The Journal of
Politics
and
International
Affairs

The Journal of Politics *and* International Affairs

Fall 2012 • Volume XI

Statement of Purpose

The *Journal of Politics and International Affairs* at New York University is a student-run publication comprised of original student research on relevant, thought-provoking topics in the global landscape. Student submissions are evaluated on their critical analysis as well as their ability to stimulate scholarly discourse. Editors select respected academics, prominent public figures, and thought leaders to headline each issue with an article of their choosing. The rest of the articles are written and edited exclusively by NYU students. The *Journal* provides a forum for students, believing their contributions to be not only legitimate, but also crucial to the intellectual growth of students at New York University and of students nationwide.

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Contributors

Reza Aslan

Zoe Berman
Valerie Bogard
Alexander Bruski
Elizabeth Dana
Brooke Fisher
Tess Manning
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An Interview with Reza Aslan

Dr. Reza Aslan, an internationally acclaimed writer and scholar of religions, is the founder of AslanMedia.com, an online journal for news and entertainment about the Middle East and the world. Reza Aslan has degrees in Religions from Santa Clara University, Harvard University, and the University of California, Santa Barbara, as well as a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Iowa, where he was named the Truman Capote Fellow in Fiction. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Los Angeles Institute for the Humanities, and the Pacific Council on International Policy. He serves on the board of directors of the Ploughshares Fund, which gives grants for peace and security issues; Abraham's Vision, an educational, conflict transformation organization for Israeli and Palestinian youths; PEN USA, which champions the rights of writers under siege around the world; and the Levantine Cultural Center, which builds bridges between Americans and the Arab/Muslim world through the arts.

Aslan's first book is the International Bestseller, No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam, which has been translated into thirteen languages, and named one of the 100 most important books of the last decade. He is also the author of How to Win a Cosmic War (published in paperback as Beyond Fundamentalism: Confronting Religious Extremism in a Globalized Age), as well as editor of two volumes: Tablet and Pen: Literary Landscapes from the Modern Middle East, and Muslims and Jews in America: Commonalties, Contentions, and Complexities.

Reza Aslan is Co-founder and Chief Creative Officer of BoomGen Studios, the premier entertainment brand for creative content from and about the Greater Middle East and President of AppOvation Labs, a mobile applications company. Born in Iran, he lives in Los Angeles with his wife (author and entrepreneur Jessica Jackley) where he is Associate Professor of Creative Writing at the University of California, Riverside..

Akber Malik: 2013 is just around the corner, and we're almost 2 years removed from the 2011 uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa, or the Arab Spring. How can we today make sense of the events two years ago?

Reza Aslan: Well I know that the prevailing media sentiment right now is that the entire Arab Spring was a complete failure,and that the region is descending into even greater political and economic turmoil; and in those countries that are transitioning toward democracy, they're slowly becoming religious dictatorships. And I understand that there is a surprise among the American public that after sixty years of liberal dictatorships, a country like Egypt hasn't been able to transition into a liberal, secular, Jeffersonian democracy

in eighteen months. I mean, come on. What's taking so long?

The truth of the matter is that two years after this entire process began, we are exactly where we could hope we could be. We are exactly where one would expect we'd be. In fact, if you look at what's happening in Egypt, there's a conflict between the democratically-elected president with roots in the Muslim Brotherhood and the new, emerging coalition of secularists, liberals, and Islamists who believe that Mohammed Morsi is not doing his job as president. The back and forth taking place in Egypt between the President and the people, between the people and the military, between the elected government and the judiciary, is a public conversation about the most fundamental issues: the role of religion in society, the role of the state in the lives of the people. These are conversations that have never been held in modern Egypt, and were they to be held two years ago under the Mubarak dictatorship, the people holding them would probably never be heard from again.

What's happening in the region, the messiness of post-revolutionary politic, and the collision of competing interests in the political and public sphere, this is what I prayed would happen in Egypt. And anyone who thought that we were going to experience some clean, easy transition into a thriving, stable democracy after decades of dictatorial rule, is living in a fantasy world.

AM: You hear about the youth role in the Arab Spring and you hear about these movements crossing all kinds of social barriers – how do we make sense of this in the context of 9/11? I know you've talked about the Arab Spring in that context before.

RA: One can argue that the youth bulge that gave birth to the Arab Spring, that came out onto the streets in Tunis, in Cairo, in Yemen, throughout the region, they are the Arab world's Generation 9/11. We talk about America's Generation 9/11 as a generation that was supposed to be utterly transformed by that tragic, transformational day. This generation was going to be more cosmopolitan but less concerned with material issues and more concerned with creating a role for the United States in an increasingly globalized world; that generation is playing Call of Duty.

In the Middle East, Generation 9/11 was the generation that was on the other side of the aisle in this grand, and I would say imaginary "clash of civilizations" that arose as the result of the attacks on 9/11. That generation was utterly transformed by those events. They were given the opportunity to also see themselves in a global context. They were inundated with competing ideologies, from the jihadist message of Al-Qaeda to the "democracy-promotion" of the Bush Administration. They were capable of taking these ideas and making sure that their own ambitions for economic equity, for political freedoms, for dignity, for the most basic aspects of human rights that we in the West take for granted—that these ambitions would not be denied to them.

I think that you could draw a straight line from the experience of the Arab youth from 9/11and the increasing oppressiveness of these Western-backed dictatorial regimes who sided with the U.S. in the War on Terror, to the Arab Spring. It was the 9/11-Generation that gave us the revolutions in the Middle East.

AM: We've seen regime-change in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya, to name a few. How can we account for the lack of regime-change, or lack of any major protests or changes achieved in the Middle East and North Africa's monarchies. What are the domestic and international factors that play into why a lot of these--like you said--"Western-backed regimes" that happen to be monarchies haven't had regime change?

RE: We can categorize the responses of the regimes in the Middle East into four categories.

The first, of course, was the category that led to demise. Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Tunisia, these are countries that were, frankly, completely taken by surprise by the potency of people power and mass mobilization. They were not able to respond in any kind of organized fashion, and as a result were swept aside by these protests.

You saw regimes that saw what was happening and immediately moved to compromise to address the grievances, both economic and political These include Morocco, Oman, and, in some sense, Jordan. Jordan had a little bit more of a problem with it, but nevertheless these are three cases where, through a combination of economic and political reforms, the regimes were able to somewhat ameliorate the grievances of the protesters and create at least enough space for political dialogue, and therefore managed to stay in power.

AM: Is that because civil society was already functioning and healthy in Jordan and Morocco to some extent before 2011, compared to military regimes in Egypt or Tunisia?

RA: Well that's actually a very good point. So what you're saying is that King Mohammed and King Abdullah had already, through certain attempts at reforming the political system, laid the groundwork for post-revolutionary compromise to be more believable. In other words, there's a difference between King Mohammed in Morocco promising political reform and President Assad promising the same; one is more believable than the other, you're right.

I think truly what sets these regimes apart is a recognition that they could either be swallowed up by the tide of mass protest coming their way, or they could get out in front of it and immediately try to make substantive changes. To make the kind of changes necessary to address the fundamental grievances at the heart of these protest movements was the second response. And there's an argument to be made about whether those changes were truly substantive or not.

The third response was to just out and out bribe the population, and that's what Saudi Arabia did. That's what many of the GCC did. They have the money to just open up their pocketbooks and to quite literally hand out cash. Saudi Arabia quite literally handed out cash to their citizens as a means of subjugating them, as a means of ameliorating their discontent. But of course, that's a temporary solution. There's only so long that you can be bought before you recognize that there's more to living a life of dignity than just economic advancement.

Then there's the fourth response, which was just to simply brutalize. The response of the Bahrain govern-

ment, the response of Syria is to just murder your way out of the problem. The difference between Syria and Bahrain is that Syria has received the condemnation of the entire world. Bahrain, in the meantime, has been incorrectly, despicably, translated into the West as some sort of proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran. That and our national security interests (after all, we have the fifth fleet stationed in Bahrain) has created a situation where you have one of the most appalling human rights violations taking place in the world today. Doctors and nurses, in violation of every known rule of international law, are being arrested, tortured, and killed, simply for doing their jobs. There hasn't been a peep from the international community, and certainly nothing from the Obama Administration, or frankly anyone in the U.S. government, in condemning the situation in Bahrain.

AM: How do these royal families spread out power in Bahrain or Saudi Arabia, for instance? Can they dilute discontent, and does that contribute to their regimes' durability?

RA: At the risk of sounding offensive, Saudi Arabia is less a country than it is a multinational corporation that is the wholly owned subsidiary of the clan called the Al Saud.

If you live in a country in which your citizens don't pay you taxes, your citizens don't matter. The citizens of Saudi Arabia are shareholders, okay? Not citizens. So, the political and economic situation in Saudi is so utterly unique that it's hard to talk about it in the sort of guise of these larger movements taking place across the region.

AM: No really major protests in Iran sprung out of the 2011 uprisings. The last major protest movement was in 2009. How do we account for this?

RA: You have to understand that the socioeconomic situation in Iran is different than it is in many Arab states. Certainly, it's true that Iran is dealing with the same high levels of unemployment coupled with an incredibly youthful population which has incredibly high levels of education and literacy. This is the same kind of powder keg that we saw in Egypt, Tunisia, etc.—across the region. Because Iran has been economically isolated from the rest of the world for the last three decades, it's created a situation where a good forty percent of the Iranian population that lives under the poverty line is utterly dependent on the government for its most basic subsistence. Wheat, bread, milk—these things are a gift from the government to this population. They obviously have no access to the free market. They don't have access to international trade. The result of America's policy to isolate and sanction has resulted in the Iranian people being more reliant on the government than they otherwise would be, and in the government being more entrenched than it otherwise would be.

AM: So the American orientation toward the Islamic Republic has empowered the regime?

RA: Of course. A tyrant stays in power by isolating his population. We have done the tyrant's job for him in Iran. What happened in Egypt is that although the revolution there began as a middle-class revolution—it was the middle-class that launched the revolt against Mubarak—it wasn't successful until they were able to expand their reach to those lower classes. That's when 500,000 people became 5,000,000 people.

Although the Green Movement in 2009 in Iran began in the same way—as a middle-class revolution with middle-class kids on the street—they were never able to expand their message to the lower class. Not because the lower class disagreed with their politics, not because the lower class doesn't have the same grievances that the middle-class does against the regime in power, but because the lower class was so afraid about the notion of a potentially prolonged disruption in the flow of goods and services from the government to them that they were unwilling to risk by joining in this revolution. And so, it never expanded beyond the middle-class. That is the death of mass mobilization. That's the death of popular revolution. If you can't get the lower class involved, it's not going to succeed. Ultimately, that's what happened in Iran.

Why did this slingshot that began in Iran in 2009 not return to Iran in 2011 or 2012 because of the success that it had in the Arab Spring? I think that partly has to do with two things.

There's a deep nationalistic fervor in Iran that is particularly heightened in times of external threat. The overt threat of military engagement by Israel and the United States has had the adverse effect of actually rallying the people to the government, and creating a situation where any kind of fomenting of political rights is tagged as anti-regime and, therefore, treasonous.

The other reason why I think it didn't slingshot is that the Iranian government is already more fractured today than it has ever been, and you can thank the Green Movement for this. This is a government that's economically on the verge of total collapse. It's a government that is devouring itself politically. The President is locked in a battle with parliament, and the parliament has tried to impeach the President multiple times. There's a vast distance growing between the unelected bureaucracy and the elected government. Meanwhile the people themselves have essentially given up on believing in the two pillars upon which the Iranian government bases its very legitimacy: that is, as the bearer of Islamic moral values, which after 2009 no one takes seriously anymore; and that it is founded upon the popular sovereignty of Iranians, which, again, after 2009 no one takes seriously anymore. The only thing basically keeping Iran together right now is the threat of an Israeli or American attack.

AM: Can you talk a little bit more about the Green Movement? Is it still a cohesive movement? Does it want reform or regime change; in other words, is it revolutionary or evolutionary?

RA: The truth is that the Green Movement was never a cohesive movement. It was an umbrella that housed both secularists and religious groups. It housed both anti-regime members who wanted to overthrow the entire system and regime-supporters who wanted to reform it. This wildly eclectic and diverse coalition of organizations and individuals all agreed upon one basic truth: that the Islamic Republic, as it exists today, is neither Islamic, nor a republic. That was an animating principle I think the vast majority of Iranians would agree with. Even regime-supporters would agree with it.

What to do about it is ultimately what separates these groups in Iran. There is an overwhelming sentiment that what's needed is reform, not regime change. Even those who advocate for reform ultimately do admit that the kinds of reforms they are advocating for would necessarily lead to regime change.

AM: Because they [the reforms] change the character of the "republic".

RA: Precisely. I think that's where the dividing line is amongst those so-called reformists.

AM: Can you talk a little bit about the Iranian people's perspective on potentially becoming a nuclear power?

RA: There have been a number of surveys, and Iranians are not shy about their opinions in this regard. There's almost complete unanimity about Iran's right to enrich uranium to its heart's content, as a signatory of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. There is no argument about that in Iran, though interestingly as a result of increased sanctions, support for the enrichment program has fallen -- but to the eighties as opposed to the nineties.

However, there is very little support in Iran for the pursuit of nuclear weapons. To be honest, there is very little support amongst Iranian officials for the pursuit of nuclear weapons. There is support for it, primarily amongst the IRGC and the senior military leaders, but that's how military guys think.

AM: Hamas is in power in the Gaza Strip, Fatah in the West Bank. How did the violence last week and the subsequent cease-fire affect the legitimacy of either group as the representative of the Palestinian people?

