS OF SUPERBLOCKS

Given that the first Superblocks were established in 2016, extensive evaluations of the initiative have been conducted to understand the impact it has had on the affected communities of Sant Antoni, Poblenou, and Horta. The most notable changes were drops in air pollution; because of the reduced traffic from private vehicles, NO2 and PM10 particles, both of which are harmful for human health, recorded 25% and 17% drops in the Sant Antoni Superblock.[26] If replicated on a mass scale as planned by the city government, NO2 levels would drop from 47 micrograms per cubic metre to 36 micrograms per cubic metre, bringing the city in line with the WHO's recommended maximum of 40 micrograms.[27]

> **Because of this, the life expectancy of residents could increase by approximately 200 days, thereby reducing healthcare costs by $1.7 billion thanks to reductions in premature deaths resulting from air pollution, traffic noise, and heat.**

Specifically, the increase in car-free spaces has led to a resulting growth in vegetation throughout the city. The reduced traffic also made roads safer, with a majority expressing greater comfort walking within the narrower streets that were previously dominated by cars. Reduced spaces for cars have also led to increases in trips made by alternative mediums of transport, including by foot, bicycle, and public transit. Accordingly, the city has planned to improve its public transit network by expanding its bus fleet, creating 67 km of bus lanes, and planning for an expansion of the metro system. The reduction in cars has also lowered the noise pollution, which helped improve the mental health of most survey respondents.[28] Thus, the Superblocks project has improved the wellbeing of residents whilst being an effective tool in fighting climate change in the city. If the council's plans to create 503 Superblocks by 2030 become a reality, then these effects will be experienced at a much larger scale, significantly altering Barcelona.

The success of the initial pilot projects has also improved the public perception of the Superblocks within the city. Much of the initial opposition dissipated as the city conducted consultations with residents which led to the addition of public playgrounds, green areas, and picnic tables. Because of this, council has moved with confidence in pushing for a significant expansion of this program, with 503 Superblocks set to be created by 2030.[29] However, it is important to note that most of the initial areas designated as Superblocks are on the outside of the city centre and expansion to major districts like Eixample and Ciutat Vella are upcoming tests for the initiative. Nevertheless, the fact it has received public support is a testament to the project's success.

> **Other cities around the world, such as Montreal and Melbourne, have also begun to discuss creating Superblocks in their cities.**

CONCLUSION

The Barcelona Superblocks project is an initiative that serves as a continuation of a long line of urban improvement projects in the city's history. From Cerdà's expansion beyond the medieval city walls in 1859 to the rejuvenation of Barcelona in the lead-up to the Olympics, ambitious restructurings of the city are embedded in the local political culture. The efforts to dramatically alter the way cars are used within the city are the by-product of the rise to power of grassroots urban social movement. Outside forces gained favour thanks to the upending of local politics that followed the Great Financial Crisis and the strong social networks of the city that were hospitable to the development of local civic activism. Once these outsiders rose to power, they sought to transition away from an elitist regime to a grassroots democratic regime characterized by a heightened role for citizens in the policymaking process. The Superblocks initiative is a consequence of these changes, for it is a

government project that is partly the result of civic initiative which has later been refined once pilot versions were created. After five years, there have been demonstrable improvements in air quality, mental health, walkability, and general wellbeing for residents. Furthermore, greener, less carbon intensive forms of transport have grown in usage throughout affected neighbourhoods. While there are concerns for its broader expansion to the more densely populated areas of the city, the Superblocks project has proven to have been a successful model in improving the wellbeing of locals whilst reducing pollution. Moreover,

> ## it is an interesting example of a policy facilitated thanks to a transition to a lower-class opportunity regime.

