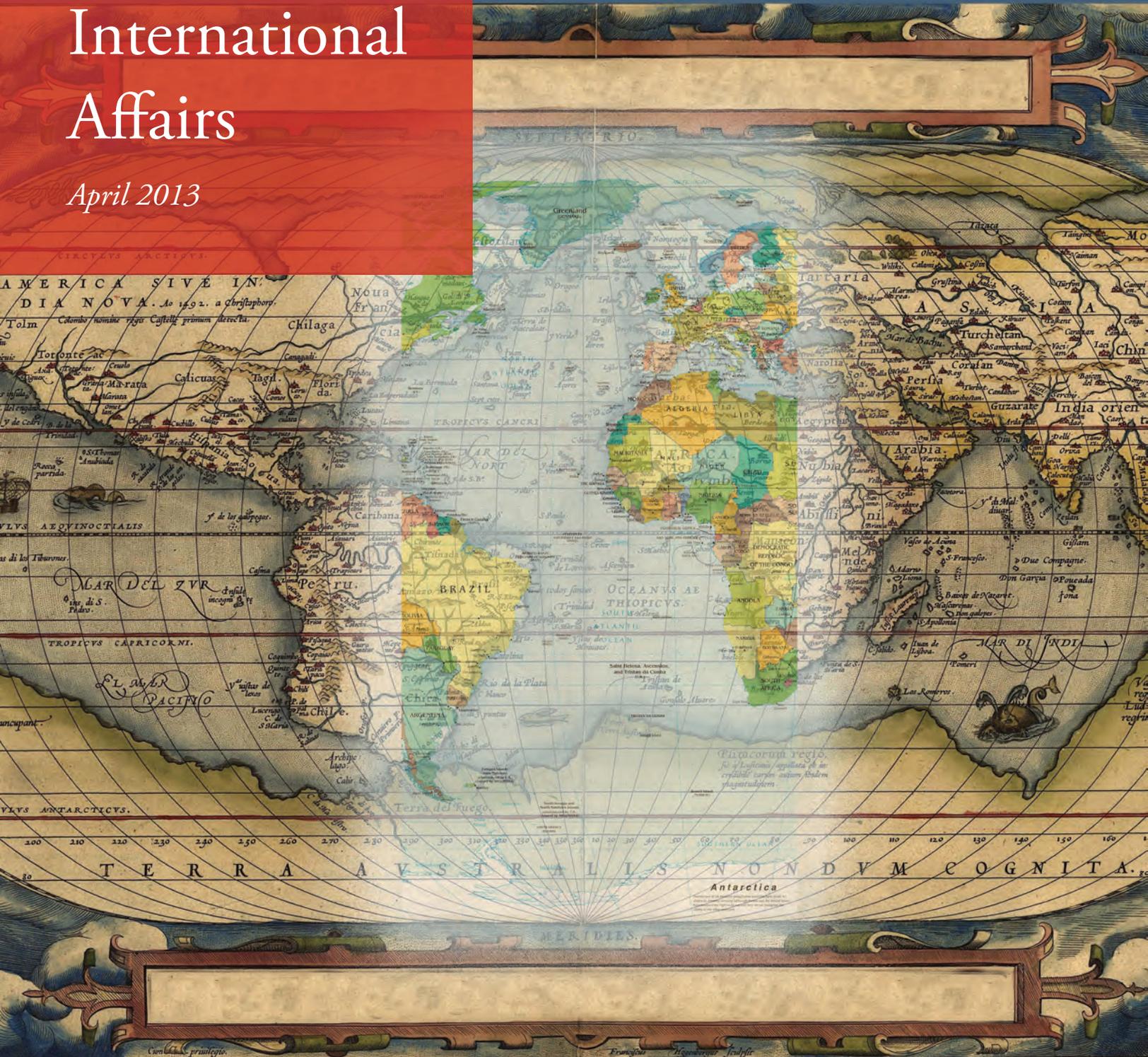


Michigan Journal of International Affairs

April 2013



Through the Revolving Door

LETTER FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

William Faulkner once wrote, “The past is not dead. In fact, it’s not even the past.” In previous years this magazine has offered opinions on and solutions to current world issues. Over the past term, though, it has become apparent that the topics we address are not totally new: stories rooted in decades of complex history have resurfaced. They may appear differently, often complicated by new leaders, globalization, or technology, but at their core they are simply reincarnations of previous events or attitudes.

This realization inspired the theme for this semester: “Through the Revolving Door.”

This concept of reiterations of history holds true for the entire world on a variety of topics spanning human rights, trade deals, geography, education, and foreign relations. Some of these conflicts in countries and global affairs are cyclical. Nuclear brinkmanship is now occurring with North Korea instead of the Soviet Union, and Will Scheffer offers foreign policy recommendations to approach the situation. Others are repetitions of issues in other parts of the world. Stories about government corruption come and go, and this year Meredith Welch directed attention to the current Spanish scandal in “Cracks in the Foundation.”

Our writers have taken a magnifying glass to history and applied lessons we have learned in the past to current problems. Kosovo remains a diplomatic nightmare, fought over by ethnic groups each claiming legitimacy, and Will Lamping discusses the importance of a swift and new solution in “Unfinished Business.” In Africa, Michelle West warns of what may happen due to unchanged ethnic tensions nearly twenty years after the Rwandan genocide.

Our theme is not limited to international or intranational conflicts. In the Americas, Amanda Bourlier examines the failures of NAFTA and advises Mexico to join a new trade agreement. In the Middle East, David Riley looks back on Israeli politics and provides an argument for why Israel must return to a centrist attitude in “Not So Hard Right.”

As nations and governments pass through the revolving doors of history, small elements may shift, but larger stories often remain generally unchanged. We cannot offer a comprehensive explanation for why history continues to repeat itself, but we can and do provide solutions to break the cycle of history’s repetition.

As long as these repetitions continue, the past will remain with us; through trial and error, all lessons in history are repeated until learned.

Michigan Journal of International Affairs,
Editorial Board

CONTACT // MJIA.INFO@GMAIL.COM
WEBSITE // MICHJOURNAL.COM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APRIL 2013

AFRICA

- 1 - Incentives or Enforcement? The Economics of Timber Smuggling in Mozambique — *Michael Clauw*
- 2 - Mali-aise: Hold Your Ground — *Austen Hufford*
- 3 - Kony 2013: Failed Advocacy for Africa — *Veronica Dulin*
- 5 - The Fall and Rise of an African Middle Class: And its Effect on Democracy — *Nicholas Moenck*
- 7 - Rwanda: On the Road to Recovery or to Repetition? — *Michelle West*
- 8 - Flower of Paradise — *Alex Leader*
- 9 - The Shifting Drug Trade and West Africa's Role — *Rachael Hancock*

AMERICAS

- 10 - Not Just NAFTA 2.0: Mexico in the Trans-Pacific Partnership — *Amanda Bourlier*
- 11 - Coca: It's Not Cocaine — *Jackson Montalbano*
- 12 - An Unusual Lifestyle — *Lissa Kryska*
- 13 - President Humala's Centrist Approach to Peruvian Stability — *Tanika Raychaudhuri*

ASIA

- 14 - A Game of Islands — *Andrew Grazioli*
- 15 - For Bangladeshi Blood: The Abolishment of Politics and Delivery of True Justice — *Sharik Bashir*
- 16 - Mongol Hoard: Resource Protectionism Threatens to Cripple the World's Fastest Growing Economy — *Trevor Grayeb*
- 17 - Understanding the Chinese Position on North Korea: The First Step to US-China Cooperation on North Korea — *Will Scheffer*
- 18 - An Investment of People: Immigration Policy in Singapore — *Carren Cheng*
- 19 - The Move to Cyprus is More Than it Seems — *Leslie Teng*
- 20 - Myanmar or Burma: Road to Decision — *Carren Cheng*
- 21 - Harder to Breathe: The Environmental Costs of China's Development — *Joseph Lindblad*
- 22 - Peeling the Orange — *Ryan Lorcb*

EUROPE

- 23 - Unfinished Business in Kosovo — *William Lamping*
- 24 - The Identity Crisis of the First Lady — *Julia Jacovides*
- 25 - Cracks in the Foundations: What Does Spain's Corruption Scandal Say about its Democracy? — *Meredith Welch*
- 26 - East Moves West: The Rise of Euroscepticism in Light of Increased EU Migration — *Stuart Richardson*
- 27 - Trendy Markets: Trouble Ahead for Fast Fashion — *Emily Meier*
- 28 - The Legacy of Mary Magdalene: The Irish Government Must Accept Responsibility for the Magdalene Laundries — *Kylee Stair*
- 29 - A New Pope, a New Path? — *Eric Huebner*

MIDDLE EAST

- 30 - Regional Powerbrokers: Expansion of Turkish Influence in the Middle East — *Nisreen Salka*
- 31 - Envisioning Opportunity: Reversing the Brain Drain in the Middle East — *Raya Saksouk*
- 32 - Silent Suffering: The Psychological Toll of the Syrian Uprising — *Anisha Kingra*
- 33 - Rewriting History: Representing the "Other" in Israeli and Palestinian Schools — *Raya Saksouk*
- 34 - Not So Hard Right: Why Israeli Politics Can and Should Return to the Center — *David Riley*
- 35 - Mob Sex Culture in Post-Revolutionary Egypt: Cases of Carnal Corruption — *Adam Miller*

Incentives or Enforcement?

The Economics of Timber Smuggling in Mozambique

— *Michael Clauw*

In 2012, China imported 323,000 cubic meters of timber from Mozambique. Although China registered over 300,000 cubic meters of imported Mozambique timber, Mozambique reported that only 41,543 cubic meters went out to all of its trading partners combined. A recent report by the UK-based NGO, the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) outlined systematic and illegal logging operations perpetrated by Chinese businessmen and Mozambique government officials. The EIA report asserts that these behind-the-scenes dealings allowing timber to be sold completely off the record have allowed importers to skip out on over 20 million dollars in taxes in 2012 alone. While predatory Chinese businessmen may be an easy target to blame, only by addressing problems involving corruption and transparency within Mozambique can the populace hope to curtail illegal logging activities and maximize future tax revenues.

This type of illegal trade activity is not possible without culpability on both ends. For the Chinese companies, the motivation for conducting under the table dealings is clear. With demand for timber growing in China each year, and little to be found within their own country, businessmen are compelled to look beyond its borders for the cheapest available sources. China's construction industry has exploded in recent decades and is expected to grow by 8.8 percent per year through 2016. Much of this construction is necessary to support the needs of the rapidly developing nation, but many of these projects are unnecessary investments spurred on by the desires of local politicians to impress the higher ups with impressive growth numbers. Construction is expected to dip in the future, as many of these new buildings lay empty, but China's recent emergence as the world's leading furniture manufacturer will keep the demand high.

It should be noted that Mozambique only supplies China with less than one percent of its yearly timber imports. But, while the total amount of trade between Mozambique and China is relatively low, their dealings have been shoved into the spotlight due to the often illegal form the trade takes. As a result of the shady business dealings between Chinese companies and corrupt Mozambique politicians, an estimated 48 percent of this trade goes unregistered and untaxed by Mozambique officials. The undercover EIA investigation revealed various arrangements between Chinese firms and Mozambique Parliamentarians who help the companies "solve problems" in exchange for "a wage every month."

This type of corruption between foreign com-



Until Mozambique develops the capacity to enforce the laws they already have on the books, changing the incentives behind smuggling is the only way to stop it."

panies and African politicians is common in a variety of resource-driven industries and does not have a silver bullet solution. Extra-legal business dealings are all about incentives and, at the moment, all of the incentives favor this type of activity to continue. One of the main reasons that this is occurring is not simply because companies want to skirt taxes, but because of Mozambican laws prohibiting the export of 22 "first class" log species without processing them within the country first, which usually entailed de-barking and cutting the logs into boards. China is not a country lacking in manufacturing and processing capabilities, and many of these companies would prefer to process the timber back home rather than building processing facilities within Mozambique or going through a local facility. Remember, Mozambique supplies China with less than one percent of its timber, so making a large investment in processing capabilities within the African nation would be much too costly. Presently, businessmen are content with paying occasional fines when caught shipping the unprocessed timber. The EIA report says that even when honest Mozambique officials do catch illegal smuggling, the Chinese companies are allowed to buy the logs back and ship them properly after paying a fine.

Although the log export ban on the 22 species is considered important by many in the sense of environmental conservation, a change in policy may provide enough economic incentive for Chinese businessmen to play by the rules. Until Mozambique develops the capacity to enforce the ban, Chinese companies will still import these unprocessed logs. The ban merely makes these transactions un-taxable by keeping them off the books. Think of it like the alcohol or drug prohibition – if a government bans a product that people want and are going to find a way to get anyway without having the capacity to properly enforce the ban, dealings don't decrease. They are simply shifted to the un-taxable black market.

Yes, China can respond by more strictly monitoring imports, but it has little to no incentive to

do so. On issues ranging from excess pollution to currency devaluation, China has demonstrated very little interest in responding to international pressures that attempt to hinder their economic growth. If this log export ban were dropped, following Mozambique's timber laws would become much less costly without processing requirements. These shipments could then be taxed. The EIA suggests the reversal of this, calling for a ban on all log types. The logic behind this is that if all unprocessed logs were banned rather than select species, the smuggling would be much easier to detect – while the untrained eye cannot identify a first class log from a legal, second class log, anyone can look at timber and know if it's been processed or not. While it is true that this change would make smuggling easier to detect, it may offer Chinese companies a very strong incentive to look elsewhere for their wood products, resulting in an even lower tax payday for Mozambique.

Other efforts can be undertaken to increase transparency and decrease corruption in Mozambique. The only way to nullify the current incentives for Mozambique politicians to take Chinese payoffs is to either dis-incentivize this behavior with an equally unattractive punishment, or to offer an equally attractive sum for whistle-blowing. Mozambique officials could offer whistle-blowers a percentage of any taxes garnered from seized logs, thus creating a strong incentive for anyone involved in the process to come clean. New laws could be passed requiring a certain percentage of Mozambique workers involved in Chinese timber projects to eliminate the opportunity for secrecy.

Everyone can call for an end to corruption, but unfortunately, it does not make economic sense for those involved in corrupt dealings to comply with such requests. This illegal smuggling of timber will continue unless laws are passed that make good behavior profitable and bad behavior too risky. Until Mozambique develops the capacity to enforce the laws they already have on the books, changing the incentives behind smuggling is the only way to stop it.

Mali-aise: Hold Your Ground

— *Austen Hufford*

In January the Tuaregs – a nomadic desert community – began small scale fighting in some cities in Azawad, the vast and rural northern area of Mali. This is the continuation of a multi-decade conflict in search of more autonomy from the Malian government. Later that month, 4,000 French troops arrived to retake the massive northern area of Mali from rebel groups. Within three weeks of their arrival they recaptured the ancient city of Timbuktu; now, less than two months after the initial invasion, the French are preparing to leave. This is the wrong decision. The French have an obligation to stay in order to ensure security in the North, to protect the democratic process in the South, and to facilitate peace talks between a yet to be elected civilian Malian government.

In March 2012 the democratically elected government of Mali was overthrown by a military coup. The presidential palace was surrounded, state television was shut down, and the army took control. The soldiers taking part in the coup claimed that the government was not doing enough to stop the recurring Tuareg rebellion.

In the chaos that followed, the coup actually re-energized the northern revolt. With the southern military preoccupied with running a government, the few populated areas were quickly overcome and in April 2012 the rebels declared the Azawad region independent.

Initially, two groups comprised the rebellion: the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) a group representing many of Mali's Tuaregs, and the Islamist group Ansar Dine, which has close ties to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. The two groups announced an alliance, and vowed to control the independent region.

This coalition, however, was not bound to last: the Tuaregs have a historically secular culture that provides women with more equal rights; Ansar Dine, though, favors the imposition of Sharia law which will significantly hinder opportunities available to females. Many other groups, mostly Muslim, also entered the fray at this time. In fact, observers suspect that some of the current fighters are foreign Islamic militants who flowed into Mali following the Libyan conflict.

In response to this rising violence, Western countries began to fear that northern Mali was becoming a lawless training ground for terrorists. This fear turned an internal disagreement into an issue of important global concern. France, which has close ties with the French-speaking country and is its formal colonial ruler, led the global outcry and eventual invasion. Both the UN Security Council and the African Union supported



With suicide bombings and guerilla attacks sprinkled amongst captured cities, now is not the time leave.”

France's January invasion.

Surprisingly, the French invasion has been nearly casualty free with only two military fatalities so far; cities were often taken without firing a single shot. The rebels, instead of fighting back, are hiding among the populace, in the vast mountains, or even in the surrounding countries.

These facts should not fool anyone: Mali is a mess. The 4,000 French troops stationed within its cities are the only thing keeping the North from chaos, and the southern government is controlled primarily by military officials. With suicide bombings and guerilla attacks sprinkled amongst captured cities, now is not the time leave.

French President Francois Hollande, who won the UNESCO peace prize for his actions in Mali, wants French troops quickly replaced by African Union and newly trained Malian troops. Sustaining an army abroad is a large expense and a desire to avoid such expenses is understandable considering Europe's austerity measures. In his mind, the primary objective was properly accomplished: the North is back under some semblance of control and the active militant force is gone. Yet, terrorists have started to kidnap French citizens in Mali itself and the surrounding areas – 14 have been taken in all – inflaming public opinion at home.

It is because they chose to invade that the French must now ensure that their intervention does not result in more harm than good. If they only consider their own national goals and leave now, chances are the situation will begin to break down. The average income in France is more than 30 times that in Mali; not only do the French have the financial ability, but they also have a moral obligation to prevent further violence.

The African troops are not comparable to the highly trained and heavily equipped French force. Even the French general in charge of training the Malian troops acknowledge that they are “very impoverished,” Reuters reports. Leaving now will provide an opportunity for Jihadists to easily recapture the North, or will even encourage the new troops to harm the Tuareg people, blaming them for the rebellion.

Until the 2012 coup, Mali had 20 years of free and democratic elections. With the French standing by, this trend can restart. The army-controlled

Malian government says it will have free elections on July 7. In the coming months this could change, and only the French government has the power to truly tame the army.

The French also have the opportunity to help end the long lasting Tuareg-Malian conflict. The Tuaregs have been weakened significantly, and the Malians want to keep the North secure. Both sides realize they now need each other and this may be the foundation for a lasting peace. It won't come easily and will take years but the French, with troops still on the ground, can establish the foundations for true peace talks – hopefully with a democratically elected government. The Malian and Tuareg people need the French troops and their stability more than ever.

Kony 2013: Failed Advocacy for Africa

— *Veronica Dulin*

Last year, the advocacy and charity organization Invisible Children Inc. released a YouTube video, “Kony 2012,” with the purpose of increasing awareness of the atrocities committed by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in central Africa. The filmmakers’ intent was mobilizing viewers to pressure leaders for strategies to capture the LRA’s head, Joseph Kony, by the year’s end. The video soon went viral, gaining attention on major news networks as well as high school and college classrooms across the globe. It currently has almost 100 million views on YouTube. Undoubtedly Invisible Children fulfilled their goal of spreading the message, but as the anniversary of “Kony 2012” passes, the LRA continues committing crimes and Joseph Kony is still at large. Many hailed the video as a revolution in activism, an empowerment of the people to effect real change by uniting through social media. Yet, ultimately, the movement did not succeed. This failure can be attributed to criticisms of the video regarding its factual accuracy and neo-imperialistic treatment of the situation, an inability to convert digital support to meaningful participation in the cause, and the campaign’s misguided focus on the capture of one man rather than the stability and development of the entire region.

One victory the video touted was the Obama administration’s 2010 passage of the Lord’s Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act that the organization for which it lobbied. This act made it US policy to support the capture of Kony and the destruction of the LRA. President Obama announced in October 2011 that 100 American military advisers would be deployed to central African countries to aid in the capture of Kony. Invisible Children called upon their members to contact their representatives in Congress to voice support for continued US military involvement. Some critics viewed this as a promotion of neo-imperialism, unilateral Western intervention in non-Western countries and another example of the United States as the “white savior” of Africa. Indeed, ridicule followed “Kony 2012” as a quarter of the video shows Invisible Children’s co-founder, Jason Russell, explaining the conflict to his young, white son. Aside from this conversation detracting from the screen time of the true victims, African children, it also patronizes the audience with a watered-down version of the conflict tailored for child consumption. The message is simple: Kony is a bad man and he should be arrested. The realities of the situation, however, are far more complex and very different than what “Kony 2012” described.



A prominent Kony 2012 campaign advertisement.

WIKIPEDIA

While it is true that the LRA has abducted thousands of children in northern Uganda since its inception in 1987, by 2006 they had been driven out of Uganda and into the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic (CAR), and what is now South Sudan. Ugandans were upset by the depiction of their country as a war-zone as they were trying to build up the tourism industry. With the LRA operating in other countries, the video's call to assist the Ugandan military played down the difficulty of coordination between the four nations that the LRA has affected. There is also a human rights concern in allying with these militaries. The armies of the DRC, CAR, South Sudan, and Uganda have all been accused of using child soldiers and terrorizing civilians. After the backlash from the original video, Invisible Children released a sequel, "Kony 2012: Part II – Beyond Famous," which described the LRA's position and present-day Uganda more accurately, as well as the organization's activities to improve the lives of those affected by the LRA. The sequel was not nearly as popular as the original, garnering only around two and half million views to date. Had it been more widely viewed, it would have drawn attention to developmental projects to which viewers can contribute, and would have brought to light the strength of Invisible Children Inc. as a charity organization.

