

2016

San Francisco State University /Volume 35



THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS JOURNAL

SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY

A Yearly Publication of the International Relations Department
College of Liberal and Creative Arts

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 02 Journal Staff
- 03 Editorial Policy
- 04 Acknowledgements
- 05 The Role of Symbolic Capital
in Putin's Popularity: State Society
Relations in Russia
KA CHIO
- 14 Mexico: The Failed Drug War
GENEVIEVE LANE
- 23 Latin America/United States Alliances
and the War on Drugs
CHARLOTTE OHRBOM
- 32 Palestine and Israel: The Path
Towards Cooperation
MICHELLE STONE
- 40 Navigating the Future Stability of
Xinjiang and China's Silk Road
RAJA SUTHERLAND

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MANAGING EDITORS

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Noora Larson
Michelle Stone

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Ka Chio
Genevieve Lane
Charlotte Ohrbom
Michelle Stone
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EDITORIAL POLICY

Overview

The International Relations Journal at San Francisco State University strives to exhibit the diverse range of undergraduate and graduate research interests that flourish in our department.

Each semester, the Journal is offered as a course in which students participate as writers or editors in a peer review process, or as administrative staff members who assist authors and editors as well as guide the Journal through its production.

The goal of the course is to expose students to the peer review process, focusing on academic standards of argumentation and factual accuracy, citation formatting, and collaborative editing using Microsoft Word's "track changes" feature. More broadly, the Journal's executive editors aim to help students develop writing/editing skills applicable in other courses and promote a deeper understanding of the discipline of International Relations as a whole.

Submissions & Process

The Journal encourages all students pursuing a B.A. or M.A. in International Relations to submit completed works (incomplete papers and abstracts are not accepted) at the beginning of each semester. From these submissions, the Journal's executive editors assign students to positions on the writing and editorial boards as well as a number of administrative-level appointments.

The course curriculum includes a number of informational workshops and at least three rounds of structured editing and revision. All editing is anonymous and each submission is reviewed by three different editors.

The structured peer review is as follows: ^[1] a submission is first edited by an undergraduate or graduate "peer expert" who has conducted prior research on topics and/or regions relevant to the paper and can thus provide fact checking and citation suggestions; ^[2] second round editing focuses on clarity and academic tone by pairing the manuscript with an editor unfamiliar with the paper's subject; ^[3] finally, the paper is edited for proper citation formatting and technical aspects. At the end of the semester, authors participating in this process are expected to submit a final manuscript for consideration by the Journal's executive editors and the faculty advisor.

Publication of Articles

Only submissions that have gone through the peer review process and meet the content and formatting requirements will be considered for publication. The Journal is published yearly.

For Submissions and Back Issues:

<http://internationalrelations.sfsu.edu/content/international-relations-journal-0>

For all other inquiries:

Department of International Relations
1600 Holloway Avenue/HSS Room 336
San Francisco, California 94132
PHONE: 415.338.2654/ FAX: 415.338.2880

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The staff of the *International Relations Journal* is grateful for the continued funding allocated by the Instructionally Related Activities Committee and the Department of International Relations at San Francisco State University for the production of this journal.

The production of this journal is a group effort and the managing editors would like to especially thank all the members of the editorial board and the contributing writers. The editorial board members edited the articles contained in this issue and both the editors and writers patiently endured the labor of multiple revisions of these articles, as well as corresponding with one another. The guidance and advice of Dr. Burcu Ellis in the International Relations Department has been indispensable to the publication of the Journal.

SPECIAL THANKS to Dior Acevedo for redesigning the page layout, and Charlotte Ohrbom for redesigning the cover. The new layout is a much needed breath of fresh air for the journal. Another special thanks to the hard-working managing editors, for moving the process forward at a steady pace, preventing a rush at the end of the semester. Great team work this year!

THE ROLE OF SYMBOLIC CAPITAL IN PUTIN'S POPULARITY: STATE-SOCIETY RELATIONS IN RUSSIA

BY
KA CHIO

Due to Vladimir Putin's efforts in resolving Russia's economic chaos of the 1990s and restoring Russia's influence in world politics, he has been the most important and popular figure in Russian politics since late December, 1999. Since 2014, Russia faces economic difficulties due to Russia's annexation of Crimea and the West's economic sanctions. It is reasonable to expect that Russian people should blame Putin for the economic difficulties. However, Putin's approval rating keeps going up even during the current economic difficulties. This phenomenon is a puzzle for scholars and policymakers. This study draws on the concept of symbolic capital to examine this puzzle. It demonstrates that Russian people grant honor for Putin to rule Russia. So, Putin enjoys a high approval rating.

Vladimir Putin has been the most important leader in Russia since he became the President of Russia in late December, 1999. During his reign as president from 2000 - 2008, Russia's economy recovered from the economic chaos of the 1990s, and Russia's influence expanded across the globe.¹ As a result, Russian people can be said to have a positive attitude toward Putin.

Beginning in 2014, however, Russian people experience turbulence and hardship. Due to Russia's annexation of Crimea and its support toward separatists in eastern Ukraine, the United States and its allies imposed a series of economic sanctions on Russia.² Amid the economic sanctions, the price of petroleum plunged, which dealt a serious blow to the Russian government's revenue.³ These economic woes have contributed to the decline

of the Russian economy and brought about suffering to Russian people. It is reasonable to expect that Russian people should blame Putin's leadership, so Putin should have a very low approval rating. However, this expectation does not occur. Instead, he continues to enjoy support since the annexation of Crimea in March 2014. According to data from the Levada Center, a Moscow-based and independent polling organization in Russia, Putin's approval rating was 65 percent in January 2014.⁴ His rating rose to 80 percent in March 2014, and has stayed in the 80s ever since. In June 2015, the rating hit an all-time high of 89 percent. In Putin's 15 years in politics, his approval rating had never been higher than 89 percent.⁵

Overall, this phenomenon poses

1 Stephen White and Ian McAllister, "The Putin Phenomenon," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 24, no.4 (2008): 615-16.

2 BBC. "How Far Do EU-US Sanctions on Russia Go?," last modified September 15, 2014, accessed October 26, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28400218>.

3 *Ibid.*

4 Michael Birnbaum, "Putin's Approval Ratings Hit 89 Percent, the Highest They've ever been," *Washington Post*, June 24, 2015, accessed October 25, 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/06/24/putins-approval-ratings-hit-89-percent-the-highest-theyve-ever-been/>

5 Russia Today, "Putin's Approval Rating Hits Historic High at 89 Percent," last modified June 24, 2015, accessed October 5, 2015, <https://www.rt.com/politics/269434-russia-putin-record-rating/>.

a puzzle for scholars and policymakers. Why, given that Russian people are experiencing economic difficulties, is Putin still enjoying strong support from Russian people? This paper argues that Putin has been able to enjoy strong support from Russian people during the current economic difficulties because Russian people bestow prestige on Putin for his achievements. Moreover, opposition parties and figures cannot destroy Putin's prestige because Putin has made them politically weak and marginalized. This paper is organized as follows. The first section offers an introduction. The second section introduces the concept of symbolic capital, and it demonstrates the validity of the research question. The third through fifth sections examine Putin's prestige, looking at his record on economic recovery, his record on state sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the ineffectiveness of Russia's opposition to affect Putin's prestige. The sixth section recaps this paper's argument and discusses its implications.

Validity of the Research Question

When Putin became the Prime Minister of Russia in August 1999, his popularity was at the level of 2 percent. In two months, the number jumped to 26 percent. When Putin became president in January 2000, the number rose to 58 percent.⁶ In his eight years as Russia's president between 2000 and 2008, his rating reached 87 percent at some point and never dropped below 60 percent.⁷ As Russians' living standard steadily improved and the Russian economy gradually recovered from the economic chaos of the 1990s, Putin's approval rating rose. An increasing number of Russian people expressed the belief that Putin brought prosperity to Russia and had a positive attitude toward Putin.⁸

2014 was a turbulent year for Putin. In March 2014, Putin signed into law incorporating Ukraine's Crimea into the territory of Russia in the wake of political turbulence in Ukraine.⁹ To punish Rus-

sia, the United States and Western European states imposed a series of economic sanctions on Russia.¹⁰ Amid the economic sanctions, the plunging price of petroleum dealt a serious blow to the Russian economy.¹¹ The Russian economy is in crisis now. The economy contracted by 4.6 percent in the second quarter of 2015 compared to the same period in 2014,¹² and the rate of inflation stood at 16.9 percent.¹³ A study conducted by Stephen White and Ian McAllister shows that there is a causal relationship between economic prosperity and Putin's high approval rating. They argue that Putin enjoyed robust public approval because of improvements in the Russian economy from 2000 - 2008.¹⁴ According to this study, it is reasonable to expect that Putin should get a very low rating due to the struggling Russian economy. However, his approval rating keeps rising. In June 2015, Putin's approval rating hit 89 percent, the highest percent in his political life.¹⁵

In order to understand this puzzle, this paper draws on the concept of symbolic capital. Symbolic capital can be defined as society perception that grants prestige, honor, or recognition on political leaders. Political leaders use it to acquire influence and assert the right to rule.¹⁶ The following sections demonstrate that Russian people grant prestige to Putin and recognize his achievements, and Putin utilizes such prestige and recognition to rule Russia.

Putin's Record on Economic Recovery

Immediately after the collapse of the Soviet

10 BBC. "How Far Do EU-US Sanctions."

11 Christopher Walker and Robert Orttung, "How Russia Props up Putin in the Polls," *Washington Post*, January 30, 2015. Accessed October 25, 2015, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/how-russia-props-up-putin-in-the-polls/2015/01/30/0302bea8-a59e-11e4-a7c2-03d37af98440_story.html.

12 Katherine Hille, "Fears of Financial Crisis Rise as Russia's Economy Shrinks," *Financial Times*, August 10, 2015, accessed October 26, 2015, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/a4b9944c-3f77-11e5-b98b-87c7270955cf.html#axzz43rZMwgxo>.

13 Bridget Kendall, "Russians Reel from Economic Crisis," BBC, April 13, 2015, accessed September 25, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-32220335>.

14 White and McAllister, "The Putin Phenomenon," 615-16.

15 Birnbaum, "Putin's Approval Ratings."

16 Pierre Bourdieu, "Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field," in *State/Culture: State-Formation after the Cultural Turn*, edited by George Steinmetz, 62-3.

6 Richard Rose, "How Floating Parties Frustrate Democratic Accountability: A Supply-Side View of Russia's Elections," *East European Constitutional Review* 9, no. 1/2 (2000): 221-22.

7 Daniel Treisman, "Presidential Popularity in a Hybrid Regime: Russia under Yeltsin and Putin," *American Journal of Political Science* 55, no. 3 (2011): 590.

8 White and McAllister, "The Putin Phenomenon," 615-16.

9 Peter Rutland, "The Impact of Sanctions on Russia," *Russian Analytical Digest*, no. 157 (2014): 2-3.

Union in 1991, the Russian economy deteriorated. When Yeltsin became Russia's president, he wanted to transform Russia's command economy to a western-style free market economy in a short period of time. So, he adopted a shock therapy strategy to reform the Russian economy, which resulted in economic disasters.¹⁷ During the 1990s, Russia's industrial output contracted by about 50 percent, and its agricultural production declined by about 40 percent. Russia's gross domestic product fell by about 50 percent. After the Russian government freed its control on consumer prices, its inflation rate sharply rose to 2,509 percent in 1992. Though it declined thereafter, the rate did not decline to single digits by the end of the 1990s.¹⁸ The Russian government's plan for privatization of state enterprises further escalated the deteriorating economic problem. People who received those shares' vouchers did not earn much as a small group of Russian people accumulated them at low prices. This small group of Russian people gradually became oligarchs and gained control over 50% of the Russian economy.¹⁹ To make matters worse, the Russian government ran up enormous debt. In 1999, Russia had to pay its \$17.5 billion in debt to both domestic and foreign investors when its domestic budget was about \$20 billion.²⁰ Russia came close to becoming a failing state during the 1990s.²¹

When Putin became Russia's president at the dawn of the twenty-first century, his priority was to rescue the country's deteriorating economy and to improve the standard of living. In his early speeches, he already warned the danger of Russia falling to the status of a third-world state. He compared Russia's economy to that of Portugal, the European Union's poorest member. He said of the Russian economy: "It would take us fifteen years and an eight percent annual growth of our GDP to reach the per capital GDP

level of present-day Portugal."²² He immediately cut off the complex web of state subsidies to the federal, state, and local levels, especially subsidies to companies. Rising petroleum prices brought a large amount of revenue to the Russian government's coffer. Public debt declined from 66.8 percent of GDP from 1999 to 2.7 percent of GDP in 2007. The revenue generating from petroleum sales accounted for about 30 percent of Russia's GDP in the second half of the 2000s. At the same time, inflation stabilized, falling from 12 percent in 2003 to 9 percent in 2006.²³ Real GDP growth expanded, rising from -5.3 percent in 1998 to 7.3 percent in 2007. Unemployment steadily improved as well. In 1999, Russia's unemployment rate stood at 12.4 percent. In 2007, the number dropped to 6.3 percent.²⁴ Under this economic condition, Putin sought to gain people's loyalty and support by giving them new economic opportunities and social services. From 2000 to 2005, Russian people saw their incomes grew by an average of 26 percent. Russia's middle class now constitutes about 25 percent of the population.²⁵

Because Putin was able to bring about economic prosperity and improved the people's living standards before, it can be said that Russians perceive him as a symbol of stability and trust. Their trust in Putin reflects in a series of polls conducted by the Levada Center. These polls on the perception of Putin are separate from the polls on Putin's approval rating. In an October 2015 survey, the Levada Center asked why so many people trusted Vladimir Putin. About 37 percent of the respondents answered that Putin successfully and adequately resolved the country's problems, and 36 percent said they hoped Putin would be able to resolve the country's problems in the future. Similarly, the same survey asked the same group of people whether they agreed with the opinion that the Russian population had already grown tired of waiting for Vladimir Putin to introduce positive changes into Russian people's lives. In October 2015, about 33 percent of the respondents answered mostly

17 Andrei P. Tsygankov, *The Strong State in Russia: Development and Crisis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 89.