Additional research to understand transitions to this governance system would help provide detail on key success factors in mass mobilization of citizens and the long-term viability of such a strategy.
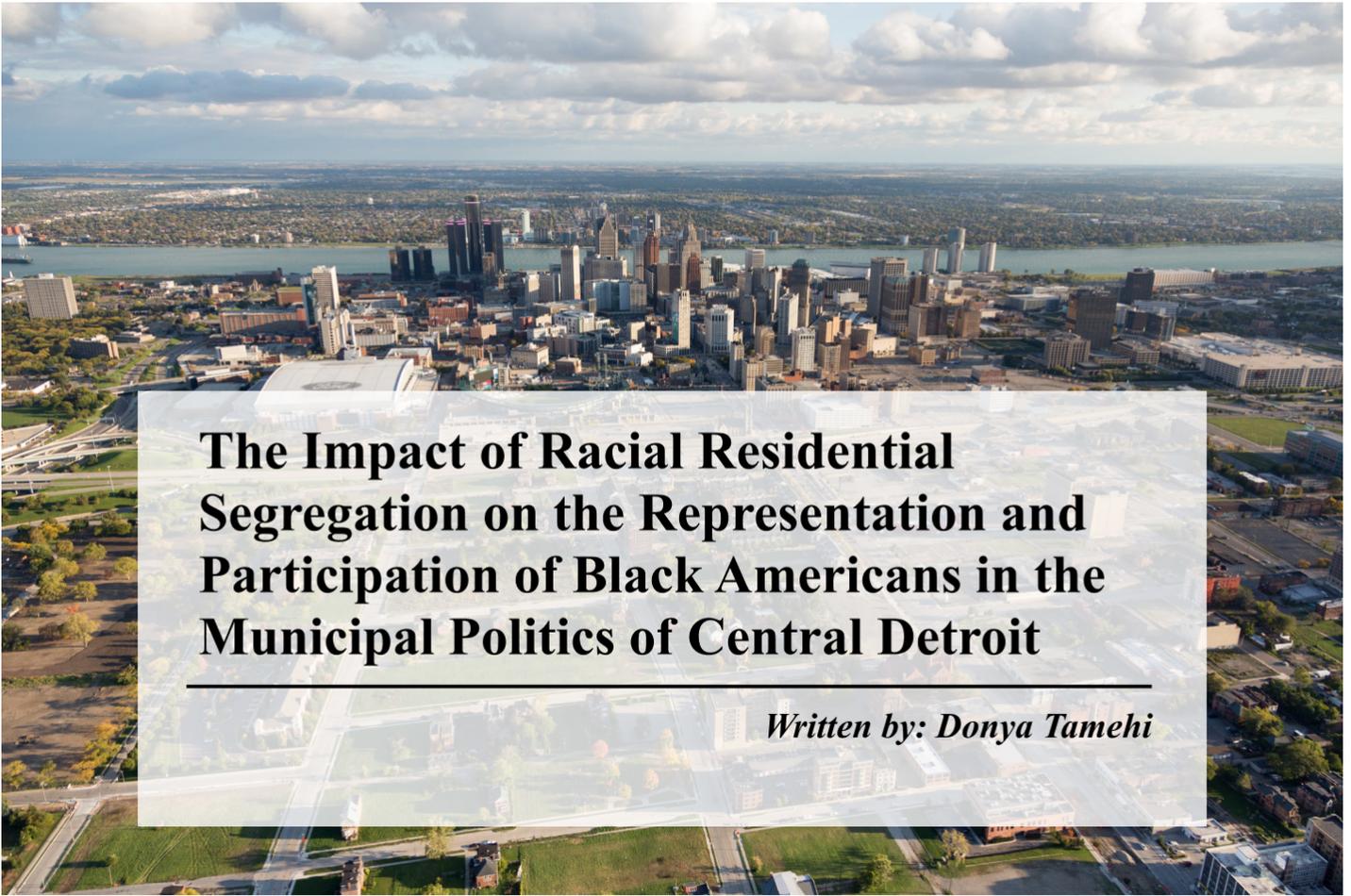
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The Impact of Racial Residential Segregation on the Representation and Participation of Black Americans in the Municipal Politics of Central Detroit

Written by: Donya Tamehi

Abstract

This paper aims to gauge the effect of racial residential segregation on the voices of black Americans in the local politics of central Detroit. In this paper, I look at the geographical settlements of black Detroiters versus that of white Detroiters within the past several decades. I then categorize these settlement tendencies into two distinct eras, within which I analyze the trends surrounding black representation and participation in the municipal politics of the central city. Then, I discuss these findings to draw a conclusion regarding racial residential segregation's impact on black Detroiters in municipal politics. I find that even with the significant shift of central Detroit's racial demographic from a majority-white to a majority-black city, black Detroiters remain underrepresented and disadvantaged within the city's municipal politics.