Another problem was the "Kony 2012" message that the best way to end the violence was to focus on arresting Joseph Kony. The International Criminal Court (ICC) indicted Kony and four other LRA leaders in 2005, but the indictment has actually hampered the peace process. Kony has made the nullification of these ICC arrest warrants one of the criteria for peace agreements. In December the Ugandan Speaker of Parliament, Rebecca Kadanga, asked the ICC to allow Uganda to try Kony if he is captured, noting that the Rome Statute governing the ICC specifies that if a government is willing and able to try an accused person from their state or who committed a crime within their state, the trial falls under national jurisdiction. According to the Kadanga, the Ugandan government meets both criteria and the ICC has refused to retract the indictment.

The reaction to "Kony2012" showed the difficulties of translating media attention into activism. The video advertised a "Cover the Night" event at which supporters were supposed to meet on April 20 and post fliers with pictures of Joseph Kony in cities to draw attention to his crimes. Poor coordination, however, resulted in confusion and an embarrassingly low turnout. Instead of an effective, well-informed army of followers, the video instead led to a mass of "slacktivists," people who engage in measures to support a cause that require little to no effort and have no practical effect. While liking "Kony 2012" on Facebook or retweeting Invisible Children on Twitter may have made participants feel good, the social media blitz did not last longer than a month after the video's release. "Likes" do not catch Kony, and retweets do not rehabilitate

victims. The "slacktivist" aspect of "Kony 2012" is especially troubling as the legislation Invisible Children claims to have helped pass was a result of actual rallies and meetings with members of Congress, not solely a digital awareness campaign.

By far the worst mistake made by Invisible Children in "Kony 2012" was its focus on Kony. Centralizing the entire campaign on his capture meant neglect of the most important players in the conflict: the victims. Many Africans found it offensive that pictures of a mass murderer would cover US cities and that a charity was advocating for increased militarization of a conflict. Conversely, Africans affected by the conflict need donations and volunteers to help rebuild Uganda and neighboring countries and provide care for rescued child soldiers.

Even if Kony is caught and the LRA dismantled, the instability and poverty could engender more violent groups who utilize child soldiers. Development of state institutions and infrastructure, the strengthening of local economies and the redressing of claims of corruption and lack of political freedom in the region would help to alleviate the tensions that create militant groups. In the short term, charitable organizations such as Invisible Children should focus on the protection and reintegration of child soldiers into society. It should have been the victims' faces on those signs, not their captor's. If the Invisible Children encourages people to lobby the government for anything it should be increased foreign aid to Africa to build lives and safe communities for those within the LRA's reach. Asking people to send their tax dollars to Africa would have been a true test of the spirit of global citizenry and equality that "Kony 2012" promoted. Invisible Children urged the masses to buy into an even larger media crusade and to call Congress to ensure the continuance of a military presence that was not immediately threatened. The organization should instead have highlighted the evils of the LRA and channeled the resulting outrage into a productive donations campaign that could help eliminate the circumstances under which the abduction of children occurred and assist those who were.

The problems that Uganda and neighboring countries face are multi-faceted and complex. "Kony 2012" was a well-intended attempt to market an idyllic solution to an oversimplification of these problems. Bringing one man to justice will not eliminate his entire organization. There are roadblocks of development, corruption, poverty, and rehabilitation that must be tackled before the practice of using child soldiers can be eradicated and those children and their families can begin to live normal lives. As for the future of digital advocacy, other groups can learn from the flash-in-the-pan fate of "Kony 2012": social media campaigns only work when there is a practical message behind them, and concrete, reasonable action that can be taken offline.

The Fall and Rise of an African Middle Class And its Effect on Democracy

— *Nicholas Moenck*

The rapid economic growth of emerging markets has caused a profound change in global economics and geopolitics. Growing investment in the Global South has resulted in a growing middle class in these previously impoverished states. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the emerging middle class is able to access luxury items such as radio, television, and advanced education, resulting in new demands for governmental competence and transparency. Increased incomes and the “trappings of the middle class” have led to improved democratic governance throughout Africa, though countries which have failed to facilitate economic growth have remained authoritarian. The significance of these findings could be profound in predicting regime stability within Africa and, potentially, worldwide.

The year 1978 would prove devastating for the white-middle class in Southern Africa. In Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), the successful shoot down of Air Rhodesia Flight 825 by black militants proved that the Salisbury government could no longer protect its citizens.¹ In South Africa the black insurgency carried out devastating attacks in Port Elizabeth and Daveyton, and the South African Defense Forces increased its presence in Angola.² The Portuguese had recently permitted Mozambique to gain independence and, as a result, it had begun to collapse into a brutal civil war.³ A mass exodus of expertise and capital fled the continent, taking with it both the historically white middle class as well as the black Africans who saw no future in an area overwhelmed with problems.⁴

Today, growing investment in the continent, led notably by China, but coming from numerous sources, has led to new economic opportunities and increased income for millions of Africans.⁵ The African Development Bank estimates that 34 percent of the continent’s residents, 313 million people, are now part of the middle class, which is defined as earning between \$2-20 a day.⁶ The growth of the African middle class could have a profound impact on the continent as well as the world. As more individuals begin to feel financially secure, it is likely that they will increase their demand for consumer goods, energy resources and investment opportunities. Politically, the growth of the middle class might fuel calls for democracy and responsive government. Responsive democracies that are able to meet the needs of the majority of their citizens should be able to remain stable and see steady economic growth. Nondemocratic one-party states or “strong man” governments likely will result in violence, human rights violations, and create an environment conducive to extremism.

The impact of an emerging middle class within

Africa has been widely debated by political scientists in recent years and requires further research. While empirical evidence from Southeast Asia suggests that economic development leads to strengthening multiparty democracy, the significant investment from China has led some to conclude that increasing prosperity might remain in the hands of the elite and result in a consolidation of power. Development should result in improvements in education, media access, and preference for politics-dominated parties (as opposed to ethnic- or regional-dominated); however, it is likely that corruption and patronage networks will also increase. If the party in power is able to successfully monopolize the story of development, they can be seen as pivotal to economic success, reducing the chance of strong challenger or competitive elections.

Thesis

The rise of an African Middle Class should produce strong, stable multiparty democracies on the continent because middle class citizens will demand a voice in the government and have access to the requirements of political participation. Increases in both income, as well as the “trappings of the middle class” (e.g. radio, television, personal transportation, advanced education) should increase a citizen’s knowledge of his or her government and international opinion. This knowledge should result in increased demands for improved governance and access to the political realm.

Hypothesis: Regression analysis of the “trappings of the middle class” on Democracy Index Scores

To test this hypothesis I compare the items I term the “trappings of the middle class” with the Economist’s Intelligence Unit’s Democratic Index Country Scores. Afrobarometer asks several lifestyle questions which ask about access to commodities which should be representative of a middle class lifestyle. I focus on respondents’ ownership rates of radios, televisions, mobile phones and motor vehicles, internet access, and their level of educational attainment. I pick these variables because they all indicate a certain level of disposable income which can be spent on luxury goods. Second, they all have the potential to disseminate information to voters, resulting in increased political knowledge. Authoritarian regimes which want to control dissent should expect to control media access, and limit television and radio penetration. As a middle class emerges, its own consumer demands should counter this, leading to improved media coverage and the potential for challenges to the governmental system. The vehicle ownership data is valuable because it specifically demonstrates a high level of financial stability,

even though the motor vehicle does not directly increase an individual’s demand for democracy. This data should be valuable because it is income independent – there is no need to adjust for comparative “value” of money between separate states. Purchasing power parity is inherent in this calculation. It also solves any challenges which might be present do to governmental or socially provided services which are difficult to track in normal median GDP per head calculations.

I compare the “trappings of the middle class” data to the Economist Intelligence Unit’s Democracy Index Score. The score ranks countries from zero to ten based on perceived levels of democracy, with higher scores indicating more free and open democracies. Scores are determined from the weighted answers to 60 questions which experts answer focusing on electoral processes, civil liberties, functioning of the government, political participation and political culture.⁷ The most recent round of surveys, and the results I use for my analysis, was taken in 2011. The comprehensive nature of the Index makes it a useful indicator of Democracy and it relies on both factors as determined by international experts as well as internal views of governments by citizens.

All data on “trappings of the middle class” come from the most recent Afrobarometer polling in the surveyed countries. The 22 data sets were all based on polls conducted in 2008 or 2012.⁸ Conveniently, the Economist Intelligence Unit also provides Democracy Index analysis in 2008 and 2012. I have paired country data by year to reduce the risk of confounding variables affecting my results. The only pairing that does not have a perfect match is Zambia, where the Afrobarometer Round 4 survey occurred in 2009 instead of 2008. I still compare it to the 2008 Intelligence Unit Democracy Index results for commonality with other data. See Table 1 for full country analysis.⁹

While I have no strong reason to believe that car ownership rates will directly lead to increased information, education, or other roots of democracy, I think it is a reasonable indicator of economic stability. By being a single, large investment, only the most secure of African households are able to purchase a vehicle. This variable is perhaps, then, only a dummy variable for the most significant “trapping” of economic success in Africa and could have been replaced for “washing machine in home” or “household employees” if the data had been available.

My regression analysis supports some, but not all parts, of my hypothesis. The large standard deviations and numerous data values which fall

| | Radio Ownership | TV Ownership | Regular Internet Access | Mobile Phone Access | Car Ownership | Education (at least Secondary) | Democracy Index (DI) | DDI | DI/DDI | DI/R | DI/TV | DI/I | DI/MP | DI/C | DI/E | DI/R+TV+I+MP |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------|--------|-------|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------------|
| Botswana 2012 | 60 | 48 | 27 | 85 | 17 | 65 | 7.63 | 302 | 2.52 | 12.71 | 15.89 | 28.26 | 8.98 | 44.88 | 11.74 | 3.46 |
| Cape Verde 2012 | 80 | 87 | 39 | 80 | 14 | 24.4 | 7.92 | 324.4 | 2.44 | 9.9 | 9.10 | 20.3 | 9.9 | 56.57 | 32.46 | 2.77 |
| Liberia 2008 | 56 | 11 | 6 | 48 | 5 | 24.7 | 5.25 | 150.7 | 3.48 | 9.37 | 47.72 | 87.5 | 10.94 | 105 | 21.25 | 4.34 |
| Madagascar 2008 | 74 | 35 | 6 | 44 | 5 | 14.6 | 5.57 | 178.6 | 3.11 | 7.52 | 15.91 | 92.83 | 12.66 | 111.4 | 38.15 | 3.5 |
| Mali 2008 | 61 | 18 | 3 | 47 | 28 | 7 | 5.87 | 164 | 3.57 | 9.62 | 32.61 | 195.67 | 12.49 | 20.96 | 83.85 | 4.55 |
| Namibia 2008 | 66 | 31 | 11 | 81 | 22 | 42.4 | 6.48 | 253.4 | 2.55 | 9.81 | 20.9 | 58.9 | 8 | 29.45 | 15.28 | 3.43 |
| Nigeria 2008 | 79 | 57 | 18 | 78 | 25 | 54 | 3.53 | 311 | 1.13 | 4.47 | 6.19 | 19.61 | 4.52 | 14.12 | 6.54 | 1.52 |
| Uganda 2012 | 79 | 18 | 11 | 62 | 10 | 48 | 5.13 | 228 | 2.25 | 6.49 | 28.5 | 46.64 | 8.27 | 51.3 | 10.69 | 3.02 |
| Zimbabwe 2012 | 65 | 45 | 21 | 76 | 11 | 44.3 | 2.68 | 262.3 | 1.02 | 4.12 | 5.95 | 12.76 | 3.52 | 24.36 | 6.05 | 1.29 |
| Benin 2012 | 70 | 34 | 5 | 67 | 33 | 31 | 6.06 | 240 | 2.52 | 8.65 | 17.82 | 121.2 | 9.04 | 18.36 | 19.55 | 3.44 |
| Burkina Faso 2008 | 55 | 20 | 7 | 44 | 33 | 5.4 | 3.6 | 164.4 | 2.18 | 6.54 | 18 | 51.43 | 8.18 | 10.91 | 66.67 | 2.86 |
| Ghana 2012 | 83 | 60 | 15 | 76 | 10 | 40 | 6.02 | 284 | 2.12 | 7.25 | 10.03 | 40.13 | 7.92 | 60.2 | 15.05 | 2.57 |
| Kenya 2012 | 81 | 38 | 18 | 81 | 13 | 58 | 4.71 | 289 | 1.62 | 5.81 | 12.39 | 26.16 | 5.81 | 36.23 | 8.12 | 2.16 |
| Lesotho 2008 | 74 | 22 | 5 | 51 | 6 | 15.6 | 6.29 | 173.6 | 3.62 | 8.5 | 28.59 | 125.8 | 12.33 | 104.83 | 40.32 | 4.14 |
| Malawi 2008 | 71 | 13 | 3 | 38 | 4 | 11 | 5.13 | 140 | 3.66 | 7.22 | 39.46 | 171 | 13.5 | 128.25 | 46.64 | 4.1 |
| Mauritius 2012 | 95 | 95 | 36 | 84 | 52 | 29.3 | 4.17 | 391.3 | 1.06 | 4.39 | 4.38 | 11.58 | 4.96 | 8.02 | 14.23 | 1.35 |
| Mozambique 2008 | 71 | 36 | 7 | 55 | 16 | 16.9 | 5.49 | 201.9 | 2.71 | 7.73 | 15.25 | 78.42 | 9.98 | 34.31 | 32.49 | 3.25 |
| Senegal 2008 | 74 | 39 | 14 | 72 | 9 | 11.2 | 5.37 | 219.2 | 2.45 | 7.26 | 13.76 | 38.35 | 7.46 | 59.67 | 47.95 | 2.69 |
| South Africa 2012 | 75 | 73 | 21 | 87 | 23 | 41 | 7.79 | 320 | 2.43 | 10.39 | 10.67 | 37.09 | 8.95 | 33.87 | 19 | 3.04 |
| Tanzania 2008 | 73 | 13 | 3 | 56 | 3 | 10.8 | 5.28 | 158.8 | 3.32 | 7.23 | 40.61 | 176 | 9.43 | 176 | 48.89 | 3.64 |
| Zambia 2009 | 64 | 31 | 8 | 65 | 9 | 24 | 5.25 | 201 | 2.61 | 8.20 | 16.93 | 65.62 | 8.07 | 58.33 | 21.88 | 3.12 |
| Average | 71.71 | 39.28 | 13.52 | 65.57 | 16.57 | 29.45 | 5.48 | 236.07 | 2.49 | 7.77 | 19.55 | 71.68 | 8.81 | 56.52 | 28.89 | 3.06 |
| St Dev | | | | | | | | | 0.808 | 2.136 | 12.21 | 56.201 | 2.69 | 44.41 | 20.893 | 0.9182 |

Table 1 Data from Afrobarometer based on the percentage of the population which fits each demographic group. The Democracy Index (DI) comes directly from the Economist Intelligence Group's Democracy Index. DDI is a numerical sum of the first 6 columns ("trappings of the middle class" variables). Column DI/DDI percent of amount of democracy versus amount of "trappings of the middle class." If these factors are relevant indicators of democracy there should be little variance in this value. This turns out to be the case, with all results falling within two standard deviations of the mean value (95% Confidence). I further run independent analysis on the effect of each specific "trapping of the middle class" on the state's Democracy Index Score. (DI/R – Democracy Index versus % Radio Ownership; DI/TV – Democracy Index versus % Television Ownership; DI/MP – Democracy Index versus % Mobile Phone Ownership; DI/C – Democracy Index versus % Car Ownership; DI/E – Democracy Index versus % of population with at least secondary education). My final column analyzes the combined role of Radio, Television, Internet and Mobile Phone ownership rates, while ignoring car ownership or population educational achievements.

outside of the two standard deviation limit of the individual "trappings" analysis indicates that no single product plays a significant role in democracy. On the other hand, the grouped analysis indicates that a combined perspective on the "trappings" is a useful indicator of democracy. The low variance in these numbers shows that a developed middle class has strong correlation with high democracy index scores.

A challenge with this analysis is that it fails to prove causation. It is unclear whether a rising middle class creates a democratic government, or if an increasingly democratic government produces growth in the middle class. It is possible that a third external variable, such as foreign aid or globalization, is the root cause for both middle class growth and democratization. I would argue that increased foreign investment from Western and Chinese sources have led to new economic and employment opportunities in Africa, which has thus produced a new consumer class which has spiked demand for middle class goods, which has resulted in increased demand for democratic government. Unfortunately, this directional causation cannot be proven with the data I present, and it remains based in at best anecdotal evidence.

Conclusions

Continent-wide commercial growth has pulled millions out of economic destitution and into an African middle class. Radios, televisions, mobile phones and internet access are becoming common place, improving information dissemination and forcing governmental accountability. African democracy appears to be improving in the states with growing economic prospects. Countries which re-

main impoverished, though, seem destined to live under the rule of authoritarian regimes. My data does not prove that the rise of the middle class is leading to continent wide democratization, but it does indicate that the two are closely related. It is easy to argue that the products that newly middle class families may want would also result in increased demands on a regime. Improved education and access to media markets will result in improved flow and spread of ideas and demands on a state. Governmental transparency should be improved when voters are able to see issues outside of their own village. Further research could prove the causality of these statements, but for now simple correlation will be enough to support my thesis that countries with emerging middle classes in Africa should also display characteristics of becoming increasingly democratic. Africa has seen significant economic growth in recent years, much of which has trickled down to the 313 million Africans who now are members of the middle class.

ENDNOTES

¹ The September 3rd shoot down by ZIPRA fighters collapsed peace talks, resulted in a lengthen of martial law and facilitated a white exodus from Zimbabwe: Bate, F. "Kariba Slaughter" Our Rhodesian Heritage, September 2010 <http://rhodesian-heritage.blogspot.com/2010/09/kariba-slaughter.html>

² Steenkamp, Willem. *South Africa's Border War 1966 - 1989*. Ashanti Publishing, 1989

³ Victor, I., Bas, J., Schreuder, Wim, C., Kleign,

"The Cultural Dimension of War Traumas in Central Mozambique: The Case of Gorongosa" Priority.com, 2012 <http://priority.com/psych/traumacult.htm>

⁴ Kalyegira, Timothy, *The Monitor* "Uganda: Africa's Identity Dilemma and the Black Exodus to the West" September 15th, 2007 <http://allafrica.com/stories/200709150139.html>

⁵ Polgreen, L. "U.S., Too, Want to Bolster Investment in Continent's Economic Promise" New York Times August 8th, 2012 http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/09/world/africa/us-seeks-to-step-up-africa-investment.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

⁶ Smith, D., & Lamble, L. (2011, December 25). Africa's Burgeoning Middle Class Brings Hope to a Continent. *The Guardian*.

⁷ Economist Intelligence Unit "Democracy Index 2011: Democracy under stress" 2012 https://www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=DemocracyIndex2011

⁸ Botswana 2012; Cape Verde 2012, Liberia 2008, Madagascar 2008, Mali 2008, Namibia 2008, Nigeria 2008, Uganda 2012, Zimbabwe 2012, Benin 2012, Burkina Faso 2008, Ghana 2012, Kenya 2012, Lesotho 2008, Malawi 2008, Mauritius 2012, Mozambique 2008, Senegal 2008, South Africa 2012, Tanzania 2008, Zambia 2009

⁹ Data analysis is author's own, with considerable help from his fantastic girlfriend Anna Frick.

Rwanda:

On the Road to Recovery or to Repetition?

— Michelle West

It has been 19 years since more than 800,000 Rwandans were slaughtered in the mere span of 100 days. The Rwandan genocide was the culmination of decades of ethnic tension which set Tutsi and Hutu neighbors and friends against one another. The close personal connections between each group have made it difficult for the Rwandan government to reconcile the country's citizenry and rebuild the once prosperous nation. The government's refusal to acknowledge its own complicity in the genocide only fosters more distrust and ethnic division within society. So long as the Hutu majority is painted as the perpetrators and the Tutsi minority as the victims, true reconciliation will elude the Rwandan government.

Peace building efforts have utilized the Rwandan multi-level judicial system to bring truth and justice to the society. This has been done in three separate stages. On an international level, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) adjudicates the most severe crimes by those considered 'master-minds' of the genocide. On the state level, the national courts of Rwanda also arbitrate cases of those accused of planning serious crimes, including rape. On the local level, *gacaca courts*, traditionally forums for airing out grievances, hear the testimony of those accused of complicity in the genocide. These latter courts are meant to serve as a means for the Hutu to admit wrongdoing and, in asking for forgiveness, reconcile with the Tutsi victims. Through this multi-level system, Rwanda attempts to initiate reconciliation in both a top-down and grassroots manner.

On the surface, the government-sponsored strategy appears to be working. Its initiatives have paved roads, courted foreign investment, and educated the new generation of Rwandans. Discontent, though, can be found behind closed doors. Due to harshly enforced restrictions on free speech, any criticism of the current government or the reconciliation effort must be spoken in private. It is there that one finds Rwanda to be far from the peaceful, progressive country the international community thinks it is. One survivor interviewed by Human Rights Watch explains, "We say hello to each other but we don't visit each other even though we were friends and we shared beer together before the genocide." True reconciliation requires trust. Trust is based on a shared view of equality which cannot be fostered so long as one section of society continues to blame the other wholeheartedly and completely for past atrocities.

Because the government has dictated so strictly how the reconciliation process must progress, members of Rwandan society do not feel involved



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Rwandans sit during a gacaca trial.

in the procedures. One survivor explained, "This is government enforced reconciliation...the government pardoned the killers, not us." The government has told society that the 'perpetrators,' Hutus, are guilty. With this guilt declared, society is supposed to move forward.