18 Sutela Pekka, "Economic Policy," in *Return to Putin's Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*, edited by Stephen K. Wegren (Lanham: Roman & Littlefield Publishing Group, 2013), 173.

19 Tsygankov, *The Strong State*, 90.

20 Tsygankov, *The Strong State*, 93.

21 John P. Willerton, Mikhail Beznosov, and Martin Carrier, "Addressing the Challenges of Russia's 'Failing State': The Legacy of Gorbachev and the Promise of Putin," *Demokratizatsiya* 13, no.2 9 (2005): 219.

22 Dale Roy Herspring, *Putin's Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, 2007), 199.

23 Pekka, "Economic Policy," 174.

24 Peter Rutland, "Putin's Economic Record: Is the Oil Boom Sustainable?," *Europe-Asia Studies* 60, no.6 (2008): 1052.

25 Tsygankov, *The Strong State*, 104.

no, and about 17 percent said definitely no.²⁶ These numbers remained consistent throughout Putin's rule. In August 2000, about 31 percent of the respondents said mostly no, and about 12 percent said definitely no. Likewise, the survey asked whether the respondents believed that Putin was concerned with making major improvements on people's lives. About 49 percent said Putin sincerely wanted to improve people's lives, but he was unable to do so because of the resistance of the bureaucracy and a lack of a good leadership team, up from 33 percent in May 2012. At the same time, about 25 percent of the respondents said that Putin sincerely wanted to improve people's lives, and he would be able to do so within the next 6 years, up from 22 percent in May 2012.²⁷ On the West's economic sanctions and the subsequent economic difficulties, a large number of Russians expressed their positive views as well. In an August 2015 poll, about 58 percent of the respondents answered that the sanctions did not create serious problems for them and their families, whereas about 14 percent of the respondents said the sanctions created no problems at all.²⁸ On the question of whether the economic sanctions could create serious problems for them and their families, in August 2014 about 48 percent of the respondents said the economic sanctions could not create serious problems, and about 13 percent of the respondents said no problems at all.²⁹ Without Putin's record on economic achievements during the 2000-08 period, Russian people would not have such an optimistic perception of Putin.

Moreover, the tradition of Russian people looking for a strong leader reinforces Putin's popularity among the people. Throughout Russia's history, various foreign threats - ranging from the Mongols, the Poles, and the Ottomans - invaded the country repeatedly. To defend Russia and mobilize its resources to deal with external and internal problems, more and more people looked for state centralization. The Orthodox Church and other autonomous centers of social life yielded to the state. Strong leaders played a role in this process. Gradually, an increasing number of Russians accept autocracy and strong leaders

²⁶ Levada Center, "Perceptions of Vladimir Putin," last modified October 16, 2015, accessed October 26, 2015, <http://www.levada.ru/eng/perceptions-vladimir-putin>.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

as they can provide ordinary Russians with stability to improve their living conditions.³⁰ Today, Russian people view Putin as a strong leader and believe Putin is equal to the Russian state. They continue to see Putin as a stabilization factor for Russia, so they vigorously support him. As Putin said of Russia's tradition on leadership: "Our state and its institutions have always played an exceptionally important role in the life of the country and its people. For Russians, a strong state is not an anomaly that should be gotten rid of. Quite the contrary, they see it as a source and guarantor of order and the initiator and main driving force of any change."³¹

Putin's Record on State Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity

In the wake of Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea in March 2014, the West imposed economic sanctions, which resulted in economic difficulties in Russia. Crimea used to be a part of Russia's territory. Russia's roots in Crimea can be traced back to the baptism of Prince Vladimir, who was one of the earliest Russian leaders and helped the Russians to convert to Christianity. It was in Crimea that Prince Vladimir baptized himself and the Russian people one thousand years ago.³² In 1921, the Soviet Union government established the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. In 1945, Crimea became an administrative region of Russia, a member of the Soviet Union. After the end of World War II, the Soviet government departed Crimean Tatars - who lived in Crimea for centuries - along with large numbers of Greeks and Armenians. In 1954, the Soviet government transferred Crimea from the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.³³ The transfer did not cause a lot of con-

³⁰ Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia and the West from Alexander to Putin* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 28-36.

³¹ Tsygankov, *The Strong State*, 104.

³² Will Englund, "Kremlin Says Crimea is Now Officially Part of Russia after Treaty Signing, Putin Speech," *Washington Post*, March 14, 2014, accessed October 25, 2015, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/russias-putin-prepares-to-annex-crimea/2014/03/18/933183b2-654e-45ce-920e-4d18c0ffec73_story.html.

³³ Adam Taylor, "To Understand Crimea, Take A Look Back at Its Complicated History," *New York Times*, February 24, 2014, accessed October 25, 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2014/02/27/to-understand-crimea-take-a-look-back-at-its-complicated-history/>.

trovsky at the time as both Russia and Ukraine were part of the Soviet Union. When Russia and Ukraine gained independence, Crimea remained a territory of Ukraine. In 1997, both states signed a bilateral treaty, which confirmed Ukraine's possession of Crimea.³⁴ As of March 2014, about 58 percent of Crimeans were ethnic Russians.³⁵ Because of Russia's historical and cultural ties with Crimea, the territory occupies a place in Russian people's mind. As Putin said of the territory, Crimea is a sacred place for Russia and Russian people for generations.³⁶

Putin and the rest of the country are concerned about the historical and cultural ties with Crimea. A small number of politicians, such as Vladimir Zhirinovski and Dmitri Rogozin, argue since the 1990s that ethnic Russians living on earth are the largest divided nation. Russia must defend these ethnic Russians wherever they live, and national reunification with them is imminent. Initially, Putin ignored them as he perceived them as dangerous.³⁷ During the Ukrainian political turbulence in 2014, however, Putin couldn't ignore ethnic Russians who sought Russia's protection. The new Ukrainian government discriminated against ethnic Russians, ranging from restricting Russian media coverage to forming a new government with a heavy representation of anti-Russia figures. Inaction to help ethnic Russians living in Crimea would deal a serious blow to Putin's credibility and prestige.³⁸

It can be said that Russian people support the annexation of Ukraine to help ethnic Russians. They believe Putin has restored Russia's honor, thus perceiving Putin as a symbol of stability. A series of the Levada Center's polls reflect Russian people's support toward the return of Crimea to Russia and

Putin's efforts. In a poll conducted in October 14 2014, 55 percent of the respondents said that they definitely supported Crimea's unification with Russia, and 31 percent said that they mostly supported Crimea's unification with Russia.³⁹ In the same poll, about 74 percent of the respondents answered that Crimea had been a Russian land for a long time, and about 6 percent said that Crimean people could have been subjected to violence by Ukrainian right-wing radicals.⁴⁰ Moreover, about 70 percent of the respondents in March 2014 reported that the return of Crimea to Russia brought more good than more harm to Russia.⁴¹

Overall, a large number of Russian people support and recognize Putin's effort in restoring sovereignty over Crimea. To them, the close historical and cultural ties weigh heavier than the economic sanctions and the subsequent economic difficulties. Therefore, Russian people bestow prestige on Putin and keep supporting his rule because Putin has restored honor in Russia's state sovereignty and territorial integrity. The above polling data support the claim that Russians support and bestow prestige in Putin.

Ineffectiveness of Russia's Opposition

Authoritarian regimes' hostility to opposition parties and figures are hardly unique. Given opposition parties and figures always criticize authoritarian regimes and resist their policies, authoritarian regimes adopt measures to contain opposition. These measures include co-opting real and potential opposition parties and figures, using propaganda media to discredit them, and coercing and threatening them. In the case of cooptation, opposition parties and figures may benefit from their conversion to loyalty. In the case of propaganda, the image of opposition parties and figures can be tarnished in people's minds. In the case of coercion and threat, the price can be high as opposition parties and figures can cost their lives.⁴² Like a typical authoritarian regime, Putin uses the

34 Adam Taylor, "To Understand Crimea, Take A Look Back at Its Complicated History," *New York Times*, February 24, 2014, accessed October 25, 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2014/02/27/to-understand-crimea-take-a-look-back-at-its-complicated-history/>.

35 BBC. "Why Crimea Is so Dangerous," last modified March 11, 2014, accessed October 26, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26367786>.

36 Vladimir Putin, "Address by President of the Russian Federation," *Kremlin*, March 18, 2014, last accessed October 26, 2014, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603>.

37 Andrei P. Tsygankov, "Vladimir Putin's Last Stand: the Sources of Russia's Ukraine Policy," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 41, no.4 (2015): 292-3.

38 Tsygankov, "Vladimir Putin," 293.

39 Levada Center, "Crimea," last modified November 12, 2014, accessed October 26, 2015, <http://www.levada.ru/eng/crimea>.

40 *Ibid*.

41 Levada Center, "Crimea," Last Modified September 7, 2015, accessed October 26, 2015, <http://www.levada.ru/eng/ukraine-3>.

42 Vladimir Gel'man, "Calculus of Dissent: How the Kremlin Is Countering Its Rivals," *Russian Analytical Digest*, no.166 (2015): 2.

above mentioned methods to deal with Russia's opposition parties and figures. These methods result in the weakness of the opposition parties and figures as they find it difficult or no longer want to challenge Putin's rule. Most importantly, the weakness of the opposition parties and figures means that a large number of Russian people do not see them as credible alternatives to replace Putin.

First, Putin co-opts Russia's opposition parties and figures through incentives and benefits. For example, Putin set up the People's Front for Russia in May 2011 as a personal vehicle to co-opt opposition figures and leading elites. It comprises of trade unions, business groups, and around 2000 other organizations in support of the regime. There is a notable representation of younger members and blue collar workers in the membership.⁴³ Four major groups make up of People's Front for Russia. The first group is Putin's election proxies, who closely align with Putin. The second group comprises of leading cultural and scientific figures. These leading figures come from women's councils, trade unions, veterans' associations, youth organizations, scientific bodies, and blue collar workers. The third group is the dominant political parties' figures. They include the secretary of United Russia's General Council Sergei Neverov, the head of the United Russia's Duma Caucus Vladimir Vasiliev, and senior General Council members Olga Baralina and Irina Yarovaya. The fourth group comprises of other political parties, which pledge loyalty to Putin. They include the Patriots of Russia and Rodina. These two parties' chairpersons become the central staff of the People's Front for Russia.⁴⁴ Moreover, Putin provides support to Russia's non-governmental organizations which he deems valuable to his rule. For example, in 2004 Putin established the Public Chamber as a platform for Russian citizens and non-profit organizations to present their initiatives and discuss them in detail. Putin appoints the members of the Public Chamber, who are said to be representatives of both anti-governmental organizations and loyal organizations.⁴⁵

43 Richard Sakwa, *Putin Redux: Power and Contradiction in Contemporary Russia* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 175.

44 Sakwa, *Putin Redux*, 175-6.

45 Alfred B. Evans, Jr., "Civil Society and Protest," in *Return to Putin's Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*, edited by Stephen K. Wegren (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing

In addition to the co-option method, Putin utilizes coercion and threat to suppress Russia's opposition parties and figures. Putin targets those NGOs which he deems not valuable and threatening his rule. In 2012, Putin signed into law requiring NGOs that receive foreign funding to register as foreign agents or to face fines of up \$16,000. By July 2013, Russian police launched a wave of inspections against 2,000 NGOs across the country. The Russian government proclaimed 500 violations were found, and 36 of them were prosecuted in court. Golos, who received funding from the US Agency for International Development and the National Endowment for Democracy to monitor Russia's elections, became the first NGO to be persecuted under the new law. Then, the Russian government launched a new wave of inspections against another 300 NGOs on the ground of tax evasions.⁴⁶ Opposition figures who voice their displeasure and resistance against Putin are punished as well. Sergei Guriev, former reactor of the New Economic School, fled to Paris after Russian prosecutors interrogated him. Professor Mikhail Savva, who came from Krasnodar, was accused of espionage by the local branch of Russian intelligence agency. He subsequently left Russia to avoid prosecution.⁴⁷ These two figures were able to leave Russia because of their minor social status and mild criticism of Putin. Those who harshly criticize Putin cannot leave Russia but face trials and jail. In June 2012, Russian police raided the homes of leading protest leaders who staged a massive wave of protests against Putin's re-election to the presidency in March 2012. The protests leaders arrested included the heads of Solidarity and People's Freedom Party, which Putin had not been able to co-opt.⁴⁸ Alexi Navalny, who proclaimed his ambition of running for the Russian presidency, was charged with economic crimes in April 2013.⁴⁹

Moreover, Putin strictly controls Russia's media so that their coverage can show a positive image of Putin to Russian people and he can close a venue for the opposition parties and figures to voice their dissent. As he said in one of his early interviews in 2000: "At some point many people decided that the

Group, 2013), 107.

46 Sakwa, *Putin Redux*, 168.

47 Evans, Jr., "Civil Society and Protest," 3.

48 Sakwa, *Putin Redux*, 160.

49 Sakwa, *Putin Redux*, 164.

president was no longer the center of power. I will make sure that no one ever has such illusions anymore.”⁵⁰ Putin’s strategy of media management relies on the dominance of national television, which most Russians use as a source for news and information. In February 2012, about 73 percent of Russian population watched these TV channels as primary source of information.⁵¹ The Russian government nationalizes Channel One, Rossiia, and NTV, and use them to shape public perception of Putin. Their political and public affairs coverage mostly target conservatives living in less urban areas. These groups of people constitute the electoral base of Putin’s support.⁵² Because of such strictly controlled media, Putin does not tolerate freedom of expression in state-owned media. For example, federal law prohibits nongovernmental print and radio reporters from showing on federal TV shows.⁵³

Because of the above mentioned measures against the Russian opposition parties and figures, the opposition parties and figures are scarce, fragmented and marginalized. A series of Levada Center’s polls confirm this phenomenon. In a December 2014 poll, the Levada Center asked its respondents whether they believed there was currently a person who could replace Putin as president of the country. About 54 percent answered that there was not a person in Russia now who could replace Putin, up from 27 percent in December 2012 and 31 percent in December 2013. In the same poll, about 55 percent of the respondents answered that Vladimir Putin would continue to be Russia’s president after the 2018 elections.⁵⁴ These polling data show that the opposition parties and figures could not destroy the prestige bestowed on Putin because they are so weak. Also, no influential and large Russian media would report on them. A large number of Russian people simply do not know the existence of the opposition parties and figures.