Key words: Urban Politics, Detroit, Municipal Political Participation, and Racial Residential Segregation

INTRODUCTION

As this paper finds, racial residential segregation has been, and continues to be, the prevalent reality to central and metropolitan Detroit. Since the post-slavery era, the Northern state of Michigan has been comprised of either all-White, all-Black, all-Hispanic, or all-Asian neighbourhoods, with only a small number of neighbourhoods being racially diverse. Essentially, geographical settlement in this area is largely dependent on racial identity, and continues to be so today.[1] Even with the debatably progressive advancements of Western social attitudes regarding racial tolerance, racially diverse neighbourhoods continue to be extremely rare, even within the larger Metro Detroit. Inevitably, these racially homogenous neighbourhoods lead to cities and municipalities with a limited amount of racial diversity. As this paper finds, the cumulation of these all-black and all-white neighbourhoods tend to scale up to larger homogenous areas, such as heavily segregated all-black and all-white cities. This paper's analysis focuses on these settlement tendencies. That is, for the purposes of this paper, racial residential segregation is defined as the racial homogeneity of the inhabitants of central Detroit.

The racial residential segregation- or the racial homogeneity of the residents of central Detroit- may or may not have some implications on the municipal politics of the city. A city comprised of mainly all-Black neighbourhoods arguably differs from a city comprised of all-White neighbourhoods. And it almost certainly differs from a city that is a mix of all-White and all-Black neighbourhoods when it comes to the local political participation and representation of black citizens. Race is an inevitable, but very prevalent factor when it comes to the political practices of any group.

Thus, through comparing the correlations (or lack thereof) of the distinct residential segregation eras with the representation and participation of black central Detroiters in that respective era, I aim to answer the following question:

what impacts, if any, does the racial residential segregation of Detroiters have on the participation and representation of black residents in the municipal politics of Detroit?

I begin to answer this question by marking the first racial residential segregation era as post-World War II Detroit, where the central city is internally segregated with a majority-white population. I extend this era all the way to 1970s Detroit, where the influx of black-Detroiters begins to take over the city's majority populace. With that in mind, I analyze black participation and representation in the local politics of the central city during this era, to gauge the relative effects of an internally segregated central Detroit on Black Americans in municipal politics. It is worth noting that this portion of the paper focuses on the general picture of Detroit's racial makeup during the specified era. The broad tendencies of racial residential shifts in the central city from 1940-1970 will remain the focus of this section of the paper, which means that events such as the 1967 riots in central Detroit, while important, fall outside of the scope of this analysis and therefore, will not be discussed in detail.

In the second section of this analysis, I move on to declare the second area of focus as 1970s Detroit to 2000s Detroit, where a significant drop in the central city's overall population coupled with a notable increase in the municipality's

black population lead to the city's majority black residents. This shift in racial demographic has had both positive and negative implications for the participation and representation Black Detroiters in the city's local politics. These implications seem to be intrinsically positive but do prove to have some instrumentally negative aftereffects. Nonetheless, the specifics of these political impacts are researched and briefly presented in this section of the paper.

In the third section, I present a brief discussion regarding the findings of the first two sections of the paper. In this section, my sole aim is to take the political patterns found in the previous sections and use them to answer the question presented earlier in this introduction. Here, I seek to understand the change in the participation and representation of Black Detroiters as a result of the shift in racial residential tendencies, and further draw some conclusions to that effect.

I finish this paper off with briefly discussing a recent era of racial residential segregation in central Detroit. Namely, I look at the recent rise of the new black middle class in the city, as the potential consequence of the 2014 election of mayor Michael Duggan. I then move on to briefly discuss the changes in Black participation and representation in the municipal politics of the city within this era. However, given that this third era is in the very recent past, I do find drawing an analysis quite difficult. Nonetheless, this section looks to provide a conclusion, and subsequently, a potential prediction regarding where Black participation and representation in Detroit's municipal politics is potentially headed.