Most notably, the families of those accused, comprised mostly of the Hutu ethnic majority, do not feel included. The gacaca court system, along with the government, provides a biased, one-sided view that they must accept for the time being. They do not see the current government as the harbinger of peace but rather as the enforcer of biased laws. "The biggest problem with gacaca is the crimes that we cannot discuss," one survivor says. Rather than a forum for fact-finding and peace building, the gacaca court system represents a "means of targeting Hutu." Ethnic divisions, banned by the government, have been replaced by the labels of "victim" (the Tutsis) and "perpetrator" (the Hutus). The government-sponsored campaign of silencing Hutu power is carried out through the gacaca court system's refusal to acknowledge the validity of any complaints made by the accused Hutus.

It is hard to argue with Hutus who do not feel protected by a government. The very people who launched offensive attacks against the previous Hutu administration well before the war now run the government. It is comprised of the former Tutsi rebel group known as Rwandan Patriotic Front who ended the genocide with an invasion from neighboring Burundi. The Rwandan government purportedly continues to fund the Tutsi rebel groups known as "M23" in the neighboring nation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

While it denies the existence of ethnic groups in its own country, it is actively supporting the Tutsi-supremacist groups across the border.

Hutus also feel that the government's credibility is diminished by its continued denial of any wrongdoing. President Paul Kagame recently told a judge of the ICTR "to go to hell" after he issued warrants for the arrests of Rwandan army officers, former members of the Rwandan Patriotic Front. Furthermore, its intolerance of criticism gives support to the claim of many Hutus that the government is an autocracy. Three political opposition parties were banned from the most recent presidential elections in 2010, which President Kagame won with 93 percent of the vote. The leader of one of these political opposition parties, Victoire Ingabire, was sentenced to eight years in jail for "belittling the genocide" and inciting ethnic hatred after criticizing the absence of Hutus from the 1994 genocide memorial. The government continues to repress in order to "maintain organization." According to President Kagame, such measures are necessary "as a certain element of organizing the population. The West tries to use its standards in the developing world and it isn't fair."

Rwanda will not be able to progress past the genocide and preceding decades of civil war while more than half of the country feels subjugated and neglected. It is imperative that the international community act now, particularly given its failure to intervene during the genocide. If the Rwandan government does not promptly change course and ensure the equality and equal representation of all of its citizens, it will once again experience ethnic warfare.

Flower of Paradise

— Alex Leader

There are few things in Somalia that occur with such precision as do the daily arrivals of

khat. Timed perfectly with the morning routine of a typical Somali pirate, the first truckloads will roll into most major cities around noon, amassing a controlled chaos of economic activity in their wake. In a land of scarcity and instability, there is something comfortingly reliable about the *khat* business. Admittedly, however, this business is one of dependency.

Khat is, quite simply, a drug. The chewable plant's addictive properties and physical harm may be relatively low, but it is nonetheless a mind-altering stimulant. Over the past decade, khat has espoused undying infatuation from Somalia's notorious pirates and successfully made itself a staple throughout the entire country. Today, despite many ongoing hardships, Somalia is at a democratic crossroads for a brighter future. To implement policies motivated by public service rather than public suppression, leaders ought to reexamine this lucrative industry. Khat has its fair share of moral ambiguity, manifesting both as an economic benefit and a social cost, but offers remarkable potential for nationwide development.

Empirical arguments exist for and against government support of the drug. Families have been reported to avoid paying their child's education simply to cover the expenses of regular khat consumption. At the same time, those constrained household budgets translate into revenue for vendors, helping pay school fees on their end. As for the pirates, upon receiving a ransom, they quickly exhaust it with three pursuits: alcohol, women, and, of course, khat. To satisfy their demand, these AK-47-toting rogues will flock to the city center to chew a few leaves with their comrades in arms. The "bad boys," as they are sometimes called, have quite the intimidating effect on residents. Others consider it a welcome respite from the pirates' nefarious activities, knowing if they are not relaxing at the market, trouble would likely be stirring up nearby.

Somalia's long tradition of khat came to a standstill just four years ago. When Ethiopian troops withdrew in 2009, the Islamic militant group al-Shabaab filled the political void and immediately imposed its own variation of Sharia law across large swathes of the country. Soon after, the beloved substance was deemed haraam (sinful) by the new rulers and forbidden wherever they held jurisdiction. Street vendors, who are predominantly women, faced a choice between abandoning their livelihoods and selling on the black market. The latter entailed the constant threat of public beatings and humiliation, but did not deter everyone.

Today, with the waning of al-Shabaab's con-



In a land of scarcity and instability, there is something comfortingly dependable about the khat business.”

trol, the khat craze has reemerged, although the industry remains a fraction of what it once was. Commercial farms used to grow the drug have all but disappeared, along with the many jobs they previously offered. Other businesses once thrived off the passersby attracted to the marketplace by khat stalls; those shops have yet to make a full return. There is promise for a short turnaround, as start-up costs for most entrepreneurs are remarkably low. A large-scale distributor will happily supply any aspiring vendor on consignment alone. As a result, breakaway regions like Puntland and Somaliland (outside of al-Shabaab's former territory) are suffering from a surplus of boutique dealers.

This market externality, however, has not yet reached the newly liberated regions of Somalia's heartland, and opportunity abounds for a new wave of small business owners. For a low-income nation, where taking a single loan from the local moneylender can be financially devastating, this is a remarkable phenomenon.

After four years of the central government's power struggle with al-Shabaab, a military coalition backed by the African Union wrested control from the fundamentalists. As Somalia's new caretakers, with the help of the international community, reassert their authority and attempt to unify the broken nation, it remains unclear what policies Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's new leadership (democratically elected in September 2012) will pursue regarding khat. For now, the priority is a thorough expulsion of al-Shabaab, which still retains minor strongholds along the southern coast. But once the bullets stop flying, President Mohamud ought to make a firm decision. The perils of a cash crop society could easily be avoided with responsible regulation.

Issuing permits to vendors, placing tariffs on imports, taxing consumption, and controlling water supply for commercial farms are all viable ways to improve an inextricable grey area of Somali society. In a land wrestling between lawlessness and strict religious control, a few bureaucratic remedies could be surprisingly useful.

The Shifting Drug Trade and West Africa's Role

— *Rachael Hancock*

The UN's 2012 Drug Report estimates that at least 230 million people worldwide use illegal drugs at least once a year, making drug trafficking one of the UN's primary concerns. However, despite this concern and the obvious need to control the spread of illegal substances, a widely supported solution remains elusive. In addition the lack of a unified approach to reducing drug trafficking, this issue is further complicated by a developing challenge recently reported by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC): the rising West African drug market and trade.

Beginning in the mid-2000s, West African drug traffickers and dealers have cooperated with Latin American cartels like the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) to smuggle illegal drugs, usually cocaine, into Europe. Initially, this system of using West African countries, especially Nigeria, as a "staging ground" for maritime cocaine shipments was a novel, successful method, as European drug authorities did not anticipate cocaine shipments from Africa. Latin American cartels were then able to traffic billions of dollars of drugs into European ports despite augmented surveillance. Eventually, however, this new route was detected, and by 2008, the novelty of this maritime trafficking had worn thin; the success rate of Latin American cartels using West African drug mules and the number of ships using the passage then decreased significantly.

However, tighter restrictions on and harsher sentences for international drug trafficking have done little to limit demand for illegal drugs. In fact, demand for cocaine in Europe has doubled in the past decade, inspiring Latin American and West African drug traffickers to transform, rather than abandon, their methods of trafficking. While the Latin American cartels search for other sources of profit, the UNODC has reported a significant rise in independent West African cocaine smugglers and methamphetamine producers within the past two years. After years of acting as mules for drug transport, West African traffickers are now emulating Latin American systems of smuggling and distributing illegal substances. However, regulation of maritime shipments has made transportation by boat unlikely to succeed, forcing African drug runners to pursue more risky aerial routes.

While new drug routes alone are cause for concern, the rise in African drug traffickers is particularly threatening for regional and international security. Aerial routes are dangerous and require that more smugglers carry smaller amounts of drugs to be profitable – therefore involving more people in illegal drug trade. While involvement of more



While new drug routes alone are cause for concern, the rise in African drug traffickers is particularly threatening for regional and international security.

people in the drug trade would appear to be a significant obstacle to creating profit, opportunities to participate in drug trafficking, even for marginal profit, may be particularly appealing in countries like Nigeria where over 20 million youth lack regular employment. The UNODC's reported increase in African nationals, especially Nigerian citizens, arrested for drug possession in Switzerland and Portugal confirms that drug trafficking has not lacked willing participants. Finding the right rates of incarceration of drug traffickers in European countries suggests that while trafficking drugs may present a temporary source of income, this economic success is neither sustainable nor permanent.

Furthermore, drug trafficking by independent West African dealers not only involves unemployed youth in unsustainable, illegal economic opportunities, but also detracts from legitimate economic production. In Benin in 2011, drug related pirate attacks off the coast heightened the waters' safety classification to "high risk," resulting in high shipping costs and a 70 percent decrease in trading activity. Additionally, the traffickers at the head of these upcoming cartels are unlikely to help their economies by spending their money domestically. Rather, they invest profits in more stable foreign economies, thus failing to contribute to the national economy.

This innovative drug trafficking has the potential not only to weaken already ailing economies, but also to destabilize West African governments. Profits from cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines and other illegal substances usually benefit non-state groups, and, in some cases, have enabled rebel groups to purchase weapons, as is purportedly the case in Mali. In other countries like Guinea, where cocaine was seized by government officials but allegedly disappeared from government custody, drug trafficking has infiltrated the national government, compromising both national security and political stability.

Despite allegations of corruption, most local, regional and international organizations have acknowledged negative effects of the drug trade, but

have yet to reach consensus to find a remedy. While several national governments have adopted nationally integrated programs to decrease the prevalence of drug trafficking through deterrence, harsher punishment, or publicly destroying confiscated drugs, these plans have yet to achieve meaningful results, due largely to a lack of funding. Despite efforts to close legal loopholes, without the capacity to enforce these laws or monitor drug movement, these programs are unlikely to reach their goals.

While a lack of funding for well-intentioned programs is not uncommon in Africa, this inability to enforce drug trafficking warrants particular attention. Because drug use centers primarily in the European Union, but production occurs in West Africa, surveillance should be an integrated effort by both groups. Both regions benefit from curbing drug trafficking and a joint effort will allow for both proximity to the source of the drugs, and adequate funding to monitor and eliminate these sources.

Fortunately, the EU has already recognized its pivotal role in preventing the sale and distribution of illegal drugs and recently pledged 41 million dollars to Peru with the goal of combating drug trafficking. Its willingness to help is undoubtedly positive, but it is now time that this involvement extends to the African drug trade as well.

The EU would serve its interests best by following the UNODC's recommendation to address the changing nature of the drug trade. While apprehensiveness about giving aid to potentially corrupt governments is a valid concern for all donors, contracting surveillance and enforcement to organizations like the UNODC that are equipped to simultaneously build capacity amongst national drug enforcement organizations and enforce national laws will avoid further corrupting unstable governments.

Maintaining the autonomy of African nations should remain a UN priority, but this commitment does not preclude opportunities for integrated efforts between West Africa and the EU to address pressing security threats like growing drug trafficking.

Not Just NAFTA 2.0: Mexico in the Trans-Pacific Partnership

— *Amanda Bourlier*

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is a multilateral free trade agreement currently being negotiated between 21 countries along the Pacific Rim, including the US, Japan, Canada, Australia, Singapore, Chile, Peru, and Mexico. Negotiations are expected to conclude in late 2013 or early 2014. While the press has focused mostly on what the deal means for Asian countries, especially in the context of relations between the US and China, it will have tremendous implications for all signatories. The participation of several Latin American states is noteworthy, because their policies and goals tend to differ from other countries in the TPP. Mexico's decision to participate is particularly interesting, considering its mixed experience with NAFTA, the most recent free trade agreement Mexico signed with the United States. Yet, for both economic and political reasons, the TPP will have positive effects for Mexico.

First, the TPP promises economic advantages for Mexico that NAFTA failed to deliver. While NAFTA increased economic activity between Mexico and the US, it did so largely without passing on the benefits of this deal to the working classes. Despite the gains made by those who already comprised the wealthiest levels of Mexican society, many in other classes found conditions stagnant or worsening due to a variety of economic factors, many of which can be at least partially attributed to the impact of NAFTA. However, the broad nature of the TPP's regulatory articles, which include everything from workers' rights to environmental protection protocols, should support a more egalitarian distribution of financial benefits and work to halt environmental damage. The cost to the environment is a frequent complaint about multinational corporations - particularly those with heavy manufacturing sectors - operating in Mexico. Additionally, while NAFTA was a trilateral agreement, giving Canada, the United States, and Mexico increased mutual access to each other's markets, the TPP extends to 21 countries. Thus, the potential gains are much higher across the board.

But the political benefits of participating in the TPP ultimately comprise some of the most compelling incentives for Mexico to sign on. First, Mexican journalists note hope that the TPP can serve to refresh relations with the US, strained in recent years by immigration concerns and the drug war. A new president, Enrique Peña Nieto, also makes reconciliation more possible. The US favors the TPP, and Mexico's enthusiastic participation in such a long-term initiative will likely intertwine the two states' economies even further



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Leaders of the TPP states at a TPP summit in 2010.

than previous deals, like NAFTA, and generate significant international goodwill.

President Peña Nieto should use the TPP as a legitimizing force for the new administration for voters and foreign diplomats, as well as a way of solidifying his campaign promises of putting Mexico back on the right track. Joining the TPP is a good way to convince voters that the new government is serious about taking action and fighting for Mexico's interests. On an international level, Mexico's image has suffered significantly as a result of the harsh spotlight on continued organized, drug-related violence. Participation in such a major multilateral agreement as the TPP will be a major step toward repairing Mexico's international reputation, as it demonstrates a commitment to making and keeping promises, being an active, integrated member of the global community, and exhibiting international leadership.

In addition to likely gains from TPP membership, being a signatory allows Mexico to avoid the negative repercussions of being on the outside of this agreement. By including Mexico, the TPP will encompass 44 percent of world trade and countries that, combined, amount to 50 percent of the world's population. Refusing to sign onto the TPP would mean lost economic opportunities that overseas expansion creates. While many have noted that the TPP serves as a way to consolidate economic activity away from China, the trade opportunities offered by the TPP also give participating Latin American states an alternative to aligning with Brazil, an increasingly powerful player in the region. This is an especially significant incen-

tive for Mexico, who is perhaps the most similar to Brazil in regard to population, geographic size, and economy. Furthermore, if Mexico excludes itself from the TPP, it would risk losing existing investment from other TPP members, namely the United States.

As with any political action, there will be winners and losers resulting from Mexico's participation in the TPP. Due to the scope of the agreement, however, there is reason to believe that many who did not benefit from NAFTA may encounter better circumstances with the TPP. While there are strong economic opportunities attached to membership, some of the most salient consequences of Mexico joining the TPP are political, namely legitimizing the new government and improving international image. The TPP should be seen, therefore, not as a NAFTA redux, but as a defining moment for Mexico and its place in the international community.

Coca: It's Not Cocaine

— Jackson Montalbano

On January 11, Bolivia rejoined the UN's Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs Treaty after the Convention agreed to decriminalize the cultivation of coca, a key ingredient in cocaine. Since its ratification in 1961, the Convention has influenced the drug policies of its members by forcing them to criminalize certain drugs and outlaw the production of their essential ingredients. While under dictatorial rule, Bolivia signed the Convention in 1964 and subsequently agreed to criminalize coca. However, Bolivia's drug policy changed drastically with the election of President Evo Morales, a former coca grower, in 2006. He instituted a new constitution that legalized coca due to its cultural importance to indigenous communities. The violation led to Bolivia's resignation from the Convention in 2011. After realizing the strategic importance of Bolivia in the war against drugs, the Convention voted to exempt Bolivia from the coca prohibition to bring them back into the fold. The Convention's decision has met strong opposition from the UN International Narcotics Control Board and several members of the Convention, including the United States, who claim the new legislation will lead to an increase in coca production that will fuel the cocaine industry. In the interests of both Bolivia and the international community, however, the Convention must uphold the recent amendment to advance the war against drugs.

Since permitting the production of coca in 2009, Bolivia has seen positive results in its fight against cocaine. Under current legislation, the Bolivian government strictly regulates the amount of coca produced. Specifically, coca growers must register their plantations with the government and each grower may only cultivate a certain number of acres depending on the region. Moreover, the government complements these strict regulations with harsh punishments. For example, if it catches a grower planting more than the allotted acreage, the authorities will remove the excess crops. If the grower is a repeat offender, officials will ban him from the industry. With these regulations, the total acreage of coca plants declined by nearly 13 percent last year, indicating a reduction in coca production, and subsequently cocaine production.

In addition to controlling coca production, Bolivia has tightened its security against drug trafficking. The Bolivian government detained nearly 4,000 suspected drug traffickers in 2012 and has increased the number of drug seizures by 16 percent since 2010. Better yet, the amount of violence associated with drug trafficking has decreased ac-



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Indigenous woman holding a coca leaf.

cording to Bolivia's minister of government, Carlos Romero. However, Bolivia continues to fight an uphill battle, considering more than 50 percent of the coca produced in the country still goes into the drug trade. Nevertheless, by reducing cocaine production, increasing drug seizures, and decreasing drug related violence, Bolivia has taken a step in the right direction.

Bolivia's new drug legislation has also strengthened its economic standing. During the cocaine craze of the 1980s, coca production dominated the Bolivian economy, which ended poorly. The high cocaine demand in the United States caused coca production to increase from 35 tons in 1978 to 120 tons in 1985. Many farmers abandoned the production of other cash crops and, subsequently, Bolivia's economy suffered from the limited diversity.

Since 2009, however, the Bolivian economy has gradually improved due to President Morales' attempt to redistribute the country's wealth and eradicate poverty. To further this effort, Morales has sought to create jobs for the poor, primarily through agriculture. With the legalization of coca, many people can farm coca to make ends meet. The government's regulations on the coca industry keep the price high, making the profession more profitable. Furthermore, coca provides Bolivia with another cash crop to export. In a recent New York Times article, President Morales spoke to coca's economic importance, claiming "We still have coca to save us" if the market for other crops falls. While the coca industry only makes up approximately two percent of Bolivia's GDP, the government has the power to expand the industry if the economy worsens. If nothing else, the coca industry provides a safety net for Bolivia's fragile economy.

The legitimate demand behind the coca indus-

try stems from its importance in Bolivia's indigenous culture, specifically with the Andean people who have chewed the coca leaf for centuries. As the first indigenous president, Morales has sought to push the indigenous agenda forward by restoring the coca tradition. Surprisingly, Morales' efforts paid off when the Convention announced the recent amendment, which caused nearly 100,000 Bolivian farmers to gather in the streets of La Paz and Cochabamba to celebrate. In the midst of the celebration, Honorata Diez, a farmer from El Chapare, expressed the significance of coca in the indigenous culture to a reporter from *The Washington Post*, saying "Coca is our culture, our food, our medicine. Coca is our life." In the interest of maintaining Bolivia's culturally important traditions, the UN must not sweep coca production aside.

Permitting Bolivia to continue its current coca policy also benefits the international community. Despite Bolivia's recent progress in curbing the cocaine industry, the country remains the third largest cocaine producer in the world, behind only Columbia and Peru. Accordingly, it is crucial for the UN to keep Bolivia in the Convention to avoid coordination problems within the region, especially since the drug trade stretches across borders. To win the war on drugs, nations must band together to reduce the supply and diminish the demand. If the West has any hope of slowing the drug trade, it must support this policy that has curtailed cocaine production in Bolivia. The next step lies in the West, where the demand for cocaine remains high. With international cooperation, the war against drugs may actually stand a chance.

An Unusual Lifestyle

— *Lissa Kryska*

Nestled between Brazil, Argentina, and the South Atlantic is a mid-sized country with a growing economy, unique drug policies, and relatively high levels of education, healthcare, and social stability. Uruguay's progressive government and decriminalized drug policy should serve as an example to other Latin American countries hoping to achieve similar success. In the wake of Hugo Chavez's death, Uruguay and its President José Mujica should become the new role models for left-wing Latin America.

Mujica, president since 2010, leads an unusual lifestyle for someone of his status and power. Unlike his predecessors, he turned down the option of moving into the presidential palace. Instead, he remains in the farmhouse he and his wife have shared for years, where they grow flowers together. In another unprecedented move, he has chosen to donate 90 percent of his salary each month to causes helping the poor and those starting small businesses.

His background is also unusual for a head of state: he was a guerilla fighter with the Cuban-inspired Tupamaros movement in the 1960s and 70s. Following a military coup in 1973, he spent 14 years in prison, much of it in isolation, including two years at the bottom of a well. After the restoration of democracy, he became involved in politics again in the 1990s, and rose through his party to take on his current role as president.

The country that elected him has not stuck to the normal trends either; for the past few decades it consistently scored higher on the Human Development Index than both the world average and the Latin American/Caribbean average, and continues to do so. The United Nations Development Programme uses the Human Development Index, which takes into account life expectancy, education, and income, to create holistic scores for each country's development.

Uruguay's economic growth slowed in 2008 from previous levels of eight percent per year to two percent per year, but it was able to avoid a recession, in part due to increased public expenditure. The country is in fact known for its high social spending, and has a relatively well-educated populace because of high public investment in education. Despite Uruguay's high social spending, their total government debt is only 57 percent of GDP, putting them in a far better position than many Western countries (including the United States, France, and the United Kingdom) as well as many other developing countries.