RA: I don't know if any reasonable person can doubt that Hamas came out of this conflict stronger than it was before, just as it came out of the 2008 Operation Cast Lead stronger than it had before. The fact of the matter is, primarily as a result of Israeli and American policy in the region, Hamas has become increasingly the legitimate voice not only of Gaza, but the Palestinian people. This is a direct result of foolish policies by the United States, Europe, and Israel to isolate and punish the people of Gaza on behalf of Hamas, and to "reward" the people in the West Bank for Fatah's willingness to negotiate with Israel, and its willingness to accommodate Israel's demands and interests. The Israeli government would gladly admit that the Palestinian Authority has been the most moderate and most accommodating Palestinian partner that it has ever had.

And what has the Palestinian Authority gotten in return? Nothing. It's gotten thousands and thousands more settlements, and the possibility of real sovereignty is lessening more and more. In other words, the entire experiment has proved to be an utter failure because the parameters around which the experiment was built—punish one for its radicalization, and reward one for its moderation—had not actually been carried out. The people of the West Bank may live in a better economic climate, but their dignity, their ambition for independence and sovereignty, for control over their own lives, have not been addressed in the slightest.

On the contrary. They are, as I say, further removed today from the possibility of realizing those ambitions than they have ever been before. Meanwhile, as the moderate, accommodating voice of the Palestinians in the West Bank becomes increasingly irrelevant, the radical voice in Gaza has repeatedly stood up to

Israel, and has come out of numerous military engagements stronger than before. At the very least it has provided an alternative vision of leadership for the Palestinians that, in contrast to the irrelevance and, frankly, corruption and ineptitude of the Palestinian Authority, is becoming more appealing to the youth. Young Palestinians are starting to realize that the two-state solution is dead, that the Palestinian state is a mirage, and that the status-quo seems to be the only possibility moving forward, especially with a government in Israel that is, today, the most right-wing radical government the country has ever had, and that is about to become more right-wing and more radical after the January elections.

AM: If it's looking like the status quo will persist, and that the two-state solution isn't the answer, is the possibility of a single, unified, secular democracy with equal rights for all ethnicities and religions a possibility? Or just a liberal fantasy?

RA: Let me just say this: I am a one-stater. I no longer believe in the two-state solution because I think it's impossible to achieve; this is deliberately so, as direct result of policies by successive Israeli governments that would create facts on the ground to make the creation of the Palestinian state unachievable.

I am also a one-stater because the reality is: it's already one state. It's an unequal, unfair, and, some would say, apartheid state. But the idea that there is some dividing line between the occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel proper that is firm, that is agreed-upon, that is the kind of marker that separates America from Mexico, is ludicrous. They share a single economy, they share a single environment, and they share the same natural resources. Again, all to the detriment of the Palestinians, but nevertheless it is already a single state.

Unfortunately, because of intransigence on both sides, we are moving towards a situation where there has to be, sooner or later, recognition of the one state that already exists in Israel/Palestine. Which means, frankly, the end of Israel as an ethno-nationalist state, as Israel's president, Shimon Peres, has said himself. At that point, when the demographics finally shift—and according to the Israeli Census Bureau, it has already shifted; today there are already more non-Jews than Jews between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea—at a certain point, Israel's going to have to make a decision about whether they want to be a Jewish-majority state or a democracy, because they can't be both. And at that point, then we can have the discussion about what kind of state it's going to be. Will it be a liberal, secular democracy? Because Israel in its current iteration is not a liberal, secular democracy. Just look at the laws passed by the Likud coalition over the last 18 months and you tell me whether they represent liberal, secular values. But nevertheless, at that point we can have that discussion. My only argument and my activism for the one state is not based on some fantasy I have about a future of peace and harmony between the two peoples. It's based on the reality on the ground right now.

AM: You said in an interview with Mother Jones a little over a year ago that the Obama Administration would "go down as the administration that put a definitive end to the possibility of a peace process and a two-state solution."

RA: That's right.

AM: Do you stand by that today? How would you rate the Obama Administration's handling of the peace process?

RA: I can say with confidence that the Obama Administration has been the single worst administration for the advancement of the peace process and the two-state solution of any president since Oslo. To me that is obvious and clear. When you don't even allow a meaningless and symbolic UN declaration for non-state enhanced observer status to come to a vote because of some perceived lack of benefit that it may provide Israel, you have given up at that point. When you don't even allow a resolution that uses your own language, your own administration's language criticizing settlement expansion in the occupied territories, to come to a vote, you've given up.

There were these grand promises that Obama was going to be an unbiased and fair mediator between these two sides, and he started out so strongly demanding a freeze of settlement activities -- which never happened despite Israel and the media's insistence that Israel actually did a ten month freeze; no, they had a ten-month freeze on approving new settlement expansion, but they continued building during those ten months. I was there; I saw the building taking place in front of me. When you have the Israeli Prime Minister respond with the diplomatic equivalent of "go screw yourself", and you back down to that, you've given up. The peace process is over for a whole host of reasons, but we are going to remember this administration as the administration that presided over its death.

AM: Do you anticipate any changes in Obama's second term?

I don't know; there is still the possibility of making a dramatic and bold gesture in the region forcing the Israeli administration to make the sacrifices necessary to create a viable, economically stable, independent Palestinian state.

Understand that the coalition that is in charge in Israel now utterly rejects the possibility of a Palestinian state. The problem isn't the prime minister, who himself rejects the possibility of a Palestinian state. If the prime minister of Israel tomorrow became the most vocal advocate of a Palestinian state, his own party has promised that they would dissolve parliament as a response. He has partners in his coalition, like the ultra-Orthodox Shas (third-largest party in the coalition) that refused to acknowledge the existence of a Palestinian, let alone the existence of a Palestinian state.

So, without serious arm-twisting that comes with actual robust consequences on the part of the American administration towards Israel, the idea that we can move towards a two-state solution is laughable. Frankly, anyone who thinks that kind of arm-twisting by an American administration is going to happen hasn't been paying attention to presidential politics in this country for the last four decades.

AM: We were talking a little bit about the role of students and young people in forging a way forward in the Middle East. What's the state of student activism in the MENA, and is it an important factor in determining the course of the region's future?

RA: The future's course is totally dependent on the actions, ideologies, aspirations, ambitions, and will of the students in Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, and the rest of the region. They are going to define the future of the Middle East.

I feel good about that because the youth are a different breed than their parents. Everyone talks about how there's a sectarian divide in the Middle East, or there's a Sunni-Shia divide, an Arab-Persian divide, or a radicals versus moderate divide. That's all nonsense. The principle divide in the Middle East is a generational divide, and the generation that is shaping the Middle East right now doesn't have the same concerns as their parents. They're not obsessed with ideas of national identity, with questions of honor and tradition. They're not obsessed with Israel and the United States. They're not obsessed with the same social and moral issues, gender segregation, or even the role of religion in society. They don't have those hang-ups.

What they care about is what people everywhere care about: that they actually have a voice, that they can be heard, that their dignity can have an outlet in society. As long as they focus on those ambitions I feel very confident in the future of this region.

How to Create Hope: Intergenerational Storytelling and Social Change in Post-Genocide Rwanda

Zoe Berman

The youth of post-genocide Rwanda matured during a period characterized by dramatic sociopolitical changes, censorship, and globalization. Despite the resilience they demonstrate in their everyday lives, these youth are often cast as victims of their country's past. This thesis evaluates the ways in which "vulnerable" Rwandan youth targeted by an American non-governmental organization (NGO) promoting unity and trauma recovery changed their lives after having a special, facilitated discussion with an elder. Drawing on fieldwork conducted in Rwanda in 2011, I first put the research setting in context, exploring Rwandan history and the current sociopolitical climate. I then use qualitative analysis to examine how participants claim the program affected their lives, engaging anthropological theories on childhood to evaluate the ways youth conceptualize adolescence and agency. The research reveals how youth used the knowledge and communication skills gained from conversing with their elder via the NGO to dramatically change the ways they perceived themselves within the society and interacted with others, and to fortify their understanding of Rwandan culture. My work offers critical, anthropological insights on humanitarian work and highlights the potential of Rwandan youth to re-invigorate and re-conceptualize notions of unity and culture in the post-genocide climate.

Introduction

"…After the genocide, he didn't have much hope for the future because he had been, he had met a lot of problems in the genocide cause he was in, he had wounds that he got from the genocide, so in the process he became crippled. And that it was hard for him even to get clothes. So he never had hope for the future, he felt like the world was crushing on him. And though he never took drugs, in the process like many others did, but it was hard and he never had a clear vision for his future… That after coming to stories for hope, the way he perceived himself… he gave himself some value because before he thought he didn't have any value in the world but after coming to stories for hope he felt he is of much value to the world. And he perceived himself as a person who is going to persevere. And not to give those people who committed those atrocities a chance of saying that he's falling back, he's not going to be a better person and he wants to show them that he can have a brighter future and he is strong."

- Tambo, Translating for Emmanuel (Personal Interview)[1]

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1 All participants' names are pseudonyms.

Emmanuel, now a lanky, even-toned man of 29, lost his parents and siblings and was left with a disability during the Rwandan genocide in 1994 that would inhibit him from attending school. Immediately following the conflict's resolution, Emmanuel lived with other orphans in a house without access to the medicine or care he needed. He was overjoyed to be adopted by a woman whom he now describes as the "best friend [he has] in [his] life," who gave him medicine and provided him with a home in which he felt safe. In the 17 years that followed, Emmanuel spoke only with family members and those he knew had a similar experience with the genocide. He felt hopeless for the future, "…like the world was crushing him," limited because of his disability, and "lonely in this world."

In 2010, a leader of his town's church, a parish of the Église Anglicale au Rwanda (Anglican Church of Rwanda), asked Emmanuel to participate in a program intended to promote Rwandan history and reconciliation. The American Non-governmental Organization (NGO) called Stories for Hope (SFH) brought the program of the same name to Byumba, a town in northern Rwanda. SFH aimed to help Rwandan youth who were exposed to violence during the genocide by putting them in conversation with an elder of their choosing. Emmanuel accepted and went to the diocese with his neighbor Beatrice, who had agree to participate with him. That day, Emmanuel and Beatrice partook in an SFH Storytelling Session in a small room of the diocese, sitting on either side of a trained Rwandan facilitator with recording devices positioned in front of them. Per the program's guidelines, Emmanuel asked Beatrice whatever questions he liked and Beatrice responded at length, often drawing on personal experience while avoiding contentious assertions about ethnicity and the genocide. Emmanuel received a CD of the conversation, a CD player, and compensation for his travel from SFH.

In the months following the SFH conversation, Emmanuel began interacting more with his peers, taking action to overcome his painful memories of the genocide, and endeavoring to become a leader in the community. He gave a testimony of his experience at an annual genocide memorial, visited the house he lived in before he was adopted, and successfully ran for a Sector Level Position as a representative for people with disabilities. After participating, he claimed he "felt he is of much value to the world... he perceived himself as a person who is going to persevere" and that he was "very happy and honored to be a leader." He expressed his newfound confidence and positive outlook to SFH employees and volunteers in evaluation interviews conducted three and thirteen months after his storytelling session with Beatrice. He wasn't the only one. Of twenty-two youth participants who were evaluated three months after their participation in Byumba, not one complained of their experience with the NGO's program. All reported a variety of positive changes to the way they communicated with others, the knowledge they gained about their country and/or family's past, their understanding of Rwandan "traditions" and "cultures" and/or "how to go about life" in contemporary Rwanda.[2]

As an assistant to SFH, I transcribed these evaluations in the spring of 2011. I was moved by what participants said and what the program was trying to do, but skeptical of the overwhelmingly positive responses. I went to Rwanda with the program in September of 2011 to investigate the processes by which the program motivated change through a second round of follow up interviews with seven participants. Several research questions guided my work. First, I hoped to evaluate the appropriateness and implications of the SFH. I was intrigued by the assumptions and motives that structured the model and the way that Rwandans and Americans perceived SFH's role in the communities it targeted. The storytelling held the

potential to alter the ways in which youth understood their societal position by putting youth in face to face conversations with elders, a situation that would be considered disrespectful by traditional Rwandan standards. What was the impact of the program on generational hierarchy in Byumba? That is, how did youth interact with elders? Finally, were these results as significant as they appeared to be? If so, were there social, political, and historical dynamics in Byumba and Rwanda that contributed to the program's success, or did it have a power greater than context? Had speaking with an elder for an hour or less really moved individuals out of isolation, fostered positive thinking, and pushed them to take on new responsibilities in their community? Visiting Rwanda, learning about the context in which SFH was deployed, and performing a qualitative analysis of my interviews, it became clear that there are elements in SFH's model that fostered the program's success. My research reveals how youth used the knowledge and communication skills they gained from conversing with elders to dramatically change their self perception, interactions with others, and understanding of Rwandan culture, and also to take on new duties and responsibilities. However, because these components worked in harmony with pre-existing social and political dynamics in Byumba and in Rwanda, the programs' success was also contingent upon the context in which it was deployed.

A Difficult History: Conflict and the Evolution of "Ethnicity" in 20th century Rwanda

Youth of contemporary Rwanda grew up amidst the dramatic social tensions of Rwanda's post-genocide period, in families likely affected, if not broken, by the conflict. They were also raised under a government regime that limited their insights to Rwanda's past. In order to understand the social dynamics that characterized Rwanda in the past 17 years, it is important to understand the country's complicated history of violence and ethnicity.