⁵⁰ Maria Lipman, “The Media and Political Developments,” in *Return to Putin’s Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*, edited by Stephen K. Wegren (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, 2013), 128

⁵¹ Robert Orttung and Christopher Walker, “Putin and Russia’s Crippled Media,” *Russian Analytical Digest*, no. 123 (2013): 3.

⁵² Lipman, “The Media,” 132-3.

⁵³ Lipman, “The Media,” 136.

⁵⁴ Levada Center, “Alternatives to Putin,” January 26, 2015, accessed October 26, 2015, <http://www.levada.ru/eng/alternatives-vladimir-putin>.

Conclusion

The above examination demonstrates that symbolic capital plays a role in sustaining Putin’s high approval rating during the current economic crisis. Putin’s record on economic recovery convinces a large number of Russian people to believe that Putin would bring economic prosperity back to the country. At the same time, the return of Crimea to Russian land further convinces a large number of Russian people to believe that Putin has restored honor to the state and the people. An increasing number of Russian people bestow prestige on Putin to rule Russia because of these two achievements. Accordingly, Russian people perceive him as a strong leader. A series of positive opinion polls illustrate their approval of Putin. Moreover, the opposition parties and figures cannot not destroy this prestige as Putin co-opts, coerces, and marginalizes them in public space and media. They are politically weak, so they do not present to a large number of Russians as credible and reliable alternatives to replace Putin.

This study demonstrates how political leaders can use symbolic capital to maintain their rule and keep high approval rating unchanged in severe economic crises. It has two implications. First, political leaders do not have to rig polling data to prop up their support. As long as political leaders can do something that can generate prestige, they can remain in their offices and enjoy strong support. Second, as the case of Putin shows, economic difficulties do not relate to low approval rating. Nevertheless, this case leaves out a question. The concept of symbolic capital sufficiently explains a political leader’s high approval rating amid an economic crisis in an authoritarian regime. Whether it can explain the same situation in a democratic regime remains unknown. Scholars and policymakers may continue to study the concept of symbolic capital by applying it to a democratic regime. In doing so, we may have more empirical data on the validity of symbolic capital.

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MEXICO: THE FAILED DRUG WAR

BY
GENEVIEVE LANE

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the effectiveness of Mexico's "War on Drugs" and the Merida Initiative in decreasing drug-related violence throughout the country. Various factors such as corruption, impunity, and policy reforms are taken into consideration in order to evaluate the role of the Mexican government in addressing the increasing power of the drug cartels. In addition to this, it is imperative to examine how society has been affected by these policies and if there has been a general improvement in security and public safety since 2006.

Public security in Mexico, especially in the 2000s, became an issue due to increases in drug-related violence as a result of two significant factors. First, the election of Vicente Fox, the National Action Party's (PAN) presidential candidate, signified a crucial defeat of the Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI), ending its 71-year rule. The PAN's victory ruptured the previously established pacts between the PRI and the drug-trafficking organizations that had divided the country's territory among the four main cartels and provided for relatively low levels of violence. Consequently, it created a period of imbalances and competition among the cartels.¹

Second, the government's strategy of targeting and arresting drug leaders triggered greater instability, both within and between the drug-trafficking organizations. In addition to this, the cartels began to splinter apart, causing the levels of drug-related violence to increase from 1,080 deaths in 2001 to 2,100 in 2006.² Then, when Felipe Calderón, also of the PAN, was elected president in 2006, he made public security a key concern.

December 11, 2006 marked the

1 Jorge Chabat, "Combatting Drugs in Mexico Under Calderon: The Inevitable War." *CIDE.edu* (2010), <http://www.cide.edu/publicaciones/status/dts/DTEI%20186.pdf>

2 *Ibid.*, 6.

beginning of Calderón's "War on Drugs." This initiative involved an intensification of the militarized public security approach set in place by previous presidents, as 50,000 military and federal police members went out into the streets to combat the cartels.³ However, the Mexican government did not take action alone since the United States, responding to its partial responsibility for the increased violence in its southern neighbor, collaborated with Mexico in the creation of the Merida Initiative in 2007.⁴ The Merida Initiative went into effect in 2008 and its primary objective has been to support Mexico's fight against the drug cartels with the U.S. contributing \$1.6 billion over a period of three years since narco-trafficking was viewed as a security threat to both countries.⁵

Central Argument

This paper's central argument is

3 "Mexico - Failed State, Narco-state or Merely a Weak State?" *Radio National*. (December 07, 2014), <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/rearvision/mexico-and-america27s-war-on-drugs/5940460#transcript>.

4 Rafael Velázquez and Jorge Schiavon, "La Iniciativa Mérida En El Marco De La Relación México-Estados Unidos." *CIDE.edu* (2009): 15-16. <http://www.cide.edu/publicaciones/status/dts/DTEI%20186.pdf>.

5 "Merida Initiative." *Council on Foreign Relations*. (2009), <http://www.cfr.org/americas/merida-initiative/p18904>.

to demonstrate that former Mexican President Felipe Calderón's decision to declare a "War on Drugs" and join with the U.S. in the Merida Initiative did not succeed in reducing the power of the cartels and the drug-related violence that plagued the country, but rather increased the violence, insecurity, and power of organized crime.

It is then necessary to analyze how the effects of various factors such as the lack of government transparency, broken democracy, rupture of social cohesion, militarization, U.S. involvement, and institutional reform have impacted the country's social structure by influencing various institutions, values, and norms. This kind of approach provides further understanding and insight as to how Calderón's decision to begin the "War on Drugs" and join in the Merida Initiative did not increase the country's public security, but rather exacerbated the security crisis as violence increased during this period and has continued to have negative consequences under the current Peña Nieto administration.

The Spider Web of Mexico's Drug War

Structural-functionalism is the theoretical framework that will be used to analyze the inability of the "War on Drugs" and the Merida Initiative to effectively decrease the drug-related violence that has plagued Mexico. This theory gained an increasing amount of popularity in the 1960s and has been used in a number of disciplinary studies such as political science, biology, and sociology.⁶ Structural-functionalism goes beyond solely focusing on the role of institutions and their ability to constrain certain behaviors and actions. This theory aims to understand society by looking at how its institutions, values, and norms affect the social structure.⁷

The social structure, or the social system, is composed of roles, statuses, and institutions.⁸ Society is then composed of a number of different elements that all work together in a complex system with change

in any one component leading to change in another.⁹ The structural-functionalist theory will deal with a number of variables in the attempt to shed light on the situations that have led to the undermining of the Mexican government, especially in regard to the country's public security. However, a historical context is also necessary in comprehending the development of the country's current social system and its failures in addressing corruption, impunity – the lack of justice for crimes committed – and drug-related violence.¹⁰

Political Culture

Mexico's broken democracy and lack of institutional transparency are important factors in the failure of the "War on Drugs." These two themes have developed over centuries, making it necessary to look at the historical factors that have led to the establishment of these norms in the social system. In order to understand Mexico's political structure one has to analyze the political culture that has been embedded in society. The country's colonial legacy has been a primary factor that has shaped this political culture, as characterized by elitism, authoritarianism, corporatism, patrimonialism, and hierarchilization.¹¹

The Aztecs, for instance, had a history of overtaking and controlling smaller indigenous cultures and adding them to their vast empire, which resulted in "...a tightly-structured system of self-supporting units," as each unit was dominated by those at the top that exerted a large amount of influence on the daily occurrences due to their power.¹² Patrimonialism and elitism were also exhibited as each unit ruled by the Aztecs had to pay tribute to the leader.¹³ Then in 1521, the Spaniards arrived and colonized the Aztec civilization as they established authoritarian,

9 John H. Chilcote, "Structural Functionalism as a Heuristic Device." *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 29, no. 1 (1998): 103, http://0-www.jstor.org.opac.sfsu.edu/stable/3196104?seq=2#page_scan_tab_contents.

10 Aliaume Leroy, "Mexico's Guerra Al Narco: A Disaster Rooted in Misinterpretations." *Bellingcat*, (December 17, 2014), <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/americas/2014/12/17/mexico-guerra-al-narco-a-disaster-rooted-in-misinterpretations/>.

11 Howard J. Wiarda and Harvey F. Kline, eds. *Latin American Politics and Development*. Boulder: Westview, 2014.

12 "History of Mexico." History.com, (2009), <http://www.history.com/topics/mexico/history-of-mexico>.

13 "History of Mexico." History.com, (2009), <http://www.history.com/topics/mexico/history-of-mexico>.

6 "The Structural-Functional Approach." *Udel.edu*. <http://udel.edu/~jdeiner/strufunc.html>.

7 Terry N. Clark, "Structural-Functionalism, Exchange Theory, and the New Political Economy: Institutionalization as a Theoretical Linkage." *Sociological Inquiry* 42, no. 3-4 (1972): 276, <http://0-onlinelibrary.wiley.com.opac.sfsu.edu/doi/10.1111/j.1475-682X.1972.tb00240.x/epdf>.

8 *Ibid.*, 277.

militaristic, undemocratic, and intolerant legacies and institutions.¹⁴ This has served to reinforce the dominant political culture that has continued to play an important role in the formation of Mexico's social structure as the cultures were combined.

These corporatist, hierarchical, patrimonial, elitist, and authoritarian elements seen under the Aztecs and Spanish are also evident in Mexico's contemporary history, as shown in the highly controversial presidential election of 2006. It was in this election where Felipe Calderón was barely lifted to victory over, leftist party candidate, Andrés Manuel López Obrador by 0.58 percent under a cloud of electoral irregularities.¹⁵ This incidence exposes the effects of the country's colonial legacy as authoritarianism and elitism continue to be dominant factors in Mexico's political structure and practices. The lack of transparency that exists within Mexico and its broken democracy has been highly evident and cause for great concern.

Consequently, Calderón's sexenio – presidential term – was off to a rocky start due to the lack of legitimacy, since the election was perceived as largely fraudulent. The various characteristics that have come to define Mexico's political culture played a key role in motivating Calderón to declare the “War on Drugs,” seeing it as a way to help him gain public and military support that would permit him to establish his power over the country and eliminate any shadow of doubt cast over his election.¹⁶ However, this issue with the drug cartels is not only driven by internal factors, but also by external factors such as U.S. influence.

“Poor Mexico, So Far From God, So Close to the United States”

Another crucial factor that needs to be taken into consideration is Mexico's geography, with the largest emphasis on Mexico's geographic position. The border shared between the United States and Mexico has played a crucial and consequential role in shaping U.S.-Mexico relations.¹⁷ The fact that the

countries share a border has greatly determined the way the Mexican government has dealt with the drug cartels because “the framing of security challenges in the domestic context has to resonate with partner states....”¹⁸ As a result, Mexico continued the “War on Drugs” that had been established by the United States under Richard Nixon.¹⁹

U.S. influence in Mexico has, therefore, been a crucial factor that has constantly shaped the decisions made by the Mexican government. For instance, the United States had a key role in the evolution of the PRI in the 1980s due to the implementation of neoliberalism – policies that opened up Mexico's economy to the international market and encouraged free trade such as with the reduction of tariff barriers. Mexico was pushed to adopt neoliberal economic reforms as a result of the debt crisis and its northern neighbor further encouraged this.²⁰

Mexico's membership in NAFTA, though, has resulted in a number of ramifications since it made it faster and more profitable for the cartels to transport drugs through Mexico on their way to the U.S. market, which replaced the previously used sea routes.²¹ The policies established in the United States and in Mexico have then contributed to the violence that has come to characterize the drug war. Therefore, a key factor that has led to an ineffective response to the “War on Drugs” by both the U.S. and Mexico is the pact established since the 1980s among “... Washington politics and money and Mexican oligarchs and neoliberal politicians.”²²

The shared border between the U.S. and Mexico as well as the alliance and collaboration among elites over the years were elements that influenced Calderón to look to the United States for support in fighting the cartels.²³ The United States has also recognized the role it plays in the drug war and has

in Mexico: Transformation and Crisis in Regional Perspective. Google Books. Routledge, (2012).

18 *Ibid.*, 8.

19 Tony Payan, Kathleen A. Staudt, and Z. Anthony Kruszewski. *A War That Can't Be Won: Binational Perspectives on the War on Drugs.* U of Arizona, (2013):10.

20 Daniel C., Levy and Kathleen Bruhn. *Mexico: The Struggle for Democratic Development.* Berkeley: University of California Press, (2006):166

21 *Ibid.*

22 *Ibid.*

23 Velázquez and Schiavon, “La Iniciativa Mérida,” 15.

14 Darling, Juanita. *A Little History.* PowerPoint Slides.

15 Andalusia Knoll, “Fleeing His Own War on Drugs, Felipe Calderón Finds Refuge at Harvard.” *Truthout.* (March 01, 2013), <http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/14761-fleeing-his-own-war-on-drugs-felipe-calderon-finds-refuge-at-harvard>.

16 *Ibid.*

17 Brian J. Bow and Arturo Santa Cruz. *The State and Security*

attempted to address this by supporting Mexico through the Merida Initiative that went into effect in 2008. However, this has not involved a great degree of U.S. participation as the United States has largely limited its efforts to providing money to help improve the armament used by the Mexican military in confronting the cartels.²⁴ For example, the provisioning of weapons made up the bulk of U.S. aid provided to Mexico as in 2008 counter narcotics, counterterrorism, and border security consisted of 306.3 million dollars out of a total of 500 million dollars.²⁵ Providing money for greater militarization efforts has not delivered the desired results of greater security as it actually led to an escalation of insecurity and even spread to states that were previously isolated from waves of violence.²⁶

The Rupture of the Rule of Law

Over the years, corruption and impunity have grown and are considered commonplace occurrences reaching from the lowest to the highest levels of Mexico's government structure. This reflects how norms, such as the respect for the rule of law, have been broken and have been replaced with rampant illegality transforming these into the dominant norms.