Uruguay's drug policy also separates it from other countries in the region; Mujica's government is currently pushing to legalize the cannabis trade, hoping that it will be able to profit economically as well as undercut trafficking organizations. This



WIKIMEDIA

President José Mujica of Uruguay.

would, however, be a violation of the United Nations convention banning all sales of non-medical drugs.

While Uruguay has experienced an increase in crime rates recently, the country has not faced the same levels of drug-related violence as many other Latin American countries. In Uruguay it is not illegal to possess drugs for personal use, but the sale and production of drugs is still off-limits. This means that if a person is caught with a small enough quantity of drugs ("small enough" left to the discretion of the judge) and the drugs are determined to have been for personal use only, rather than for sale, the person will not be punished. But because the sale and production of drugs is still illegal, the money still goes to trafficking organizations and cartels.

After donating most of his salary, Mujica makes the same amount of money as the average Uruguayan, and he has experienced generally high approval ratings, at least in part because of his lifestyle. He will need to leverage this connection with what is often a socially conservative society as he continues to push for the legalization of cannabis under a state monopoly. He will also need to be prepared for a possible reaction from the United Nations should his measure pass.

If Mujica is able to pass this measure, Uruguay will become one of the most liberal countries in Latin America in terms of drug policies. Other Latin American countries are also eying legaliza-

tion as a way out of the violent cycle of drug wars that has consumed the continent in the last few decades. If Uruguay successfully implements this policy, many others may follow. Making legalization a viable option would completely change the framing of the war on drugs, and has the potential to wrest power away from the violent criminal organizations currently funded by the drug trade.

Governments in countries where drug use is a significant problem should study the results of the drug policy that Uruguay already has in place. Its policy shows that the decriminalization of personal drug use is not going to destroy the fabric of society, and can in fact lead to increased stability.

Foreign governments should note Uruguay's success, which is not the breakout success that makes headlines, but the kind that is sustainable and has been able to weather a worldwide recession. Latin American countries tend to struggle with many of the same problems: poverty, the war on drugs, and corruption are chief among them. Strong investments in education, healthcare, and sustainable growth are necessary for countries hoping to end cycles of poverty. New solutions are desperately needed in the war on drugs, and decriminalization has been successful in Uruguay; legalization may soon be as well. And finally, leaders across Latin America and across the world should be humbled by Mujica's example, and democracies should focus on electing representatives who live by the beliefs they put forth in their speeches. If all leaders followed his example, corruption would be much rarer.

While Uruguay is by no means a perfect country- many are advocating for further advances in education and healthcare in particular- it has avoided much of the turbulence often faced by Latin American countries, and it and its leader are worth taking note of.

President Humala's Centrist Approach to Peruvian Stability

— Tanika Raychaudhuri

With a booming housing market, rising currency values, and high levels of foreign investment, Peru is the current poster child for economic development in Latin America. The majority of growth in the Peruvian economy centers on the mining industry. Recent projections suggest significant increases in investment and revenue in the sector in coming years: According to Dow Jones Newswires, mining investments could increase by up to 12 percent this year. This massive growth at a time of relative stagnancy in the world economy has many implications for Peru's political leaders, as economic expansion changes voters' expectations of government.

Peru's current president, Ollanta Humala, a center-left politician, plans to spend some of the tax revenue from this increase in corporate activity to fund anti-poverty initiatives. Humala's outlook on future economic growth reflects his general approach to governing: appeasing both conservatives with pro-business economic policy positions and his liberal supporters with a leftist social policy agenda. This overall strategy has been difficult to maintain as the two ideological positions often conflict. However, President Humala has managed to capitalize on the contrast between a growing economy and a recent history of political corruption to promote a vision of a stable future. While this means rejecting some major provisions of his original left wing platform, Humala's focus on foreign investment and the continued growth of an urban middle class will create a path for future prosperity in Peru.

Peru's national government is democratic, with a unicameral Congress acting as a check against the president. However, the development of a full-fledged democracy is fairly recent. In the 1980s and '90s, autocratic presidents who benefitted from the latent support of a powerless Congress ruled Peru. Most notable is President Alberto Fujimori, who served three terms between 1990 and 2000. While Fujimori worked to stabilize the Peruvian economy, he was also accused of corruption and eventually impeached. He is currently serving a 25-year prison sentence for human rights violations and corruption charges.

According to the Peruvian National Institute of Statistics and Information, Peru's GDP grew by almost 45 percent during Fujimori's administration. The Fujimori administration encouraged private investment and privatized export-oriented infrastructure owned by the government, which are the primary explanations of this GDP growth. Despite his anti-democratic rule and hu-



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/JIMOHAGAN

Port of Callao, a major port for Peruvian exports, benefits from the booming mining economy.

man rights violations, the Peruvian public views Fujimori favorably today.

In contrast to Fujimori, President Humala won election on a platform of government transparency and democratic values. Humala's major goals as president are maintaining a stable society and allowing the democratic government to flourish in the long-term. Since his election in 2011, Humala has faced some difficulty taking positions on issues related to corporate resource and infrastructural development, as he has struggled to balance opportunities for economic growth with a broader social policy of equal opportunity.

For example, the proposed construction of the Pakitzapango hydroelectric dam by Odebrecht, a Brazilian corporate conglomerate, caused international controversy. *The New York Times* reported that the construction of this dam would flood the valley, displacing thousands of indigenous people who live there. Additionally, the dam would disrupt the natural environment, angering many environmental advocacy groups. The intent of the dam was exporting power to Brazil, which suggests to the public that the government prioritized bringing Brazilian investment into Peru over indigenous people's rights.

While Congress debated the dam legislation

in 2012, the Humala administration was slow to take a position on the project. During the campaign, Humala opposed large corporate mining projects that could have negative social effects on Peruvians. As president, though, he does not want to discourage foreign investment in Peru. Ultimately, Odebrecht chose not to build the dam, but this was mainly due to international protest, not Humala's explicit rejection. As his first term advances, it is becoming increasingly clear that conflict exists between increasing economic growth and committing to some of the social issues on which he campaigned.

While President Humala has received some criticism for this from prominent leftist figures, most notably from members of his own family, his centrist approach to government has gained support from much of the Peruvian public. According to local newspapers, Humala had a 48 percent popularity rating in early 2013. This is likely because a majority of people see themselves as middle class. As many of these people benefit from this economic growth, public approval of increasing investment and export in the mining sector is high. Accordingly, the Peruvian middle class is the new baseline for political support in national elections.

The growth of the middle class is apparent in major cities like Lima, where new shopping centers and buildings emerge every year. In addition, access to the financial sector, higher education, and formal sector jobs has increased. The positive impact of this economic growth across all income groups is staggering, and the fact that this growth originates in the mining sector and corporate investment cannot be discounted. While minerals are limited natural resources, investment in the mining industry benefits the overall economy by increasing financial value to the Peruvian stock market. This growth is extending into other sectors as well, such as the Peruvian garment industry.

Humala has abandoned some of his original leftist platform, but he supports economic growth without the corporate corruption associated with previous leaders and plans to complement industrial success with government policy aimed to reduce poverty. The resulting balance of free market economic policy with a commitment to social reform and maintaining a functional democracy will lead to continued growth in Peru and long-term social benefits for all.

A Game of Islands

— Andrew Grazioli

In September 2012, the Japanese government made a seemingly innocent purchase: it bought several small islands in the East China Sea from their private Japanese owner, bringing the territory from private to public ownership. This purchase resulted in widespread protests in the People's Republic of China, and has led to the gravest threat of military conflict between China and Japan since the Second World War. The islands in question comprise part of a small cluster of islands known as the Senkaku Islands in Japan, and the Diaoyu Islands in China. Despite the islands' uninhabited status and virtual strategic insignificance (though at stake are untapped reserves of natural gas), the territorial dispute over their rightful ownership has sparked a significant international incident. Armed patrols have been conducted by both sides and escalated in recent months, notably with a confrontation in January in which a Chinese warship came close to firing upon a Japanese vessel. As war is in neither country's interest, the best course of action remains for both sides to back down and consult a neutral, third party such as the United Nations to arbitrate the dispute.

Japan has controlled the small archipelago control since 1895, apart from a small window of American control following the Second World War, and Japan considers it a part of its natural territory. China, however, asserts that the islands have always been part of its territory, laying claim to them along with the nearby island of Taiwan. Complicating the matter are possible reserves of oil and natural gas underwater near the islands: whoever controls the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands has a legitimate claim to these valuable natural resources. As easily accessible sources of oil increasingly decline, underwater reserves like those in the East China Sea will become increasingly important in the future. Japan alleges that China only began pressing its claim on the islands once reports of these energy reserves became known in 1969, and that China has no legitimate historical claim to the islands. Unsurprisingly, China holds a contrary position.

Neither China nor Japan indicates readiness to solve this dispute through bilateral discussion. Nationalistic sentiments in both countries have used this territorial squabble to gain domestic political advantage and stir public sentiment against the encroaching enemy nation. China and Japan have a complicated and painful history of conflict, most recently during the Second World War. The Japanese occupation of China during World War II resulted in the massacre of hundreds of thousands of Chinese civilians and forced sex slavery upon thousands of women, known as "comfort women" during the war. Deep resentment over



WIKIMEDIA

The disputed islands known as Senkaku in Japan and Diaoyu in China have been a source of tension in the East China Sea.

Japanese crimes during the Second World War continues to this day, and a perceived lack of genuine Japanese apology is a major factor behind the current aggressive Chinese stance on the issue of the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands.

Though neither side in the conflict genuinely yearns for armed conflict, the path each travels increases the risk of inadvertent violence breaking out. Both sides have been patrolling the sea zone around the islands with coast guard and naval warships in an attempt to assert their sovereignty over the territory. With bellicose rhetoric coming from the governments of both nations, the tension is likely to keep escalating.

The likelihood of an accidental incident which then escalates must be considered seriously. In late January, a conflict between the two sides almost came to blows; Japan alleges that a Chinese warship target-locked a Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force helicopter and destroyer warship, though Beijing denies the accusation. Regardless of who is actually at fault for starting the confrontation, incidents such as this can and will escalate into conflict with real human consequences and deaths. In order to resolve the issue, both sides need to realize that they will only benefit from a de-escalation of tensions.

If they are genuine in their professed desire to avoid war, Japan and China must both agree to back away from armed patrols, and include a neutral third party to mediate the conflict. By allowing

an actor like the UN to begin discussion between the two nations, a reasonable compromise can be reached with neither side feeling as though they are backing down to the other. The answer may be an agreed-to neutral zone around the islands respected by both sides, or some framework that allows for shared control of the land and division of the natural resources. Regardless, both countries must each allow themselves to sit down and have a rational discussion on the issue without resorting to military maneuvers or harsh propaganda. Until this happens, there is little possibility of settling the dispute without bloodshed.

For Bangladeshi Blood:

The Abolishment of Politics and Delivery of True Justice

— *Sharik Bashir*

In March of 1971, a civil war erupted in the country formerly known as East Pakistan between East Pakistani (Bengali) nationalists and the West Pakistani military. This liberation effort triggered nine months of brutal conflict, and ultimately West Pakistan surrendered after Indian intervention on behalf of the Bengalis. During these nine months, the West Pakistani military and their collaborators in East Pakistan, the Islamist party Jamat-i-Islami (Jamat), committed horrific atrocities against East Pakistani civilians. Women were raped, homes were burned, mass executions were rampant, and the intelligentsia was targeted and assassinated. The death toll from this genocide rose to three million. Finally in December 1971, a new nation, Bangladesh, was born in blood.

In an effort to hold those who committed the atrocities responsible, the party of the incumbent Prime Minister, Sheikh Haseena, established a Bangladeshi International War Crimes Tribunal in 2010. However, controversy surrounds the trials of the ten senior leaders of the Jamat accused of war crimes. As the largest Islamic party in Bangladesh, the Jamat plays a key role in Bangladeshi politics as a power broker and ally of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). Sheikh Haseena, a member of the opposition Bangladesh Awami League, has been accused of using the trials as a way to gain support in the upcoming elections and weaken the Jamat and the BNP. The politicking in these trials interferes with the right to a fair trial, thereby compromising the judicial process. It also denies the Bangladeshi people from witnessing true justice against those responsible for the crimes against humanity during the Bangladesh Liberation War.

An Economist investigation recently forced the former chairman of the Bangladeshi International War Crimes Tribunal, Mr. Mohammed Nizamul Huq, to resign in December. The article examined Mr. Nizamul's private emails and phone calls and discovered a conflict of interest. Mr. Nizamul's conversations with a lawyer of Bangladeshi origin based in Brussels made clear that the current government wanted an urgent decision in the cases against the ten accused Jamat leaders. Since a future BNP government would unlikely carry on with the trials, the current administration had strong reasons for wanting a fast verdict. Mr. Nizamul's conversations with the lawyer in Brussels also revealed that government officials personally visited him and pressured him to prod the decision. In the case of Senior Jamat leader Delwar Hossain Sayeedi, evidence showed that Mr. Nizamul had decided upon a guilty verdict even

“ **Both parties are less interested in carrying out proper justice, but more invested in damaging the popularity to the opposition.**”

before he heard the testimony from the defense witness. Such rigged trials not only do injustice to those who have been accused of war-crimes, but also to the victims who seek closure from the past by wanting the right people to be punished.

On January 21, the first guilty verdict was issued to Abul Kalam Azad, a former youth leader of the Jamat-i-Islami who now serves as the Assistant Secretary General of the party. While Sheikh Haseena celebrated the verdict as proof of honoring her promise to punish those responsible for the atrocities, the opposition camp felt otherwise. The highly politicized and controversial guilty verdict spelled trouble for Ms. Zia and the BNP as the popularity of the Jamat plummeted. Moreover, a violent political climate has surrounded the trials.

On February 14, two people died as religious party activists clashed with the police, and the death toll has increased to nine since the protests began. Protests also broke out in Dhaka when the punishment of one of the accused Jamat leaders was changed from a death sentence to a sentence of life in prison. The protesters demanded a death sentence and once again the ruling elite began playing politics of populism. Sheikh Haseena and her supporters fervently supported the protests while Mrs. Zia's BNP joined in eight days later in an attempt to disassociate itself from the Jamat, now a pariah of Bangladeshi politics. Once again, both parties are less interested in carrying out proper justice, but more invested in damaging the popularity of the opposition.

Overall, these trials have made a mockery of the Bangladeshi judicial process, and revealed the degree to which politicians can interfere in cases if they affect political agendas. Even if those accused are war criminals deserving of severe punishment, they must be assumed innocent until proven guilty and receive a fair trial. While this extends beyond just this situation, it holds especially true in these trials. If Bangladesh will ever find closure from its bloody inception, politicking must be left aside and proper justice needs to be served.

Mongol Hoard:

Resource Protectionism Threatens to Cripple the World's Fastest Growing Economy

— Trevor Grayeb

When the head of a Mongolian airline conglomerate told his board in early 2012 that “airline passenger traffic would double compared to 2011” and that “revenues would also double,” he was told that he was being “too pessimistic.” Such intense optimism has become ubiquitous in the world’s most sparsely populated country. Analysts predict Mongolia’s economy will grow faster than any other country in 2013, with some forecasts projecting that growth rates will continue to accelerate throughout the next decade. Mongolia’s GDP expanded by roughly 17 percent in 2011 and continued sustained growth in 2012. The source of growth centers on the sprawling facilities of Oyu Tolgoi—the world’s largest mining exploration project sitting atop one of the world’s largest untapped reserves of copper and gold. Once an economic backwater with little industry beyond traditional herding, Mongolia has the potential to become a new Asian mineral hub. However, the recent rise of resource nationalism among its politicians has cast doubt on a promising economic future.

The gargantuan Oyu Tolgoi (OT) mine has yet to begin operations, but it already accounts for an estimated 30 percent of Mongolia’s GDP, employing over 11,000 Mongolians and paying the country over one trillion dollars in taxes. This site alone will provide three percent of the world’s copper production when it reaches full capacity in 2018. However, excavators believe that these deposits also comprise a small portion of one of the largest untapped mineral reserves in the world. This mineral wealth will inevitably gain attention as investors in neighboring China eye future excavation sites to fuel continued Chinese industrial growth.

Yet, politics threatens to stifle a spectacular economic boom prematurely. Following the center-right Democratic Party’s victory in last July’s parliamentary elections, a new faction of “resource nationalists” has taken root in Mongolia’s contentious political arena. These politicians have a primary goal to renegotiate the government’s contracts with foreign mining companies—collectively the largest financial undertaking in the nation’s history—to more heavily favor government profit. At the moment, such plans are merely political posturing, but they endanger formerly cordial relations with international investors, whose support directly determines continued growth. To see the effects of such policies, one only needs to examine Tavan Tolgoi (TT), the world’s largest untapped coal reserves located 100 miles west of OT. TT remains undeveloped after political squabbling delayed the



WIKIPEDIA

Traditional ger huts provide housing for workers at Oyu Tolgoi.

contracting of the site until mid-2013.

Rio Tinto, an Anglo-Australian mining conglomerate and owner of the OT site, has already hit roadblocks dealing with the Mongolian government. Earlier this year, with a budget deficit on the books and rising project costs at OT, Parliament summoned Rio Tinto executives to talks in the capital, Ulaanbaatar, to discuss proposals aimed to increase the government’s share of profits from the mine. With new taxes, higher royalties, and a larger stake in resource ownership on the table, miners and investors objected to the proposed legislation. Though Mongolian bankers and analysts remain hopeful that the OT agreement will stay untouched, Ulaanbaatar’s sudden protectionist streak has investors worried.

The origins of this burgeoning resource nationalism occur in the “ger” villages surrounding the capital—shanty town style communities of felt tents—filled with voters who have yet to see any personal benefit from the country’s skyrocketing growth. Among some Mongolians, the OT project has developed a reputation of a lot of money being spent for the sake of the country’s elite and foreign investors. Despite an increase of 20 percent in Mongolia’s per-capita GDP between 2011 and 2012, the country remains poor, and worries abound over mounting corruption in the government siphoning away mining wealth.

While the government must address a more equitable distribution of mining wealth, the country needs foreign investment to guarantee the development of the mining sector and ensure long-term

growth. Parliament has struggled to address a budget deficit, and the nation’s handful of domestic mining companies lack the capacity to capitalize on OT and TT’s vast reserves without the dozens of Australian and Canadian mining companies already active in the country. In the fourth quarter of 2012, economic growth faltered after the passage of the Strategic Foreign Investment Act, requiring Parliamentary approval for all foreign purchases of domestic mining assets. Further restrictive measures would only deter investment and jeopardize economic growth. A Bloomberg report in early February shocked markets with a rumor that Rio Tinto may consider a temporary halt to construction at OT to protest Ulaanbaatar’s steep royalty demands. For a country whose mining industry hinges on foreign investment, that outcome would be damaging.

The Economist describes Mongolia as primed for an economic success story akin to that of the Gulf oil states, where abundant resource wealth made small and poor populations wealthy. Parliament must now look to ensure that Mongolia’s mineral riches profit its people without scaring off foreign companies in the process. For the moment this means focusing on the contracting of new mining contracts to yield jobs and commerce, rather than attempting to draw more tax money and ownership shares from existing projects. Without further Parliamentary intervention, Oyu Tolgoi stands set to begin production on schedule, while Tavan Tolgoi remains barren. Parliament should focus on bringing change to Tavan, not Oyu.

Understanding the Chinese Position on North Korea:

The First Step to US-China Cooperation on North Korea

— *Will Scheffer*

When North Korea conducted its third nuclear test in early February, the pariah state proved once again that it would not allow the protests of the United States, or even its closest ally China, hinder its development of a long-range nuclear warhead. Although China has vocalized its objections to North Korean nuclear tests, many Americans regard these public denunciations as disingenuous in the face of continued Chinese economic support of the North Korean dictatorship. Despite the frustration over China's apparent unwillingness to take meaningful action against North Korea, US policymakers should understand the Chinese position and utilize that knowledge to develop innovative policy proposals that would incentivize the Chinese to work with the United States.

As leading Brookings Institution China scholar Ken Liberthal recently noted at a talk on US-China relations in the second Obama administration, the US must not rely on the Chinese to take the initiative to develop a proposal on how to deal with North Korea. Although China has started to turn outwards, its government still focuses more on domestic issues over foreign ones. According to Liberthal, the Chinese foreign minister does not even rank among the top twenty-five most important ministers in the Chinese government. As another example of Chinese inexperience with international engagement, the only member of the powerful Politburo standing committee educated outside of China graduated from Kim-il Sung University in Pyongyang, North Korea. Simply put, China's bureaucracy does not have the capability currently to develop innovative foreign policy; rather, the government would be better suited responding to a US proposal. Although this places the weight of solving one of the world's most complicated security issues on the shoulders of US policymakers, this initiative would grant the United States full power to shape the entire negotiation process with North Korea on its terms while having positive cooperation with China.

An important factor for US-Chinese cooperation on North Korea is timing. China's number one concern with North Korea is instability on the Korean Peninsula, and the Chinese government is unlikely to adopt punitive measures against the North Korean dictatorship if they believe it might destabilize the government. The Chinese response to the February 12 nuclear test bodes well for US-China collaboration over North Korea. As the Council on Foreign Relations' Scott Snyder mentioned in late



WIKIPEDIA

A North Korean Unha-3 rocket at Tangachai-ri space center on April 8, 2012.

January when another nuclear test was imminent, the new Chinese leadership's response to the trial would provide useful insight into Chinese assessment of North Korea's political stability. Specifically, if the Chinese believed that the nuclear test occurred as a result of political infighting in North Korea, they would hesitate to respond negatively out of fear of acknowledging the regime's destabilization. A condemnation of North Korea's actions, however, would indicate cohesiveness behind the actions of the government. Given China's critical response to the North Korean nuclear test, there is reason to think the North Korean regime acts with singular purpose. Since the Chinese do not appear concerned with the short term stability of the North Korean leadership, with proper incentives from the US, they may be more inclined to put pressure on them to stop future nuclear tests and the continued development of nuclear weapons.