Rwanda is a small country (10,185 square miles), located in central East Africa, bordered by Tanzania, Burundi, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo ("Rwanda." Encyclopedia Britannica Online). Home to several large lakes formed by the East African Rift, this area is known as the African Great Lakes Region. Although Rwanda has been dubbed "The Land of a Thousand Hills" for the lush, rolling hills that dominate the country's landscape, the world is less familiar with the Rwanda's topography than it is with the genocide of 1994.

Contrary to mainstream accounts, the genocide was not a mere "ethnic conflict" between Hutu and Tutsi "tribes." Nor was it a rupture in peaceful living; the country was more than familiar with violence in

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2 I put these phrases in quotation marks because they were employed by multiple participants during evaluation interviews in 2010. Though I will explain these terms later, I hope to situate them within participant responses so that readers may infer their definitions, as I often had to do.

1994.[3] The history of violence and ethnicity in Rwanda is lengthy, complex, and often contested. While it is beyond the scope of this project to engage in debates regarding the origins of Hutu and Tutsi peoples, questions of dominance and victimhood, or the causes of genocide, I would like to provide a rough outline of Rwandan history and ethnic divisions over the course of the 20th century to help contextualize my research site.[4]

The history of the terms "Hutu", "Tutsi", and "Twa" is intricate and controversial. The existence of these terms extends (at the very least) to the late nineteenth century. In the years preceding colonization, they belonged to kin networks, economic systems and political organizations across the region that the Banyarwanda, or those who speak Kinyarwanda, inhabited. This region included areas in present-day Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Tanzania. During this period, there existed a high degree of intermarriage, cohabitation, and what Mahmood Mamdani calls "cultural exchange," which I interpret to be the exchange of beliefs and practices both sacred and secular. Belgian colonization in 1926, however, would polarize these identities with a regime that politicized Hutu and Tutsi identities, affording Tutsis official political, economic, and educational advantages. Colonial authorities used the writings and assertions of missionaries and social scientists practicing anthropometry, the measuring of human bodies, to officially document the racial superiority of the Tutsi race, as they defined it. While documents indicate that the Tutsi remained in a privileged position until 1959, they also reveal that cohabitation, intermarriage, and consistent migration between the countries in the African Great Lakes Region continued.[5]

However, the colonial era also saw the rise of a Hutu counter-elite; educated Hutus formed political and intellectual coalitions with an aim to overturn the minority Tutsi, who maintained political power and asserted authority over Hutu citizens. During the period of decolonization in the late 1950s, tensions rose between Hutu counter-elite and the Tutsi elite, culminating in the Revolution of 1959, a series of violent conflicts in which the majority of dead were Tutsi. The thirty-one years that followed saw political domination by Hutu parties and several massacres that not only left many Hutus and Tutsis dead, but also caused a mass exodus of Rwandans to neighboring countries. Again, throughout this period, intermarriage and cohabitation persisted despite connotations of race, political ties and indigeneity.

In 1990, during the period known as "The Second Republic," a militant group of Tutsi refugees in Uganda called the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) invaded Rwanda from the north in an armed attack that commenced the Rwandan Civil War. Although the war reached an artificial truce with the Arusha accords of 1993, political tensions persisted. During the civil war, a group of Hutu extremists purporting an ideology called Hutu Power gained ground in Rwandan politics and media. Prompted by Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana's assassination, constituents of the Hutu Power movement led a series of attacks to eliminate the Tutsi on April 6, 1994. Leaving an estimated half of Rwanda's population dead in one hundred days and putting Rwanda under the international spotlight, the genocide turned ethnicity

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3 "Ethnic conflict" and "tribes" are words that have been used by mainstream media to characterize the genocide. I put these terms in quotations because research indicates that they misrepresent and oversimplify the complexity of the genocide and the significance of the categories Hutu and Tutsi.

4 This history is taken primarily from Mahmood Mamdani's When Victims Become Killers (Mamdani 2001) and considering Gerard Prunier's The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide (Prunier: 1995). Other sources are cited in text.

5 Colonial governments rigidly defined boundaries between Great Lakes countries, which did change the meaning of what it meant to cross borders. However, the familial and economic systems upon which border-crossing depended were never eradicated and population flows between these countries continued to this day. The presence of non-citizens in Uganda and Burundi, in particular, in the late 20th century, greatly affected domestic politics and conflict. (Mamdani 2001 and Newbury 2011)

and allegiance into a matter of life and death.

Rwanda, to its own citizens as well as outsiders, became a nation of victims and perpetrators of violence. These terms later became the legal categories for those accused of committing acts of violence (often assumed domestically and internationally to be Hutu) and those who witnessed it (often assumed to be Tutsi or Hutu sympathizers to the Tutsi cause). Many Rwandans had their lives uprooted, lived in fear of being captured or killed, and saw family members and neighbors being killed.

When the conflict ended in July, 1994 and the RPF came to power, violence ceased but new social tensions arose. The tensions that arose from knowing that the genocide's victims were living alongside its perpetrators affected village life for those who had stayed in Rwanda and for refugees who had returned. These social dynamics became even more complicated in 2004, when convicted perpetrators were released from prisons to be tried in Gacacas, community-based courts that reflect traditional practices of Rwandan conflict resolution (Hatzfeld 2003).[6] The RPF government was another major source of tension; its members are primarily Tutsi and the RPF have been challenged by scholars who see them as corrupt and tyrannical perpetrators of human rights abuses (See particularly Reyntjens 2011, Thomson 2009, Purdekova 2008 and Ready 2010). The RPF regime's policies forbidding individuals from openly discussing the genocide in public forums are a particular point of criticism against the government. This generally meant that Rwandans were afraid of being persecuted for promoting "genocide ideology" or "divisionism" (terms that refer to ethnic ideologies that motivated the genocide) or disagreeing with the government. Susan Thomson, however, notes that it is not the erasure of speech that once tied individuals to the state that is most the most noteworthy trait of the current regime. Instead, it is the state's "ability to simplify and impose a sense of national unity and reconciliation…via radio addresses, speeches to the population on the need to reconcile, as well as in the messages of local officials during national unity and reconciliation activities" (Thompson 2011: 8). Thus, the government asserted its presence in various public forums, promoting a notion of togetherness in citizens' daily lives, emphasizing ideologies that were appropriate and silencing, by example, divisive speech.

Rwandan youth were placed in schools without history curriculums, where they were forbidden to ask questions about their ethnicity and the conflict that radically affected most of their lives. The government instructed schools in the post-genocide era to encourage notions of unity and "Rwandanness" (a vague term meant to spark sentiments of national, rather than ethnic affiliations), and to prevent divisionism (King 2006: 171, 179, 209). In this way, children who experienced the stresses of loss, violence, displacement, and relocation during the genocide grew up in an environment in which speaking about Rwandan history and the ethnic divisions that motivated the genocide was discouraged. In the past several years, the government has begun to realize the potential dangers of these silences and is grappling with how to begin to communicate personal and family history to younger generations (personal communication with government officials). The Rwandan government rests its home on the contemporary generation of Rwandan youth; this is the same generation whose proper development causes anxiety among Rwandan leaders and international scholars. These are the individuals that SFH targets.

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6 The Gacaca trials are highly controversial for the ways in which they have called victims and perpetrators to testify before their peers. Scholars, reporters and politicians within in and outside of Rwanda have suggested that these courts serve as another means by which the current government exerts its control, forcing citizens into practices and discourses of reconciliation they do not wish to be a part of (For examples, see Ready 2010 and Thomson 2009).

Birth of an NGO

While visiting Rwanda for a leadership convention in 2006, psychologist Patricia Pasick was struck by the state of Rwandan youth, especially those who had been exposed to violence during the genocide. She explains:

> "…an official asked, 'How will I tell my own children about what happened to their grandparents, who died in the 1994 genocide? How will we help the next generation to understand what happened in Rwanda, and go forward with their lives peacefully, instead of repeating the past?' (www.storiesforhope.org)

Dr. Pasick developed her answer after two years of return trips, which included substantial conversations with Rwandan interlocutors, a focus group in the summer of 2008 for selected youth and elders, and independent research. It was "an intergenerational story-telling project which facilitates, records, and archives audio and written transcripts of dialogues between youths and their chosen elders" (Ibid). By May 2009, Stories for Hope had received its initial funding from the Rwandan Ministry of Sports and Culture. That month, the program ran its first pilot with sixteen youth/elder pairs in Kigali. For this pilot and subsequent interventions, community leaders were instructed to seek out youth older than 18 (so there were no questions about consent) who had received secondary education and been exposed to violence. Participants were invited to bring an elder whom they felt comfortable sharing a conversation with to storytelling sessions, as the program calls them. Before they began, elders were instructed by Dr. Pasick and facilitators on how they should aim to answer questions: respond at length if possible, use examples from personal experience, and avoid language or advice that could be interpreted as divisionist. Dr. Pasick used these information sessions to screen elders as well, looking for red flags from participants who seemed they would impart genocide ideology in the conversation.[7] In August of the same year, SFH expanded its participation pool, recording over 100 more stories in Kigali and the town of Nyamata.[8] That the same month, SFH also traveled to Byumba where Dr. Pasick began working with facilitators in the local parish of the Église Anglicane au Rwanda (EAR).

Hope on a Hill; Movements for Social Change in Byumba

The town of Byumba is located in the Gicumbi District of Rwanda, one of 15 major districts that divide the country, in the North, almost an hour drive from Uganda (See map, p.6). During the genocide, Byumba was frequently a site of violence, as armies entered and left the country by way of the northern border. Central to the social lives of Byumbans is their involvement with the town's church, a parish under the EAR of Gicumbi. As an organization that houses many community leaders, the EAR in Byumba has been very concerned, in the years following the genocide, with restoring the faith and emotional security of Byumbans. Concerned church representatives declared in 2004:

…there is a general feeling of insecurity, powerlessness and desperation among the popula-

tion. Many people do not care about themselves any more. People lost their interest in dignity and do not care about the future. Some have become aggressive in reaction to everything, whether good or bad. Others are aimlessly wandering around without courage or a plan to survive.(Richters et. al 2008)

That is why, in the same year, Bishop Emmanuel Ngendahayo asked for the help of Dutch academics Annemiche Richters and Cora Dekker to help the EAR implement a "sociotherapy program." Because Dekker and Richters had successfully introduced this program to several other countries that had undergone forms of social suffering, Ngendahayo believed that it could be of help to his population. Richters and Dekker applied for funding to train facilitators, and the program commenced in 2005. Sociotherapy, as it was designed, is a form of group counseling sessions run by trained local facilitators. In these sessions, facilitators and participants are encouraged to work through problems verbally, using techniques that can be helpful to them in the future under the principles of Interest, Equality, Democracy, Learning by doing, Responsibility, and Here and Now." Facilitators from Byumba were all members of the EAR, which prides itself on privileging Anglican principals of love, acceptance, and,unity through social activity before asking parishioners to partake in religious practice or ritual (Richters 2008:76).[9] Representatives maintain that their role as mentors in the church aligned their work with sociotherapy, not strict, faith-based imperatives. In Byumba, the training and sessions were met with great success in their first year. In fact, facilitators were so enthusiastic about sociotherapy and its potential that they published a book on their experiences. "Here We Are": Community Based Sociotherapy in Byumba, Rwanda, provides a detailed account of facilitators' experiences and opinions on the potential of the program to help Byumba and other communities in Rwanda. In most of the chapters, facilitators comment on how sociotherapy helps address a specific problem in Rwandan society, such as the difficulty of properly communicating with released prisoners, genocide widows' unstable position, or orphans' uncertain future. Beyond providing local insights on contemporary problems in Rwanda, the book notes that there are a significant number of leaders in Byumba who are passionately concerned with the well-being of their population (Richters 2008).

SFH came to Byumba because Bishop Ngendahayo pursued Dr. Pasick, attending an information session that she conducted in Kigali in May before the first pilot program. After learning about Byumba's history and visiting the town, Dr. Pasick decided that it made sense to implement SFH's program in the town; it was, she explained, the next step for sociotherapy facilitators who would become storytelling facilitators, and a wonderful means of providing sustainability for SFH in Byumba (Interview, 5/6/2012). Since many of the youth participants were related to or had relationships with the program's sociotherapy facilitators, it is evident that SFH youth were members of a community from which they could draw support in the months following their conversation.

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7 As the program operated under the auspices of the Rwandan government, it was important that they respect the government line; SFH did not ask participants about their ethnicities and the matter was not explicitly discussed in the conversations. Interviews immediately following the pilot generated overwhelmingly positive feedback. (Fieldnotes: Personal Communication with Dr. Pasick, June 2011)

8 Nyamata is known as a site of many conflicts during the genocide and is thus home to many government-sponsored reconciliation programs, such as Never Again Rwanda, an organization with which SFH collaborated.

9 The mission of the EAR is in line with the aims and history of the Anglican Church in Rwanda. There has been a large Christian presence in Rwanda since European missionaries from both the Anglican and Catholic Church arrived the late nineteenth century. Throughout the 20th Century, both churches maintained followings, though the Catholic Church dominated, and Rwanda became known as a largely Christian country. During the genocide, the reputation of the Catholic Church was tarnished; not only did massacres occur in many Catholic Churches, lead by religious leaders, but Catholisism Catholicism became associated with violent pro-Hutu factions. Thus, in the wake of the genocide, the Anglican Church re-emerged as an organization that "has attempted to promote reconciliation and unity as the demand and call of Christianity,"(Cantrell 2009: 322) and asked members "to move beyond their Hutu or Tutsi identity and find a new identity in the Christian faith." Therefore, the position of the Byumban church to endeavor to support the welfare of the community and promote unity and reconciliation is part of the larger political project of the Anglican Church of Rwanda to first bring citizens together under principals of Christianity, and then encourage them to partake in religious practice (Cantrell 2009).