Mexico has been extensively criticized for its widespread corruption and high levels of impunity, causing it to "...become a country without sanction, a society that does not punish the violators of law."²⁷ The wide degree of impunity has contributed to the rising offenses of organized crime since they frequently act in collaboration with security forces through bribery. This is reflected in the increasing numbers of homicides committed by organized crime with 16,987 offenses committed in 2011 compared to a total of 2,819 offenses committed in 2007.²⁸

Along with the rising homicides, the country's corruption has also increased as Mexico has risen

24 Colleen Cook, Rebecca G. Rush, and Claire Ribando Seelke, *Congressional Research Service*. (March 18, 2008): 3. <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/103694.pdf>

25 *Ibid.*

26 Leroy, "Mexico's Guerra Al Narco."

27 Arturo González De Aragón, "Defectos Y Limitaciones De La Comisión Nacional Anticorrupción." *Proceso*. (February 14, 2013), <http://www.proceso.com.mx/333598/2013/02/14/defectos-y-limitaciones-de-la-comision-nacional-anticorrupcion-2>.

28 Guillermo Valdés Castellanos, *Historia Del Narcotráfico En México*. México, DF: Aguilar, (2013):400.

from number 55 to number 103 on the Transparency International list out of 175 countries between 1998 and 2014.²⁹ The impunity and corruption that strongly pervade the country are fundamental obstacles in accomplishing the goal of increasing the country's security as "...Calderón's War [was] aimed also at fighting corruption and strengthening the judiciary."³⁰

Ineffective Institutional Reforms

Over the years, a number of reforms have been established, but they have not succeeded. For example, Ernesto Zedillo, over the course of his presidency (1994-2000), worked to implement a number of reforms concerning the country's public security. However, these reforms were only a façade since they did not result in any substantial change, as in reality "...the government sought to contain the problems rather than seriously [confront] them."³¹

Zedillo attempted to address the ineffectiveness of the police through the creation of a new force in 1998 called the Federal Preventive Police (Policía Federal Preventiva – PFP). The PFP united members from a number of the existing police forces like the Highway, Fiscal, and Migration Police.³² Zedillo, apart from creating a new police force, also used the military to combat drug trafficking, reflecting a hierarchilization effect.³³

The attempts to establish reforms continued under Vicente Fox from 2000 to 2006. Fox carried on the police reforms as several of the previously existing organizations were replaced with new ones. For example, the former president disbanded the Federal Judicial Police (Policía Judicial Federal – PJF) and in its place created the Federal Investigations Agency (Agencia Federal de Investigaciones – AFI). Lack of confidence in the police force was further shown in Fox's 2005 operation "Safe Mexico," as he employed the use of the military along with the PFP to combat the cartels in eight cities.³⁴

29 Arturo González De Aragón, "Análisis Crítico Sobre El Sistema Nacional Anticorrupción." *Proceso*. (December 13, 2014), <http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=390527>.

30 Leroy, "Mexico's Guerra Al Narco."

31 Bow and Santa Cruz, *The State and Security in Mexico*, 8.

32 Chabat, "Combatting Drugs in Mexico," 4.

33 Daniel Sabet, "Police Reform in Mexico: Advances and Persistent Obstacles." Working Paper, (2010), http://www.fes-seguridadregional.org/images/stories/docs/5498-001_g.pdf.

34 Chabat, "Combatting Drugs in Mexico," 6.

Corruption has become an integral part of this institution, influencing the behavior of many of these actors pushing them to collaborate with the cartels, thereby making them unreliable in the fight against the drug trafficking organizations. Therefore, Calderón carried out police reforms evident with the transforming of the AFI into the Federal Ministerial Police (Policía Federal Ministerial – PFM) and the PFP converting into the Federal Police (Policía Federal – PF).³⁵

In addition to this, Calderón attempted to carry out judicial improvements in order to increase the country's respect for the rule of law as another aspect of his "War on Drugs." Various noteworthy reforms were established in 2008, as there were key changes in the way trials were carried out with oral trials replacing the previous "trials conducted secretly through written briefs."³⁶ These reforms have not been implemented rigorously since in 2014, only three states had fully executed the use of oral trials.³⁷ This slow implementation of the country's judicial reforms was due to "...the federal government's failure to prioritize the reforms...[with] more emphasis on confronting organized criminal groups..." forcefully.³⁸

The election of Enrique Peña Nieto in 2012 signified the return of the PRI to the country's presidency after 12 years. Peña Nieto also attempted to increase the country's belief in its public security system through a number of reforms. One of these reforms was the National Code of Criminal Procedures that was signed into law in March of 2014 and aimed to restructure the country's justice system.³⁹ This reform established a unified penal procedure for the country's capital and 31 states, as previously each state had its own penal codes.⁴⁰ The National Code of Criminal Procedure is supposed to be fully

implemented throughout the country by 2016 and is assumed to help strengthen Mexico's institutions and rule of law.⁴¹

Rising Insecurity

Calderón's "War on Drugs" has greatly disrupted the country's social cohesion. This has been true as the violence spread drastically to all states. However, the cities along the border have especially felt the impact of the former president's militarized anti-drug approach. From the beginning of the drug war in 2006 up to now there have been a total of 151,000 deaths and 26,000 disappearances.⁴² In addition to this, kidnappings have increased every year since 2006 as in 2013 there were 1,698, which signified a 15 percent increase from 2012. Also, from 2003 to 2013 tortures carried out by the country's police and armed forces increased by 600 percent.⁴³ Calderón's drug war has continued to impact Mexican society even after the end of his administration, since insecurity has largely been an issue under current President Peña Nieto.

Insensitivity to Violence

Ciudad Juárez, in the state of Chihuahua, has been one of the cities most affected by Calderón's drug war, as has the entire state. This city has been plagued with large levels of violence due to the confrontations between the Sinaloa Cartel and the Juárez Cartel.⁴⁴ Violence has turned into an everyday occurrence as in 2010; there were an average of 8.5 killings per day resulting in the deaths 3,100 people in that year alone.⁴⁵ Children have also been affected since they are constantly present and many times are

41 *Ibid.*

42 "México: 548 Recomendaciones Por Violaciones a DDHH En 9 Años, La Mayoría Por Tortura." *SinEmbargo MX*. (October 18, 2015), <http://www.sinembargo.mx/18-10-2015/1518861>.

43 Eline Gordts, "11 Numbers To Help You Understand The Violence Rocking Mexico." *The Huffington Post*. (October 31, 2014), http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/10/31/mexico-violence-numbers_n_6075258.html.

44 "Calderon to Violence-plagued Juarez: 'We're Looking for Solutions'" *CNN*. (February 11, 2010), <http://www.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/americas/02/11/calderon.juarez/index.html>.

45 Branden Eastwood, "10 Portraits of Ciudad Juarez, the Recovering Ground Zero of Mexico's Drug War." *Matador Network*. (May 01, 2014), <http://matadornetwork.com/notebook/10-portraits-ciudad-juarez/>.

35 Sabet, "Police Reform in Mexico," 11.

36 Chabat, "Combating Drugs in Mexico," 8.

37 Maureen Meyer, "Mexico 's Police: Many Reforms, Little Progress." *Washington Office on Latin America*. (2014), [http://www.wola.org/sites/default/files/Mexico's Police_Many Reforms, Little Progress.pdf](http://www.wola.org/sites/default/files/Mexico's%20Police_Many%20Reforms,%20Little%20Progress.pdf).

38 *Ibid.*

39 Richard Dangler, "Mexico's New National Criminal Procedure Code Covers Every State." *BanderasNews.com*. (March 12, 2014), <http://www.banderasnews.com/1403/nr-mexicoimplementsnationalpenalcode.htm>.

40 *Ibid.*

forced to participate in the violence.⁴⁶

This has been evident with the murder of Christopher Raymundo Martínez in the city of Chihuahua in May of 2015. A group of five children between 12 and 15 years old decided to play a kidnapping game with six-year-old Christopher as their victim. The older kids tied him up and beat, stoned, and suffocated him.⁴⁷ The five children will be tried for murder while also undergoing several psychological and sociological studies. “Prosecutors have expressed concern over a killing that showed ‘social decomposition’ and an absence of values.”⁴⁸ The way the country has moved further away from the rule of law has had devastating affects among society once again reflecting the interconnection that exists among all parts of the social structure.⁴⁹

Change Comes from Below

Due to the large number of murders of innocent civilians and human rights abuses, Mexican poet Javier Sicilia started the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity, which has served to mobilize the people to protest against the “War on Drugs.” The movement has presented the government with a series of demands such as withdrawing the military personnel, strengthening the rule of law through the reforming of institutions, and the need to view the drug problem as a public health issue and not a national security issue.⁵⁰

Sicilia’s Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity took root in 2011 due to the death of the poet’s 24-year-old son, Juan Francisco Sicilia Ortega. On March 28, 2011, Juan Francisco and a group of

46 Anne-Marie O’Connor and William Booth. “Mexican Drug Cartels Targeting and Killing Children.” *Washington Post*. (April 19, 2011), https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/mexican-drug-cartels-targeting-and-killing-children/2011/04/07/AFwkFb9C_story.html.

47 Gerard Couzens and Belinda Robinson. “Horroric Murder of Six-year-old Mexican Boy Who Was Tortured to Death by Five Other Children during Macabre ‘kidnap Game.’” *DailyMail.com*. (May 17, 2015). <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3085478/Youths-accused-torture-murder-6-year-old-Mexico.html>.

48 *Ibid*.

49 Chilcott, “Structural Functionalism,” 103.

50 Umar Farooq and Connor Guy. “The Movement for Peace and Justice in Mexico.” *The Nation*. (June 05, 2012), <http://www.thenation.com/article/movement-peace-and-justice-mexico/>.

his friends were kidnapped, tortured, and killed by the Gulf Cartel in the state of Morelos.⁵¹ This tragic incident pushed Sicilia to stop writing poetry and instead become an activist calling for the end of the drug war.

Javier Sicilia within days of the death of his son wrote an open letter to the country’s politicians and criminals that was published in *Proceso* on April 3, 2011. In the letter, Sicilia criticized the acts committed by both the politicians and criminals as the “War on Drugs” increased the amount of violence and deaths in the country. Sicilia then “...urged Mexicans to take to the streets” in order to protest against the drug war and demand for peace and justice in the country.⁵² This was followed by a march on April 6 carried out from the state of Morelos to the country’s capital, as well as numerous others marches in over 30 cities.⁵³

The Same Mexico as Always

Mexico’s public security has continued to be questioned with the disappearance of the 43 students from Ayotzinapa on September 26, 2014. The students had been in Iguala protesting at an event in which the mayor’s wife was participating while they were also attempting to raise money for their school. At the end of the day, the students hijacked three busses in order to return to Ayotzinapa, but the mayor ordered their arrest. The police and the local cartel Guerreros Unidos have been considered responsible for the disappearance of the 43 students.⁵⁴

This has caused many marches throughout the country as the people demand to know the truth of what happened to the students. “The events surrounding Ayotzinapa made the link between the narcogangs and the government... impossible to

51 Javier Sicilia, “A Father’s Plea: End the War on Drugs.” *CNN*. (September 10, 2012), <http://www.cnn.com/2012/09/10/opinion/sicilia-cartel-killed-son/>.

52 Catherine E. Shoichet, “Mexican Poet Becomes Crusader for Peace after Son’s Slaying.” *CNN*. (May 05, 2011), <http://www.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/americas/05/05/mexico.poet.activist/index.html?iref=allsearch>.

53 *Ibid*.

54 Melissa del Pozo, “Inside the Mexican College Where 43 Students Vanished After a Violent Encounter With Police.” *VICE News*. (October 06, 2014), <https://news.vice.com/article/inside-the-mexican-college-where-43-students-vanished-after-a-violent-encounter-with-police>.

ignore.”⁵⁵ Mexico’s Attorney General Murillo Karam stated on November 7, 2014, that the students were killed by the cartel and then cremated in a dump near Cocula, in the state of Guerrero.⁵⁶ This announcement caused much anger among the Mexican people, since the identity of a majority of the students has not been confirmed. In addition to this, “an international committee of experts...said...that there was no evidence to support” the version presented by the government.⁵⁷ It has also been proved that the federal police and military were aware of what happened to the students and did not attempt to stop it.⁵⁸ This reflects the widespread impunity that exists within the country as “98 percent of the crimes that are committed in Mexico go unsolved.”⁵⁹ As a result of this impunity, a large amount of uncertainty exists on behalf of the Mexican people towards the authorities.⁶⁰

The Road Ahead

Many academics have stated that another way to target the cartels is to reduce the profitability of the drug trafficking business through the legalization of drugs. This has been seen as targeting two key issues, corruption and violence.⁶¹ Vicente Fox and Javier Sicilia have both expressed support for this decriminalization approach. However, this is not a complete solution due to the many unforeseen conse-

55 Melissa del Pozo, “Inside the Mexican College Where 43 Students Vanished After a Violent Encounter With Police.” *VICE News*. (October 06, 2014), <https://news.vice.com/article/inside-the-mexican-college-where-43-students-vanished-after-a-violent-encounter-with-police>.

56 Randal C. Archibold, “Drug Gang Killed Students, Mexican Law Official Says.” *The New York Times*. (November 07, 2014), <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/08/world/americas/drug-gang-killed-students-mexico-law-official-says.html>.

57 Paulina Villegas, “Experts Reject Official Account of How 43 Mexican Students Were Killed.” *The New York Times*. (September 06, 2015), http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/07/world/experts-reject-official-account-of-how-43-mexican-students-vanished.html?_r=0.

58 *Ibid*.

59 “ONU: “Hay Mucha Desconfianza Hacia Las Autoridades Mexicanas En Materia De DD. HH.” *CNN México*. (October 08, 2015), <http://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2015/10/08/onu-hay-mucha-desconfianza-hacia-las-autoridades-mexicanas-en-materia-de-dd-hh/>.

60 *Ibid*.

61 Payan, Staudt, and Kruszewski, *A War That Can't Be Won*, 288.

quences that could greatly exacerbate the insecurity and the drug-related issues in which Mexico has been engulfed.