China fears the possibility of a unified Korean peninsula containing US military personnel on its borders. Given that the United States has plans to hand over wartime operational control to the South Korean military in 2015, US policymakers should

also consider withdrawing the armed forces stationed in South Korea as a potential breakthrough bargaining chip with China. The concept for transferring wartime control to the South Koreans and drawing down the US presence on the peninsula was conceived in 1988, before the global financial crisis forced policymakers to consider shrinking budgets. The same strategic thinking from 1988 still holds true today; in fact, it has been strengthened. South Korean active duty forces now exceed US forces in South Korea twenty-two fold; with reserves that number balloons to 175. Well-equipped, well trained and possessing a large force, the South Korean military can operate independently and no longer requires American supervision.

A combination of transferring wartime control to the South Koreans and withdrawing troops would undoubtedly bring China to the table regarding North Korea. The US should use these negotiations with China as an opportunity to formulate a military contingency plan in the event of a collapse of the North Korean government. Taking these actions would placate Chinese fears of US intrusion on its borders while avoiding any strategic loss in the balance of power on the Korean Peninsula.

This recommendation may be highly controversial to some of the US's allies in the region, most notably Japan, who is increasingly concerned by China's naval aggression. A relocation of a small number of US armed forces from South Korea, however, would hardly affect the strength of US and Japan's relationship. Furthermore, the new United States' "Pivot to Asia" policy means sending into the Pacific more naval assets, which would allay any fears the Japanese might have toward Chinese naval might. All in all, the benefits outlined above far outweigh the potential costs to the US's relationship with Japan and other allies.

Although finding an intermediate solution to conflict on the Korean Peninsula may be difficult, it will be impossible if China is not willing to work with the United States. Debating the validity of Chinese actions and views toward North Korea is a useless exercise unless American policymakers really grasp why China acts the way it does. This recommendation is not the only way forward, but it aims to take Chinese concerns into account, which previous proposals failed to do. Until policymakers can find a way to incentivize the Chinese into being a more productive partner on North Korea, little progress will occur.

An Investment of People: Immigration Policy in Singapore

— Carren Cheng

On February 16, more than 1000 Singaporeans staged a rare political demonstration against surging numbers of immigrants, following the release of the Population White Paper of 2013. The White Paper outlines the Singaporean government's population policy plans to address the challenge of demographic change. In the White Paper, the government indicates its continual encouragement for immigration, predicting the population to grow by 30 percent to 6.9 million by 2030; half of which will consist of immigrants. Over the past several decades, the continual influx of immigrants has led to constant and significant increases in population. The surging population has led to inflation, rising housing prices, dilution of homogenous Singaporean cultural identity, and congested roads. Despite economic growth immigrants bring to the country, the government should limit its immigration policy and redirect its expansionist attitude to foreign investment.

The term "immigrant" usually refers to foreigners who gain either citizenship or permanent residence in Singapore. The group consists of both high-skilled and low-skilled workers and a comparatively small proportion of foreign students. The Singaporean government has a long reputation of liberal immigration policy driven by its belief that immigration is crucial for economic growth. According to the government, high-skilled workers increase global links to the Singaporean market and serve as investment in human capital to increase the country's production. Low-skilled workers, on the other hand, fill in jobs that most well educated locals are reluctant to take. Most importantly, the government points to the country's low Total Fertility Rate (TFR), which implies a decreasing population size and aging population. Therefore, immigrants are also useful to fill in the vacuum of the low TFR.

However, immigration can actually cause to a chain reaction resulting in an even lower TFR, cyclically increasing the country's dependence on immigration. Influxes of immigrants every year lead to a higher demand for goods and services, in part leading to inflation. The Singaporean Department of Statistics expects CPI-All Item, a consumer price index used as an inflation guideline, to be 3.5 to 4.5 percent for the whole of 2013. On top of bolstering inflation, immigrants also increase demand for housing, driving up housing prices. According to a study on the factors responsible for driving down TFR, high costs of raising and educating a child is one of the main explanations of the low fertility rate. In other words, inflation and rising housing prices contribute to fami-



WIKIPEDIA

lies' decisions to have fewer children. Therefore, the Singaporean government should take its first step and restrict immigration, which can increase TFR in the long-term.

At some point in the near future, Singapore is going to reach equilibrium in economic growth, meaning it will reach its maximum potential output level. The point of attaining long-run equilibrium, according to economists, is to maximize the country's social utility level, or overall population satisfaction. As demonstrated by the protest, the public will only grow more disappointed and frustrated by effects of increased immigration, such as dilution in cultural identity and crowded living environment. At its long-run equilibrium, not only is the maximization of their social utility level unachievable, the government can also fall victim to anti-government sentiment, which might hinder public policy implementation in the long run.

Meanwhile, the government should redirect its sources of economic expansion from immigrants to foreign investment by easing foreign investment restrictions. Even though low tariffs and open policies have made Singapore one of the easier countries in which to do business, the country still has exceptional restrictions on financial services, professional services, and media sectors. The Singaporean government owns most of the country's telecommunications, broadcasting, and domestic new media. Foreign companies are

not only hampered by restrictions on company ownership, but are also concerned about the lack of transparency in some aspects of Singapore's telecommunications regulatory and rule-making process. Despite liberalization, few customer service locations or minimal access to the local ATM network still constrains foreign banks. Similarly, with the exception of law degrees from a handful of designated US, British, Australian, and New Zealand universities, the government does not recognize other foreign university law degrees for purposes of admission to practice law in Singapore. By easing restrictions on media, financial, and legal sectors, the government can maintain economic growth in a politically and economically safer way.

If Singapore does not address the problem of increasing public discontent, it can potentially face a socio-political scenario similar to its elbowing competitor – Hong Kong. Ever since Hong Kong returned to China in 1997, mainland Chinese has continuously permeated the local population. The social welfare system, higher educational standards, and high political freedoms have made Hong Kong an attractive location for mainland families to have children. Higher food and counterfeit regulation has also drawn a group of wealthy mainlanders to the Hong Kong market. The results of this increased immigration were inflation, skyrocketing housing prices, and a low TFR among local families. Protests, discrimination against mainland Chinese, and anti-local government are now stereotypes of the Hong Kong culture. If Singapore does not harden its immigration policy, it can potentially experience the same anti-government sentiment and cultural disparities present in Hong Kong.

The Move to Cyprus is More Than It Seems

— *Leslie Teng*

Wealthy Chinese in search of new homes have started looking for real estate outside of their homeland, especially in countries like Cyprus. The Republic of Cyprus, a small island nation in the Mediterranean Sea, has offered a rare residence opportunity for foreigners to live in a European Union (EU) member state. To qualify, all prospective buyers must spend at least 401,875 dollars (300,000 euros) on a piece of property and present a clean criminal record; in return, they gain permanent residence status in an EU member state, which allows them to travel without visas to other EU member states. This proposal has proven popular among Chinese buyers. Chinese individuals have purchased 600 properties in Cyprus between August and October 2012. However, this rush for Cypriot homes does not simply bear testament to the allure of Europe, but more so to Chinese fears about their own nation. These purchases of Cypriot homes stem from a desire to potentially settle in countries without the growing domestic troubles present within the People's Republic of China.

For the wealthy Chinese, Cyprus offers the attractive opportunity to travel visa-free throughout Europe. Young people can explore the continent without additional paperwork and hassle, while parents can easily visit children attending European schools. However, since many buyers currently reside in China, a significant portion of these newly purchased properties remain empty and uninhabited. This absence, though, does not necessarily indicate that the wealthy Chinese simply view Cyprus as a playground or a site for vacation homes. The enormous amount of money spent on these properties demonstrates more than just a need for travel opportunities. Rather, Cyprus acts as a safeguard for the fortunes of these wealthy Chinese. The buyers treat Cyprus as a “back-up” should China face unrest and turmoil. News of this growing mindset should trouble the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

In 2012, the Chinese Politburo underwent its decennial change in leadership personnel. Though the new president, Xi Jinping, hails from the “princeling” – children of powerful officials – class of Chinese politics, he has already displayed a revolutionary streak. In his first speech as president, Mr. Xi did not mention the past philosophies and slogans of previous presidents, nor did he create his own, as his predecessors had done. Mr. Xi also openly confronted the topic of corruption in Chinese politics, an issue rarely addressed in public. Some may argue that these changes show sure signs of progress. While these moves demonstrate a departure from past presidents, they do not represent adequate reform. Simply put, China's problems extend beyond just corruption.



Buyers treat Cyprus as a “back-up” should China face unrest and turmoil. News of this growing mindset should trouble the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).”

The dark side of urbanization grips the nation. As more of the rural population enters urban centers in search of jobs and new opportunities, they often discover that their prospects have hardly improved in the cities due to lack of education and skills. Consequently, many become low-paid unskilled migrant workers; thereby exacerbating China's widening inequality. Thus, on top of battling rampant corruption, the government has to face the growing income gap between rich and poor.

The government has unveiled preventative measures to combat this problem, such as raising incomes and reining in corruption. These measures, which were proposed with good intentions, are vague and provide no viable solutions to solve the current problems. As such, these methods have done little to quell the fears of the elite. One only needs to see the increasing purchases of second homes outside China to understand the inadequacy of these “reforms.” For the upper echelons of society, their wealth and status is dependent on maintenance of the status quo: the stable Communist regime. As the wealthy get wealthier from China's growing economy, the inequality becomes even more pronounced. The dangerous combination of inequality and corruption can lead to mass uprisings against the government and, therefore, threaten the elite.

However, the recent bank crisis in Cyprus may negatively affect this new property scheme. Financial turmoil may very well transform to societal turmoil, thus diminishing the allure of the island nation. Nevertheless, the demand among the wealthy Chinese for these homes in Cyprus should serve as warning to the Politburo leadership. The Chinese Communist Party should view the behavior of the elite as a signal that underclass tensions will blow up in the imminent future unless actual, viable measures are taken. Until the CCP acknowledges the extent of China's domestic issues, and begins to tackle them, then more and more wealthy Chinese will look to places such as Cyprus as their new home.

Myanmar or Burma: Road to Decision

— Carren Cheng

Myanmar or Burma: two opposing names of the former pariah state. To this day, the debate over the name of this Southeast Asian country persists. While the United Nations recognizes the country as Myanmar, those who refuse to acknowledge the authoritarian regime responsible for the name change in 1989 still brand the nation as Burma. The selection has obvious connotations: “Myanmar” signifies approval, whereas “Burma” signals condemnation. Just as the tug of words reflects opinions on the government’s legitimacy, the civilian administration recently formed by President U Thein Sein similarly is struggling to gain trust and acceptability from the public. Since the emergence of the new, supposedly civilian government in 2011 Thein Sein’s pro-democratic and liberal agenda has gained allies in Western countries. Although President Sein has proven himself to be genuine in reform, military rule and shaky foreign relations pose problems. As long as these issues exist, the country will struggle for legitimacy both nominally and politically.

Until 2011, Myanmar had been under military rule in one form or another since 1962. In 1990, the Opposition National League for Democracy (NLD), under the leadership of Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, won a landslide victory in a general election. The military ignored the results. Thereafter, the Myanmar government strayed slightly from its authoritarian style, and hope for a full democracy endured. Between 1998 and 2012 the government released more than 300 NLD prisoners, ended hostilities with the Karen National Union – a political and military organization representing the Karen, the largest Myanmar ethnic group – and attempted to draft the road map to democracy for the National Convention to Democracy in 2004. However, such efforts became futile once high fuel prices sparked public dissent, which caused the government to close the National Convention. Heavy military presence returned to the capital. In 2007, the International Committee of the Red Cross departed from its typical neutrality and accused the regime of human rights abuses. Worldwide condemnation followed.

Similarly, the recent changes under President Thein Sein’s leadership once again steer Myanmar toward liberalization and democracy. Like in the previous decade, the government released hundreds of prisoners, among them prominent political figures including Aung San Suu Kyi. Subsequently, freedom of speech improved as the government removed censorship in private publications and increased internet access. Even more remarkably, in January, the reformist government abolished a



WIKIPEDIA

President Barack Obama meets with President U Thein Sein in 2012.

25-year ban on public gatherings. The totality of these moves marks a change never seen in the old regime.

Though they indicate President Thein Sein’s genuineness in reform, the military, which still overwhelmingly controls the Parliament, has not responded positively to the President’s liberal policies. The military continues to maintain an attitude from the former regime. In November 2012 and February 2013, protests broke out among Buddhist monks and villagers over the expansion of a copper mine by a Chinese company in partnership with the military. Photos and eyewitness accounts showed the Myanmar police repeatedly firing phosphorus grenades at protestors. Such crackdowns demonstrate one of the many military transgressions that have hampered President Sein’s efforts to gain the public’s trust. Furthermore, the military’s dominance in Parliament indicates that they still have a great amount of power.

Optimists see President Barack Obama’s visit to Myanmar last May and President Sein’s visit to Europe – the first from a Myanmar leader in 46 years – as signals of reform and progress. In fact, the United States, European Union, and Australia have eased most sanctions against Myanmar. The US and EU even extended a friendly hand to Myanmar through visits and development aid. However, Myanmar’s relationships with its Asian neighbors, China and Japan, bear much greater importance for the nation because of their involvement in natural resources, particularly in diverting resources away from local development. As such, the Myanmar people

have long perceived China as a robber, based on its main interest in extracting natural resources from Myanmar. Similarly, Japan, eager to extend its network of factories, has increased its investment in Myanmar. Even though President Sein’s decision to increase the country’s reliance on Japan has diversified Myanmar from China, his decision fails to answer the public’s wish to channel those resources to the nation’s development.

In order for President Thein Sein and his government to gain acceptability, they must avoid the pattern of the 1990s, detach themselves from the military, and align with the NLD. The road to democracy will be arduous, since the military holds most of the seats in the Parliament. However, if President Sein continues with his reformist policies, expresses concerns for militant acts against Myanmar citizens, and aligns his political stance with the NLD and Western countries, he will gain the public support necessary for legitimacy.

With the elimination of most Western sanctions, President Sein should consider decreasing the country’s business alliance with Asian neighbors like China, which only spark dissent amongst the Myanmar citizens. Instead, increasing business ties with Western countries and utilizing natural resources for the country’s own development will gain public approval. Should President Sein and his government rectify these outstanding issues, the Myanmar people will begin to trust the new regime. And on a global scale, the debate over calling the nation Myanmar or Burma will also come to a close.

Harder to Breathe: The Environmental Costs of China's Development

—Joseph Lindblad

The Chinese government identifies the unimposing air quality monitoring device on the roof of the United States embassy in Beijing as one of myriad ways the Americans “meddle” in Chinese internal affairs. For years, the monitoring station—in a patronizing tone befitting the calculated indifference of algorithmic measurement—has broadcasted hourly air quality readings using a more critical pollution metric than that officially sanctioned by the People's Republic of China (PRC). Because it measures the concentration of PM 2.5—particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter—instead of PM 10, those cognizant of China's grave environmental problems recognize the embassy's measurements as a more accurate reading of Beijing's increasingly gray, opaque air. A PM 2.5 reading of 500 lies on the upper limit of an air quality index, and signifies “hazardous” levels of health concern. However, in January 2013, even more dire numbers began to appear from the monitoring station: 714, 732, and 755. These “Beyond Index” values indicate pollutant amounts over 40 times the World Health Organization recommended maximum safe level. Foreign observers, though, should view the response of Chinese officials with cautious optimism.

Considering the government's erstwhile dismissal of such smog, the frankness with which state media reported on the latest bout of air pollution came as a surprise to many China watchers. Growing anger, expressed vehemently online, over the horrible air quality catalyzed propaganda officials into finally addressing the problem. An editorial in the official Party newspaper *People's Daily* read: “The seemingly never-ending haze and fog may blur our vision, but makes us see clearly the urgency of pollution control.” Moreover, the government recently issued a list of “cancer villages,” local municipalities where industrial pollution has correlated with abnormally high rates of cancer and other health problems. Some argue that this unprecedented media coverage signals the possibility of substantive pollution reform under Xi Jinping, the country's new president. However, this optimism belies the inertia of economic trends and structural frictions that make addressing China's environmental problems incredibly difficult.

China relies heavily on fossil fuels, particularly coal, and has ample domestic reserves concentrated in the north and west of the country. Coal has fueled China's remarkable economic growth, particularly in heavy industries like smelting and steel production; in 2009, coal continued to account for 70 percent of China's total energy consumption and half of the world's total coal consumption.



WIKIPEDIA

Two pictures of the same view: Beijing after a rainstorm (left) and on a sunny day (right).

Oil constitutes an additional 19 percent, with the remainder coming from less carbon-intensive fuels like natural gas, hydroelectric projects like the Three Gorges Dam, and nuclear power. The convenience of coal as a means of powering China's accelerating economic development has heretofore minimized the incentive to develop less polluting energy sources.

Mindful, though, of the environmental consequences that come with unabated coal usage, the government has implemented a new Five-Year Plan that sets lofty but achievable targets for pivoting China towards environmental reform. These include deriving 11.4 percent of total energy from renewable sources by 2015, and reducing the carbon intensity of China's GDP by 4.6 percent per year. Nevertheless, Zou Ji, the Deputy Director of China's National Center for Climate Change Strategy, articulates the incredulity of many in the government towards fast-paced energy reform that would impact the state's tasks of development and lifting people out of poverty: he warns of “changing too quickly, trying to create a low-carbon economy in a Great Leap Forward manner and misjudging China's circumstances and technological ability. China can only do its best as it is able. Moving too quickly will actually hold back low-carbon development.” To this end, environmentally sustainable energy policy appears likely to develop at a slow pace.

Apart from coal consumption, the vast increase in car ownership also acts as a major source of air pollution in Chinese cities. Chinese consumers purchased more than 13 million automobiles last year, and these emissions are the single largest source of PM 2.5 air pollution. Automobiles have emerged as a potent status symbol among China's burgeoning middle class, even in the relatively less wealthy interior. The government subsidizes consumption growth by encouraging automobile purchases and offering attractive loan programs through state

banks. These policies, however, conflict with attempts to limit emissions pollution through congestion pricing and restricting downtown driving in some cities based on license plate numbers. Routine crippling traffic jams reaching far out into the suburbs plague the sprawling highways of China's major cities. Unfortunately, ineffective and overcrowded public transportation systems and the health hazards of traveling outside in such heavily polluted air discourage people from commuting through other means. As the Chinese become accustomed to the conveniences of the automobile, it remains unlikely to expect a decrease in its consumption without substantive policy change that encourages such a move. As Beijing resident Wang Hui says, “One car can't make a difference [about pollution], and we really need it for our life.”

Lastly, China's political structure incentivizes the continued flouting of existing environmental regulations. The central government has limited oversight over the quotidian affairs of provincial and municipal governments. With minimal consequences, local officials frequently prioritize economic growth—as well as the associated tax revenue and industrial pollution—over national environmental mandates. Moreover, it is cheaper for local officials to pay fines for polluting than it would be to use official funds to finance pollution eradication. These institutional characteristics implicitly promote continued air, water, and soil pollution, regardless of the environmental aspirations of those in Beijing. Ultimately, although the public health and economic costs of unfettered pollution are finally beginning to incur substantive discontent, the necessary task demands Xi Jinping's government to overcome deep structural and consumption trends in the contemporary Chinese state that conflict directly with the core of the Communist Party's governance, held above all else: development.

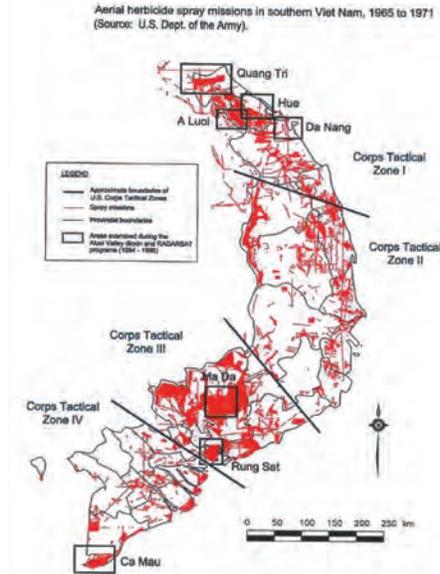
Peeling the Orange

— Ryan Lorch

Although the Vietnam War ended over 35 years ago, Agent Orange still affects the Vietnamese people today. Agent Orange is a chemical mixture consisting of herbicides and Dioxin, a common chemical toxin, used to destroy large amounts of vegetation. During the Vietnam War, American planes and helicopters dispersed 20 million gallons of Agent Orange over Vietnam's rainforest to help push the Vietcong out of hiding. However, use of this toxin has had long-term health implications: people originally sprayed have been diagnosed with multiple forms of cancer, and thousands of their children have been born with defects. Only recently has the United States finally begun to recognize the long-term health problems it induced during war. Last August, the US Department of Health launched a campaign to clean a 47-acre plot of land in Da Nang, once used as military base and is now contaminated with Agent Orange. This, however, is not enough to solve the problem. In order to fully fix the side effects of Agent Orange, Vietnam and the United States need to work together and develop an extensive plan that will cut down on birth deformities, clean up infected areas, and help treat those diagnosed with Agent Orange-related illnesses.