Methodology

Personal Engagement

I joined SFH as an assistant in February of 2011. My first task was to transcribe evaluation interviews of the 22 youth who had participated in Stories for Hope in Byumba. Unlike the storytelling sessions themselves, which are conducted completely in Kinyarwanda, the evaluations were conducted for American listeners. Questions were asked first in English, then translated into Kinyarwanda, answered in Kinyarwanda and recorded back into English. It was during this process that I listened to Emmanuel's and countless others' interpretations of how the storytelling had affected their lives. Although I felt some discomfort knowing that I was listening to a translation of the speakers' original words – an interpretation created so that a distant audience could evaluate their experience – the experiences communicated were deeply moving. SFH's formation, structure, and success fascinated me as well. A grant opportunity arose that would allow me to go to Rwanda and re-interview several participants with SFH, and I eagerly accepted. Dr. Pasick had been planning a trip, so she was happy to allow me to conduct a second round of interviews, especially since the first round had not provided her with all the information she wanted.[10]

With a grant from NYU to study the impact of SFH on kinship in Rwanda, I began working with SFH in Ann Arbor, Michigan in June of 2011. My work with the program was twofold. First, I was responsible for conducting independent research that would help me select five candidates for my study and construct interview questions. I focused my readings on anthropological theories of kinship and childhood, and on the history of Rwanda. Although I was ultimately pulled away from addressing the kinship literature, this research helped provide a foundation from which I could begin to think critically about the position of Rwandan youth in the post-genocide period. Questions of child agency and the implications of SFH's interventions, which I will address in my literature review, dominated my thinking after a summer of research and re-reading interviews. However, the notion of kinship provided one of the primary criteria by which I would choose my five candidates based on several criteria: 1) The transcription was clear and I felt minimal uncertainty about the information conveyed, 2) The participant spoke explicitly about their relationships with elders or those who were younger than them, and 3) The participant evidenced that they might be an ideal subject for re-interview by citing specific examples when responding to questions or being particularly vocal. To ensure I would have at least five youth attend, I requested that our colleague in Byumba invite seven individuals: Clementine, Christian, Nelson, Emmanuel, Phillipe, Jorges, and Maria. Having chosen my participants, I modified a template interview I had submitted to the Institutional Review Board in June to be participant-specific. Interviews were written to be open-ended; I had a series of base questions that drew upon participant evaluations and would improvise questions depending on how participants responded in order to best understand their statements and thinking.[11] Dr. Pasick reviewed the interview questions before our departure to ensure that none of the questions would be problematic or trigger past traumas.

My second task was as a research assistant to Dr. Pasick. She and I worked together to find themes in the evaluation responses, hoping to qualify the success of the Byumba storytelling sessions. Although Dr. Pasick analyzed quantitative measures with other colleagues, our work focused on a qualitative

analysis of the responses in which we grouped together quotations that spoke to similar ideas or employed similar terms. We decided upon several themes, which notably focused on the ways youth had interpreted what they learned about Rwandan history, the way they perceived themselves after the storytelling, and how they had changed the ways they were interacting with others. A belief in these trends undoubtedly influenced my questions and my subsequent analysis.

I also worked as an administrative assistant to the project and helped Dr. Pasick communicate with our Rwandan employees in preparation for our trip. Consequently, I began developing distant and new relationships with Tambo, the program manager in Byumba and my translator, and Ellisam, our primary contact in Byumba.

Travelling in Rwanda and the Tourist Agenda

On August 31st, I left for Rwanda, with interviews in my bag and no knowledge of the national language, Kinyarwanda. Going through customs, which was a desk at the top of the stairs at the airport in Kigali, I was embarrassed when the official had to tell me how to say hello as he welcomed me to his country. I was, however, relieved to see Tambo, wearing one of many pastel shirts we would see adorn his tall, lanky body, when I reached the bottom of the stairs. Though our first conversations were awkward, Tambo came to be a great friend and our constant savior, acting as a translator for the SFH team almost every time we left our Kigali apartment. At the time, Tambo was 28 and studying computer engineering at the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST), but was hoping to work with other NGOs upon receiving his diploma. He had been involved with SFH since 2010, when he assisted the Byumba storytelling sessions. Although Dr. Pasick was sometimes frustrated by Tambo's insistence to work using Rwandan conventions of professionalism he had learned when communicating with the government or other SFH employees, he was an efficient, effective and vital member of the team. Born to a Rwandan family, but raised in Uganda, Tambo returned to Rwanda after the genocide to continue his schooling. Tambo lost his brother, an RPF soldier, to the genocide in 1993, and participated in SFH himself in order to learn more about the conflict. Though Tambo seemed to be genuine with us, he spoke about the genocide and ethnicity in careful terms; he referred to the conflict as "the war", only spoke of his own ethnicity when prodded, and never expressed controversial beliefs about history, politics, or the idea that Rwanda is now unified.

My companions and I were almost certainly subject to what scholars have called the Rwandan "tourist itinerary," discourses and mapped travel routes for tourists enforced by officials to manipulate foreigners' impressions of the country (Thompson 2009:21 and King 2009: 133). Furthermore, for marked foreigners travelling around Rwanda, it is imperative that all avoid suggesting divisions within society or discontent with the government in Rwanda. Elizabeth King, who has been conducting research in Rwanda for several years, asserts that difficulties of this sort that arise during data collection can also be seen as data points within themselves (Ibid). That is, the ways in which Rwandans represent or misrepresent their political beliefs and the current state of affairs in Rwanda are significant indicators of current socio-political dynamics and tensions. Following this logic, it becomes possible to understand that limitations to my own data collection represent the larger limitations on SFH staff in their attempts to determine the successes of the program. The shadow of doubt cast over the information communicated to tourists by Rwandans also speaks to uncertainties one should maintain when considering the recorded discussions and interviews conducted for SFH. Additionally, because respected community leaders were involved, and because SFH had good intentions bringing their program to Rwanda and because they over-reimbursed participants for

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10 Dr. Pasick had originally constructed the questions for the evaluation interviews I listened to as base questions for her Rwandan colleague that conducted the follow-ups. She had assumed her colleague, a psychologist, would ask more detailed questions to participants upon hearing their response to questions such as "were there any interesting developments that resulted after the storytelling." Since he did not, and some responses were still vague to SFH or begged more questions, it was beneficial to the program for me to conduct a more detailed inquiry.

11 See Appendix 1 for an example of my interview question template and a modified form.

travel, youth may have felt pressured to respond positively during evaluation interviews.[12] Furthermore, they may have believed or been told that making a good impression would provide them an opportunity to ask SFH's American employees for money to help pay for their schooling, or for employment.[13] Although participants were being asked to provide critical responses to the program that could help it grow, they most likely felt limitations on how critical they could be. Faith that the poignancy, consistency, and detail seen in responses indicate the authenticity of the conversations is constantly tempered by the potential that participants have constructed a façade. Therefore, I analyze the data with an understanding that uncertainty is a condition of American perceptions of the program.

Tambo and Translation

Translation was a hurdle the group frequently had to deal with; none of the American team members knew enough Kinyarwanda to maintain a minute-long conversation. Beyond seeing this language barrier as a limitation to my study, I would like to highlight that the distance, inconvenience, and doubt created through this mediation are conditions under which American employees understand Rwandans' responses to the program.

On the sixth day of my stay in Rwanda, I travelled to Byumba from Kigali to begin interviews that morning. Two participants had cancelled, but Solange and Christian had heard that I was coming to the church to interview SFH youth participants and asked if they could participate. I reviewed their evaluations to create a few specific questions for each of them. The interviews were conducted in a private room at the church. Tambo, the interviewee, and I sat positioned on one side of a very large table with a recording device positioned between the three of us. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. By late afternoon, Tambo and I had finished six interviews and were exhausted. Tambo spent a good deal of the conversation apologizing for his translation, noting that he had stumbled for words often and that his English was rusty. I assured him that I was incredibly pleased with how the interviews turned out and that I understood the difficulty in translating.

The process of translation also affected my impressions of SFH's program, upon which I base my entire analysis, in several significant ways. First, meaning is lost in translation. Some words in Kinyarwanda do not exist in English, and others have several English words that correspond to them. This meant that Tambo would have to quickly select appropriate words to communicate what my participant said. Additionally, because participants often spoke for one to two minutes at length, Tambo told me afterwards that he would sometimes paraphrase, or even forget to include information altogether. Moreover, because I was communicating with Tambo, I had little insight into the inflection my participants were using. My improvised questions were based off the translations that Tambo provided, rather than a dialogue I was having with the participant. My base questions were also informed by translated responses. The information I was presented with and responded to was thus highly mediated, a rendering of the speaker's responses with representations of the words and phrases they used. Second, Tambo's presence created metaphysical

distance between the participants and myself. His position as an intermediary in the interviews meant that youth spoke to him, he spoke to me, I spoke to him, but youth and I rarely communicated directly. In some cases, participants rarely made eye contact with me, choosing to speak directly to Tambo. Therefore, in the mere hour I spent with each participant, I had a very small chance of connecting with them or establishing the sense of trust I might have been able to gain with a fluent English or French speaker. Finally, considering the ways in which the transcripts are represented in this paper, I find it important to address how issues of power come into play when one translates from Kinyarwanda to English for a removed audience.

As French Canadian scholar and translator Barbara Godard has observed in texts published for Anglophone readers, "[publishers] prefer to publish books that read as though they were written in English in the first place, texts which are 'transparent' because translation is presented as unproblematic" (Godard 2006: 12). Translated text and speech seem to convey others' thoughts and experience seamlessly, pointing to emotions or sentiments that readers find universal; they hold the power to generate powerful feelings of empathy, sympathy and understanding. However, translations that are seamlessly presented obscure the processes of mediation through which they were formed and diminish the physical and metaphysical distances between the speaker/author and reader. I therefore strive to present Tambo's translations as I received them, without heavy editing, as well as to highlight Tambo's presence throughout.

Once I returned to the US, I transcribed each interview. I was careful to keep Tambo's words and phrasing intact during this process; I did not correct grammatical errors and noted when he stumbled in an explanation or struggled to find a word. I also noted moments when he spoke to me directly. In doing this, I hoped to eliminate the possibility of fostering the illusion that the process of translation was a smooth one for myself and for my eventual readers. I then read each interview several times before annotating key words or phrases that described what interviewees were saying at each point in the interview. Reading through the interviews again, I noted when similar key words or phrases were used by multiple participants, highlighting points at which participants were discussing similar things when they were using these words and phrases. In some cases, I had to use my own words to synthesize a reiterated idea as opposed to a word or phrase. I described the reiterated idea or combined the key words and phrases repeated by participants with the descriptions of the context they were used in. I then organized this information (key word or phrase/idea, relevant quotation, and participant name) onto a chart. Since there were a high number of recurring items, I grouped phenomena together according to whether they referred to the participants' lives before or after the storytelling, or to the storytelling itself. In doing this, I was able to see patterns in the ways participants perceived themselves, others, and SFH at different periods of their experience. In the pages that follow, I discuss several bodies of literature and specific works that guided my analysis of the participants' responses in order to conduct a preliminary evaluation of SFH's model itself. In all of my research, I drew from scholars in anthropology, political science, and sociology; this informed the perspective from which I evaluated SFH's framework and its repercussions for youth living at this specific moment in Rwandan history.

Framing Stories for Hope: Relevant Literature and Evaluation of the Model
Anthropological Theories of Childhood

Rwandan youth, as witnesses to genocide and in danger of living unstable lives as a result of censorship, are internationally depicted as victims by journalists, politicians, and scholars (including em-

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12 I do not wish to imply that SFH was bribing participants for their participation or positive words; such an implication would be a gross misrepresentation of the exchange. However, Dr. Pasick remarked that the SFH often gave participants a little more money than they had spent, or given them money for "transport" when they had come by foot.

13 Dr. Pasick did send two participants money to help pay for their schooling. One of the students lives in Byumba and it is very likely that other participants knew she was sending him money.

ployees of SFH). They thus become the subject of debates regarding the role of the Rwandan government and international community in helping these youth cope with everyday life and ensure they do not return to violence. One current of contemporary anthropological theory concerning the politics of childhood is particularly relevant to my project. It examines how "childhood" as a notion is constructed, deployed and evaluated by institutions and individuals in global settings. This scholarship emerged in the early 1980s and continues to gather force (Korbin 2003: 431).