There also needs to be greater emphasis on implementing institutional reforms successfully. A number of reforms concerning the country’s police forces and judicial system have been established, but they are usually never carried out in an effective manner. In addition to this, the established reforms have not targeted the root causes of the issues confronting Mexico’s police forces, making it another target point that needs to be addressed in the future. It is imperative to create respect for the rule of law by weeding out corruption and impunity from government institutions, but this will involve true commitment from government officials.

New reforms need to address the lack of education and training of the majority of Mexico’s police. There needs to be a uniform system established throughout the country that requires police force members to complete at least high school and then matriculate in an academy to receive formal training. However, there must be an organization in place that will corroborate that the police officers have fulfilled these expectations.

Mexico has enormous potential with much to offer its people and the world, as it is the 15th largest economy in the world.⁶² Nevertheless, numerous fundamental changes need to take place in order to help strengthen Mexico as it is divided with the people against the government, which has been clearly shown with the demonstrations that have taken hold and the drop in Peña Nieto’s approval rate to 35 percent.⁶³ Public security is a necessity for any country since it provides order and enforces respect for the rule of law.

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63 Nathaniel Parrish Flannery, “Investor Insight: How Strong Is Mexico’s Economy?” *Forbes*. (September 08, 2015), <http://www.forbes.com/sites/nathanielparrishflannery/2015/09/08/investor-insight-how-strong-is-mexicos-economy/> (accessed November 07, 2015).

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LATIN AMERICAN/UNITED STATES ALLIANCES AND THE WAR ON DRUGS

BY
CHARLOTTE
OHRBOM

The strain between the United States and Latin America is ever heightening as the War on Drugs trudges on. This paper studies several inter-state theories and applies it to the current case of North and South relations over the creation, transportation, and selling of illegal narcotics. It concludes that the US and Latin American are on the brink of losing all positive diplomatic relations due to slow change of attitude and the costly ineffectiveness of America's attempt to fight a two-continent wide guerrilla war.

Latin America is rife with problems and violence, which could garner some international and academic attention. The easiest problem to identify is the current presence of drug networks and cartels throughout Central and South America, whose power and influence has expanded across the southern United States border. The violence created by the presence of these networks, as well as the backlash of law enforcement trying to control and contain them, has led Central and South America to be the most dangerous place in the world.¹ As a world leader in drug prohibition and government spending for counter-narcotics, the United States' influence in Latin America has strengthened since the commencement of the War on Drugs in the 1970's. This declaration of war was a catalyst to the creation of a more effective control in and outside of American borders.²

¹ Hasan Tuluy, "Latin America: Violence Threatens a Decade of Progress." Text. Latin America & Caribbean: Opportunities for All, April 44-44, 2013. <http://blogs.worldbank.org/latinamerica/latin-america-violence-threatens-a-decade-of-progress>.

² Elaine Carey. Diálogos Series : Women Drug Traffickers : Mules, Bosses, and Organized Crime. Albuquerque, NM, USA: University of New Mexico Press, 2014. 158.

Between the realist theory and liberalist theory which will be explored below, the neoliberalist theory best explains the current evolution of the War on Drugs as well as the opinions of the Latin American people regarding the issue. While they are currently willing to work with the United States in a group effort against drug systems and violence, the ineffectiveness of this anti-drug war is becoming clear as patience has begun to run out. The alliance between the North and South stands on thin ice and the fragmentation along cultural lines is eminent in this case, as will be discussed.

Literature Review

The way states solve problems, has been a main focus among many theorists.³ Joseph Grieco, a neorealist professor of International Relations theory, addressed the anarchic nature of the world and fear with the threat of violence in his article "Anarchy

³ As each person has his or her own point of view, so does every theorist. Most IR theorists have examined how states will or will not work together. E.H. Carr in *The Twenty Year Crisis*, John Mearsheimer in *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane in *Power and Independence*, and Francis Fukuyama in *The End of History and the Last Man*.

and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism,”: “...some states may sometimes be driven by greed or ambition, but anarchy and the danger of war cause all states always to be motivated in some measure by fear and distrust.”⁴ Grieco’s argument is simple and clearly applicable to the Latin America problem. Fear and mistrust will be present in all decisions made by any leader while war is a possibility and the world system is in a state of anarchy. In South and Central America, the violence of the drug wars continues every day and with no global 911 to call for help, fear and suspicion are commonplace in the drug wars.

In support of Grieco’s theory, Latin American states are currently in fear of internal war between the organized state and the members of drug production and cartels. If the theory is applied in this case, the states would recognize this threat then act with fear and suspicion. Andrew Hurrell, in his 1998 review and recommendations for Latin American security policy, suggests that the solutions to drug violence should be officially factored into policies. He says the complexity of a new era of violence requires more focus.⁵ In 1998, the violence had become so pervasive that action was being demanded then. Now almost twenty years later, the situation has only worsened. By suggesting that the violence needed to be incorporated in state security policy, fear must have been prominent among Latin American states in 1998 just as it is today.

The balance of power is examined by Stephen Walt in his article entitled “Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power.” As a realist, he examines the actions states would take if threatened by a strong outside state: “Alliances are most commonly viewed as a response to threats, . . . When entering an alliance, states may either balance (ally in opposition to the principle source of danger) or bandwagon (ally with the state that poses the major threat).”⁶ States will either band together in fear against the threat to

4 Joseph M. Grieco, “Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism.” *International Organization* 42, no. 03 (June 1988): 485–507. doi:10.1017/S0020818300027715.

5 Andrew Hurrell, “Security in Latin America.” *International Affairs* 74, no. 3 (July 1, 1998): 529–46. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2624967>

6 Stephen M. Walt, “Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power.” *International Security* 9, no. 4 (April 1, 1985): 3–43. doi:10.2307/2538540

balance the scale of power; or the fearful states will join the strong power in order to curry favor and gain security. Again if examined in the Latin American lens, the United States may be the external threat that Latin American states will work together to balance. It is also possible that the United States may be a balancer with Latin American states against the powerful and violent force of the drug wars.

Some balance of forces is beginning within Latin America. Brian R. Roberts and Yu Chen review that anti-drug policies put forth by a state encourages violence, for when a drug trade is not regulated by government officials, nontraditional and sometimes violent means step in to police and control the market, i.e. the cartels. They cite that cartels can even be a source of stability and governance in towns where governmental resources are scarce.⁷ The balance of the cartels and the people against the inefficient government provisions and poor policy choices is beginning, suggesting that a large scale balancing of Latin American states against America’s poor anti-drug policy choice may be in the future.

If America and its anti-drug policy are seen as a threat by Latin American states, then Samuel P. Huntington’s Clash of Civilization theory may be applicable in this situation. Huntington, as one of the early IR theorists, covered many schools of thought in his writings, but his Foreign Affairs article entitled “Clash of Civilizations?” is almost of a constructivist view, examining cultural lines and the power common culture holds. Huntington’s article suggests that these are the new lines along which the future’s battles will be fought: “The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.”⁸

Although he was theorizing a future of violence, his theory ultimately suggests that state lines will be traversed by common culture, (sometimes) religion,

7 Bryan R. Roberts and Yu Chen, “Drugs, Violence, and the State.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 39 (January 1, 2013): 105–25. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43049628>.

8 Huntington, Samuel P. “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (July 1, 1993): 22–49. doi:10.2307/20045621.

and geographical location. Relationships with neighboring states will be easy, strong, and able to stand together in the face of another cultural adversary. For Huntington, he divided the world in cultural spheres, resulting in a North America that is separate from Central and South America. This suggests that Latin American states will join efforts against American intervention in their cultural sphere.

An example of this cultural division is noted by Ethan Nadelmann, who argues that American intervention no longer has a place in South America and has only encouraged violence instead of solving any problems. He claims the “failed prohibitionist policies” are the source of violence, rather than the presence or consumption of drugs.⁹ By implementing policy that had initially been designed for America into a new environment and culture, the United States is stumbling across Huntington’s civilization line and only evoking trouble by trying to control a place it does not understand.

These theorists are divided on the course of action when facing a threat to the state. While Huntington theorizes that cooperation will occur, Grieco says that fear and mistrust will tarnish any collaboration efforts. Walt gives a center road answer with suggesting either cooperation or abandonment could happen, each for different reasons. Despite the differences in outcomes, each theory needs a threat to drive states to fight or cooperate. In this context, Latin American states are faced with a conflict in need of a resolution. Drug related violence is common and deadly within most Central and South American states. The United States’ presence and intervention can be seen here either as helping a neighbor in need, or acting as a threat as well by infringing on Latin American states’ sovereignty.

In trying to predict how the states will act together against an assumed threat, the questions are these: Will Latin American states see the presence of the United States as a helpful existence or as a bigger threat than the presence of drugs in their society at the level it is today? In addition, are Latin American states going to work together with the United States to continue the War on Drugs, or are they going to work together to balance against the US presence in their territory?

⁹ Ethan Nadelmann, “Addicted to Failure.” *Foreign Policy*, no. 137 (July 1, 2003): 94–95. doi:10.2307/3183704.

Findings

As the theorist Greico suggested, states that are faced with anarchy or a threat of war will act out of fear or suspicion. The threat of war for Latin America is present, for the rate of violence is skyrocketing. Bolivia, for example, is a landlocked state that was once America’s focus of coca leaf eradication efforts, located towards the southern end of South America. Each year, Bolivia’s murder rate has increased, to be blamed by officials on the presence of drug cartels in the region, who had not been arrested, despite American efforts.¹⁰

Latin America in general holds 40% of the world’s murders and 80% of its kidnappings.¹¹ With 10 plus deaths per 100,000 residents, Latin America is one of the most dangerous regions in the world. Central America reported 18,000 homicides per year, while Spain’s homicide rate is less than .05%, a lower rate with a larger population.¹² In Mexico, the violence of the cartels has come to include ransom, torture, decapitations, kidnapping, and castration.¹³ The violence has been so destructive within Latin America that internal displacement due to violence is increasing. In Colombia, the number of internally displaced refugees doubled between 2007 and 2008.¹⁴

The violence in Latin America has reached an unprecedented level, with the region’s security failing to improve while the rest of the world becomes safer.¹⁵ If we apply Greico and his theory to this

¹⁰ William Neuman. “Killing Puts Spotlight on Bolivian Drugs and Crime.” *The New York Times*, May 2, 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/03/world/americas/killing-puts-spotlight-on-bolivian-drugs-and-crime.html>.

¹¹ “Latin America Has World’s Highest Murder Rate.” *Latin American Herald Tribune*, n.d. April 30, 2015.

¹² Hasan Tuluy. “Latin America: Violence Threatens a Decade of Progress.” *Text. Latin America & Caribbean: Opportunities for All*, April 44–44, 2013. <http://blogs.worldbank.org/latin-america/latin-america-violence-threatens-a-decade-of-progress>.

¹³ George W. Grayson. *Mexico’s Struggle with “Drugs and Thugs.”* New York, New York: Foreign Policy Association, 2008.

¹⁴ Peter Chalk. 2011. *The Latin American Drug Trade: Scope, Dimensions, Impact, and Response*. Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation. 39.

¹⁵ James D. Fearon, Homicide Data, Third Revision. Background paper prepared for the WDR 2011 team. Department of Political Science: Stanford University, January 29, 2011. http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDS/IB/2011/06/01/000356161_20110601045939/Rendered/PDF/620370WP0Homic0BOX0361475B00PUBLIC0.pdf.

situation, then Latin American states should be acting in fear and suspicion. Instead, we see a high level of international cooperation. For example, Calderon, in his 2007 joint meeting with the American and Canadian president, spoke of how the states must work together to stop the violence.¹⁶ In summer of 2008, Carlos Ozores, the Panamanian ambassador to Colombia, expressed that America wasn't giving enough support to the Latin American states who were looking for American help in the War on Drugs.¹⁷ With the founding Union of South American Nations in 2010, a continental union of South American states, the partnership between states only ossifies.¹⁸ By reaching out to both the United States as well as more local neighbors, stronger ties have been built for Latin American states, opposite of what Greico had predicted.

Within the last ten years, the number of Latin American citizens quoting crime as a main fear has tripled.¹⁹ Latin America holds 30 of the world's top 50 most dangerous cities by murder rate.²⁰ While the majority of citizens live in silent fear, Latin American states' governments have been actively working to solve the drug problem in several different ways. Most states are in alliance with the United States and work together. Colombia has an extradition treaty with the United States and many interstate efforts have been executed in the effort to diminish drug

trafficking.²¹

With aid going to Nicaragua, El Salvador, Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, and Paraguay, specifically for antinarcotics use, the level of American led interstate effort is unprecedented.²² Mexico has been working closely with the US since the beginning of the War on Drugs, but in 2006 then President Calderón began an intensive drug extermination effort, heartily backed by the United States.²³

If the violence is such a threat, Walt's theory suggests that states should either band together against it, or go along with it. Remote small towns who are under-cared for by the state, are turning to cartels for protection and civil needs to replace nonexistent or poor government services.²⁴ The ineffective and limited training of low level and local officials, as well as their low pay makes them very vulnerable for corruption and bribery. Due to low earnings from the state, local police officials are easily bought.²⁵ Bandwagoning is found throughout the levels of the state. Often for profit, many high-level police officials have taken bribes, swayed and supported by local cartels.²⁶

Walt's theory can also suggest that America is the threat to Latin American states. Despite its goal to help Latin American states, America has become an almost imperialist threat to them.²⁷ The Latin American states' cooperation with America can be

21 "Thirty Years Of America's Drug War: A Chronology." Educational. PBS Frontline, n.d. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/drugs/cron/>.

22 Congressional Research Service, 2012. *U.S. Foreign Assistance To Latin America And The Caribbean: Recent Trends And FY2013 Appropriations*. Congressional Research Service. <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R42582.pdf>.

23 "Thirty Years Of America's Drug War: A Chronology ." Educational . PBS Frontline, n.d. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/drugs/cron/>,"Mexico's Drug War." Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed May 6, 2015. <http://www.cfr.org/mexico/mexicos-drug-war/p13689>.

24 Bryan R. Roberts, and Yu Chen, "Drugs, Violence, and the State." *Annual Review of Sociology* 39 (January 1, 2013): 105–25. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43049628>.