FIGURES AND DATA

Figure 1: Population of the City of Detroit (in Thousands)
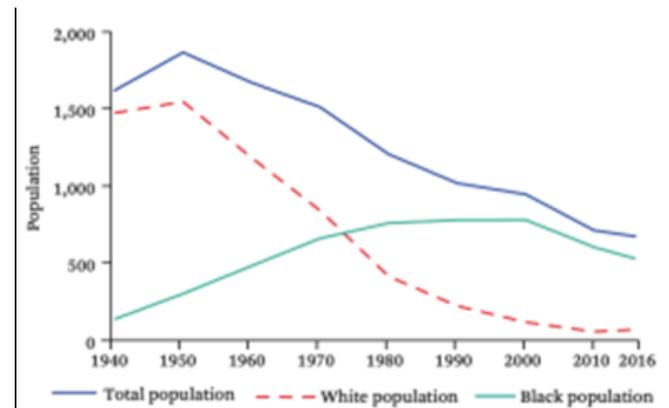
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FINDINGS: ERA ONE: RACIAL RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION IN 1940s-1970s DETROIT

For the purposes of this paper, era one in Detroit begins in the post-World War II 1940s and lasts all the way up to the years that mark the surge of Black central Detroit residents in the 1970s. This range marks the commencement of the racial residential transition of black Detroiters towards the central city.[2] This is to say, during this time frame, Black families begin to transition into central Detroit regardless of the White Detroiters' racist attitudes. In other words, throughout this thirty-year range, White residents of the city resisted the entry of Black people into their neighbourhoods but failed to keep all the Black families out. As these Black families move into these neighbourhoods, White families move out, making the neighbourhoods within the city almost entirely racially homogenous.[3]

120

At this time, White families leave these transitional neighbourhoods for other residences in central Detroit. Nonetheless, the residential transition of Black families into the central city at this point is rather steady as per Figure 1; the Black residential growth rate is on a steady incline. The population of the whole city is on a steady decline and the population of the central city is still predominantly White, regardless of the slow decline of the White residential population. To be exact, throughout much of this range, approximately 16% of central Detroit's residents are black, and roughly 82% of residents are White.[4] Therefore, for the purposes of the succeeding section, we look at 1940-1970 central Detroit as a predominantly White, and internally racially segregated city where the local political effects are to be discussed in further detail.

FINDINGS: ERA ONE: MUNICIPAL POLITICS FOR BLACK DETROITERS

During era one, the racial cleavages of the predominantly white Detroit proved to be quite relevant to the city's municipal politics. As Thomas J. Sugrue recognizes in The Origins of Urban Crisis, era one- the 1940 to 1970- was a time of triumph for the middle-class White Detroiter. At this time, political representation was almost exclusively White, with the conservative ideologies of the right wing dominating all the municipality's decisions and policies.[5] For instance, during the 1950s, republican mayor Albert E. Cobo evidently endorsed and adopted economic policies that created vast opportunities for the average White Detroiter, which was simultaneously disadvantageous to the new Black residents of the central city. Cobo's entire campaign rallied the marginal votes of White Detroiters through expanding urban renewal projects that offered the

middle-class White residents of the city opportunities for new employment, while jeopardizing the housing and residential capacities of the Black residents. During his time in office, Cobo proposed numerous urban development and infrastructure projects that, while beneficial for the city's White economy, required kicking Black Detroiters out of their Black neighbourhoods6. Throughout the 1950s, the vast majority of mayor Cobo's policies endorsed the notion of housing segregation and, as a result, strategically targeted the residential settlements of black families. This, coupled with Black Detroiters' rightful fear of finding sufficient housing in a market that was intrinsically pro segregation, significantly damaged the living capacities of the racial minority group.[7]

During Cobo's time in office, Black residents' participation in local politics proved to be working against them. Prior to election, Cobo's campaign slogans had advocated 'fighting for housing and civil rights'[8], in an attempt to sway the Black voter. Nonetheless, regardless of the false promises regarding Black Detroiters' rights, once elected, Cobo's policies actually worked in direct opposition to the Black voters' needs and desires. In that regard, the municipal political participation of Black Detroiters in the 1950s proved to be of little impact, and even detrimental for the Black residents.