For the purposes of this thesis, however, I focus on two prominent anthologies, published in the 1990s. Sharon Stephen's Children and the Politics of Culture and Carol Sargent and Nancy Scheper-Hughes' Small Wars heavily influenced the framework through which I considered the ways SFH envisioned youth and the actions they took in response to the storytelling. I will return to these texts in the body of my analysis, but in this preliminary evaluation of the SFH model, I consider a few important points. An important issue highlighted in this literature is the danger and implications of universalist "rights talk" for children, which fails to consider the different meanings of childhood in different cultures (Sargent & Scheper-Hughes 1997: 8, Stephens 1995: 13). The notion of childhood as a protected sphere is a construct that influences the way North Americans and Europeans envision an ideal childhood (Boyden cited in Stephens: 14). Because it is assumed that youth in the "third world" live under conditions antithetical to those prescribed by the Western paradigm, "Western activists have assumed the responsibility of "saving" third world children" (Stephens 1995: 14). Stephens and Scheper Hughes thus assert that children's rights talk and humanitarianism are motivated when politicians in North America and Europe impose Western ideologies on "third world" nations. The problem, then, is that discourses that assume childhood to be a universal category ignore the ways in which "childhood" and related terms are understood and deployed in targeted regions:

> "[rights talk] makes political morality the result of unconditional moral imperative rather than the result of political discourse, reflection, and compromise. It ignores the cultural constructedness of categories such as child, woman, mother and adult. These categories always risk being naturalized and essentialized so that the local context is obscured and important differences are flattened." (Scheper-Hughes and Sargent 1997: 10)

Notably, the placement of a Western paradigm that assumes certain roles to be filled by "child, woman, mother, and adult" and which assumes the rights of the child as an individualized subject, rather than a member of a community, has historically produced tensions between human rights workers and African policy makers.[14] The African context is a wonderful example of the limitations of ideologies that assume universal rights of a child: authorities from various African nations have spoken out against the ways Western individualistic discourses (that structure international rights law) often diminish or ignore the duties of a community or nation to take care of a child, an issue they consider crucial when conceptualizing children's rights.

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14 In response to a 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC), the Organization of African Unity created an African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), ratified by 15 nations. Anthropologist Signe Howell contends that African delegates were "critical of what they regard[ed] as the failure of the UNCRC to perceive children as constituted persons through their relationship with others… the expression of extremist individualistic understanding [as expressed by the UNCRC's position on children's rights, was] not accepted by the African delegates." (Howell 2006:176)

Yet, most anthropologists contend that this talk and its imperatives are important because they "can be seen to be in children's and, more broadly, in society's best interests," particularly "in cases where states conspire in the oppression of ethnic or religious groups or stand behind radical assimilationist policies that would deny children the stable social environments and coherent linguistic and symbolic contexts" (Stephens 1995; 40). We are not asked to immediately disregard movements, organizations, policies, and discourses that evoke a universal imperative to protect youth, but to be critical of the motivation behind them and the ways in which they operate. Thus, while we could possibly derive paternalistic motives or implications from the very creation of SFH, I believe such an interpretation would misrepresent the program, obscuring the important collaboration that sparked the idea for the project and informed its model. As I will indicate in the section that follows, the experiential and literary research Dr. Pasick conducted helped the project elude the pitfalls of other healing efforts in Rwanda. Attention to the particularities of the environment in which SFH would intervene led to a framework that privileged the Rwandan traditions' power and the participants' strength rather than discourses which position the founders as saviors and Rwandans as victims.

Censorship, "Trauma", and Healing in Rwanda: Considering the Context of SFH

Arriving at conclusions that echo the worries that motivated Dr. Pasick and colleagues to found SFH, several scholars writing on the repercussions of the genocide have investigated how the silence in post-genocide Rwanda compromises citizens' potential for reconciliation (For example, Thomson 2009, Reyntjens 2011, Ready 2010). Cynthia Buckley-Zistel's provocative piece, "Remembering to Forget: Chosen Amnesia as a Strategy for Local Coexistence in Post Genocide Rwanda," focuses on the silence that worried Dr. Pasick. Buckley-Zistel argues that everyday strategies of coping with the genocide inhibit an individual's ability to move past the conflict and residual tensions. Drawing on fieldwork conducted in two of the fifteen provinces, Buckley-Zistel exemplifies the tendency among Rwandans to portray history according to the government line, with "the insistence that Hutu and Tutsi had always lived together in harmony, with the genocide constituting a sudden rupture" (Buckley-Zistel 2006: 140). Historical realities are ignored due to "government coercion" to suppress discussions of ethnicity, "fear of the other group" (insecurities between survivors and perpetrators), or "pragmatism," the necessity to ignore the past in order to coexist peacefully in the present (ibid). While they are understandable, Buckley-Zistel argues that these mechanisms facilitate a superficial peace that prevents Rwandans and the government from having the "honest and frank discussions of the status quo" needed for the process of reconciliation and could have a particularly harmful impact on youth (ibid). The authors writing on censorship highlight the constraints placed on the ways Rwandan youth may speak about identity and history, corroborating the impulse upon which Dr. Pasick acted. However, they provide little insight into the ways in which one could analyze the SFH model. Articles on healing and foreign intervention in post-genocide Rwanda indicate how to derive appropriate methods of trying to help the population overcome troubling legacies of genocide.

In her article "'Keep Going Despite Everything': Legacies of Genocide for Rwanda's Children and Youth," sociologist Kirilly Pells asserts that there are inappropriate ways of viewing and trying to help youth in post-genocide Rwanda. Drawing on ethnographic research, interviews and focus groups conducted with Rwandan youth from several urban and rural sites between 2006 and 2009, Pells illustrates how current approaches to studying and aiding the genocide's youth victims are inhibited by their use of a

Western "trauma paradigm" (Pells 2011: 594). She asserts that "a biomedical understanding of trauma… applied in conjunction with child development theories" limits our understandings of the experiences of Rwandan youth because it emphasizes the vulnerability of victims rather than evaluating their resilience and the complexity of their everyday lives (Pells, 2011: 596, 595). Additionally, Pells indicates that Rwandan youth have varied understandings of trauma, a concept introduced to the country by Western aid workers. This problem results in misunderstandings for those involved in the healing process (Pells, 2011: 596). Pells insists upon the benefits of studies that critically examine the "violences of the everyday," for, "in Rwanda… the challenges of living together again… are faced on a daily basis… violence is both sustained and challenged through structures, relationships and practices of the everyday" (Pells, 2011: 598). Citing her subjects, Pells explains how such research would instead draw attention to important dynamics of Rwandan society. These dynamics include the ways family structures have been reconfigured because of orphaned children and imprisoned parents and siblings, hardships caused by poverty and lack of access to education, dynamics of mistrust within communities and between neighbors and, importantly, the nature of agency and resilience in Rwandan youth.

Annemiek Richters and Cora Dekker, and the facilitators of a successful sociotherapy program in Byumba, give us further perspective on the nature of trauma and intervention in contemporary Rwanda. Articles that Dekker and Richters have published on their own intervention demonstrate that although reconciliation and healing programs are being implemented by the Rwandan government and local authorities in specific communities, leaders also welcome foreign aid (Richters et al 2010). Furthermore, Here we Are, which features facilitators' opinions on how communities may work to overcome hardships, exemplifies how community leaders in Rwanda are looking for carefully crafted programs that allow Rwandans to use foreign methods to help themselves. The book also indicates that because of the introduction of foreign aid and Western concepts of healing and psychology, "trauma" has become a way Rwandans understand personal repercussions of the genocide. Therefore, statements concerning the often hidden traumas students deal with on a daily basis illustrate that while multiple understandings of "trauma" may exist in Rwanda, as Pells contends, the term has gained popularity and power to describe the post-genocide self (Richters 2009: 44).

Rwandan scholar Deogratias Bagilishya also argues for carefully crafted approaches to trauma and healing in post-genocide Rwanda. In his article "Mourning and Recovery from Trauma: In Rwanda, Tears Flow Within," he discusses the nature of grief in his country using a personal narrative as well as his inherited knowledge of Rwandan traditions to provide insights on the ways in which Rwandans cope with intense, post-genocide emotions. Recalling the day his son's killer approached both he and his mother to confess, Bagilishya points to and expands upon cultural practices used to deal with mourning, anger, and an impulse for revenge. Within his explanation, he underscores the effectiveness of resorting to "traditional techniques," such as the use of proverbs to help individuals understand and experience emotions, mourning rituals, and practices of intervention. Particularly relevant to my analysis, Bagilishya highlights the importance of elders in healing practices in accordance with "tradition," noting that, "in Rwandan tradition, the elderly are considered sages with great life experience… able to guide their children when faced with instances of extreme psychological distress" (Bagilishya 2008: 349-50). Bagilishya echoes claims made by historian Jan Vansina, the foremost historian on oral traditions in Rwanda, which position elders as authorities of history and traditions of the past (Vansina 2004). Bagilishya also makes the important assertion that one must be suspicious of foreign solutions:

> The use of foreign therapeutic models, organized around concepts like 'post-traumatic stress disorder' must raise questions about their pertinence and their positive and negative effects. Even if a foreign model is not necessarily harmful, it must be examined with extreme care to avoid destroying the fragile internal equilibrium that is trying to re-establish itself. The mental health and well-being of Rwandans cannot be isolated from that of their families and those who surround them. When working with Rwandans, we must take into account the importance of maintaining harmony within the families and with those who surround them, and the repercussions that may result from interference. Traditional forms of expression (e.g. proverbs and tales), which offer the possibility of representing experiences and establishing a certain distance from feelings and acts of revenge, are essential in order to break the cycle of violence, which has cast its shadow over Rwanda and its people. (Bagilishya 2008: 352)

He warns us that foreign programs aimed to promote mental health in Rwanda must acknowledge the importance of "maintaining harmony" in communities, and consider the potency of "traditional" means of healing. Though he does not state it explicitly, we see how community-focused initiatives would avoid the disconcerting, one-on-one, trauma counseling methods that aid workers had implemented post-genocide. By citing "proverbs and tales", Bagilishya again refers to the elders who have traditionally performed these oral traditions, underscoring the potential of involving them in healing projects.

Bagilishya's work had a tremendous influence on Dr. Pasick while she was formulating SFH's storytelling model. His influence is seen in the project's incorporation of both concepts from narrative psychology (namely, a facilitator to moderate the storytelling with "strength-based" questions that encourage participants to think of their strengths during conversation) and oral tradition. On their website, SFH states the project's mission: "By re-catalyzing intergenerational storytelling, and building capacity for the country to sustain this time-honored cultural practice, we hope to interrupt patterns of violence across many generations, and help re-build a more positive legacy for the newest generation of young leaders" (www.storiesforhope.org). Looking to their official mission, which I consider an accurate statement of program aims from over a year working with SFH, and pulling from the literature, it is possible to consider the strengths of SFH's model even before turning to participants' responses.

SFH does not include the word "trauma" in its mission statement, nor does it rely on a strict methodology of psychologist-patient trauma counseling. However, many youth volunteers, in storytelling sessions and in evaluations, referred to the "traumas" they face on an everyday basis, and facilitators and staff frequently used the word. The program thus operates with an understanding that those involved may be traumatized, but does not rely on the notion of trauma in their framework. Bagilishya's work and Here We Are emphasize that although "trauma" may be a foreign concept introduced to Rwandans and intervention based on a trauma paradigm may prove problematic, "traumatized" has become an acceptable way to think about the genocide's effect on individuals. Therefore, SFH allows participants to think of healing on their own terms, without pathologizing volunteers. They are also aware that they are participating in a program that evokes the Rwandan oral tradition, an important aspect of healing. Considering participant and employee responses to the program, they felt this reinforced the notion that the program was intended to support Rwandan culture and tradition, something that made them proud of, and comfortable with, their involvement.

Finally the storytelling was an event that prompted more communication between the involved

youth and members of their community, influencing their everyday lives. The fact that the storytelling model was intended to catalyze changes in the everyday lives of participants, moving them out of isolation and toward reflection on their personal and national histories, is not an official aspect of the program's mission. However, it was Dr. Pasick's vision (personal communication). Dr. Pasick and colleagues, then, have incorporated three key aspects that scholars deem important to intervention in Rwanda into the SFH model. Knowing this, it becomes easier to understand SFH's positive reception and successful results.

Why Come? Understanding and Contextualizing the Motivation Behind Participation

During my last few days in Kigali, we met a cab driver who was rather critical of the ways Americans and Europeans had treated Rwanda in the years following the genocide. The driver, Jean Pierre, insisted that the country needed to heal on its own, and that foreign aid workers could not comprehend the struggles men and women faced in the reconciliation period. When the discussion turned to SFH, he was intrigued by the collaborative structure, not immediately turned off because it was run partially by local leaders, but unbelieving of its success; he wanted to visit Byumba and see the effects with his own eyes. He did not believe that having a youth share a story with an elder could really help the lives of Rwandan youth.

The Invitation

Jean Pierre liked SFH because the storytelling was run by Rwandan facilitators; he did not like many foreign aid programs because their representatives were imposing and did not understand or respect the problems of those they were trying to help. Although Stories for Hope participants came voluntarily, most were invited to participate by SFH staff working at the Diocese. Of the six I interviewed, three found out about the program through friends or family who had participated and three learned about SFH through Elissam, the program's passionate and exuberant media manager in Byumba. Clementine and Christian told me that they were skeptical. They did not seriously believe that simply speaking with an elder could improve their lives. Although a conversation with Elissam convinced Clementine that SFH could be good for her, Christian's doubts endured until after his own participation. Nineteen years old, lithe and of medium build, Christian had an earnest smile and an expressive, soft voice. He wore a cream-colored tunic to our meeting, often looking me directly in the eye when speaking. After he spoke of his skepticism, Tambo explained,

> "… before, he used to, when they contacted him, he thought that it was a joke and that it wasn't possible because normally uh, when people talk to you about things in just words, you don't take it serious …You feel like it is only they are talking about it; that it isn't possible and it is not helpful in any way. And then, on the day of coming to give the conversation, the story, he wanted to, he had actually refused to come, and when they came to see him that's when he took the decision to come with them because he had not taken it seriously, yeah."

Christian doubted that a discussion could produce serious changes in his life or be "helpful in any way"; it was hard to take the program "seriously" from the description he was given, without seeing the program or proof of its success. It was not until after he had engaged in conversation with an elder that he was convinced of the benefits of the program. Other youth, however, were less resistant to participation; in fact, many saw it as an opportunity to speak with their elders and confront them with questions they had

been longing to ask.