Even though the United States and Vietnam have started to finally clean up highly toxic areas of Agent Orange, it is already too late; this latest campaign is a good start, but it will not make a large enough impact on those already infected. In order to rectify this situation, the United States should join with the United Nations to launch a cohesive healthcare campaign that will treat victims with cancer or birth defects linked to Agent Orange. It should also start to decontaminate areas that remain highly contaminated. At the same time, the Vietnamese government should work with the United States to pressure the international community into treating the issue more seriously. Nquyen Van Rinb, the chairman of the Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange stated last year that, "The plight of Agent Orange victims continues. I think the relationship would rise up to new heights if the American government took responsibility and helped their victims and address the consequences."

There are a couple of different steps that the United States needs to take to mend its poor reputation in regard to Agent Orange's clean up. First, the American and Vietnamese governments need to sit down together and get a grasp on how many people and how much land this toxin currently infects. This initial step is vital for both parties to properly understand the scope of the problem. Next, the United States, in a joint effort with the Vietnamese government, should focus more on treating the land before treating the people; if it



WIKIPEDIA

A map of Vietnam showing (in red) the use of Agent Orange from 1965-1971.

does this it could prevent the chemical's spread to more Vietnamese people and mitigate the chances of future exposure of the toxin. Then, after treating high-contaminated areas, this joint effort should focus its attention on the people, specifically the thousands of children that have been born with birth defects or have come into contact with this toxin. After treating the children, the next move of the government should be to educate the general population. This initiative would inform the people of which areas should be avoided and signs of symptoms that are common with Agent Orange. An educated population is better equipped to avoid exposure which will further the United States' goal of minimizing the consequences of the toxin. The United States is responsible for this mess, but the Vietnamese government needs to also help with the cleanup in order for an extensive and successful treatment to occur.

Although the United States is beginning to address the problems resulting from Agent Orange, it has taken over 40 years to start helping innocent victims. The first drop of Agent Orange was sprayed in 1961 and it has affected both Vietnamese citizens and US soldiers ever since. Even though the United States has spent billions of dollars in health care for US soldiers diagnosed with Agent Orange-related illness, there has been nothing done to help Vietnamese victims. Charles Bailey, the director of the Agent Orange in Vietnam Program stated, "There is a disconnect between what America has done for its soldiers and what America has done for Vietnam." The United

States government needs to not only address the land affected by Agent Orange, but also the victims through health care attention and compensation with help from the Vietnamese government.

Unfinished Business in Kosovo

— William Lamping

On February 17, the Serbian breakaway province of Kosovo celebrated the fifth anniversary of its independence. The celebrations spurred protests across Serbia and among the ethnic Serbs in Kosovo. Since the 1999 NATO-enforced cessation of the Kosovar War between ethnic Albanians and Serbs, the province has fallen out of the Western media's spotlight. While the European Union (EU) is currently mediating talks between Serbian and Kosovar Albanian officials in Brussels, little progress has occurred between the groups; indeed, little appears viable without significantly restructuring the current negotiation process.

During the celebrations, the self-styled President of Kosovo, Atifete Jahjaga, announced Kosovar independence to be "irreversible," declaring "the Republic of Kosovo is an irrefutable reality." While Ms. Jahjaga's audience of primarily ethnic Albanians would agree with these claims, Kosovo's Serbs and the Serbian government do not. Both Albanians and Serbs claim Kosovo as a part of their ethnic homeland. Serbs have claimed Kosovo as an integral part of Serbia since the Middle Ages, while its majority ethnic Albanian population entered Kosovo only after the 1389 Battle of Kosovo, in which Ottoman Turk forces crushed the Serbian Empire and depopulated the region. Albanians counter that their ancestors are the original inhabitants of Kosovo, and that Serbs colonized Kosovo during the 20th century. Regarding history, both sides can (and do) reference centuries of occupation to bolster their claims.

So long as Kosovo remained a part of the Ottoman Empire, its heterogeneous population was unimportant. Indeed, Ottoman authorities encouraged ethnic heterogeneity within the populace to stifle any potential national uprising. After the First Balkan War, however, when the expanding Serbian state absorbed Kosovo, its heterogeneous population became problematic: in the 1931 census, Kosovo's population was 34.4 percent Serb and 62 percent Albanian. During World War II, Kosovar Albanians allied with occupying German, Italian, and Croat forces against Serb partisans; both sides then became radicalized through acts of genocide and ethnic cleansing carried out by both parties. Ethnic tensions settled for a time in post-World War II Yugoslavia, when Kosovo was granted autonomy within the Socialist Republic of Serbia.

During the breakup of Yugoslavia, hardline Serb nationalists in Belgrade questioned Kosovo's autonomy even as Albanian nationalists within Kosovo pushed for independence from Serbia, and for possible integration into neighboring Albania. By 1999, tensions gave way to open warfare as the ethnic Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) fought the ethnic Serb Yugoslav People's



WIKIPEDIA

A map of Kosovo that details the distribution of the province's ethnicities.

Army (JNA) for control of Kosovo. During the 15-month conflict, at least 10,000 died, while 800,000 Albanians and 170,000 Serbs were displaced by the violence. By June of 1999, NATO had imposed a ceasefire and a subsequent withdrawal by the (Serb) JNA from Kosovo. As international attention waned after the ceasefire, so did progress on resolving Kosovo's political status, which remained unsettled.

For Serbs, Kosovo's de-facto independence is an unacceptable secession and violation of integral territory of the Serbian homeland. Since the war, Kosovo's Albanians have dominated Kosovar politics. Today, only 120,000 Serbs live within Kosovo, primarily in the north; another 210,000 – recognized as "internally displaced Serbs" by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) – are denied the right to return to their homes by the Albanian Kosovar government. For the remaining Serbs in the northern city of Mitrovica, life since the Kosovo War remains in a state of permanent siege. Serbs view the ethnic Albanian, NATO-trained police force, KFOR, as a force of oppression rather than protection. In Pristina, the region's capital, the Kosovar government is exclusively ethnic Albanian.

Kosovo's Prime Minister and former leader of the KLA, Hashim Thaci, faces accusations of membership in the Albanian mafia, and both narcotics and human organ trafficking from Serb prisoners taken during the Kosovo War. Anti-Serb rhetoric and the continued practice of desecration of Serb cemeteries and Orthodox Churches have yet to be addressed. Even Serbia's aspirations for EU membership have been tied to recognizing

the Kosovar regime, with EU leaders like Angela Merkel and Catherine Ashton calling for Serbia to recognize Kosovo.

While Serb war crimes in Kosovo have received significant media attention and international scorn, Albanian war crimes have not. From a Serb viewpoint, a double-standard is being upheld. Any serious resolution on Kosovo must fairly address Serb concerns and guarantee ethnic minority protection within Kosovo.

While Serbia refuses to recognize Kosovo as independent, the US and many of its allies do. As of this February, 99 UN member states have recognized the region as a sovereign state. In the interest of maintaining traditional alliances in the region, Greece, Romania, and Russia refuse to recognize Kosovo. Indeed, the strong affinity between Serbia and Russia has been linked to why the US and the West have pushed so hard for Kosovar independence, honoring their international rivalry with Russia. Despite NATO's direct involvement in propping up the Kosovar regime, there is sadly little media coverage of this "frozen conflict."

While the international community turns a blind eye to Kosovo, both Serbs and Albanians continue to suffer, with little hope for resolution of the conflict. The 13-year stagnation of the peace process in Kosovo has gone on long enough: the international community needs to facilitate a lasting resolution to the province's status. Although the EU-mediated talks in Brussels are an excellent initiative, concrete action remains elusive. Serb refugees must be allowed to return to Kosovo, and be compensated for the 13-year loss and confiscation of their property. An impartial, international investigation must be undertaken to address human rights violations and organized crime within Kosovo. Ultimately, some sort of power-sharing agreement must occur between the Albanians and Serbs within Kosovo. How this deal will unfold, whether it includes Kosovar autonomy within Serbia, independence, or division between Albania and Serbia, can only be answered by the Serbs and Albanians themselves. Sustained international attention and mediation, however, is necessary to bring both sides to an agreement.

The Identity Crisis of the First Lady

—Julia Jacovides

The past 50 years have provided great opportunities for women in power. Today, according to an *Economist* article, women constitute 49.9 percent of American workers, 51 percent of American professionals, and they earn almost 60 percent of university degrees in the United States and Europe. This presents both an enormous amount of growth and potential for future generations of females. No two women better demonstrate these possibilities than American First Lady Michelle Obama and Valerie Trierweiler, the girlfriend of French president Francois Hollande. They have each struggled to create an identity for themselves outside that of “First Lady” and though their methods vary, to some extent they have both succeeded. Mrs. Obama has created a much more independent identity for herself; Ms. Trierweiler, however, has not yet taken advantage of the opportunities her position presents. Despite the privileges and prestige associated with their roles, Mrs. Obama and Ms. Trierweiler still suffer constraints as they struggle to redefine the role of an influential woman in the 21st century.

Mrs. Obama’s chief characteristic is her refusal let go of her life before the White House. Her individual professional success and her ability to achieve a relative sense of normalcy indicate her unique legacy. Before her husband became President, Mrs. Obama worked in law, for Public Allies – an organization meant to prepare young adults for jobs in the public sector – and for the University of Chicago. In the years immediately preceding the 2008 election, she focused primarily on community service-related endeavors. Her individual success is typical for recent First Ladies, although Mrs. Obama’s unwillingness to uproot her family to Washington D.C. should her husband win the election suggests a departure from her predecessors. Mrs. Obama’s devotion to her old life, her desire to preserve its values and structure, suggest an entirely new type of professional female personality: one who successfully leads a simultaneously professional and domestic lifestyle.

Stories of conflict with her husband’s staff have emerged, in which Mrs. Obama is portrayed as a meddling wife. Such an image merely perpetuates typical gender divisions, especially those that emphasize a woman’s domestic usefulness. Indeed, most major news sources’ articles about Mrs. Obama focus on her fashion choices, her White House decoration ideas, and official garden. For a woman with degrees from Princeton University and Harvard Law School, this must be seen as several levels below her full intellectual capacity.

This statement is not meant to debase her work, but merely to point out the traditions that constrain her. Like many First Ladies before her, Mrs. Obama has chosen to involve herself in an issue of



WIKIPEDIA

Michelle Obama dances with talk show host Ellen DeGeneres on the second anniversary of her anti-obesity campaign “Let’s Move.” The program has allowed Mrs. Obama for greater independence as First Lady.

national importance: fighting obesity, increasing national health, and lowering costs. Unlike her French counterpart, though, Mrs. Obama’s campaign indirectly supports her husband’s policies, namely his healthcare bill, by having the same aims and goals. This type of circumventing logic provided Mrs. Obama with a new public image, a new cause, and a new type of political power and sway. This was a departure from the popular conception that First Ladies primarily work on general humanitarian goals; it was an ambitious woman using an alternative method to further her husband’s goals in a relatively non-political scope. Above all, it represents a manipulation of a political system intent on proving its democratic standing; Mrs. Obama cannot directly affect the success of her husband’s healthcare measures because she has not been elected. The First Lady can, however, use her influence to achieve the same goals and preserve some level of independence and authority from her old life.

Valerie Trierweiler, the girlfriend of French president François Hollande, has approached her new position of authority in a similar, albeit less supportive, way. Like Mrs. Obama, she gave up her day job as a political journalist though, unlike her American counterpart, it was obligatory and due to potential conflicts of interest. She continues to assert her independence, and the press appears to go out of its way to portray her as the vindictive girlfriend of a powerful man. French women in politics have a certain reputation to uphold: glamorous, scandalous, and controversial. Foreign observers know of Carla Bruni, Ms. Trierweiler’s predecessor, for many reasons, though the most prominent is her promotion of the glitzy sort of lifestyle that sells magazines. Such sexist stereotypes, therefore, remain popular in France,

and Trierweiler’s continued calls for authority and independence have gone against this docile tradition and have caused some discomfort.

Both women have done their best to ensure that their lives before the presidency remain intact and both have considered humanitarian work (although one article in the *Guardian* snidely calls this the “fail-safe option for spouses of powerful men who need to be kept occupied”). Yet, Mrs. Obama is undoubtedly more popular in the United States than Ms. Trierweiler is in France, where a recent poll by VSD magazine shows that 67 percent of French people view her negatively.

Possible explanations for this discrepancy lie in both the media’s portrayal of each woman and their causes. Mrs. Obama’s fight against obesity is, as the *Guardian* says, “fail-safe.” However, its goals also completely coincide with those of her husband’s healthcare policy. The public therefore views her approvingly as a supportive spouse. In France, Ms. Trierweiler has gone to court to sue the authors of an unauthorized biography accusing her of carrying on another affair ten years ago, when she had just begun seeing Hollande. The public does not know her as anyone besides the jealous, scandalous, and glamorous lady behind the president; she has not succeeded, as Mrs. Obama has, in shaping her own identity.

Despite holding similar titles, Mrs. Obama and Ms. Trierweiler could not be more different. Though their desires for their own identity are shared, the ways they achieve these goals are vastly different. Ms. Trierweiler has stumbled about a bit since the June election, and has only recently stated that she would like to focus on improving education for poor children. If she can develop this into a meaningful program, and if she can avoid criticism from the French press, Ms. Trierweiler has the opportunity to emerge as a successful First Lady. Mrs. Obama, who has already held the position for over four years, has fashioned herself an independent persona. This is a period when women in power have the greatest ability to reshape their public image. Given time, Ms. Trierweiler is capable of becoming as well known for her style as for her humanitarian work. Both ladies have the opportunity to portray themselves as a type of new subordinate: influential, powerful, and with a mind of her own.

Cracks in the Foundations:

What Does Spain's Corruption Scandal Say about its Democracy?

— Meredith Welch

Throughout the euro crisis, outsiders have blamed Spain's woes on exorbitant government spending or irresponsible borrowing by Spaniards themselves. Spaniards, on the other hand, have placed blame on the banking system for irresponsible lending practices and relaxed regulation during times of growth. With the revelation of a graft scandal involving top politicians in one of Spain's ruling parties, the Popular Party, Spaniards now have another institution to blame: their government.

The party of Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, the Popular Party (PP), is now encountering a major scandal on top of the already tough political atmosphere brewing in Spain. According to account books released by Spanish newspaper *El País*, illegal transactions have been flowing from the construction industry to top politicians in PP for almost a decade. The books are purported to have been kept by former PP treasurer Luis Bárcenas, who has also been accused of tax fraud and hiding 22 million euros in a Swiss bank account. The secret ledgers suggest that Rajoy received approximately 25,000 euros (34,000 dollars) of undeclared money every year for almost a decade. Other party officials, including Secretary General María Dolores de Cospedal, have been implicated as well. All of those implicated, including Rajoy, have publicly denied any involvement in such a scheme. Rajoy has since called for reform and suggested he will propose new laws to control the financing of Spain's political parties.

With every euro that passed into the hands of a PP politician, the corporations and individuals that contributed surely got something in return. Many observers wonder what exactly the other end of the exchange looked like, and Spaniards have a right to know how much this contributed to their current suffering. This scandal, after all, reveals a specific relationship between the government and the construction industry, one that likely directly affected the economic crisis Spain has been experiencing for nearly five years.

From 1996 to 2007 Spain experienced unprecedented growth, due in large part to soaring construction. Apartment buildings and homes were erected across the country at a tremendous rate. Homeowners were deterred from renting and encouraged to buy; as a result, they began taking out large mortgages. In 2008 the construction industry, one of the main industries of the Spanish economy, came to a screeching halt: the bubble had burst. As the Spanish economy began its downward spiral,



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/BARCEX

Spaniards protest against evictions in Madrid on 13 February 2013.

banks faced crippling piles of bad loans and individuals grappled with impossible mortgages.

Since 2008, the housing crisis has turned into a homelessness crisis. By 2010, private debt in Spain reached approximately 1 trillion euro. In the second quarter of 2012, an estimated 700,000 unsold homes remained on the market and approximately 19,000 evictions occurred. With unemployment remaining around 26 percent, many Spaniards have struggled to make mortgage payments on homes that are now worth much less than when they were purchased. Current eviction laws hold debtors responsible for the remaining portion of the mortgage even after foreclosure, leaving many without a home but still burdened by enormous debt. Bankruptcy laws exclude mortgage debt and can even make it more difficult to rent. In addition, the country has very little emergency shelter support. As a consequence, many Spaniards have been left homeless with almost no social safety net available to support them.

When hearing stories of individuals affected by this housing market crash, it is hard to ignore the humanitarian element of the crisis. Some families have resorted to squatting, sometimes even in their own homes after they have been seized. A growing number of eviction attempts have resulted in conflict as neighbors and advocates protest against bank officials and police. The most saddening aspect of the homelessness crisis is the number of suicides linked to pending eviction. In late 2012, the government attempted to ease

this growing problem by placing a two-year moratorium on evictions for the worst off of Spanish citizens, but these restrictions cover such a small amount of people that the struggles are likely to continue.

When one examines the various plights and predicaments that several EU countries are facing, it is easy to assume that this scandal does not add up to much. However, upon closer examination of how the housing bubble has impacted so many individuals across Spain, it is hard to ignore the importance of this scandal. The impact that the reported transfers had on the success of the construction industry during the housing boom will remain unknown until someone uncovers the true depth of this relationship.

Spain is not only suffering from an economic crisis, but also a humanitarian one. Spaniards deserve to know how their own government's corruption has played a role in creating the harsh situation that so many of them face today. In the late 1970s, the government concealed many aspects of political history from the public in order to ensure a smooth transition to democracy. The crisis has exposed many of the fundamental flaws in Spain's democratic system generated by such a transition. The government may continue to attempt to bring its economy out of crisis, but until all government officials willingly admit to their wrongdoings, they will continue to face a democratic crisis in which the Spanish people remain distrustful and suspicious of their country's leaders.

East Moves West:

The Rise of Euroscepticism in Light of Increased EU Migration

— *Stuart Richardson*

According to numerous treaties and directives, all EU nationals have the right to freely migrate between EU member states. Although this guarantee of free movement has increased the productivity and overall efficiency of European trade, the recent emigration of Eastern Europeans to the United Kingdom has resulted in a shifting electorate that has become more favorable of Eurosceptic political parties, which oppose European integration. In response to these recent changes to the electorate, some British analysts fear that the migration of Eastern Europeans to the UK may ultimately result in a voting constituency that is largely opposed to further EU incorporation.

According to a recent report, the United Kingdom will likely experience an influx in migrants from Romania and Bulgaria in the coming years. The report, released in early 2013 by the think-tank Migration Watch UK, suggests that the UK may have to accommodate upwards of 70,000 Bulgarians and Romanians annually beginning this year. Due to this increase in Eastern European migration to the UK, some government officials fear that new migrants – who are primarily unskilled laborers – will burden the welfare and education systems, as well as the economy. Because these Eastern European workers pose an economic threat to native Brits, it is imperative that the British government and the EU seek out ways in which to thwart mass migration. If neither can render viable options, the British government risks losing the national electorate to Eurosceptics.

The freedom of movement is essential for European integration. With its foundations in the Schengen Agreement in 1985, the right to move freely between EU member states without any personal identification documentation has expanded in terms of its geographical and logistical considerations over the past decades as more European states have joined the EU. However, this continual expansion has also resulted in heightened criticism, particularly in the early 2000s when the EU began integrating Eastern European countries.

In 2004, the EU incorporated eight nations that were formerly part of the Communist Bloc, including Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia, into its political and economic domain. Originally, analysts predicted that only 15,000 Eastern Europeans would migrate to the UK annually as a result of incorporation; however, nearly 600,000 migrants (mostly from Poland) moved to the UK from the new EU member states within one year after integration. In response to this mass migration, the British government placed limitations on migration to the UK when Bulgaria and Romania joined



WIKICOMMONS

Nigel Farage, the leader of the Eurosceptic United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), has gained favorability amongst British voters, alarming some EU proponents.

the EU in 2007. Although British officials have successfully hindered migration for a number of years, the laws inhibiting migration expired at the end of 2012 and were nonrenewable according to EU policy; thus, EU nationals from Bulgaria and Romania can now move to the UK unrestrained by domestic laws.

Some may argue that hindering migration between EU member states undermines the original principles of the Schengen Agreement. Although legislative action at the national and supranational levels would indeed undermine such principles, there are many non-legislative options that the British government can utilize to quell mass migration. One such option involves a negative ad campaign that portrays the UK as an unfavorable locale for resettlement. Even though this option sounds somewhat counterintuitive, such a strategy has been utilized by businesses in the past to manipulate consumer trends and bolster profits. Some analysts believe that this commercial tactic may also lend its self to immigration control by discouraging migration to the UK.

By remaining bound to statutes addressing free movement as put forth by the Schengen agreement, proponents of European integration risk damaging the EU. The United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), the UK's largest Eurosceptic party and one of the most outspoken opponents of the Schengen Agreement, has recently gained favor among Brits at the expense of the integration-favoring Con-

servative Party. Yet, it is not only UKIP's current popularity that is disconcerting for EU proponents, but also the time it took for UKIP to attain its newfound clout. In 2010, only eight percent of the British electorate favored UKIP candidates as opposed to the 13 percent of Brits who favor UKIP now. Furthermore, a YouGov poll published in March found that nearly a third of British voters would "consider" voting for UKIP candidates. Finally, the Conservative-UKIP "switchers," a new political group accounting for 10 percent of all voters, now prefer the leadership of Nigel Farage, the leader of UKIP, to David Cameron. In only a matter months, UKIP has compounded its political prestige in a nation that has historically been leery of European supranational politics (as evidenced by the UK's refusal to join the Eurozone).