Furthermore, the only significant challenge to Cobo's residentially divisive policies throughout this time was the backlash of civil rights groups that operated both in and out of central Detroit.[9] The average black Detroiter had essentially no place in the actual local political arena to combat the very policies that put their place of residence in jeopardy. At this time, Black municipal representation in central Detroit was non-existent,

which essentially worked to reinforce the lack of political ability with respect to the average Black Detroiter.

Later in era one, specifically, in the late 1950s and 60s, the political standings of Black Detroiters seemingly took a turn for the better, with the election of Louis C. Miriani and subsequently Jerome P. Cavanagh into mayoral office. The two mayors had affiliate ties and endorsements from Black leading groups from the central city. The two collectively worked to minimize racial discrimination in the city's labour markets and advocated for the central municipality's civil rights initiatives. Nonetheless, through their time in Mayoral office, economic discrimination (outside of the labour market) and housing residential segregation persisted over the black residents of Detroit. In addition to this discriminatory residential dilemma, the overwhelming White police force continued to subject black Detroiters to undue brutality and hardship,[10] which essentially erased the hope that had been created by the election of both democratic mayors.

Similar to the preceding decade, black residents participating in the municipal politics of the 1950s and 60s was not necessarily helpful for the average Black Detroiter. At the time of election,

Jerome P. Cavanagh was said to have won 85% of the Black vote.[11] But regardless of the fact, failed to implement any policies to effectively combat the economic discrepancy, the residential segregation, and the prevalent police

brutality that victimized Black residents of central Detroit.

In that regard, municipal participation of lack Detroiters, while allowed, was systemically designed to work in opposition of Black people in the city throughout era one.

Notably, the late 1950s did mark the election of the first Black elected official, William Patrick. Patrick served on the Common Council, and in that regard, did open the door for Black local political representation in central Detroit.[12] Nonetheless, the fact that the issues of economic discrimination, housing segregation, and law enforcement brutality still haunted the non-white residents of Detroit shows that this disproportionate representation of black people in local politics did not work in favour of Black Detroiters. In fact, the election of William Patrick worked counter to the interests of Black central Detroit residents as it became the last straw for white Detroiters, and as a result, led to the racial residential nightmare that was to come in the succeeding years.

FINDINGS: ERA TWO: RACIAL SEGREGATION IN 1970s-2000s DETROIT

With an increased amount of Black American migration to central Detroit after the 1940s, 50s, and 60s, the notion of 'White flight' became a prominent beast that devoured the social, political, and economic stability of the central city. Simply put, during this range- 1970 Detroit to 2000s Detroit- the increasing ratio of black people to white people was accompanied with a proportional increase in white residents' discomfort in their own city. This discomfort, coupled with the fear of becoming the city's new racial minority group, led the White residents of

Detroit to move out of the central city and into the surrounding suburban municipalities.[13] This is what Farley et al. call 'White flight'[14]; namely, central Detroit moving towards an overwhelmingly black residential region, with the surrounding suburbs of Metro Detroit becoming almost exclusively White. This is depicted in Figure 1, where the central city's white population experiences a colossal decrease, declining by nearly 86%. All the while, the city's black population undergoes a rather sizeable increase, becoming the majority population of the central city, creating the largest racial residential segregation gap in all of America.

There are many reasons to which Detroit's 'White flight' crisis of 1970-2000 could be attributed. Scholars argue that it was in fact, a complementary mix of the racist attitudes of White Detroiters, the exclusionary practices of the housing market, as well as the communal preferences of Black residents that led to the overwhelmingly segregated metropolis during this period. That is, on one hand, the imbedded use of racial stereotypes on behalf of Detroit's White residents led to associating fellow Black Detroiters with things like inferior intelligence, lack of work ethic, and criminal activity, which ultimately translated to white Detroiters disparaging their Black neighbours.[15] On the other hand, the agents of the metropolis' housing market, acting in their own financial interests and on these same racial stereotypes, discriminated against Black (potential) homeowners, essentially reinforcing racial residential segregation within the region.[16] All the while, the Black home-seekers, being aware of the unwelcoming attitudes of White residents, leaned more towards residing in areas where other black people are numerically dominant.[17]

All these factors put together arguably facilitated the growth of racial residential segregation in central Detroit throughout 1970-2000.