In a community where local leaders insist that children have been most affected by the lack of trustworthy figures and institutions in their lives, it may seem surprising that the majority of participants were eager to come in.[15] However, unpacking the components of these invitations to speak with elders reveals storytelling's appeal. The first component questions who was asking them. Since youth who were asked to participate were primarily those targeted as "vulnerable" by members of the sociotherapy community, facilitators recruited them.[16] Only one of my participants did not learn about the storytelling from someone who was also a sociotherapy facilitator. The fact that sociotherapists were the ones promoting SFH is, I believe, rather significant. These individuals had a vested interest in the mental health of Rwandan citizens, particularly youth in Byumba, and had been training since 2005 to learn how to effectively communicate with "vulnerable" persons.[17] They were also members of the diocese, an overwhelming presence in Byumba: the EAR. Moreover, for half those I interviewed, the sociotherapy member that asked them to participate was a member of their extended family. Therefore, youth were invited by elders whom they trusted and who knew how to build trust through communciation.[18] Even for Christian, "… His aunt who works with the sociotherapy at the church who told him about it... it was significant because he used to talk to his aunt and because of that he managed to understand a lot better about Stories for Hope."

Unanswered Questions: The Significance of Understanding Rwandan History and Culture

Beyond the encouragement participants received to attend, they also had personal motives; many were compelled by what they hoped to gain from the storytelling. All of the Byumban participants, including the fifteen I did not interview a second time, claimed that they came because they had questions they wanted answered, questions they felt they could not ask. To cite a few translations:

> *Tambo for Emmanuel:* That there are things he had wanted to know and he had not got answers to them, so he got an opportunity to call the person who would give him the answers to those questions he had wanted to ask so that's how he came to Stories for Hope. (Interview, 9/10/2011)

> *Tambo for Nelson:* Yeah, that he already had the questions in his mind because they were questions he had been living with in the day-to-day life…. he didn't have anyone to talk to about them. He didn't have anyone to ask. And that Stories for Hope is the one that provided him that opportunity to talk about these. (Interview, 9/10/2011)

> *Lydia for Noah:* Before I came here, I wished I could find someone I can ask about things con-

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15 In "Here we Are": Community Based Therapy in Byumba, Rwanda, community leaders frequently cite the lack of trustworthy figures in the lives of orphans and other youth in Byumba. For example, a chapter on orphans features an entire section dedicated to "Mistrust of others in the community" and one on children in secondary schools points out that children "mistrust their teachers and their fellow students."(Richters 2008)

16 Elissam was officially instructed by Dr. Pasick to recruit youth who had been exposed to violence. My fieldwork suggested that he was also looking for youth who were socially isolated.

17 Three chapters of "Here we Are" focus on the importance of helping orphans and students in secondary schools overcome traumas and engage with others in positive ways.

18 A primary component of the sociotherapy training is learning to make others feel comfortable, valued and that they are able to trust those around them. (Richters 2008: 17)

cerning the genocide and trauma because I had always wanted to find someone to talk to and listen from. (Evaluation, 11/2010)[19]

Noah's comment touched upon two prominent themes that came up in the storytelling sessions themselves—contemporary history relating to the genocide and personal matters like individual trauma or unhappiness. Another major point of discussion was culture – i.e., questions about traditional practices of the past.

Focusing on participants' interest in culture and history, a few things are noteworthy. However, many questions youth had rested on the fact that information students learned in school contradicted or did not explain information that they had been told by their families or neighbors, or overheard in the community. Many asked about traditional practices that they had heard about in their everyday lives but knew little about. These questions referred to practices of the past: blood brotherhoods, behaviors of children, education, ways neighbors interacted with each other, marriage, courting, pregnancy, genital cutting. Often, the questions were gendered; several of the girls from Byumba asked about "how *girls* behaved" in the past. Overwhelmingly though, youth were curious about specific practices they had heard of in passing. For example, Philippe, who was interested in learning about "the culture of brotherhood whereby one family would make brotherhood with another family through taking one's blood," had heard about the practice from neighbors who said it happened in the past. He wanted to speak to an elder to clarify whether or not such an exchange should occur at present because of HIV/AIDS. Other questions arose in relation to Rwandan history; in several of the storytelling sessions, participants asked directly about the genocide and its cause. That youth would have questions about history, the genocide, and Rwandan culture is understandable when one considers the limited history curriculum in schools and the interdictions on discussions of ethnicity. SFH thus provided youth with a unique opportunity to receive reputable answers to such questions from a respected elder.

While clarity or curiosity may have been aspects of participants' desire to know about country's past and traditions, the fact that they felt this knowledge could actually improve their lives was also motivation to participate. During the 2010 evaluations, several individuals expressed interest in finding out about the past in order to compare it to the present, using knowledge about their culture to better assess how to go about life. In 2011, my interviewees evoked this notion again as they discussed particular questions to which they had been seeking answers. For example, when I asked Clementine why it was important to her "to know what was being practiced in the culture in the past and then compare it to what is happening today," she specified that "she was thinking about the way she was living and then wondering if that's how the young girls in the past generation used to be." Nelson, on the other hand, asked his elder "to compare life, the relationship between, among the Rwandese, before the war and after the war" so that he may "… know how he can live in the society without being a burden to other people in the society." Finally, Phillipe, who was seeking information on blood brotherhood rituals and HIV/AIDS because "he thought that if the practice was to be continued today, most of the people would get infected through the process, so he wanted to discourage people from practicing it." In all of these cases, participants were looking for an elder to help them compare practices of the past to their own and peers' behaviors.

While questions of history were more general, the notion of "tradition" represented more concrete cultural practices. In his book, Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec, Richard Handler

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19 The translator for the 2010 evaluations was told to translate directly, using "I".

discusses Quebec's folk traditions and the ways in which urbanites and historians in French Canada tried to find and catalogue, but also rejuvenate traditions of their ancestors still being practiced in rural Canada. He observes that in this process, practices become objectified as traditions by both rural and urban Québécois, a move that actually brings change, rather than preserving the past. Handler explains that when "new criteria for the classification of social experience" are deployed, practices and entities gain "new meaning" (Handler 1988: 77). Thus, "to the degree that these new interpretations become incorporated into the "things" themselves—that is, become part of the understanding that the folk have of their lives—objectifiers will change folk culture by creating it as tradition (Handler 1988: 77). As it is already becoming clear, the ways that youth in Rwanda call upon their elders to define traditions of the past so that they may use or reject these practices in their everyday lives are similar to those that Handler witnessed in Quebec. Rather than preserve traditions, SFH youth were seeking to define them in order to construct contemporary lifestyles that deal appropriately with important practices of the past (Handler 1998: 69).

Some participants were interested in discussing more specific personal issues, raising questions relating to traumas they had suffered in the past. Emmanuel, who lost his entire family in the genocide and became disabled, wanted to know about the history of the conflict. Solange, a petite, 22 year-old girl with short hair and a delicate face, had been mistreated by her adopted parents. As she sat to my right, glancing at me sometimes then shyly looking at the table, Tambo explained that,

"…she wanted to know mainly about the children, how they are treated in families. Like herself, she was not treated well in the family, so she wanted to ask and get explanations to why that was happening… she wanted to know whether that also happened in the past whether their parents also had to go through that mistreatment."

In these two cases, participants explicitly wanted to use storytelling to help them understand their own suffering in comparison with others who experienced similar problems.

In her dissertation, "The Role of Education in Violent Conflict and Peacebuilding in Rwanda," Elisabeth King asserts that government policy forces a "reductionist" history curriculum in primary and secondary schools, which "inhibits critical thinking skills that are important for conflict management" for Rwandan students today (King 2008: 218). This univocal historical narrative glosses over the ethnic divisions and conflict of the past and forces students to accept an ambiguous national identity and to blindly embrace "Rwandanness" while erasing important ties to ethnic identity (King 2008: 209, 218). However, looking to participants in SFH, we can see that these students are actively pursuing ways to think critically about their identities. Moreover, because they are looking for information about Rwandan history, it would appear that they are also attempting to define, for themselves, aspects of this national and cultural identity that the schools and government are encouraging them to accept. Whether or not their interest in culture was motivated by the ways in which Stories for Hope encouraged youth to discuss such issues with an elder is difficult to say. However, we can see how the storytelling served as a means by which participants believed they could ask knowledgeable figures about culture in order to ground their understanding of their "Rwandan" identity at present.

The Chance to Ask

In light of the participants' interest in these significant questions and the hope that these answers

would improve their lives in various ways, a final inquiry arises as we consider their motivation to come to SFH: why hadn't they asked these questions before? Most of the participants I interviewed claimed that they regularly had conversations with knowledgeable elders, either relatives or members of the socio-therapy community, but had not asked these questions before. Some participants said that they had felt it was inappropriate to ask such questions in everyday conversation. Emmanuel, for example, "never asked before because he felt like it was history, it was gone, but later he felt like he had to ask." Nelson, a mature-looking 28 year-old who smiled when he spoke and tapped his weathered hands against the table, offered further insight. The following exchange I shared with him demonstrates how he felt he could not ask such questions on those occasions despite his regular conversations with an elder:

> *Zoe:* Did you prepare questions to ask her?
> *Tambo for Nelson:* Yeah, that he already had the questions in his mind because they were questions he had been living with in the day-to-day life.
> *Z:* And why didn't you ask her them before?
> *T for N:* Yeah, that he didn't have anyone to talk to about them. He didn't have anyone to ask. And that Stories for Hope is the one that provided him that opportunity to talk about these…
> *Z:* But I'm confused, didn't you talk with your aunt before, once a week?
> *T for N:* Yeah that they would talk about other things that she had lost her husband and he was much younger so he wouldn't just begin asking her questions.
> *Z:* So how were the questions you asked during the storytelling different than what you asked her in discussions before?
> *T for N:* That before he would ask questions about her family, her relationship with her in-laws and after, during the time for the storytelling, the conversation he had with her, he asked more difficult questions, the ones that he had wanted to ask for a long time.

Even though Nelson had a stable relationship with his elder, spoke with her regularly, and had important questions on his mind, he felt it was inappropriate to bring them up because they were talking about other things. The fact that Nelson felt he was not in a position to ask his aunt such questions because he was younger reflects the fear expressed by others to approach elders with questions. For Solange, "the main reason why she came was that before she feared to ask her parents or elders about anything, so she thought this was the opportunity when she has to overcome the fear and get the opportunity to ask the questions she wanted to ask." Tambo explained how Christian claimed that this fear is something commonly experienced by youth:

> "…he was afraid of asking questions because as a youth growing, he would be afraid of asking such a questions from his father… most of the youth have the fear to ask those questions, that kind of questions from their parents, yeah cause they feel it is not right to ask their parents those questions… That mostly it arises from the fear that they will be beaten or called, or saying that they are going out of line or that they are becoming, like they are being disrespectful in a way."

As Solange and Nelson said, Stories for Hope gave them the "opportunity" to overcome their fears and

begin to ask their elders questions that they had on their minds. It seems like such an opportunity would be at the very least tempting, if not impossible, to pass up.

Christian also indicates that such an encounter would, in perhaps exaggerated terms, destabilize the social hierarchy, reducing distance between younger and older generations by diminishing youths' fear to approach their elders. Participating in this unique process certainly held the potential to change the ways in which youth saw themselves in relation to figures they respected as well as their peers. Unsurprisingly, it did affect the ways participants communicated with others and understood their position in society. The task, then, is to examine exactly how and why the conversations changed youths' perceptions of themselves, their elders, their peers, and their place in the community.

As I move on to examining the ways in which youth changed their lives after the storytelling, I would like to offer an important lens through which we can understand their actions. These young people are explicitly marked as "vulnerable" because they were exposed to violence, a requirement for those who participated, and because they were socially isolated (a less formal indicator of their vulnerability, understood by youth participants, their families, and community members). However, as has already become clear through their attempts to use the storytelling to gain access to knowledge and speak with an elder, the youth participants were not passively interacting with SFH. Anthropologists writing on the cultural politics of childhood assert that it is important to understand the agency of vulnerable youth in various global contexts, referring not only to children who have been exposed to violence or traumatizing events, but also children who occupy novel social spaces, such as youth who grow up during revolutions or the children of first generation immigrants (Stephens 1996; Sargent & Scheper-Hughes 1990). Anthropologists frequently use the word "agency", but seldom define it. As none of the editors or contributing authors to these anthologies define "agency", I borrow from anthropologist Laura Ahearn, who defines agency as "the culturally constrained capacity to act" (Ahearn 2001: 54). Thus, we can consider how "child agency" refers to a child's ability to act under constraints placed upon them surrounding social structures. Notably we can consider the ways in which their own social hierarchies confine them to the role of "child" or "youth," endowing them with certain responsibilities or characteristics and denying them others. It is within the constraints placed upon them by social rules of respectability and national regimes of censorship that SFH youth act, taking steps to change their lives and the lives of those around them. These individuals were thus "people as social actors in their own right, engaged in making sense of and recreating the social worlds they inherit," exercising an agency that undermined the vulnerable characteristics that first identified them.