Nigel Farage noted in a recent speech that the continuing waves of mass migration from EU member states will force Britain to leave the EU. Although Farage did not elaborate on his stance, other UKIP members have suggested that Eastern Europeans would raise crime rates and erode civil order in the UK. Therefore, in light of UKIP's growing favorability amongst Brits, Farage's statements concerning the UK's future participation may not be as outrageous as they sound. A European Union without the UK will only spell disaster for the rest of Europe. Regardless of the fact that the Brits do not have a direct stake in the Euro, the UK's secession from the EU will undoubtedly harm European economics. Likewise, if the Brits leave the EU, they will set a precedent for other nations, disenchanted for one reason or another, to do the same, which could ultimately result in the complete demise of the Union altogether. For this reason, it is imperative for the British government to seek out ways in which to deter mass migration to the British Isles, for it is better to hinder the freedom of movement than to destroy the UK's participation in the EU altogether.

Trendy Markets: Trouble Ahead for Fast Fashion

— *Emily Meier*

126.97 billion dollars: That's the amount that Swedish clothing designer and distributor Hennes & Mauritz recorded as revenue in 2011. Hennes & Mauritz, better known as H&M, is a member of a relatively new facet of the clothing industry nicknamed: "Fast Fashion." Fast fashion firms all over the world follow the same basic business strategy- to push out new products that reflect current fashion trends as quickly and as cheaply as possible. They ignore the two-season design schedule of traditional clothing producers and instead opt to continuously change their stock to satisfy their consumers with the newest popular fashion.

Thus far, H&M has been the frontrunner in this fast paced industry; however, as Asian labor costs rise, it now is unlikely that clothing will continue to be produced as cheaply as it is today. H&M's business strategy is based heavily on its ability to offer cheap and easy fashion to the masses. In order to stay a big player in the fast fashion game, they are going to have to follow in step with their competition from the south; Spain based clothing company, Zara.

The fast fashion industry is constantly growing. Cheap and trendy clothing is becoming increasingly popular and traditional clothing companies are now entering the market, bringing in new competition. This means that consumers have more options than ever before. Thus, a whole new weight has been placed on the "fast" part of the industry. Companies that can produce the newest trendiest styles at the fastest rate win out. This fierce competition, combined with the rising wages in manufacturing haven China, will force many of the competitors straight out of the European market, possibly even fast fashion superstar, H&M.

H&M outsources all of its production from factories around the world. However, they do not own a single one of these factories. In contrast, top competitor Zara uses a much more effective strategy. They split their production between company owned factories in Asia and in Europe. The factories in Europe produce their trend based products, whereas those in Asia produce their staple products. This is advantageous because of the speed it allows Zara to put their products on their shelves. The "trendy" pieces of clothing can go from the design board to the retail shelf in a matter of days. Thus, in the contest of speed, Zara triumphs over H&M.

However, there is still the issue of price. Consumers want their fast fashion cheap and even cheaper, regardless of speed. Zara manufacturers most of its products in Spain, thus it has benefited



WIKIPEDIA

less from the low labor cost of Asia. However, they have made up for this disadvantage by cutting costs in other ways. Zara is a vertically integrated clothing company. This means that Zara owns every part of the production process, so a Zara shirt is designed by a Zara design team. It is then produced in factories that Zara owns, where it is sent exclusively to Zara stores to be sold to the public. This allows Zara to not only maintain speedy product development, but also cut out the elusive "middle man" and the costs associated with him.

Secondly, Zara has a much different take on advertising than H&M. Quite simply, they ignore it. H&M, on the other hand, spends around three to four percent of its 126.97 billion dollars in sales revenue on advertising, which is used as a means to lure consumers from their fierce competitors. That being said, Zara and H&M have well-established reputations across Europe. Zara officials know they do not need to advertise to keep up sales. Instead, they focus on gaining recognition by simply expanding. Over the past four years, Zara has opened more than 4000 more shops across Europe. They invest their money in real estate and focus on building aesthetically pleasing stores that are geographically close to their factories. Through this strategy, they establish a reputation for quality that helps counteract fast fashion's reputation for cheap, poorly made pieces. In addition, their geographic proximity allows them to beat out H&M when it comes to releasing trendy new products. Zara produces approximately 11,000 new items

per year. H&M does not even produce half that amount.

Although H&M is considered to be immensely successful today, if they want to stay in the European market, they need to respond to the changing conditions in Asia. H&M outsources most of their manufacturing to Asia, and thus they are dependent on the cost benefits from cheap labor. When these cost benefits disappear with increasing labor costs, H&M will take a hit. In order to mitigate this risk, H&M should copy Zara's smart approach. Their first step should be to buy up some factories that are geographically close to their European stores. This will save money by cutting out the cost of the middle man. In addition, these factories will allow them to be to produce their product more quickly and efficiently, two factors that are vital in the fast fashion industry. Finally, while H&M can effectively use advertising to attract new customers in foreign markets, they need to direct their marketing strategy to presenting a higher quality clothing image. This will help H&M compete with Zara on a quality level. If they take these steps, H&M will be better prepared for unstable labor costs, and thus be a stronger competitor in the fast fashion industry.

The Legacy of Mary Magdalene: The Irish Government Must Accept Responsibility for the Magdalene Laundries

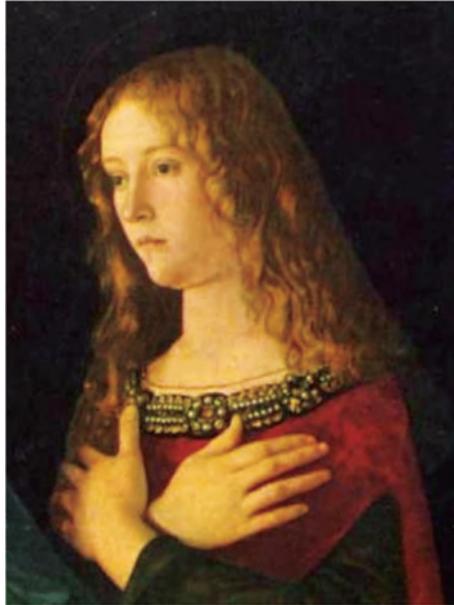
— *Kylee Stair*

They were named after Mary Magdalene, perhaps the most famous disciple in Christian history. They were created in honor of this saint, who was reputed until late into the twentieth century to be a prostitute, a fallen woman. They were meant to be a place of refuge, a place to redeem women of poor moral character. These are the Magdalene laundries, ten workhouses throughout Ireland run by four Roman Catholic orders. Founded in the late eighteenth century, these houses for “fallen women” first became well known in 1993 as the subject of a public scandal, due to alleged abuse.

Between 1922 and 1996, over 10,000 women and girls were detained in these houses. Although residents were allegedly “deviant” women who needed religious rehabilitation, the term was used extremely broadly and came to include unwed mothers, the sexually promiscuous or flirtatious, mentally disabled women, and even those convicted of petty offenses. These women were stripped of their identity upon entrance to the laundries and given new names, under the pretense of protecting privacy. The prescribed rehabilitation plan included hard physical labor – including laundry and needlework – with no pay, as well as long periods of prayer and enforced silence. Although the median stay was seven months, hundreds of women were detained in these institutions for more than ten years. Although the average age was 23 years old, girls as young as 12 years old were imprisoned in these houses. In addition, there were nearly frequent allegations of physical, psychological, sexual, and emotional abuse in this environment which had become increasingly punitive and prison-like.

Of those women and girls subjected to confinement in these Magdalene houses, approximately 1,000 are still alive today. Various support groups, often led by children or relatives of the imprisoned women, surfaced in order to protest this injustice. Although the government closed the last house in 1996 and recognized that the women had been victims of abuse, no compensatory programs emerged. Officials repeatedly denied that the government had any direct relation with the houses, insisting that they were privately run.

Accordingly, in 2011, the advocacy group “Justice for Magdalenes” brought the issue to the attention of the United Nations Committee Against Torture, requesting a full investigation. In response, the Committee urged the Irish government to launch an 18-month inquiry, of which the results were released this February. The com-



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Giovanni Bellini's depiction of Mary Magdalene shows her as a “fallen woman”—the idea which inspired the establishment of Roman Catholic rehabilitation workhouses for women and girls in Ireland.

mission, led by Senator Martin McAleese, reported significant state complicity in the admission of thousands of women into the Magdalene institutions. In fact, the state sent over 25 percent of the women admitted to the houses. Although the state may defend this by defining the houses as an extension of the Irish prison system – as some prison terms may require certain types of labor – the women sent by the state were generally not convicts, but merely judged as moral deviants. The commission findings mean that the Irish government can no longer deny involvement in the Magdalene laundries and, in fact, needs to admit direct responsibility.

With the release of the 1000 page report in February, hope among survivors and advocates was high. There was a general expectation for a formal apology from the state, as well as the creation of a plan of redress for years of unpaid labor and pension payments owed to the victims. However, these expectations were in vain. Although Ireland recognized the harsh conditions endured by these women and the possible suffering of confusion, fear, and abandonment, it admitted neither discovery of evidence of systematic sexual abuse nor offered an official apology. Instead, Prime Minis-

ter Enda Kenny maintained that the female victims “had been sent at a time when Ireland was a harsh, uncompromising and authoritarian place.” This response incited anger and hostility, particularly among survivors who demand a more just and complete admission from the government and religious orders involved.

Historically, Ireland is traditionally known as a deeply conservative Roman Catholic country. Yet, using this history as an excuse for injustices perpetrated in earlier times merely prevents recovery. After the parliamentary debate when politicians have sufficient time to review the investigative commission's report, it would be in the best interest of the government's favorability to admit complicity in the establishment and continuation of these workhouses and to establish a plan for compensating the survivors. This is the only viable option if Ireland wishes to retain its credibility in the eyes of international governments and human rights activists. Having ratified all of the UN human rights treaties and a wide range of other international human rights documents, Ireland has no other choice. Ireland thus faces responsibility on two fronts: on an individual level, the victims are looking to begin the process of recovery; and, on a more universal level, Ireland needs to put an end to this painful era in order for the nation to move on.

A New Pope, a New Path?

— Eric Huebner

When white smoke billowed out of the small chimney in Vatican City in early March, the world's 1.2 billion Catholics began to celebrate. Following the retirement of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI on February 28, the Catholic Church experienced a brief period without a leader. Once the newly selected Pope Francis of Argentina made his first official appearance from the windows of the papal apartments, celebration immediately turned to wonder. As the successor to the deeply conservative Benedict, himself the successor to the reformer John Paul II, many Catholics tried to understand how the new Pope would direct the course of church policy in the years to come. Although Pope Francis has maintained the Church's dogmatic nature, he has made several statements that could signify that a more progressive Church is on the horizon.

In the 21st century, the Catholic Church has often received negative publicity for its staunch adherence to dogma and its complicit role in several scandals. Many critics have accused the Church of blindly following dogmatic policies generated in centuries past with little to no regard for the changing norms and social expectations of the current age. The critics often implore the Church to adopt a more moderate political stance, particularly with regard to inflammatory topics like birth control, gender equality, and homosexuality. The dialogue between critics and supporters of the Church has grown increasingly vitriolic in recent years. As many people have begun to adopt less strict forms of spirituality, they question if the Catholic Church can continue to survive without adapting and they look to the newly elected Pope for guidance.

In many ways, Pope Francis continues the socially conservative line espoused by Pope Benedict. In a series of well-publicized remarks, Pope Francis referred to same-sex marriage as "the devil's work" and denounced adoption by same-sex couples. Disputes regarding same-sex marriage have caused a sizeable political rift to open between Pope Francis and the current President of Argentina, Cristina Kirchner. However, Pope Francis also qualified these statements by stressing the importance of respect toward all individuals, heterosexual or homosexual. This represents something of a departure from past Church policies in which homosexuals were not accepted in any manner. Pope Francis has given similarly qualified statements regarding long-held dogmatic policies like priest celibacy, another long-held tradition of the Catholic Church that has come under fire in recent years.

Pre-papacy, Francis established a name for himself as an advocate for tolerance across disparate communities. His attitudes toward and



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Pope Francis with Argentinean president Cristina Kirchner.

remarks regarding members of the Jewish and Muslim faiths have been praised by various world leaders and representatives of these denominations for their tolerant nature and progressive air. In addition, as the first Jesuit Pope, Francis has led a life of noted humility, eschewing the regal and wealthy trappings that have been a source of criticism for several years. This leads many to believe that Francis will set the Church on a "back to basics" path, featuring a focus on community outreach and spiritual growth.

While this seemingly peaceful attitude toward other ideologies and altered attitude toward ceremony may hint at a more relaxed policy line in the future, many scholars have been quick to caution against extreme optimism. The relationship between the United States and the Holy See has been, in recent years, frosty at best. Ever since the passage of the Affordable Care Act in 2009, relations between the Obama administration and the Vatican have been limited. This was due to the vociferous protests that arose from Catholic communities around the country and world regarding the provision of the ACA that mandates that all hospitals, even Catholic, provide birth control. This directly contradicts the traditional policy of the Catholic Church, which has opposed birth control continuously, despite its mainstream adoption into society. This disagreement presents an interesting conundrum to interstate relations. The Vatican does not reserve the right to argue US domestic policy decisions. However, it does have a vested interest in what it views as the direct meddling of a foreign body in the affairs of its

global institutions. While Pope Francis has indeed presented a more modern view regarding several dogmatic topics, he staunchly supports the right of the Catholic Church to self-determination and has spoken out against what he views as an American curtailment of religious liberties.

Although Pope Francis is unlikely to introduce any radical reform similar to those that originated in 1962's Vatican II Council, it does appear as though progressive Catholics around the world have reason to be cautiously optimistic. While Pope Francis does adhere to Church dogma, his more liberal interpretations of its necessity may signal the prelude to a new era in the history of the Catholic Church. Although the new Pope is still unwilling to compromise on many of the Church's most hotly debated issues, his stance of increased tolerance has given many reason to believe that the Church's relations with the rest of the world may soon thaw.

Regional Powerbrokers:

Expansion of Turkish Influence in the Middle East

— *Nisreen Salka*

Recent revolutions and domestic upheaval in nations once considered the leaders of the Middle East have created a void disrupting the balance of power within the region. A new government in Egypt and the escalating violence of the Syrian uprising coupled with the economic collapse of the European Union reduced such nations' transnational influence and thus their authority as regional leaders. In anticipation of recent shifts in the balance of power, Turkey must adjust its approach to international trade and enact aggressive domestic programs should it wish to establish itself as a regional leader of the Middle East.

Turkey's adjusted perspective of surrounding nations indicates its fall from grace; no longer perceiving Egypt and Syria as rivals, Turkey has agreed to an alliance with Egypt and shows strong support of Syrian rebels. Turkey recently fully opened its borders to 177,000 Syrian refugees in hopes of maintaining Syria's decentralization and take over its influence. Turkey also supports the conflict by providing arms to rebel forces. These actions indicate Turkey's willingness to seize the available opportunity from Egypt and Syria's recent declines in regional power.

This void in the Middle East's regional authority and weak economic incentives for EU investment denotes a necessary shift in Turkish economic relations to Middle Eastern nations. In the past two years alone, reduced EU foreign direct investment into Turkey led to severe declines in real GDP growth from 9.2 percent in 2010 to a mere three percent in 2012. Involvement in neighboring Arab nations that are rich in natural resources should provide more lucrative capital inflow.

The main weakness of the Turkish economic system remains its large trade deficit, culminating in a loss of 71.4 billion dollars in 2012. The main explanation for decreased EU investment is the gap between inflation rates. The Turkish inflation rate is higher than average EU rates, causing fewer EU buyers to purchase Turkish goods. On the other hand, higher Middle Eastern inflation rates compared to the Turkish inflation rate makes Turkish goods appear cheaper to these buyers. Thus, improved terms of trade through exchange with Middle Eastern nations instead of European nations will equalize the trade deficit.

Intensifying foreign influence through political support also often leads to future economic gains through long-term investments and partnerships with other nations. In the case of support for the Syrian rebel regime, Turkey not only encourages continuance of conflict, but also invests in strong relations with the emerging government

“Improved terms of trade through exchange with Middle Eastern nations instead of European nations will equalize the Turkish trade deficit.”

should the rebels overcome their adversaries. Such strong relations could be useful to accumulate wealth from proven reserves of two billion barrels of Syrian oil, untouched since the conflict began in 2011. Turkey's support of Syrian rebels not only opens the opportunity for Turkish to assert regional power, but also ensures future gains due to the increasing value of oil worldwide.

Many cynics of Turkish prospects in the Middle East argue that Turkish dependency on Iranian oil and natural gas, as well as Iran's economic growth, diminishes its ability to achieve regional hegemony. However, many fail to realize that Turkish goods appear cheaper relative to Iranian goods due to the comparatively higher inflation rate in Iran; thus, Turkish goods remain highly competitive abroad. Also, following Turkey's realignment of trade partners through improved relations with non-rivals Iraq and Yemen will reduce dependency on Iran for oil and natural gas.

Expanding relations to oil-rich Iraq poses no threat to Turkish interests of regional leaderships, and is thus a more stable trading partner than Iran. Iraq also remains the fourth highest exporter of oil in the world, more so than Iran.

However, current relations with Iraq remain heavily dependent on a diplomatic dispute involving the settlement of Kurdish rebel forces representing an ethnic Turkish minority in the hills of northern Iraq. Through accelerated attempts to establish peace with the Kurds, Turkey should hope to absorb the minority from northern Iraq, thus improving Turkish-Iraqi trade relations and ensuring escalating importation of oil from Iraq rather than from Iran.

In order to reduce dependency on Iranian natural gas, Turkey should also turn to Yemen, a nation whose resource endowment has been overlooked. Not only does Yemen, a nation much less threatening to Turkish interests than Iran, contain the resources necessary to fulfill Turkey's growing energy needs, its comparatively high inflation rate ensures terms of trade that benefit Turkey. As such, Turkey receives natural gas at a cheaper price

than that originally assumed through Iran.

Careful reassessment of foreign influence through international trade will allow Turkey to expand sustainable regional leadership without dependency on Iran for oil or natural gas. The opportunity presented following the downfall of the EU, Egypt, and Syria coupled with the redistribution of trade with non-threatening Middle Eastern nations also supports Turkish interests. In order to achieve profitable relations with such nations, however, Turkey must first rearrange its foreign and domestic priorities.

Envisioning Opportunity: Reversing the Brain Drain in the Middle East

— *Raya Saksouk*

A serious question facing some Middle East and North Africa (MENA) countries, particularly in the wake of the Arab Spring, concerns how they might hold on to their most skilled and educated nationals. People in search of work, or education in many cases, migrate west to Europe or North America, or farther east to Australia. Many see the Arab Spring as the perfect opportunity to address these issues head-on. The key approaches to reversing the brain drain lie first in reforming higher education and, second, in ensuring that jobs are available after graduation. Creating opportunities at home that de-incentivize moving abroad should be the main goal of reform. Positive, sustainable, and visible change in the MENA region – economic, intellectual, structural change – depends largely on whether or not these reforms actually take place.

Over the past year, many have asserted the reversal of the brain drain is already occurring. Encouraged by the initial optimism of the Arab Spring, many expatriates are moving back home. The entrepreneurial spirit of the region is thriving, with particular growth in the Internet and technology sectors. Jordan, for example, according to Al-Monitor, “attracts more start-ups than anywhere else” in the region. The relatively positive outlook has inspired many to return, and discouraged more from leaving.

Nevertheless, it is hard to imagine these trends growing much stronger while keeping the turmoil of the past two years in mind. High levels of instability, particularly in countries touched by the Arab Spring, have slowed the economy and increased unemployment. The result has been an increase in emigration. To name just one example, one year ago asylum applications from Tunisia to the EU rose by 92.5 percent. In Egypt, too, instability as a result of Hosni Mubarak’s departure in 2011 has provoked many to take their lives elsewhere. A survey conducted by the International Organisation for Migration found that two-thirds of Egyptian respondents intending to migrate were “negatively affected” by the Arab Spring: some had experienced reduced working hours, some had been asked to take unpaid leave, and still more had lost their jobs. One can only assume that opportunities abroad, for those who can afford to move, are growing increasingly appealing.

Indeed, evidence of the brain drain in Egypt, for one, emerged not too long ago. A 2010-2011 report by the Information and Decision Support Centre revealed that in just one year, the country dropped eight places regarding its appeal for scientists. Whether this was the result of the revolu-



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Lecture halls at the Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar’s Education City.

tion or the failure to invest sufficient resources in scientific research is unclear. Both factors are likely an explanation. Regardless, Egypt has unquestionably lost a noticeable amount of scientific talent and knowledge.

One way to address the brain drain, specifically with respect to the loss of students, is increasing access to and funding for higher education. Higher education in the Middle East and North Africa, while in many places both progressive and highly successful, is not without problems. While the number of universities has grown exponentially in the past 30 years, institutions are still few relative to the number of youth who need them. Classes are overcrowded, faculty overworked, and both suffer from a lack of key resources. Moreover, universities have underperformed in terms of equipping their students for life after graduation. In 2011, the World Economic Forum pinned problems in business in the Arab world on an insufficiently educated labor pool. Many struggle to find private sector jobs after graduation simply because they lack the relevant vocational training.

Therefore, reforming higher education would do little to reverse the brain drain if the job market fails to make room for incoming graduates. In Gulf States, unemployment of youth aged 16 to 24 is at 35 percent – twice that of the total labor force. According to the World Economic Forum’s 2011-2012 Arab World Competitiveness Report, unemployment for people with a tertiary education ranges from 11 percent in Algeria, 14 percent in Tunisia, 22 percent in Morocco and the United Arab Emirates, and a whopping 43 percent in Saudi Arabia. The report most readily identifies the two root problems as corruption and cronyism, both of which run rampant and render equal opportunity for youth impossible. Furthermore, even while MENA countries have nearly

closed the gender gap in higher education, only 33 percent of working-age women join the labor force. The result is a significant loss in economic productivity.