25 "Mexico's Drug War." Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed May 6, 2015. <http://www.cfr.org/mexico/mexicos-drug-war/p13689>.

26 Ricardo Soberón Garrido, "Transnational Institute | Corruption, Drug Trafficking and the Armed Forces." Accessed May 6, 2015. <http://www.tni.org/article/corruption-drug-trafficking-and-armed-forces>.

27 Stanley Meisler, "Operation Casablanca: End of a Beautiful Friendship?." The Los Angeles Times. June 24, 1998. <http://articles.latimes.com/1998/jun/24/news/mn-63186>.

16 Office of the Press Secretary. The White House. President Bush Participates in Joint Press Availability with Prime Minister Harper of Canada, and President Calderón of Mexico.

17 "US Funding for War on Drugs 'Ridiculous' - Panama." *BBC Monitoring Latin America - Political Supplied* by BBC Worldwide Monitoring, August 3, 2008. <http://0-www.lexisnexis.com.opac.sfsu.edu/lnacui2api/api/version1/getDocCui?lni=4T4H-MVM0-TX34-N10P&c-si=270944,270077,11059,8411&hl=t&hv=t&hnsd=f&hns=t&hgn=t&oc=00240&perma=true>.

18 Nathaniel Parish Flannery, "Can South America Become the New European Union?" *Forbes.com*, November 30, 2012. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/nathanielparishflannery/2012/11/30/can-south-america-become-the-new-european-union/>.

19 Hasan Tuluy, "Latin America: Violence Threatens a Decade of Progress." Text. *Latin America & Caribbean: Opportunities for All*, April 44–44, 2013. <http://blogs.worldbank.org/latina-america/latin-america-violence-threatens-a-decade-of-progress>.

20 "The 50 Most Violent Cities In The World." Accessed May 5, 2015. <http://www.businessinsider.com/the-most-violent-cities-in-the-world-2013-11>

seen as bandwagoning, a sort of acceptance of a forced alliance from the aggressor's side. This is supported by a 2009 comment from former Mexican President Felipe Calderón, blaming the drug violence in Mexico on "having the world's biggest consumer (of drugs) next to us."²⁸ This remark can be analyzed as a strike at America, placing the majority of the reasoning blame on it. This comment could be understood as blaming internal American demand for creating the drug networks, whose product is made for American consumers. If this is what Calderón meant, then bandwagoning seems a good analysis of the current relationship between American and the Latin American states.

Efforts have been systematically increased between Latin American nations not only in general trade unions like the Union of South American Nations as mentioned before, but in a general anti-American ideals trend. America's policy pushing and action in Latin America has caused grievances. Operation Casablanca in May of 1998, an American led money laundering probe in Mexico without their governments' permission or knowledge, strained the southern state's relationship with their northern neighbor.²⁹ Mexico was lividly upset at the strike on their sovereignty, for the American approval of undercover sting operations not only violated local Mexican laws, it also created distrust between the states.³⁰ The differences between the culture spheres were emerging, for the United States' actions clearly are not an acceptable course of action in the eyes of Latin America.

After forty years of violence and drug conflict, the War on Drugs has been criticized as a lost cause, from both within and outside of America.³¹ In 2012, President Otto Perez Molina of Guatemala specifi-

28 "Mexican President Blames U.S. Corruption for Hampering Drug War." *El Paso Times.com*. Accessed May 4, 2015. http://www.elpasotimes.com/newupdated/ci_11852600.

29 Ricardo Soberón Garrido. "Transnational Institute | Corruption, Drug Trafficking and the Armed Forces." Accessed May 6, 2015. <http://www.tni.org/article/corruption-drug-trafficking-and-armed-forces>.

30 Stanley Meisler, "Operation Casablanca: End of a Beautiful Friendship?" *The Los Angeles Times*. June 24, 1998. <http://articles.latimes.com/1998/jun/24/news/mn-63186>.

31 The Editorial Board. "The New York Times Calls for Marijuana Legalization." *The New York Times*, July 26, 2014. <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/07/27/opinion/sunday/high-time-marijuana-legalization.html>.

cally sent his vice president to neighboring countries in Central America to begin drug legalization discussions, in which most seemed ready to participate.³² In South America, the topic is being breeched, with Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos reaching out his neighbors' former heads of state to discuss the idea of legalization.³³ A joint-force team has been created by former heads of state from Mexico, Brazil, and Colombia, which looks to reform drug policy and encourage states to consider legalization and regulation as valid options.³⁴ This Global Commission on Drug Policy is now at 22 members and is committed to encouraging states to take the path of decriminalization.

America, known for a no-tolerance policy in the War on Drugs, has a fundamentally different mindset than some South American states. With hundreds of years worth of pre-colonial culture including the chewing of the coca leaf, the base ingredient of cocaine, the Andean mountain region states hold a different attitude towards the cultivation and use of the leaf than America.³⁵

As Huntington described, the cultural lines are becoming more prominent as battle lines. The divide between the attitudes of the Latin American governments and the US government is so polarized, it seems as if a consensus on policy for the drug trafficking and violence is unlikely to be reached. While Huntington does seem on the nose with this theory, future relations should be tenser, but violence between the states seems unlikely while drug related violence is still a threat. No state will willingly fight a war at home and abroad at the same time.

We refer back to the main questions posed by this paper. Is Latin America working towards a drug free environment, or an American free environment? Reviewing the facts, it seems that Latin American states' have accepted the presence of American policy and aid and as the old saying goes "The enemy of my enemy is my friend." But, with the rising trend of

32 Ethan Nadelmann, "Legalization Debate Takes Off in Latin America." *The Huffington Post*. Accessed May 4, 2015. http://social.huffingtonpost.com/ethan-nadelmann/legalization-debate-takes_b_1337053.html.

33 *Ibid*.

34 *Ibid*.

35 William O. Walker III, ed. "Drugs in the Western Hemisphere." Wilmington, Delaware : Scholarly Resources Inc., 1996.

legalization support, as well as the general criticism of the ineffectiveness of the War on Drugs, I predict that the strained alliance between North and South will splinter. Unless the United States' government is willing to readdress policy and respect their southern counterparts, this partnership will continue to harbor resentment, leading to an eventual split of interests.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Latin American/United States joint effort in the War on Drugs has begun to fray at the edges. Although the struggle has been prominent for forty years, it is safe to conclude that not much has changed. The states of the South are beginning to research other avenues to deal with the drug related violence in their communities, most significantly the possibility of legalization.

The cooperation efforts foreseen by Huntington and Walt all have manifested, but each with a different reason. The interstate cooperation within Latin America, as predicted by Huntington has begun to chafe against the alliance between Latin American states and the United States. While Walt's suggestion of balancing is prevalent, it has shown to be somewhat counterproductive. While Latin American states ally with the United States against the drug threat, the southern states ally together against American assertion and imposition with the southwest hemisphere. Neoliberal theory takes the gold in this discussion, for the Latin American states act rationally and take steps to preserve their own safety and interests. The bandwagoning examples shown explore the reality of scared states under the influence and "care" of a big brother state, here the United States. The balancing against this influence proves neoliberal theory of cooperation in the sense of self interest, for being influenced by American policy choice has not done much to end the War on Drugs, and the dangers that it brings.

For forty years, the American-waged war on narcotic consumption has highlighted the immense danger to the lives of their southern neighbors. This violence is delivered from the daily business dealings of the immense illegal narcotics networks, which funnel north to feed the American people's demand for the illegal substances. A constant game of whack-a-mole, the War on Drugs has done little to help the fear and violence in Latin America, and the same tired prohibition policy has run its course in the

minds of many Latin American leaders.

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PALESTINE AND ISRAEL: THE PATH TOWARDS COOPERATION

BY
MICHELLE STONE

While the actual Palestine-Israel region is geographically small, the conflict in the area is part of the larger Arab-Israel conflict that has received global attention. By analyzing the conflict through three realist principles I explore why different attempts at peace and cooperation in the region have failed and how the parties involved can overcome these obstacles. My research was collected from a variety of primary and secondary sources, including news sources and peer-reviewed articles. My paper concludes that states in conflict must first overcome their distrust of one another in order to form a peace agreement.

Palestine and Israel have a long history of conflict. While the actual state of Israel is a small region geographically, the engagement between the Israelis and Palestinians is a large part of the broader Arab-Israeli conflict. This struggle has prevented both parties from fully cooperating to achieve a peace agreement. Because conflict in the region has been fueled by mistrust and fear, any attempt to reach a genuine peace deal has failed. The theories examined in this paper will deal with the factors that cause states to fear and distrust one another, as well as the motivations for power and security acquisition. Each of these theories will be explained in relation to the ongoing conflict in the Palestine-Israel region.

Theoretical Debate

Joseph Grieco is a professor of Political Science at Duke University whose work primarily focuses on theories of international relations, issues of international political economy, and problems of international conflict. He provides a clear argument on liberal institutionalism in his essay entitled, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism."¹ Grieco

1 Joseph, M. Grieco, "Anarchy and the Limits

goes on to explain that the presence of international institutions can help states achieve cooperation, contrary to the realist belief that anarchic societies tend to provoke the unwillingness of states to work together.²

According to Grieco, "...States in anarchy are preoccupied with power and security, are predisposed towards conflict and competition, and often fail to cooperate even in the face of common interests."³ Therefore, his explanation about whether states will cooperate in the face of common interests depends on whether they are preoccupied with power and security.

In his same essay, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism," Joseph Grieco also reasons that in addition to being preoccupied with power and security, countries are also motivated by fear and distrust.⁴ According to him, "...states may sometimes be driven by greed or ambition, but anarchy and the danger of war cause all states always to be motivated in some measure by fear and

of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism." *International Organization* 42, no. 3 (Summer 1988): 488. *Academic Search Complete, JSTOR.*

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Ibid.*

distrust.”⁵ If nations exist in an environment where the danger of war is real, then states’ actions will be motivated by fear and distrust. In order to support his arguments about state behavior, Grieco examines the Prisoner’s Dilemma that goes:

In the game, each state prefers mutual cooperation to mutual noncooperation (CC>DD), but also successful cheating to mutual cooperation (DC>CC) and mutual defection to victimization by another’s cheating (DD>CD); overall, then, DC>CC>DD>CD. In these circumstances, and in the absence of a centralized authority or some countervailing force to bind states to their promises, each defects regardless of what it expects the other to do.⁶

According to Grieco for realists, anarchy means that states are theoretically capable of cooperation, but the knowledge that cheating is both possible and profitable, and the lack of a supranational authority to enforce state promises prevents cooperation. The Prisoner’s Dilemma could be applied to the case of Palestine and Israel today. While both sides may benefit from a peace agreement, neither is willing to do so out of both mistrust of the other party and unwillingness to lose power.

Hans J. Morgenthau is considered to be one of the founding fathers of the realist school in the 20th century. In his book *Politics Among Nations*, Morgenthau claims that due to the inherently flawed nature of humans, states tend to pursue self-interests.⁷ Therefore, the primary objective of diplomacy is the advancement of their national interests through peaceful means.⁸ International peace can be strengthened through the surrender of partial sovereignty by states to a higher authority. He states that:

It is only when nations have surrendered to a higher authority the means of destruction which modern technology has put in their hands — when they have given up their sovereignty — that international peace can be made as secure

as domestic peace. Diplomacy can make peace more secure than it is today, and the world state can make peace more secure than it would be if nations were to abide by the rules of diplomacy.⁹

His explanation for how the world can achieve a lasting, stable peace, relies on states’ willingness to give up some of their sovereignty to an international force. While this idea is consistent with liberal principles, his theory about lessening state sovereignty stems from his own personal experience during the Cold War, where he favored supranational control of nuclear weapons.¹⁰ Even though his theory dates back to 1948, the idea of relinquishing partial state authority to an international body is still very relevant today, especially in the case of Palestine and the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The issues of conflict resolution and peace preservation have served as a foundation for debate among International Relations theorists for years. The realist school of thought asserts that anarchy and the threat of violence causes states to fear and distrust one another. This causes them to then focus on increasing their power and security, which only leads to more conflict. In order to stop the cycle of violence between states, Morgenthau proposes that states delegate partial sovereignty to a higher authority. While these theories differ in their major and minor premises, they all are formulated around the central question: what factors prevent states in conflict from cooperating to achieve peace?

Methodology

The majority of evidence I collected to support my conclusion came from electronic primary sources, such as “The Guardian” and the ICC website. In addition, I also used secondary sources, such as monographs and peer-reviewed articles, along with their footnotes and endnotes, to examine the various theories included in my paper. During my research, I used strategic keywords to find articles and news sources related to my topic. These keywords included names of international organizations, such as the ICC, United Nations Educational Scientific,

⁵ Joseph, M. Grieco, “Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism.”

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Hans, J. Morgenthau, and Kenneth W. Thompson. “The Future of Diplomacy.” In *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. Brief ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Hans, J. Morgenthau, “We Are Deluding Ourselves in Viet-Nam.” *New York Times Magazine*, April 18, 1965, reprinted in *The Viet-Nam Reader*, ed. M. Raskin and B. Fall (Vintage Books, 1967), pp. 37–45.

and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and United Nations Security Council (UNSC), combined with names of states, such as Palestine and Israel. The database I created was comprised of 100 events that were gathered from various articles and arranged chronologically. This chronology was then used to find precedents that supported the conclusion.

Fear and Distrust

Joseph Grieco focuses on how the threat of war affects state behavior. According to Grieco, "...states may sometimes be driven by greed or ambition, but anarchy and the danger of war cause all states always to be motivated in some measure by fear and distrust."¹¹ If a state feels there is a threat to their security, then it will be motivated by both fear and distrust. This principle has prevented both Palestine and Israel from reaching a lasting peace agreement.