FINDINGS: ERA TWO: MUNICIPAL POLITICS FOR BLACK DETROITERS

Central Detroit's shift from a predominantly white city to a predominantly black city during the 1970s through to the 2000s had both positive and negative implications for black people in the municipality's local politics. On one hand, the overwhelming increase in the city's black population led to municipal officials recognizing the electoral power of the black vote, and therefore, paying more attention to the central city's apparent discriminatory practices. Also, during this time, the balance of political power in the central city began to move towards the left, as the rapidly growing Black population gained municipal authority.[18] In fact, during this period, the Black population, alongside an underwhelming segment of White liberals, were able to elect the city's first black mayor, Coleman Young.[19] Young's time in office, while rather controversial, was nonetheless a time of local political activism for the black residents of Detroit. The proactive mayor was effectively able to level the playing field for many black residents through affirmative policies that amended the racist practices of various city departments, including the city's police force. Additionally, Young was able to grant a fair share of the city's contracts to black-owned businesses, essentially aiding the previously present economic discrimination crisis.[20]

On this same token, the participation of Black Detroiters in municipal politics during the 1970s, 80s, and 90s, seemed to be gaining endorsement. Black residents now outnumbered White residents in the central city, so their participation in local politics was directly rewarded by municipal representatives. Their issues were being spoken about, and better yet, they were being more or less combatted through campaign promises and official policies. That is, since the local political representatives at this time were faced with a predominantly black constituency, they found themselves having to pay attention to the demands of the wider ethnic population and plan their respective campaigns accordingly.[21] All in all, during this time, the participation of Black Detroiters in the local political realm seemed to be gaining importance and valuation by even the remaining White residents and officials in the central city.

Furthermore, Black representation in the city's local politics during the time Coleman Young took office was also increasingly valued. Obviously, there was a Black representative leading the municipal administration of the city, which implicitly encouraged more Black residents to run for local political positions.[22] In fact, this time marked the election and appointment of several Black councilmen and a few councilwomen to Detroit's local political office. Inevitably, the rapidly increasing Black population in central Detroit at this time, proportionally increased the black political representation in the city, just as it would in any other democratic system.

Nonetheless, while all this was good, there were still severe local political shortcomings that translated to the oppression of average Black Detroiters. Namely, the fleeing White residents

during this era brought the politics of local defensiveness with them to the metropolitan suburbs and made it increasingly more difficult for Black Detroiters to move into White suburban neighbourhoods. When Black central Detroiters tried to move to these exclusively White areas, they faced severe backlash and hostility from the same white residents that had essentially caged them in the central city.[23] That is, even though the increased number of Black residents in the central city seemed to be a matter of integration on the surface, the prevailing racism of White suburbia strengthened the metropolis' residential segregation crisis even further. Not only that, but more importantly,

the fleeing of the White residents to Metro Detroit led to the simultaneous fleeing of grassroots coalitions into the metropolis as well.

That is, various industries that dominated the economics of the central city significantly reduced their urban labor force and took their businesses to White suburban areas, essentially resisting the affirmative action policies that anti-segregation politicians, like Coleman Young, had put forward. In short, the societal racism that persisted over the larger metro Detroit area during this time, reinforced the racial cleavages between the Black and White residents of the metropolis, and thus, bolstered the issues that Black Detroiters had been facing for the past few decades.