Gaining: How Stories for Hope Improved Participant Morale and Motivated Open Communication

Before jumping into the after-affects of the storytelling, I would like to take a moment to explain and examine the structure of the discussion itself. The storytelling session spans approximately one hour, during which a youth and their chosen elder share a conversation mediated by a facilitator trained by SFH to ask "strength-based questions." Strength-based questions, according to Dr. Pasick, are those that refer to the speakers' strengths while moving the discussion forward or in a new direction. It is important to understand the storytelling in and of itself as a process, rather than merely an encounter. Participants expressed that it was through the process of asking questions and receiving informative answers that they began to gain new insights on their lives and feel more comfortable communicating with others. Moreover,

because participants continued having discussions similar to the storytelling, the process repeated itself: there was what I will call "secondary storytelling," through which participants continued to benefit from talking with others long after their initial SFH session. Therefore, before I evaluate how relationships between participants and those older and younger than them changed as a result of the storytelling, I would like to explore the ways in which the participants felt the process of having these conversations impacted their lives. This step helps us understand how the positive things that youth drew from their first discussion, and subsequent discussions with their elder and others who were close to them, fostered a foundation from which they could engage with other community members in new ways. Furthermore, looking to the immediate benefits participants felt they took from the storytelling, we see connections between their rationale behind coming and what they gained.

Fearless and Free: New perspectives on communication

"…before the storytelling [when I had a problem at school] I could just go home and sit quietly and not even communicate with my parents. But after the storytelling, my parents have become my great friends, they have become like as though they are my sisters and my brothers… it has changed my life in a way that I even sit with my parents and we chat and we converse and we share ideas for more than 3 hours…" Christian (Initial Evaluation)

I was compelled ask Christian for a second interview because of the way he spoke about the dramatic change in his relationship with his parents only three months after the storytelling. I was curious about his transition from non-communication with his parents to perceiving them as "sisters and brothers," people who he could "converse" and "share ideas" with frequently and openly.

In the first section of this paper, I noted that when I asked Christian about his relationship with his parents before the storytelling, he remarked that he had been afraid to approach them with questions. He explained, however, that this fear was gradually alleviated during the storytelling. Tambo translated for Christian: "Now he can ask the questions easily… at the beginning he was afraid, he was full of fear…. As the conversation went on, he began to feel easy, more comfortable with her, his mother, and in the process he felt relieved and they talked to each other, son and mother." Thus, in his first discussion with his mother, he began to feel more comfortable asking her questions and conversing with her. Furthermore, we can see how the fear that he would be beaten for being disrespectful may have been allayed when he realized that asking questions could result in conversation and made him feel "more comfortable" with his mother. Clementine also expressed a belief that storytelling can help individuals overcome fears they have to communicate. Early in our interview, she asserted that the storytelling makes people "fearless." When I asked her to expand upon that claim, Tambo explained for her,

"That at first, she never felt open to anyone else … and so when you are less afraid, you are more open to someone and also pass new ideas to that person… she says that she used to talk to people, but in a more closed way, so she never expressed her ideas well because she was reserved. And then, after coming to Stories for Hope, that's when she starting being freer and fearless and also being open."

Like Christian, Clementine pointed out that the storytelling helps participants become less afraid to share

their ideas or ask questions because they receive a positive response when doing so in the session; they learn that they will not be reprimanded or discouraged for engaging with elders in this way. Moreover, she indicates how being without fear can make a person less inhibited about expressing their opinions or pursuing things they are curious about.

These comments from Clementine, as well as those from Christian, touch upon another personal change many participants attributed to the storytelling, related to the lack of fear they now knew: the ability to be more open or free with people. As Clementine explained, the way in which she communicated with others after Stories for Hope was more "open," as compared to before, when she was "reserved" and "closed." When I asked her to elaborate on this, through Tambo, he explained, "…She used to think that what she had [been] thinking was concerning her alone. And then she decided to go out and ask others what they think about it and in the process she had to get some ideas from other people." Clementine indicated that because she felt her thoughts could be connected or related to those around her, that she could converse with family and community members about her ideas and questions, she was more inclined to approach others after the storytelling session. As a result, the responses, "ideas" she got, reaffirmed that others had similar thoughts and opinions to her own. Therefore, we can see how storytelling motivated Clementine to speak to others because she felt an affinity, and in the process of having more conversations she felt increasingly less isolated, thereby "freer" to approach people and speak "openly" with them. Responses from the other participants indicate how this fostered in them an openness to communicate that was self-perpetuating, bringing them out of isolation. For example, Tambo translated that Solange claimed,

At the time, [before the storytelling], she was reserved and she also had these perceptions that they wouldn't even listen to her… in the past whenever the elders or some of the old people used to visit their place, she wouldn't talk to them. She was reserved and she even had anger for the past things that had happened, the bad things that had happened. ... But now, everything has changed… That by the time they had the conversation with the uncle [after the storytelling], she became free and the uncle also told her to feel free talking to [him] about anything. And that was the first time she had got someone to talk to, someone to listen to her and in the process now, she has opened up and she is free to talk to the rest of the family members.

Again, for Solange, the encouragement she received from her uncle to ask him questions freely "opened" her to talk with other family members she had not spoken with before. Christian expressed a similar sentiment in his evaluation when he noted that, before "[he] could just go home and sit quietly and not even communicate with [his] parent[s]," but now talks to them openly and regularly for long periods of time. Nelson also explained that he now frequently approaches his in-law with any questions he has.

Although I did not interview elders, the youths' comments suggest that they were both supportive and available to converse with them frequently after the storytelling, as were other members in their families and elders in the community. All of my interviewees noted that they spoke regularly with their elders and conversations were more intimate and/or more frequent than before the storytelling. Furthermore, there were several structures in place that helped ensure their ability and inclination to continue intergenerational communication that fostered new, positive mindsets. We should remember first that the elders who came also came voluntarily; they were probably not antagonistic to the idea of the storytelling and believed it could be of help to the youth. Second, they were trained by SFH staff before

the storytelling session to respond positively to the youth and encourage them to continue to come to them after their initial discussion. Since many members of the SFH staff worked in the sociotherapy program at the church, they were a presence in elders' daily life. Therefore, they were in place both as advocates of regular communication and providers of assistance if elders felt unsure of how to proceed with their youth counterparts after the storytelling. Finally, the transcripts from the storytelling point to ways in which the process may have encouraged elders to continue conversation. Elders may have again been motivated by program facilitators, who often interjected to point out strengths of participants and the importance of focusing on the topics at hand. Additionally, several storytelling transcripts indicate that elders were quite moved by the conversations themselves and understood the benefit of continuing to speak with youth on a regular basis. Therefore, without inferring too much about elders' response to the storytelling, we can see how pre-existing social dynamics (the interest elders and sociotherapists had in the well-being of youth) and the structures of the storytelling (how it showed elders the benefit of speaking with youth and aligned them with sociotherapists) helped ensure that elders would continue to be supportive of the youth reaching out to them.

Respect and the Arts of Conversing with Elders

The regard with which most participants spoke of elders suggested that they looked to elders' advice with respect and considered their knowledge and wisdom to be official. Indeed, elders are in many ways the ultimate authority on culture in Rwanda, as it is traditionally their role to pass down wisdom and tell younger generations stories of the past (Bagilysha 2000: 349). Since elders command so much authority and respect, it is unsurprising that youth were fearful to approach them before the storytelling. Moreover, it is easy to understand how the idea of having conversations with such venerated figures in which they, youth, could also voice their opinions and command respect was rather inconceivable.

After the storytelling, however, many participants expressed that it was now easy to have such conversations because they knew how to approach elders using specific conversational conventions. Christian, who, after participating in SFH, "learned to speak with elders," explained that "…there is a way you respect the elders… speaking with an elder, it is a process, there is a way you have to begin asking him about the family, how they are at home. And then in the process you come to a point where you ask what you would like to ask." His comment echoed those of Clementine, Philippe and Nelson, who all claimed that the storytelling helped them to learn how speaking with elders is a process in which it takes time and careful conversation to reach the trust necessary to ask the question you intended to ask. Youths' mastery of the form of such intergenerational conversations allowed them to feel like they were asking elders questions in an appropriate way, but also, more importantly, that they were giving advice or asserting their opinions at appropriate times. Philippe even remarked that, going about a conversation with an elder in the proper way, he could tell them practices of the past were wrong, that "it wasn't being disrespectful"; once one has an audience with an elder, it is "ok to ask the question and also be open to the elder." Therefore, youth could not only learn the cultural information that they sought; they also began to critically engage with that information as they spoke with elders, forming opinions on traditions and the past as they learned about them, all while maintaining a proper amount of respect. While youth did not explicitly state how they learned to talk to elders in such a way, the fact that they went through the process of asking questions for their initial SFH conversation and then had subsequent conversations with elders and family members suggests that they learned these conventional skills through secondary storytelling. It is important to note,

however, that elders' conversations with facilitators and employees indicated that they saw the exercise of oral tradition to be an important and positive element of the model. While it is beyond the scope of my data to evaluate the ways in which elders and facilitators were using the program to promote these interactions, I suspect that they were actively encouraging youth to come to them and teaching them appropriate practices as well.

Once they became accustomed to conversing with elders, youth were also able to understand the worth of their contributions to these conversations. Almost all of the participants expressed confidence in the opinions they shared with elders. While one might partially attribute this confidence to the ways in which having multiple conversations with youth and elders built up participants' perceptions of themselves, some youth explained how their unique societal position (as youth in conversation with elders, as youth who had participated in the storytelling) gave them salient contributions to their discussions. This is demonstrated by the fact that Emmanuel, Solange, Christian, and Nelson gave advice that elders subsequently followed. Additionally, as the following comments indicate, Emmanuel and Nelson, in their respective occupations as local official and sociotherapist, gained confidence in their advice and perspective by helping elders deal with youth.

> *Tambo for Emmanuel:* "[Elders] approach him and sometimes they seek his advice when there are some problems in the society… in the neighboring villages, there are cases where some parents have got, their children steal, they are thieves. So they approach him and ask him how they can handle their kids and in some cases there are some family problems and they ask his advice, whether they can report to the authorities and which channels to follow… he feels confident [in the answers he gave them].

> *Tambo for Nelson:* "…That before, [as sociotherapists] they were trained to help parents in their homes whenever they have problems with the kids, but he found it very hard to help them. Yeah. But, with the experience he got from Stories for Hope it has become more easier to talk to those parents in the ways they can help their children, yeah… [it's easier because] he takes the example from himself. Before he used not to just ask questions, and that after coming to Stories for Hope and after going through the experience of asking his in-law and being responded to, he came up with how he can tell the parents to talk to their kids, so he kind of got it through Stories for Hope.

Each participant's comment reflects a confidence in their ability to guide elders. Nelson's remark that he was able to "take the example from himself" and encourage parents to speak to their children with a model similar to that of SFH indicates how he understood the efficacy of the SFH model and the ways it can improve conversation between generations. Christian (and any other participant with a similar understanding) could use his awareness of how elders can make youth feel comfortable in conversation when discussing intergenerational problems with elders. I argue that special knowledge engendered an amount of confidence in youth participants when conversing with elders that relied upon their position as youth, for it aided them in guiding elders looking to relate to other young people. Coupled with their ability to speak to elders in an appropriate way, the insight SFH youth were able to offer elders afforded them positions as informed, respected conversation partners in the eyes of elders.

Processes of Reflection

There were a variety of other ways in which participants claimed they changed their perceptions of themselves and their community because of the storytelling. The role the SFH CDs played in participants' lives following the storytelling is particularly interesting. The storytelling session was recorded and youth were given both a CD of the conversation and a CD player so that they could listen to it again and, if so inclined, share it with their families. In the November 2010 evaluation interviews (four months after the storytelling) participants overwhelmingly responded that they had already listened to the CD at least several times, and most had shared it with their families or friends. The fact that youth had embraced and used the CD shows how sharing and listening to the CD was a part of secondary storytelling. In my own interviews, Solange and Nelson discussed why it was important for them to listen to the conversation again and again. Although they were the only two participants who discussed it a second time, I chose to include their remarks because the ways in which they used their CDs speaks to the potential of the conversation to motivate critical thinking and introspection. Nelson, who in November 2010 claimed to listen to his CD every day, told me that he still listened to it three times a week almost a year later. Tambo explained, "…whenever he goes to visit [his elder], he listens first to the CD they recorded and whatever he thinks he has forgot he goes back … and he asks her about it… If he doesn't go there, he listens to the CD and he relaxes and he feels like he is discussing with her." Nelson was thus able to use the CD to reflect upon the storytelling and consider his first conversation, pondering what he learned from his elder and what he would what like to continue learning. His comment that he "relaxes and feels like he is discussing it with her" echoes several statements made by participants in the 2010 evaluation interviews, in which they claimed the storytelling calmed them or gave them some relief. Solange also used her CD to think back to her the storytelling session. Tambo translated her explanation:

> "She does listen to [her CD] mostly because some of the children at home ask her to play it so that they can listen to the conversation she had with the uncle and secondly she has to listen to it so that she remembers, tries to remember what the conversation was and then evaluate how she has progressed ever since she had the conversation."

By listening to the CD once a month she is able to think about the conversation and "evaluate how she has progressed." This indicates how the storytelling sparked a kind of critical introspection whereby she could evaluate how she had matured emotionally or learned to better connect with others since her initial conversation. Here we are reminded of the fact that the storytelling was a unique experience in participants' lives, a special event in which their thoughts and questions took on significance. The CD can be seen as a tool by which they were able to remind themselves of that encounter, constantly re-evaluating its importance and the impact it made on their lives.