In the Arab-Israeli conflict, there have been many attempts to negotiate a peace treaty. After the First Intifada, where Palestinians rebelled against Israeli occupation in 1987 killing nearly 1,300 Palestinians and 160 Israelis, the need for a peace negotiation became more apparent.¹² One of the most famous peace negotiations was the Oslo Accords. The accords started in 1993, in Oslo, Norway behind closed doors. Israeli and Palestinian negotiators, acting without a mediator, came together to draft up a set of agreements in hope of ending the long lasting conflict.¹³ The agreement was set up in a two-phase timetable. According to the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organization Agreement: 1993, Article V: Transitional Period and Permanent Status Negotiations, the first phase of the agreement would consist of a five year interim period where upon Israel would withdraw from the Gaza Strip and slowly out of parts of the West Bank.¹⁴ The Palestinian Liberation

Organization (PLO) would also police the territories they controlled and cooperate with Israel in the fight against terrorism.¹⁵ After the five-year period, the second phase of the agreement was designed to permanently resolve the more complex issues, such as refugee status, borders, and Jerusalem.¹⁶ Following the interim period, despite attempts to reach a permanent peace solution, an agreement was never made and the accords ultimately failed.¹⁷

Despite serious attempts to negotiate, neither party was able to cooperate fully. Israel accused Arafat and the Palestinian forces of not being committed to peace or seriously trying to stop militant groups who opposed the peace process.¹⁸ In a speech given by Yasser Arafat, the PLO Chairman, in a mosque in Johannesburg, South Africa, he said:

This agreement, I am not considering it more than the agreement which had been signed between our prophet Mohammed and Koraish, and you remember the Caliph Omar had refused this agreement and [considered] it a despicable truce.¹⁹ But Mohammed had accepted it and we are accepting now this peace offer. But to continue our way to Jerusalem, to the first shrine together and not alone. We are in need of you as Moslems, as warriors of Jihad.²⁰

Similarly, Palestinians also saw Israel as not fully committed to the accords. They accused Israel of failing to stop the building and expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and stalling on the agreed withdrawal from the area.²¹ According to Al Jazeera America, the resolution to the settlement

2015. http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/isrplo.asp.

15 "Shattered Dreams of Peace." PBS.

16 *Ibid*.

17 Khaled. Elgindy, "Oslo's 20-year Legacy of Failure Lives on." Al Jazeera America. September 13, 2013. Accessed May 4, 2015. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/9/13/oslo-s-20-year-legacyoffailureliveson.html>.

18 "Shattered Dreams of Peace." PBS.

19 *The agreement with Koraish allowed Mohammed to pray in Mecca, which was under Koraish control, for ten years. When Mohammed grew stronger two years later, he abrogated the agreement, slaughtered the tribe of Koraish and conquered Mecca.*

20 "Arafat's Johannesburg Speech." Information Regarding Israel's Security. Accessed May 4, 2015. <http://www.iris.org.il/quotes/joburg.htm>.

21 "Shattered Dreams of Peace." PBS.

11 Joseph M. Grieco, "Anarchy And The Limits Of Cooperation: A Realist Critique Of The Newest Liberal Institutionalism."

12 "The First Intifada: The Stone Resistance against Occupation." World Bulletin. Accessed May 4, 2015. <http://www.worldbulletin.net/news/150293/the-first-intifada-the-stone-resistance-against-occupation>.

13 "Shattered Dreams of Peace." PBS. Accessed May 4, 2015. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/oslo/negotiations/>.

14 "The Avalon Project : Israel-Palestine Liberation Organization Agreement : 1993." The Avalon Project : Israel-Palestine Liberation Organization Agreement : 1993. Accessed May 4,

issue was meant to be negotiated permanently after the five-year interim period was over. However, “in the 20 years since Oslo, Israel’s settler population in the occupied territories has more than doubled — from roughly 270,000 in 1993 to well over 560,000 today [2013] — even as the parties were ostensibly negotiating the fate of these areas.”²²

According to Grieco, the failure of the Oslo Accords would be the threat of war, which caused both parties to act out of fear and distrust, preventing any lasting solution from being made. The First Intifada was a grassroots uprising that killed over 1,000 people. Since then there was a Second Intifada, which started in 2000 and was much more bloody and violent than the first.²³ Grieco would see the two intifadas as evidence that the threat of war in the Israeli-Palestinian region is real. Even during the Oslo peace negotiations, deeper mistrust grew on both sides,²⁴ causing the accords to fail and violence to plague the region until this day.

Power and Security

Grieco believes that, “...States in anarchy are preoccupied with power and security, are predisposed towards conflict and competition, and often fail to cooperate even in the face of common interests.” Building off of his last theory, when states feel threatened they build up their security, which causes them to fail to cooperate, which will ultimately lead to more violence and the need for more security. In 2012 Israel spent 15,536,000,000 USD on their military, about 6.2% of the country’s GDP. That is more than three of its bordering neighbors Lebanon (\$1,622 million), Jordan (\$1,382 million), and Egypt (\$4,175 million) spent in 2012 combined.²⁵ In addition to a large military budget, the nuclear program of Israel opted to not be party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This became public

22 Khaled, Elgindy, “Oslo’s 20-year Legacy of Failure Lives on.” Al Jazeera America. September 13, 2013. Accessed May 4, 2015. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/9/13/oslo-s-20-year-legacyoffailureliveson.html>.

23 Damien, McElroy, “Israel-Gaza conflict: What is an intifada?” The Telegraph. Last modified November 6, 2014. Accessed May 10, 2015. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/israel/10990699/Israel-Gaza-conflict-What-is-an-intifada.html>.

24 “Shattered Dreams of Peace.” PBS.

25 “Israeli Military Budget.” Military Budget Israel Comments. Accessed May 5, 2015. <http://militarybudget.org/israel/>.

news when a former speaker of the Knesset, Avraham Burg, declared Israeli possession of both nuclear and chemical weapons, describing the classified policy as “outdated and childish.”²⁶ Israel also has mandatory military service for both men and women. It is one of the few countries in the world that maintains compulsory military service for both sexes. The Israeli Military has one of the highest recruitment rates in the world, around 80% of those who are summoned serve.²⁷ *Market Business News* recently reported on the 2012 National Power Index (NPI) that Israel ranked tenth on the list of the world’s most powerful countries with a 32.19 NPI ranking. The list was released by the Foundation for National Security and Research (FNSR), a New Delhi based think tank.²⁸ The NPI is a quantification of a nation’s power, meaning its ability to influence global events. The rankings are derived from a statistical analysis, “in terms of economy, military, diplomacy, technology, and population.”²⁹ Israel’s score is highly influenced by its outstanding military capacity, ranking 6th in the world, as well as ranking 4th in technological capability.³⁰

Since Israel withdrew from the International Criminal Court (ICC) on August 28, 2002, its support for the court has been minimal.³¹ After the ICC Prosecutor decided to open a preliminary investigation into the Palestinian- Israeli Conflict during the summer of 2014, Israel’s former foreign minister, Avigdor Lieberman, described Israel’s plan to combat the investigation. During a meeting with Canada’s Foreign Minister, John Baird, Lieberman states that if “Israel does not see a ‘dramatic change’ in the ICC position, ‘we will ask all our friends to stop any

26 Julian, Borger, “The Truth about Israel’s Secret Nuclear Arsenal.” The Guardian. January 15, 2014. Accessed May 5, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jan/15/truth-israels-secret-nuclear-arsenal>.

27 “IDF Background Information.” Mahal: IDF. Accessed May 5, 2015. <http://www.mahal-idf-volunteers.org/information/background/content.htm#who>.

28 “Israel Among Ten Most Powerful Nations In World.” Arutz Sheva. Accessed May 5, 2015. <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/176683#.VUGM1znBHZl>.

29 *Ibid*.

30 *Ibid*.

31 “Which Countries Have Joined the ICC?” American Non-Governmental Organizations Coalition. Accessed March 24, 2015. <http://www.amicc.org/icc/ratifications/#fn1>.

funding of the ICC.”³² A similar incident in 2011 occurred when both Israel and the US cut funding to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) after its decision by world governments to grant Palestine UNESCO membership. Both Israel and the US lost their UNESCO voting rights on November 8, 2013 after failing to meet the deadline to repay their debts to the organization.³³

According to Grieco’s theory, Israel’s preoccupation with power and security has prevented them from cooperating with other international organizations, even when it would be in their mutual benefit. Israel’s massive military spending and mandatory conscription for service demonstrates the Israeli government’s obsession with power and security. This has caused them to pull out of many international treaties and organizations such as UNESCO and the ICC. Israel and Palestine have been locked in this self-serving cycle of violence, which according to Grieco’s logic, will continue until genuine cooperation is achieved.

Pooling of Sovereignty

According to Morgenthau:

It is only when nations have surrendered to a higher authority the means of destruction which modern technology has put in their hands — when they have given up their sovereignty — that international peace can be made as secure as domestic peace. Diplomacy can make peace more secure than it is today, and the world state can make peace more secure than it would be if nations were to abide by the rules of diplomacy.³⁴

Morgenthau’s theory claims that if states give up partial sovereignty, then peace will prevail; therefore it is logical to assume that if states refuse to delegate

some of their sovereignty to a supernatural authority, peace will remain insecure. As previously mentioned, Israel has a long history of either abstaining from or pulling out of international treaties and organizations.

After Israel and the United States cut their funding to UNESCO in 2011, the organization underwent a financial crisis that “forced it to cut or scale back US-led initiatives such as Holocaust education and tsunami research.”³⁵ While UNESCO is predominantly known for the preservation of heritage and support for cultural diversity, it also works to mobilize education, advance scientific cooperation, and protect the freedom of expression.³⁶ In addition to serious cut backs to educational programs, according to the Guardian, “some fear that a weaker US presence will lead to growing anti-Israeli sentiment within Unesco, where Arab-led criticism of Israel for territorial reasons has long been an issue.”³⁷ The organization has already been forced to cut funding to a program in Iraq, which would have helped to restore water facilities, and may also have to cut a Holocaust and genocide awareness program in Africa. This loss would be a particular blow to the US and Israel as Holocaust awareness was one of the areas they had aggressively promoted after the US rejoined UNESCO in 2002.³⁸

By pulling out of UNESCO, Israel is not only hurting itself, but also demonstrating to the international community its unwillingness to cooperate. By cutting funding to UNESCO, Israel and the US caused cutbacks to educational programs, including Holocaust awareness programs. These cutbacks could provoke anti-Israel sentiment within UNESCO, which may then cause international tension. While cooperating with the organization would be beneficial to Israel and the US, both countries chose to not support it, with disregard towards the consequences.

Conclusion

Throughout much of history, foreign relations

³⁵ “US Loses Unesco Voting Rights after Stopping Funds over Palestine Decision.” The Guardian. November 8, 2013. Accessed May 5, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/08/us-unesco-voting-funds-palestine-decision>.

³⁶ “Introducing UNESCO.” UNESCO. September 24, 2012. Accessed May 6, 2015. <http://en.unesco.org/about-us/introducing-unesco>.

³⁷ “US Loses Unesco Voting Rights after Stopping Funds over Palestine Decision.” The Guardian.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³² Herb, Keinon, and Khaled Abu Toameh. “Netanyahu Slams ICC; Steinitz Compares Court Decision to Dreyfus Affair.” The Jerusalem Post. January 18, 2015. Accessed March 20, 2015. <http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Netanyahu-slams-ICC-Steinitz-compares-court-decision-to-Dreyfus-Affair-388108>.

³³ “US Loses Unesco Voting Rights after Stopping Funds over Palestine Decision.” The Guardian. November 8, 2013. Accessed May 5, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/08/us-unesco-voting-funds-palestine-decision>.

³⁴ Hans, J. Morgenthau, and Kenneth W. Thompson. “The Future of Diplomacy.” In *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. Brief ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993.

have been a driving factor for state behavior. The struggle to cooperate and achieve peace between nations is an ongoing issue today. Grieco's analysis of cooperation between states depends on whether there is a threat of war between the two entities. This threat causes states to fear and distrust one another, which eventually leads to conflict. This struggle in turn causes states to become preoccupied with power and security, which leads them to oppose cooperation and ultimately causes more conflict. In the case of Palestine and Israel, the intifadas serve as proof of a threat of war. This threat prevented states from fully cooperating during the Oslo Accords peace process, contributing to the failure of the accords. Due to the violent nature of the conflict in the region, especially the second intifada, Israel became preoccupied with power and security, which led to more noncooperation and has caused the region to be plagued with violence today.

Building on Grieco's argument, Morgenthau believes that the solution to achieving international peace is for states to willingly surrender partial sovereignty. As a result of the threat of war and the preoccupation with power, Israel has been unwilling to delegate some of its sovereignty to an international entity. However, unlike Israel, the Palestinian Authority has been delegating more and more of its 'sovereignty' to international organizations, such as the ICC.

In order to break the cycle of violence and non-cooperation in the region both parties must first overcome the obstacle of fear and distrust. Because the realist school of thought assumes that the world is in anarchy, causing the threat of war to be legitimate, states must accept that the threat is there and work towards cooperation despite any distrust. This could help prevent the aspiration to increase power and security, which has the potential to give states a better chance of achieving peace. Further research should be done about the effect surrendering sovereignty has on eliminating mistrust between parties. If Palestine and Israel work to genuinely to cooperate in the forming of a peace agreement, an end to the long history of violence may be possible.

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NAVIGATING THE FUTURE STABILITY OF XINJIANG AND CHINA'S SILK ROAD

BY
RAJA SUTHERLAND

Since the March 11th 2014 attack in Kunming China, attention has shifted to the increasingly restive province of Xinjiang, which has been become more unstable over the years due to the growing tensions between Han Chinese and its indigenous people, the Uyghur. Meanwhile, with the rise of the Islamic State has attracted an increasing number of Uyghur's, who China fears will come back to sow destruction within its borders. With China's Silk Road economic belt relying heavily on the stability of the province, growing radicalization among the Uyghur population poses a great danger for the future. China's ability to address the grievances driving unrest in the region will be crucial going forward.

Over the past two decades China's most western provinces, traditionally inhabited by the Uyghur's, has seen an influx of Han Chinese migrants, sparking sporadic incidents of violence between the two groups. However, Uyghur separatists launched their most devastating attack on a train station in Kunming, China was forced to confront its policies two decades in the making. Changes are primarily in its settler colonialism and development initiatives which have played a heavy role in rising tensions. Chinese officials are increasingly worried about citizens joining Islamist groups like the Islamic State, and terrorism within its borders. Security in the area has also become a priority for China due to current efforts to create economic the "Silk Road Initiative" economically linking Central Asia with Xinjiang serving as the hub. The Chinese government has recognized that cooperation with other countries in the region will be necessary in order to combat religious extremism aimed at its borders.