With this in mind, the participation of Black residents in Detroit's local politics, once again proved to be somewhat counterproductive. That is, local political participation, although more valued amongst potential municipal representatives, was still not converted to practical change,

124

as the attitudes of White suburban Detroiters proved to outweigh the attitudes of liberal politicians. Simply put, although Coleman Young had attempted to decrease labour force segregation and implement policies to combat the racism of the city's economic realm, the persistent racist attitudes of white suburbia proved to counteract his efforts. In essence, Black central Detroiters were still underrepresented in skilled and White-collar work and the economic discrepancy between the white and black residents was still a prevalent issue for the average Detroiter.[24]

Additionally, the representation of Black Detroiters in municipal politics was also impacted by these societal shortcomings. Even though there was evidently more Black representation in the municipality and its affiliated administrations, these representatives essentially lacked the political power to combat the attitudes of White suburbia. That is,

even though there were Black representatives in office, the racist tendencies of the surrounding metropolis' residents, coupled with the racist tendencies of the economic sector's agents, kept these representatives from facilitating any actual change for the average Black Detroiter.

Simply put, any integrative policies that would be implemented by Black representatives in municipal office would be in one way or another counteracted by the racist attitudes of the surrounding suburbia, or by the greedy, and racist perceptions of the private sector.

In that regard, local political representation for the Black residents of central Detroit, although increasing in quantitative numbers, failed to accomplish the goals and objectives that democratic processes set out to accomplish.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The findings section of this paper adequately proves that race is, in fact, an important factor with respect to the residential preferences of Detroiters. On one hand, as depicted by the findings of era one, the integration of Black immigrants into exclusively White neighbourhoods leads to the residents of those White neighbourhoods feeling uncomfortable and concerned for their becoming the respective minorities of their communities, which in turn translates to them moving to surrounding neighbourhoods in which their ethnic identity is numerically dominant. This essentially leads to the internal racial residential segregation of the central city. But, as depicted in era two, the residential segregation does not stop there. In fact, with an increased amount of black residential migration, the process continues until the central city is internally homogenous, and the racial residential segregation spreads to the surrounding municipalities. That is, while many scholars attribute the segregation crisis of central Detroit to the class-based inequality that persists amongst the different casts of the city,

race proves to be an underlying factor that feeds into the class-based discrepancies of residents.[25]

In short, the Black White racial cleavage that plagues Detroiters directly impacts the residential tendencies of the city's residents.

Moreover, as once again found in the findings section of this paper, these residential tendencies seem to undermine the voices of Detroit's Black residents in municipal politics in one way or another. During era one, we see that there is an explicit lack of participation and representation of Black residents in Detroit's city politics. That is, in this era, there is an inevitable connection between the majority-White population of the central city, and the lack of participation and representation in local politics on behalf of the minority Black Detroiters. In fact, only the members of exclusively White neighbourhoods participate in electoral processes and run as representatives of local politics, while the minority number of black residents remain marginalized in the political arena. Subsequently, when we shift our attention to the second era, where the Black residents make up the majority of the city's population, we see that the inevitable democratic increase of participation and representation does not lead to an effective facilitation of change on behalf of the municipality. That is, we find that even when Black Detroiters are explicitly represented in the city's local politics, their interests are still undermined by the social racism that prevails outside of their municipality. In that regard, it seems as though the participation and representation of Black residents in municipal politics remains continuously undervalued regardless of whether the city's majority population is predominantly White, or predominantly Black. Evidently, these local political failures seem to prevail in light of racial residential segregation within the metro area as a whole, and not just within the city.

Unfortunately, the racial residential segregation of Detroit's residents seems to have other implications that do not directly impact local political participation and representation, but that