Of course, many of these challenges have been met with vigor and innovation by large swaths of people across the region. Several models have emerged that envision what a more sustainable and productive future might look like. The Qatar Foundation, for one, has built eight branches of well-renowned Western universities in Doha, and Dubai has followed suit with its Knowledge Village and International Academic City. Surely the question of whether or not Western standards and methods of education should be adopted at all is another story, but it is a modest attempt to remedy a large problem.

In Lebanon, too, scholars at the American University of Beirut have sought ways to reverse the brain drain of Lebanese-educated doctors and have, to some extent, succeeded. In three years, the university repatriated more than 80 doctors as part of a five-step plan addressing the expansion of infrastructure in medical research, education, and collaboration.

Egypt and Jordan have taken positive steps to level obstacles for the region’s job seekers by lowering the minimum capital requirement for loans, a useful initiative for entrepreneurs struggling to finance their projects. Moreover, NGOs in Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia have been working to finance innovation and nourish the region’s entrepreneurial spirit.

Continuing this path would undoubtedly make for a more self-sustaining MENA region. Reforming higher education and making room in the job market for college graduates would create a solid knowledge-based society more than capable of integrating with the global economy, raising standards of living, and, in some cases, addressing the grievances behind the uprisings of the Arab Spring.

Silent Suffering: The Psychological Toll of the Syrian Uprising

— *Anisha Kingra*

April will mark the two-year anniversary of the beginning of the conflict in Syria. Unfortunately there is little reason to believe the uprising will come to an end anytime soon as violence continues and Syrians still attempt to leave their country in search of safety. Although physical safety is a blessing, many of the refugees and those who remain in the country are suffering from trauma and psychological damage that they do not have the proper resources to treat. Addressing such conflict-related mental health problems in Syrians – especially in children – is a priority that must be higher on the agenda for humanitarian and medical organizations.

Currently, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as Mercy Corps and World Vision provide Syrian refugees with clothing, food and medicine. While these organizations are dedicated to crisis relief in Syria they offer tangible resources, not psychological aid. The International Medical Corps (IMC) is one of the only NGOs with a plan to mitigate mental health issues for Syrian refugees. More organizations need to diversify their aid administration and offer psychological treatment in addition to tangible resources.

The IMC administers aid through health care training and relief programs that focus on physical treatment and mental health treatment for Syrian refugees. From May 20 to June 17, 2011 the organization conducted a qualitative study in Wadi-Khalid, a Lebanese city on the border with Syria. The results reveal prevalent mental health problems faced by Syrian participants due to the revolution. Nearly 53 percent of participants admit to feelings of lethargy, 54 percent have experienced depression, and 70 percent cite anxiety. The IMC's study reveals how quickly the revolution affected Syrians' mental health, and highlights the possibility of further deterioration as the conflict continues.

Furthermore, Syrians in Jordan's Za'atari camp reported that the living conditions in the camp made it difficult to try to normalize their lives and cope with ruminating thoughts and anxiety. One way to treat mental health issues is by encouraging people to stay active and busy; unfortunately, there is little opportunity in the Za'atari camp to actively work or for children to play. In the IMC's study on the Za'atari refugee camp, 28 percent of participants suggested improving activities for children such as television access or organizing educational initiatives. Not only is there a lack of such activities, but there is also a lack of security and sanitation. Shared shower space and the use of tents as shelter make Za'atari a difficult and un-

“ **More organizations need to diversify their aid administration and offer psychological treatment in addition to tangible resources.”**

comfortable place for refugees – especially women and children – to reside. The IMC's study reveals 61 percent of those surveyed suggested improvements in electricity for safety at night as well as more food and clothing provisions in the camp. Tension within the camps combined with the distress from leaving home can take its toll on refugees and their overall quality of life that inevitably affects their mental well-being.

As in many countries and cultures, mental health is a stigmatized issue for Syrians. The burden of such problems is already heavy in Syria due to stigmatization, and a lack of resources to treat these problems only increases the burden. Many psychiatrists or psychiatric nurses who are trained in Syria ultimately leave to work in petrodollar countries. Furthermore, the Syrian health care system focuses on providing medical treatment rather than social support or therapy, and mental health patients typically prosper from both medicinal and therapeutic treatments such as psychotherapy. Establishing a system of social support for mental and emotional distress can immediately help people cope with their problems, and could prevent them from becoming overwhelmed with fear, anxiety and sadness. However, in the long run, the Syrian regime and humanitarian organizations need to find a way to improve the system of mental health care so citizens have proper access to the medication and therapy they need.

Although mental health problems exist in a wide age range, Syria's youth population should be given priority on the mental health agenda because they comprise a large proportion of the population. According to a report from the IMC, more than 55 percent of Syrian Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are under the age of eighteen. Many families are trying to escape the turmoil for their children's safety, and even though children tend to be resilient they are still incredibly susceptible to psychological damage. Providing children with the necessary medical or therapeutic treatment can decrease the future burden of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, or anxiety, and help children re-integrate into society when the havoc subsides.

Syrian civilians, IDPs, and refugees are in dire need of not only political stability but also access to medication and therapy. Furthermore, the refugee camps need to be structured so residents (especially women and children) feel a sense of safety and security. By encouraging camp residents to establish normal routines, discuss their feelings, and develop proper coping and stress-relieving mechanisms, refugees' mental health can be mitigated from the impacts of the revolution. By shifting the attention of mental health treatment to children there is greater potential for these children to live stable lives in the future. Treating the issue of mental health now rather than later will help civilians cope with the trauma they have endured in a healthier way, and children will have better opportunities to pursue an education or a career without the barrier of mental health issues.

Rewriting History: Representing the “Other” in Israeli and Palestinian Schools

— *Raya Saksouk*

For years, accusations have been thrown back and forth between Israelis and Palestinians regarding the content of textbooks in each other's schools. More often than not, these accusations come from Israel, where the chief concern is that Palestinian books perpetuate a cycle of violence by sowing hatred in the classroom. Yet, as the results of a recent study show, this is not the case. Demonization of the “Other” is rare in textbooks on both sides of the Green Line, with the real danger lying in the lack of recognition each side is willing to afford the other. The study, “Victims of Our Own Narratives? Portrayal of the ‘Other’ in Israeli and Palestinian Schoolbooks,” raises some interesting questions regarding how schools in Israel and Palestine should teach a history so incredibly complicated by subjective interpretation. When the “facts” themselves are so often disputed, whether it is possible to teach them fairly is difficult to gauge. The only answer lies in presenting a multiplicity of truths—acknowledging as many perspectives as possible and hoping to achieve at least some semblance of a mutual understanding.

Launched in 2009 by the Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land (a group comprised of religious leaders from three monotheistic faiths), the study in question set out to explore allegations that schools in Israel and Palestine expose children to biased educational practices. Backed by a 500,000 dollar grant from the US Department of State, a research team under the supervision of Professors Daniel Bar-Tal and Sami Adwan spent three years reviewing over three thousand texts, illustrations, and maps from a collection of 472 textbooks. A little less than a quarter of these books came from Palestine, where, beginning in the year 2000, the Palestinian Authority replaced Jordan and Israel as the primary producer of textbooks for 90 percent of Palestinian children. The rest came from Israeli state and Ultra-Orthodox schools. While the majority of students in Israel are enrolled in state secular or state religious schools, a sizeable minority attend Ultra-Orthodox schools, where curricula and learning materials are independent from those of state-run institutions.

What the researchers found demonstrates how desperately each side rejects the existence of the Other. Indeed, a majority of the textbooks studied appear to rewrite history through the careful redrawing of maps. Only four percent of maps in Palestinian textbooks, for example, depict the Green Line or label “Israel” to the West of its demarcation. One third include the Green Line but make no mention of Israel, and 60 percent neglect



WIKIMEDIA

Graffiti near the separation wall between Israel and the West Bank.

drawing boundaries all together. In Israeli books, meanwhile, 76 percent of maps have no borders and, for their part, fail to designate Palestinian areas. These are hardly insignificant details. Drawing a map – assigning boundaries and the names within them – is tantamount to laying down a public claim. It constitutes the erasure of one reality for the sake of another. In the case of Israel and Palestine, it is the symbolic refusal to legitimize what exists on the opposite side of the border. Unsurprisingly, then, the researchers also found that lessons concerning the Other's daily life (religion, culture, economy, etc.) were incomplete or else conspicuously absent from schoolbooks on both sides – an absence particularly problematic in light of the fact that Israeli and Palestinian children rarely encounter one another in real life as it is, and thus already know relatively little.

When all is said and done, the researchers conclude that textbooks in Israel and Palestine rely on selective interpretations of reality to reinforce what they call “unilateral national narratives” – that is, negating the experience of the other side in an effort to bolster self-defined nationalistic histories. This allows both to succeed in cultivating their respective notions of truth. They adopt whichever reality suits them and push forward their political agendas. More than that, they avoid the risk of exposing their own legitimacy to doubt. The problem, however, is that peace between the nations cannot occur without that most essential tool: understanding. Each side has an incentive to practice reductive and exclusionary education, strengthening the extreme at the expense of the moderate, but in the long run it benefits both to

offer the possibility of more than one reality and, as much as possible, sympathize with the distant “Other.”

The real question, then, concerns what incentives, if any, exist in acknowledging the reality of those outside the “circle of we.” To quote the late Edward Said: “There can be no possible reconciliation, no possible solution unless these two communities confront each other's experience in the light of the other.” To remain entrenched in prevailing attitudes would be to continue pulling in opposite directions until the line between these two communities, threadbare, threatens to snap completely. Propagating unilateral national narratives stokes the flames of nationalist sentiment, unifying the nation against a common enemy, but it also hardens each side against the other. More than that, denial perpetuates what undoubtedly has become, in different forms on each side, an impossible dream that time will somehow restore the past and everything will “go back to normal” in a situation where no one has to make concessions. The truth, however, remains that two histories so tightly interwoven cannot very easily be undone.

Of course, the conflict is undoubtedly more than just an issue of offering sympathy or condolences. Often, though, it whittles down to one of recognition – not only of existence, but also of differences in perception, reality, and equality. The best solution for biased educational practices is to aspire to the highest possible level of transparency, each acknowledging more than its own perspective. Any alternative might very well usher in another hundred years of conflict.

Not So Hard Right: Why Israeli Politics Can and Should Return to the Center

— David Riley

On January 22, nearly four million Israelis cast their vote for a new Knesset, Israel's parliament. With the highest turnout of eligible voters since 1999, at almost 67 percent, the election's results depict continuing overall support for rightwing parties in Israel, like current Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud ("Unity") Party. A closer look at the election results, however, reveals the subtle losses of numerous rightwing parties, and surprising success from more centrist parties. The explanation for their unexpected success paired with the right's underperformance boils down to strained international relations and dissatisfaction with inflexible and hawkish politics, especially regarding peacemaking with Palestine.

Likud ran on a single ticket with Yisrael Beiteinu ("Israel Our Home"), the ultra-nationalist party of Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman. Likud-Yisrael Beiteinu won 31 of the Knesset's 120 seats, more than any other party ticket. In reality, though, Likud won only 20 of the joint ticket's 31 seats – seven fewer than it won in 2009. Yisrael Beiteinu won 11 seats, a four-seat drop from 2009. Multiple polls predicted Likud-Yisrael Beiteinu to win around 47 seats, but the two parties fell short. Bayit Yehudi ("The Jewish Home"), a relatively new nationalist rightwing party, also gained popularity in the months leading up to the elections. Similarly to Likud-Yisrael Beiteinu, however, Bayit Yehudi performed worse than expected. The newly-formed centrist Yesh Atid ("There Is a Future") Party, meanwhile, won an unexpected 19 seats in its first election, while the center-left Labor Party won 15 seats, a seven-seat gain.

In all, these results depict a weaker rightward shift than predicted. Throughout 2012, other rightwing parties also performed consistently well in opinion polls, only to win a disappointing number of seats in the Knesset. The January elections therefore signal a break in the Israeli electorate's support for the hardline tactics of rightwing parties. Given the success of center-left parties like Yesh Atid and Labor, Israel's new government ought to promote more centrist policies. This will be particularly fruitful with regard to Israel's ongoing peace negotiations with Palestine. A more balanced and accommodating Israeli government will mollify not only the apparent concerns within the Israeli electorate, but will alleviate concerns from the international community as well. Last fall, European countries and the US strongly condemned Netanyahu's announcement to vigorously increase the construction of settlements in particularly contentious areas of the West Bank.



WIKIMEDIA

The Knesset building, home of Israel's parliament.

The aggressive construction initiative detracts from progress in the peace process; a more moderate government would temper Israel's policy toward Palestine, and would alleviate international pressures on Israel. Those on the right must realize that this cooperation is in their own interest. If rightwing parties successfully work together with their center-left counterparts—especially if Israel's government is able to make some discernible headway with Palestine—Likud-Yisrael Beiteinu and others will likely improve their prospects for later elections, thus ensuring that they remain an important part of Israel's government.

In the past, centrist parties have worked toward peace with Palestine, more so than right-leaning parties. Likud and other rightwing parties enjoyed increased electoral success for almost 20 years, even as prospects for peace with Palestine continued to deteriorate, until Yitzhak Rabin of the Labor Party was elected prime minister in 1992. Rabin disrupted rightwing parties' political dominance, and made marked progress in the Palestinian peace process. Notably, he negotiated the 1993 Oslo Accords with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, which created the Palestinian National Authority, led to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza and the West Bank, and opened the door for a possible "two-state solution" between Israel and Palestine.

When a rightwing activist assassinated Rabin in 1995, however, prospects for peace diminished substantially. The Oslo Accords lost much of their legitimacy with Rabin's death, and Israelis' sense of insecurity grew. This sentiment peaked during and after the second Palestinian intifada, or uprising, from 2000 to 2005, in which thousands from both Palestine and Israel were killed, so that Israelis felt even more vulnerable. Israel's electorate therefore steadily returned its support to rightwing parties, who pledged to make Israel's security their top priority. This protracted rightward shift

has led to aggressive territorial policies from Israel's various governments, especially those of Netanyahu. These policies may temporarily appease a concerned electorate, but they have ultimately prevented any meaningful development in finding resolution with Palestine, and have drawn much international criticism.

Importantly, the Israeli electorate seems firmly in favor of peace with Palestine, but pessimistic toward the prospects of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The Israel Democracy Institute's 2012 Peace Index shows that 60 percent of Israelis support a two-state solution, as do a majority the leading parties' supporters: 52 percent of Likud supporters, 80 percent of Labor Party supporters, and 83 percent of Yesh Atid supporters. However, 64 percent of Israelis rate the likelihood of successful peace negotiations as moderately low or very low under a government led by Netanyahu. Both Israelis' increased support for center-left parties, who pledge to prioritize the peace process, and the losses of rightwing parties reflect a discouraged national outlook. As the US and Europe argue that Netanyahu's settlement policies will essentially cripple any hope for the two-state solution and will significantly undermine negotiations between Palestine and Israel, the Israeli electorate responded with hope for peace in the January elections.

Parties like Yesh Atid and the Labor Party can and should moderate the hardline approach of Likud-Yisrael Beiteinu and other rightwing parties toward Palestine. In a cooperative government coalition, these two camps, the right and the center-left, can offer Israelis a sense of security while also displaying to Palestine and the world willingness to compromise. Given Israel's apparent dissatisfaction with the status quo of Netanyahu's government, the self-interest of rightwing parties and a common desire for resolution should intersect to result in some progress toward peace, or the next elections in Israel will certainly reflect even more frustration by the people of Israel.

Mob Sex Culture in Post-Revolutionary Egypt: Cases of Carnal Corruption

— Adam Miller

As the events of the Arab Spring unfolded, the world watched in horror as women were brutally sexually assaulted in Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt. In reality, Egypt's streets have long been a dangerous place for women – a place where they have been threatened, groped, and violated while police look the other way. This is not then the recent phenomenon western media sources have framed it to be, and with the taboo nature of sex in Egypt, assault survivors are not receiving the help they both require and deserve.

Two years have now passed since Egyptians began flooding the streets to protest decades of corruption. With Mohammed Morsi in office since June 2012, the Muslim Brotherhood aligned President has done little to prevent violent assaults on women.

Americans became most familiar with the situation when a mob attacked Lara Logan, CBS Chief Foreign Affairs Correspondent, near Tahrir Square on February 11, 2011—the very day Hosni Mubarak was driven from power. On May 1, 2011, Logan spoke out about the incident on *60 Minutes* due to the 'prevalence' of sexual assault in Egypt. This incident is only one high-profile example of mob attacks on women by violent protesters, almost entirely young men.

A rumor exists that young men have a financial incentive to carry out these horrendous mob attacks on women, though the source of the money is unclear—some tie it to Mubarak sympathizers while others claim it is the work of the Muslim Brotherhood. Though women have been at the forefront of the Egyptian revolution, many of them are now fearful to take part in the regular public demonstrations. Sexual harassment is not a new problem in Egypt. According to a 2010 United Nations survey, more than 80 percent of women surveyed said they were sexually harassed. Wael Abbas, one of Egypt's most influential bloggers, claims Mubarak used sexual harassment as a weapon against female protestors and that current authorities are continuing this policy. And despite a democratically elected formal government, public order appears to have broken down since the revolution as reports of mob sex attacks are increasing at an alarming rate.

According to NBC News, in the post-Mubarak era activists and protesters have reported many particularly violent assaults on women. Some believe government and security officials are simply not taking the problem seriously. In late October,

“

Egypt's streets have long been a dangerous place for women—a place where women have been threatened, groped, and violated while their police look the other way.”

more than 700 claims of harassment were filed across Egypt over the four-day Eid al-Adha, the sacred Muslim holiday celebrating the prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son Isma'il as an act of submission to God.

Heba Morayef, Director of Human Rights Watch for the Middle East and North Africa recently noted, “Government inaction has allowed the problem to spiral out of control. The state is failing to respond, and men don't have to worry about being caught.” Not only that, these women live in a society where filing charges against an attacker is a daunting process—one where sex is taboo and police do not appear to take allegations seriously often enough. Speaking more generally Morayef added, “Failure to prosecute is a major factor in the escalation of violence against women in public places.”

Al-Tamami believes the outbreak of violence is organized and planned, and not random as western media has suggested. Specifically she says, “I don't want to speculate, but there are definitely people who have an interest in positioning the square [Tahrir] as dangerous and make protesters look like harassers or thugs.” HarassMap says during the most recent Eid al-Adha celebrations, they confronted more than 50 harassers and helped five women press charges. Despite the frequency of the mob assaults, no one knows who is orchestrating the violence or why. Al-Tamami and others partially blame the social acceptability of sexual harassment in Egypt, which she believes explains why the courts have punished so few men thus far. Ultimately, the reasons behind sexual harassment in Egypt are complex but societal attitudes likely lie at the heart of it, allowing for political groups to use it as a means of intimidation.

The New York Times, however, reported an increase in citizen vigilante groups on high alert for women in need of bodily rescue during the aforementioned Eid al-Adha. Also on the rise

are organizations like HarassMap, an Egyptian organization that collects reports on harassment, conducts community awareness and outreach programs, and is part of a campaign called Operation Anti-Sexual Harassment Assault. Eba'a al-Tamami, marketing and communications unit head for HarassMap says, “The main objective is to get the girl out. It is crisis management.” In the last two years, they have received more than 900 reports from women across the country.

Today men can be seen wearing fluorescent vests standing on rickety wooden towers with binoculars, scanning the crowd for signs of sexual mobbing. The local group Fouada Watch has set up a hotline for women, anti-harassment patrols seek to protect women in hot spots and bring alleged offenders to police, in addition to tools like HarassMap. Prime Minister Hisham Qandil also announced the drafting of a law to combat sexual harassment through harsher penalties, calling the situation a “disastrous phenomenon. Three months ago President Morsi said, “Egypt's revolution cannot tolerate these abuses.”

Still, Mohammed Morsi has presided over two holidays and many believe there are few signs to show the government is paying closer attention to the problem. Many share the conviction the authorities will not truly act on harassment until the problem is forced into the public debate. Egypt is still suffering from side effects of the rule of Mubarak – official apathy, and generally empty responses to attacks. Thankfully as the country's tumultuous transition from authoritarian rule to democracy takes hold, more and more groups are emerging to protect women and shame the ‘do-nothing’ police and government.

MJIA STAFF

EDITORIAL BOARD

Andrea Shafer
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Michael Clauw and Julia Jacovides
MANAGING EDITORS

Emily Meier
DIRECTOR OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Nisreen Salka
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Andrew Grazioli
SECRETARY

STAFF WRITERS

AFRICA

Maya Ragsdale, *EDITOR*
Gabrielle Cheng
Michael Clauw
Veronica Dulin
Rachael Hancock
Austen Hufford
Alex Leader
Nicholas Moenck
Michelle West

AMERICAS

Lissa Kryska, *EDITOR*
Caroline Bissonnette
Amanda Bourlier
Jackson Montalbano
Tanika Raychaudhuri

ASIA

Naveen Kakaraparthi, *EDITOR*
Sharik Bashir
Carren Cheng
Andrew Grazioli
Trevor Grayeb
Joseph Lindblad
Ryan Lorch
Rahul Ramachandran
William Scheffer
Leslie Teng
Rebecca Volpano

EUROPE

Eric Huebner, *EDITOR*
Julia Jacovides
William Lamping
Emily Meier
Stuart Richardson
Olivia Singer
Kylee Stair
Leah Stavenhagen
Meredith Welch

MIDDLE EAST

Anisha Kingra, *EDITOR*
Sahar Adora
Kennan Budnik
Gabriel Kahn
Adam Miller
David Riley
Nisreen Salka
Raya Saksouk
Paul Sherman