China's 9/11

On March 1, 2014 an unknown number of assailants wielding machet-

es attacked a train station in Kunming, one of China's south-western provinces, leaving 29 people dead and 130 more injured.¹ Local authorities managed to kill four of the assailants, but the rest escaped without a trace. State authorities have since labelled the attack as "China's 9/11," pointing to Islamist Separatists from their most north western province Xinjiang, home to the Uyghur's. While no specific group claimed responsibility for the attack, the Chinese government blamed the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), an umbrella term for a number of splinter groups who are seeking independence from China.² Of these groups, the most prominent group is the Turkic Islamic Party, which was formed in 2006 by Uyghurs

¹ Kaiman, Jonathan, and Tania Branigan. "Kunming Knife Attack: Xinjiang Separatists Blamed for 'Chinese 9/11.'" *The Guardian*. March 2, 2014. Accessed March 7, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/02/kunming-knife-attack-muslim-separatists-xinjiang-china>.

² Moore, Malcom. "Kunming Massacre: Has the Global Jihad Reached China?" *The Telegraph*. March 4, 2014. Accessed March 8, 2015. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/world-news/asia/china/10675219/Kunming-massacre-Has-the-global-jihad-reached-China.html>

who had fled Afghanistan and Pakistan in the 1990's. They have claimed responsibility for such attacks before in the past including one in Beijing, in which a car ploughed through pedestrians in Tiananmen Square before crashing into a bridge and causing a fire that killed five, and injured more.³ Although the group did not claim responsibility for the terrorism in Kunming its leader has praised the attack nonetheless.⁴ So far, the vast majority of the ongoing separatist violence has remained confined within the borders of Xinjiang. However, this fact appears to be quickly changing.

The FATA Connection and the China-Pakistan Relationship

The majority of ETIM fighters are suspected to be hiding in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FTA), an autonomous region. The areas are administered by tribal councils called the Jirga's with a federally appointed official, overseeing various aspects of governance. The primary role of this official is to the law and call upon tribal leaders to settle disputes.⁵ This fragile dynamic was disrupted during the post 9/11 invasion of Afghanistan, when the United States demanded that Pakistan clamp down on Afghan fighters seeking refuge in FATA. The Pakistani compiled army's incursions into the area was met with a full blown insurgency. In fact, the Pakistan's military is still dealing with the repercussion of this decision a decade later. A 2014 terrorist attack on an army pupil school, typically referred to as the Peshawar School, has served as a recent, yet somber reminder of the consequences of Pakistani

3 Kaiman, Jonathan. "Islamist Group Claims Responsibility for Attack on China's Tiananmen Square." *The Guardian*. November 25, 2013. Accessed March 8, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/25/islamist-china-tiananmen-beijing-attack>.; Moore, Malcom. "Kunming Massacre: Has the Global Jihad Reached China?" *The Telegraph*. March 4, 2014. Accessed March 8, 2015. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/10675219/Kunming-massacre-Has-the-global-jihad-reached-China.html>.

4 Tiezzi, Shannon. "Turkestan Islamic Party Expresses Support for Kunming Attack." *The Diplomat*. March 20, 2014. Accessed March 8, 2015. <http://thediplomat.com/2014/03/turkestan-islamic-party-expresses-support-for-kunming-attack/>.

5 Tiezzi, Shannon. "Who Is Fighting China's War On Terror?" *The Diplomat*. November 26, 2013. Accessed March 8, 2015. <http://thediplomat.com/2013/11/who-is-fighting-chinas-war-on-terror/>.

compliance with coalition forces.⁶

China is one of Pakistan's strongest allies, yet it does not share the United States' aggressive posture when it comes to confronting Pakistan about its militant safe havens. China, for the most part, has preferred to use economic incentives—which Pakistan needs to help its poor economy—in order to get the desired results. Due to US and Pakistani operations in the FATA region, China has had the luxury of avoiding coming up with its own military solution. For example in 2010, one of East Turkestan Islamic Movement designated leaders; Abdul Haq was killed in a U.S. drone strike because of his association with Al Qaeda and Bin Laden.⁷

China has also counted on the United States to maintain stability in Afghanistan, because of concerns about the possible extremist violence that could spill over in the post US era. Chiefly, the resurgence of terrorist training camps for ETIM members could disrupt its development plans for the central Asian region.⁸ China has called for several regional dialogues in the hopes of mitigating possible fallout from a post-US Afghanistan, but it will take more than that in order to keep the country from falling into the same position it was before 9/11.

China's Own Foreign Fighter Problem

Since the rise of the Islamic State in the Middle East, an estimated 300 Chinese nationals have been fighting for the group, making the Chinese government more worried about increasing radicalization among the Uyghur population.⁹ The link between the

6 Syeda, Butool. "Pakistani Responses to AfPak Policy: Local Narratives and an Ending Global War?" *Asian Survey* 53, no. 6 (2013): 1005-036. Accessed March 8, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.1525/as.2013.53.6.1005?uid=2129&uid=2&uid=70&uid=4&sid=21106055254893>.

7 Tiezzi, Shannon. "Who Is Fighting China's War On Terror?" *The Diplomat*. November 26, 2013. Accessed March 8, 2015. <http://thediplomat.com/2013/11/who-is-fighting-chinas-war-on-terror/>.; "Treasury Targets Leader of Group Tied to Al Qaida." US Department of Treasury. April 20, 2009. Accessed March 8, 2015. <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg92.aspx>.

8 Tiezzi, Shannon. "Why China Needs the US in Afghanistan." *Why China Needs the US in Afghanistan*. March 25, 2014. Accessed March 8, 2015. <http://thediplomat.com/2014/03/why-china-needs-the-us-in-afghanistan/>.

9 Martina, Michael. "About 300 Chinese Said Fighting alongside Islamic State in Middle East." *Reuters*. December 15, 2014. Accessed March 11, 2015.

Islamic State and Xinjiang extremists was officially confirmed for the first time by Xinjiang's Party Secretary, Zhang Chunxin, who admitted that the organization has had success in recruiting Uyghur members.¹⁰ More than 800 Chinese were stopped in Vietnam alone in an attempt to reach jihad training camps last year according to the Chinese government.¹¹ In his speech in Iraq last July, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi the current head of the Islamic State proclaimed, "Muslim rights are forcibly seized in China, India, and Palestine" and that "Your brothers all over the world are waiting for your rescue and anticipating your brigades."¹² The fact that China's name was first on the list has not been lost on Chinese authorities nor have they ignored a map released purportedly showing Xinjiang included in territory the Islamic State intends to conquer within the next five years.¹³ In a departure from its policy of non-interference, China has offered to participate in supportive air strikes to aid Iraq to defeat the Islamic State.¹⁴ This is correlated with the fact China is heavily invested heavily in Iraq's oil industry, which now accounts for 10 percent of China's oil imports ranking Iraq as their fifth largest oil supplier.¹⁵ China has already evacuated 10,000 of its citizens from Iraq (one of the most dramatic steps China has taken yet) in fear that they would be placed in jeopardy due to

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/15/us-mideast-crisis-china-idUSKBN0JT0UX20141215>.

10 Jia, Cui. "IS Recruits Xinjiang Residents." People's Daily Online. March 11, 2015. Accessed March 11, 2015. <http://en.people.cn/n/2015/0311/c90882-8860966.html>.

11 Meng, Angela. "Hundreds of Chinese Seeking 'jihad Training' Are Caught on Vietnam Border in One Year: Beijing." South Morning China Post. January 19, 2015. Accessed March 12, 2015. <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1681827/two-uygurs-xinjiang-killed-trying-cross-illegally-vietnam>.

12 Olesen, Alexa. "China Sees Islamic State Inching Closer to Home." Foreign Policy. August 11, 11. Accessed March 13, 2015. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/08/11/china-sees-islamic-state-inching-closer-to-home/>.

13 *Ibid.*

14 Bozorgmehr, Najmeh, and Lucy Hornby. "China Offers to Help Iraq Defeat Sunni Extremists." Financial Times. December 12, 2014. Accessed March 27, 2015. <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/3f4dc794-8141-11e4-b956-00144feabdc0.html#axzz-3Vd6zMQ8l>.

15 Ford, Peter. "Why China Stays Quiet on Iraq, despite Being No. 1 Oil Investor." The Christian Science Monitor. June 27, 2014. Accessed March 10, 2015. <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-Pacific/2014/0627/Why-China-stays-quiet-on-Iraq-despite-being-no.-1-oil-investor-video>.

Islamic State's swift gains throughout Iraq.¹⁶

Development: An Underlying Factor For Instability

Xinjiang is one of China's most resource rich regions, containing the country's largest oil deposits. As such, Beijing is eager to pour massive investments for development into the region to fuel the ever growing Chinese economy and to become an energy producer in the region.¹⁷ However, the costs of development have become increasingly clear as environmental degradation threatens seriously harming agriculture production, and driving local companies out of business in favour of larger ones.¹⁸ A crucial factor driving this unrest is the policy of moving Han Chinese into the region in vast numbers. While this government policy to encourage settlement has been in place for over a century, it has increased with the Chinese governments drive to modernize the province. It is estimated that between one million and two million Han Chinese have settled in Xinjiang in the last two decades alone.¹⁹ This has led to displacement of the Uyghur population and a subsequent lack of economic opportunities. Compounding the issue, they often face discrimination in favour of Han Chinese when it comes to employment opportunities. Feeling like second class citizens in their own lands has only contributed to Uyghur resentment toward China and the Chinese people themselves.²⁰ While Xinjiang has traditionally been a poor province, the

hope was that development would bring long-term

16 Olesen, Alexa. "China Sees Islamic State Inching Closer to Home." Foreign Policy. August 11, 11. Accessed March 13, 2015.

<http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/08/11/china-sees-islamic-state-inching-closer-to-home/>.

17 Kurlantzick, Joshua. "The Unsettled West." Foreign Affairs. Council on Foreign Relations. August 1, 2004. Accessed March 8, 2015. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/59942/joshua-kurlantzick/the-unsettled-west?page=show>.

18 Lee, Raymond. "Unrest in Xinjiang, Uyghur Province in China." Al Jazeera Center for Studies. February 20, 2014. Accessed March 10, 2015. <http://studies.aljazeera.net/en/reports/2014/02/201421281846110687.htm>.

19 Hammer, Joshua. "Demolishing Kashgar's History." Smithsonian. March 1, 2010. Accessed March 12, 2015. <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/demolishing-kashgars-history-7324895/?no-ist>.

20 Bhattacharji, Preeti. "Uighurs and China's Xinjiang Region." Council on Foreign Relations. May 29, 2012. Accessed March 10, 2015. <http://www.cfr.org/china/uighurs-chinas-xinjiang-region/p16870>.

stability. Unfortunately, the way in which the policies have been carried has done just the opposite inflaming the local population which in turn can lead to more violence.

Uyghur's feel their cultural identity has also been attacked over the years. In September of last year, Chinese authorities gave a life sentence to Ilham Tohti, a prominent Uyghur academic, who has been critical of the Chinese government's policies in the region though he himself has denied being a separatist.²¹ In January 2015, legislators banned the burqa in Xinjiang's capital; Urumqi, with the ban expected to spread province wide.²² In addition cities with cultural significance such as Kashgar have faced demolitions of neighbourhoods under the \$500 million "Housing Reform" program. Announced in 2009, the program will destroy 85 percent of the old city. These demolitions are viewed as a way to erase Uyghur identity and integrate them into greater Chinese society.²³

A Rocky Path for China's Silk Road?

China has recently announced plans to build roads, railways, and pipelines linking the country with Europe in what it has termed a "New Silk Road Economic Belt," China plans to create a \$16.3 billion fund in order to finance the construction.²⁴ In addition to economic interests, China sees stability in Central Asia as paramount to its own security. In 2001, when the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was created, consisting of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan counter terrorism was at the front of the agenda.²⁵ Xi

21 "China Jails Prominent Uighur Academic Ilham Tohti for Life." BBC News. September 23, 2014. Accessed March 10, 2015. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-29321701>.

22 Jiang, Steven. "China Bans Wearing Burqa in Biggest Muslim City." CNN. January 14, 2015. Accessed March 10, 2015. <http://www.cnn.com/2015/01/13/world/asia/china-burqa-ban/>.

23 Hammer, Joshua. "Demolishing Kashgar's History." Smithsonian. March 1, 2010. Accessed March 12, 2015. <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/demolishing-kashgars-history-7324895/?no-ist>.

24 Shi, Ting, and Steven Yang. "China Said to Plan \$16.3 Billion Fund for 'New Silk Road'." Bloomberg News. November 3, 2014. Accessed March 13, 2015. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-11-04/china-said-to-plan-16-3-billion-fund-to-revive-silk-road>.

25 Sud, Alisha. "China's Central Asian Anti-Terrorism Efforts." Council of Foreign Affairs. October 8, 2014. Accessed March 14, 2015. <http://blogs.cfr.org/asia/2014/10/08/alisha-sud-chi>

Jinping has recently offered the organization's members joint projects which amounting to \$5 billion dollars in exchange for commitments to fighting terrorism. China also held the largest military drill of Shanghai Cooperation Organization members since 2004 within its borders.²⁶ With the western province being crucial to Beijing's new initiative, bringing stability to the viability of this long-term project than ever before.

Conclusion

The threat of extremists is not going away any time soon; however, it is in China's power to mitigate the internal factors that have driven members of its Uyghur population to take up arms and whose grievances stem from the alienation of cultural and physical displacement. The Islamic State remains a potent force for jihadi recruits worldwide China included. By addressing what motivates them China can decrease their number while increasing security cooperation with its Central Asian neighbours. The stability of the province as well as its economic plans for the region may very well depend on how China straddles the future challenges ahead.

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26 Ooi, Su-Mei, and Kate Trinkle. "China's New Silk Road and Its Impact on Xinjiang." The Diplomat. March 5, 2015. Accessed March 14, 2015.

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