nevertheless instrumentally affect the voices of Black Detroiter's in their city's democracy. That is, Black residential isolation from the White residents of a given region leads to the social and economic marginalization of Black cities[26]; this social and economic disenfranchisement, although not strictly political, does have various spillover effects for the participation and representation of Black residents in the local politics of these cities. For instance, racially segregated areas are claimed to form economic coalitions that are weaker than those formed in racially integrated regions.[27] Essentially, ethnically homogenous cities form ethnically homogenous coalitions that reflect the interests of a singular ethnic group. If this representative ethnic group is a victim of societal bigotry, as they are in our case, then the entire coalition proves to be a victim of social bigotry as well. This translates to the coalitions' initiatives lacking endorsement from the big, important economic figures, who, in our case, happen to be predominantly indifferent to the coalition's objectives. Which, in turn, means that the coalition works alone in a large and competitive playing field, in which getting anything done requires endorsement and collaboration. As a result of this, the coalition fails to efficiently get anything done, and therefore, fails to represent the interests of its originating urban area. That is, the economic coalitions that are formed out of racially segregated cities like Detroit, fail to efficiently make their mark in the large economic (now globalized) playing field. This sense of economic underrepresentation translates to a very limited influence in the political realm. That is, even though the weak economic coalitional tendencies do not directly impact the participation and representation of Black Detroiters in local politics, they do, in fact, affect the representation of Black Detroiters in the economic arena, which in turn spills over to the representation of these same residents in general politics.

CONCLUSION AND THE NEXT STEPS FOR DETROIT

Answering our initial question regarding the impacts of racial residential segregation of Detroiters on the participation and representation of black residents in the municipal politics of Detroit proves to be multifold. Primarily, this paper finds that racial residential segregation does have an impact on the participation and representation of Black Detroiters in local politics. Intuitively, segregated cities, whether majority-White or majority-Black, do tend to reflect on the participation and representation of Black residents in the central city's politics and this was reflected in the findings of this paper. However, the extent to which the participation and representation of Detroiters was impacted remained the question that this paper attempted to answer.

This paper found that regardless of how the residence in the central city was segregated, the participation and representation of Black residents in local politics was more or less flawed. That is, as we moved from an era in which central Detroit was internally segregated and predominantly White, to an era in which central Detroit was internally homogenous and predominantly Black, we noticed that the local political concerns of Black residents persisted regardless of the demographic change. During the first era, the lack of participation and underrepresentation of Black Detroiters in municipal politics was direct and inherently present as the White majority dominated the local political arena. Subsequently, during the second era, while the participation rate and representation rate of Black residents increased, the problems concerning Black Detroiters, such as economic and housing inequality, persisted. The persistence of these problems then led me to believe that the

increase in political participation and representation during the second era was counteracted by the racist attitudes that were reinforced by the city's racial residential segregation dilemma. To that effect, the participation and representation of Black Detroiters in city politics remained rather passie.

Within the past few years, Detroit has entered a new, third era, in which the city's White population has begun to slightly increase. This era has been argued to mark a turning point for Detroit's racial cleavages as it has been trying to shift the city towards a more integrated municipal society.[28] Now, the central municipality is comprised of approximately 14% White residents and 80% Black residents, with other racial identities making up just over 5% of the municipal demographic.[29] I mark the beginning of this era as 2014, where the election of Michael Duggan, the city's first White mayor in about forty years, initiated several growth coalitions moving their headquarters to the central city. Duggan's administration has proactively endorsed these coalitions' economic incentives through taxes and abatements, in an attempt to endorse a new and coming Black middle class, and subsequently better the economic health of the city.[30] These growth coalitions are projected to increase funding for Duggan's city integration initiatives and urban renewal projects, all of which are aimed at increasing the black quality of life in Detroit.

Nonetheless, the actual success of these initiatives is rather hard to gauge, as the recent alleged developments have yet to reflect on the local political tendencies of Black residents. That is, in the central city, local political voter turnout is quite low, with less than 22% of the city's population voting in the 2017 mayoral election[31]; which, inevitably implies that majority Black

residents have yet to see value in their participating in local politics. Additionally, given that social political issues like police brutality, and the war on drugs continuously target the municipality's black population, it could be argued that again, Black local political participation seems to be counteractive for Black Detroiters.[32] Finally, some argue that the election of the first white mayor in several decades possibly implies that the city is shifting back towards an under-representative administration. A White mayor could potentially translate to a White majority, which can again, politically internalize the racist attitudes of White Detroiters. Therefore, we must beg the question: is this new era of alleged change just a glorification of 1940s Detroit where we are reintegrating White residents into the central city at the expense of Black people's political freedom? With all this in mind, we may come to conclude that the light of the end of the tunnel that this third era initially presented, may not seem too bright.

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129

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