However, the CD also was a potential source of pain for those who discussed upsetting events or experiences during the discussion. For Solange, who initially had a difficult time discussing previous abuse she had encountered as an orphan in her storytelling conversation, hearing the CD was difficult at first because she had to relive the discussion. She, Tambo and I had the following exchange:

> *Z:* So how has it been different every time you listened to it?
> *T for S:* At first, listening to the tape, making the recording, it was hurting, it was painful, and

when she finished making the recording, whenever she listened to the CD, it would also make her feel the pain, but as time kept passing, these days she never feels that. It has changed. She enjoys it more than the first time she was listening to it.
Z: Why was it so painful the first time?
T for S: Yeah, that she wasn't used… it was her first time to talk about her experience.
Z: And now, it's easier to hear the tape, to talk about your experience?
T for S: Yeah, that it makes her even stronger.
Z: To talk about your experience?
T for S: Yeah
Z: So have you talked to a lot of people about it since the storytelling?
S: (nods)
Z: Who? Your family?
T for S: Yeah, mostly she talks about it with friends who are experiencing the same problems.
Z: So what's it like to talk to friends who are experiencing the same problems now?
T for S: Yeah, that it makes her stronger and also she has to encourage her friends to be strong and pass through those hardships and let them know that they will pass through it and have a better future.
Z: Do you have friends who are stronger than you?
T for S: There are not.
Z: You're the strongest.
Solange: (nods, smiling at me)

Although it was painful for Solange to hear the conversation again, listening to herself talk about her experience became easier over time and she even began to discuss similar problems with friends. Therefore, first through the storytelling, then through listening to the CD, Solange was able to better deal with a past that left her "angry" and "introverted."[20] Moreover, the fact that she feels stronger now that she is able to think about her experience and uses it to help "encourage friends [who have gone through the same experience]…to be strong" shows how the conversations and processes of reflection motivated by the storytelling taught her how to use her own hardship to empower herself and help others. Although it is only one example, Solange's story substantiates that although the CDs may have forced them to revisit painful memories, reflections that were part of secondary storytelling held a great power to help participants overcome past hardships and help them feel stronger in their everyday lives.

Hope for the Future

A final important benefit participants claimed to have taken from the storytelling was a new sense of hope for the future. Emmanuel, who spoke with a sly smile, looked at Tambo and Dr. Pasick when responding,[21] and often moved his pointer finger and thumb up and down to illustrate points, discussed this at length. Tambo ultimately relayed that,

> "After the genocide, he didn't have much hope for the future because he had been, he had met a lot of problems in the genocide cause he was in, he had wounds that he got from the

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20 Her words from other moments in the September 2011 interview.
21 Dr. Pasick had been present for Emmanuel's interview because it was the first of the day. All other interviews were conducted without her.

genocide, so in the process he became crippled. And that it was hard for him even to get clothes. So he never had hope for the future, he felt like the world was crushing on him. And though he never took drugs, in the process like many others did, but it was hard and he never had a clear vision for his future.... That after coming to Stories for Hope, the way he perceived himself… he gave himself some value because before he thought he didn't have any value in the world but after coming to Stories for Hope he felt he is of much value to the world. And he perceived himself as a person who is going to persevere. And not to give those people who committed those atrocities a chance of saying that he's falling back, he's not going to be a better person and he wants to show them that he can have a brighter future and he is strong."

Emmanuel, who felt hopeless before the storytelling, was unable to imagine a future for himself that was positive or "clear." However, because the storytelling made him feel he was "of much value to the world… a person who was going to persevere", and he became "strong" in his quest to pursue a "brighter future" for himself, one that he could now envision. Solange and Christian also touched upon the fact that they now speak regularly with their peers about a "better future" as a means of turning away from hardships in their past; Solange was mistreated and Christian did drugs. Again, it is relevant to think about how secondary storytelling held incredible potential to continuously reaffirm participants' new perceptions of self worth and their abilities to overcome their past, fueling transformative optimism.

Understanding how the storytelling allowed youth to envision positive and new futures for themselves will be addressed again in the next section, when looking to the ways in which SFH youth were able to encourage their peers using their new perspectives on the past and present. Indeed, as I explore ways participants began interacting with elders and other youth in their community, it will become apparent how the strength, openness, positivity, and communication skills they gained during the storytelling served as a foundation for engagement.

Peer to Peer: Building a Future and Guiding the Youth

Emboldened by the confidence, skills, and knowledge they gained in the storytelling and from subsequent conversations with elders, the SFH youth also began conversing with other youth. Several participants claimed that they now approach peers to exchange ideas and opinions about topics important to them, ranging from personal dilemmas to questions of "culture" to national issues. Christian, for example, declared that, "…nowadays they discuss on how they can make a better future and now they talk about how they can make projects to generate some income and also how to help in the society." Solange also discusses the future with her peers, both as a way of encouraging them to pass through hardships and "have a better future." In this way, we can see how "hope" for the future, as motivated by the storytelling, helped them have positive conversations with peers in which they were also able to consider the role their generation would have in their country in following years. In another vein, Clementine and Philippe claimed that they now approach peers with an imperative to have conversations in which they are critical about culture. While Clementine stated that she is persistent in asking peers questions about culture and "about the life in the past compared to life in the present", Philippe brought up the example of discussing the issue of HIV/AIDS with his peers. These kinds of conversations reflect the processes of learning "how to go about life" in order to become better members of society, as discussed earlier in this chapter. Through all of these

conversations, we can see how youth, as an ultimate result of secondary storytelling, began engaging with their peers in order to analyze and fortify their understandings of the role of their generation in Rwandan history.

In what is perhaps a more inspiring fashion, youth also began advising their peers and those younger than them, using personal experience and their knowledge of "culture" to guide them. A stunning example of this is Solange's case. Tambo explained how, after the storytelling,

"The young ones normally ask [Solange] about how they are treated in their families and in school. How they are beaten at home and at school. So most of the questions arise from there… the reason as to why they ask her is that she normally approaches them. She approaches young people where they are and she talks to them and in the process they open up and ask her the questions they want. …"

Later, she told Tambo that, "… She has an important role in the society in that if the young children approach her for solutions, whenever they meet differences, when they fight, when they have grudges and they approach so that she solves their problems, she feels… like it is important." After finding ways to overcome the mistreatment she faced in her past, Solange began approaching young children and was able to help them when they asked her about similar problems. Since she was able to offer "solutions" to these problems and others, she felt she had earned a legitimate claim to an "important role in the society." Emmanuel and Nelson also remarked that they felt comfortable advising their peers; specifically, Emmanuel gave examples of how he was able to guide young couples, as well as young women who were considering dating older men (it is likely he was talking about sugar daddies), and Nelson spoke of helping children who were saddened by an absent father. Christian articulated his ability to guide others as a responsibility. Tambo explained for him,

"…he has a role of sensitizing the youth to leave the bad practices they were in and instead work together to build the nation… like the youth who are still consuming drugs, he talks to them as a person who used drugs before. He gives them the examples, he talks to them about how they can be, they can live a better life without the drugs. And in a way he shows them the way. The clear path to take… he feels it is a burden to him to see some youth still using drugs, so and it is because of this that he and some of the other three friends that are also involved in the Stories for Hope, they came up with a project of setting up that project of theirs where they have to go to all these youth clubs sensitizing the youth about how to leave drugs and how to live a better future."

Having done drugs in the past, Christian saw the task of helping other youth overcome such "bad practices" as his duty, a "burden" even, to the point where he and his friends who had also participated in SFH organized an official club to help their peers. In all of these examples—Solange's guidance of mistreated children, Emmanuel's work with young couples, Nelson's with children, Christian's efforts to help youth avoid using drugs—we see how the SFH youth were able to guide the young on issues they, as youth, could relate to. Moreover, most of these issues touched upon problems participants worked through during their secondary storytelling (with the exception of Emmanuel, who did not mention dating or sugar daddies in

any evaluations or the storytelling session). Since participants reached out to young people in their communities facing problems they had either experienced or were familiar with, I argue that they have taken on roles as peer mentors to fellow youth. Rather than place themselves in positions which confer to them the same amount of respect as elders possess or distance themselves from their peers socially, they are actively working through problems to, as Christian put it, "live a better future."

Important Members of Society: Storytelling, Boldness, Respect, and Authority

Before I address the responses that speak to my largest research questions regarding Stories for Hope—whether or not the storytelling process had affected the ways in which participants treated generational hierarchy—I would like to take a moment to consider the youth who, more than others, lead me to believe that SFH altered participants' behaviors and outlooks in ways dramatic enough to spur social change: Clementine.

When I first listened to the evaluations, I knew that I would ask Clementine for a second interview. "Why had she participated in SFH?", I asked her, via Tambo. "…Because it promotes culture and it creates a platform for youth to discuss issues and to converse with elders," she replied. Did she have any problems as a result of the storytelling? Only, she declared, "that now she has a liberal mind." She explained,

> "She discusses issues with other people to this and it surprises other people how she is so much bold. Where she got that boldness to be able to speak and discuss with other people without fear, interacting with elders without fear that sometimes creates uh… makes especially her friends, they ask why? How come you can be bold to go and chat and discuss about such issues with elders?"

Clementine became "liberal" in the sense that she felt free to voice her opinions to others and "boldly" ask elders questions about difficult topics. The way the storytelling emboldened her, and her awareness of the project's cultural and social significance, permeated Clementine's responses in her first interview. Pat and I were both struck by the way in which she conveyed a sense of authority and an eagerness to communicate with both elders and youth in the community. I wanted to know more: Where exactly did her boldness come from? What kinds of questions was she asking? Why did she feel no fear asking them? How had elders received her? If she was the only young fearless person, how did she see herself in relation to her peers?

Due to a scheduling conflict with her university courses and the fact that she was living in Kigali, I interviewed Clementine on a different day than the rest of my participants. Needless to say, I was excited when she arrived and even more excited to realize that I did not have to worry about squeezing her into a busy day of interviews and fret over the time, and that we could chat informally before and after the interview. I felt our short conversations helped us connect (if only slightly) over our mutual interest in the state of Rwandan culture at present, generating some trust between us. In her interview, Clementine looked me (not Tambo) right in the eye when speaking, her tone subdued yet firm, her answers careful and direct, laughing sometimes, her eyes lighting up when she spoke about how the storytelling had ignited her interest in culture. Considering the confidence she emanated, the ways she immediately and articulately responded to questions, I doubt the informal conversation was what made the interview go so well; the

most important factor in the success of our conversation was what helped me communicate with others—the participants' enthusiasm to share his or her story, my knowledge of the storytelling, and my eager interest in their experience.

It was precisely that combination that made studying her comments about boldness easy in our interviews. I learned that during the storytelling, Clementine had learned about a number of traditional practices in Rwanda, but was particularly affected by hearing that elders used to sit with youth and have conversations in which they gave them advice. Thus, after the storytelling, Clementine began approaching elders with questions about Rwandan culture. She became increasingly frustrated, however, by the inability of most elders to answer her questions because, "the people today are not like the ones in the past because the elders in the past used to be knowledgeable about so many things, but these days it is hard to find them." Despite her frustration, she continued approaching elders using conventions of respect that marked her position as a youth distinct from that of an elder, eventually finding some elders whom she felt could give her the knowledge she desired. In the process, she also began approaching her peers and even those younger than her to try and have critical conversations with them about culture. Again, she was disappointed, this time by her peers' disinterest in the issues she hoped to discuss, but continued to pursue such conversations with youth. Additionally, she began advising those younger than her about problems they were facing.

Although Clementine exhibited a unique vested interest in culture, new inclinations to approach elders, to have critical conversations with peers, or to advise younger children are themes that came up in all of my interviews. I prefaced this section with Clementine's story in particular, however, because her case is one in which an observer might have expected generational roles to become reversed; with her interest in and knowledge on culture and tradition Clementine could have begun to disrespect her elders and view herself as a greater authority. Instead, by observing intergenerational etiquette, Clementine was able use the knowledge and perspective she gained from the storytelling and subsequent conversations to engage with her peers and youth, serving as guide or advisor when necessary. As this section will demonstrate, the roles and responsibilities Clementine and other youth assumed in their community are those they see as appropriate and necessary for confident and informed youth of post-genocide Rwanda to take on. First, so that we may better understand how SFH youth came to assume their new positions as responsible youth in their community, I begin with an examination of what motivated them to start becoming more active members of Byumban society. From there, it becomes possible to assess the processes by which youth gained a sense of moral and cultural authority through their interactions with each generation, fortifying their position as informed, respectable Rwandan youth.

"How to Go About Life"

Like Clementine, most of my interviewees indicated that, since the storytelling, they had begun to approach youth and elders in their community with zeal. It seemed that the primary motivation behind youths' attempts to engage with elders and peers was their interest in furthering ideas they had started forming during the storytelling; youth could continue to discuss issues important to them by approaching family members and others in order to exchange opinions and knowledge. Certainly, the increased degree to which they were interacting with members of the community was marked for each participant; both Clementine and Solange emphasized how they now approach youth, both their peers and those younger than them, to discuss culture and personal experience, respectively, Emmanuel and Christian both became

involved in official community organizations in order to help youth who had gone through experiences similar to their own. Philippe, Clementine and Nelson began approaching elders to have conversations in which they were keen to assert their opinions. These different levels of engagement suggest how, for several participants, the ways in which the storytelling comforted or strengthened them, or pulled them from isolation, was not enough. Youth were curious to know how others felt about issues they had discussed in the storytelling—questions of culture, of history, of personal experience. Furthermore, because they did feel stronger in various ways (fearless, free, with hope for the future), youth were eager to assume assertive roles in these conversations, as well as to encourage their peers with advice they were now able to give as a result of the storytelling. Philippe, for example, in both his evaluation and his interview, discussed how he was not only able inform youth about Rwandan "culture" (specifically about the practice of blood brotherhood and about various proverbs), but also give others advice on how one may go about life in present day Rwanda. During the interview, he looked between Tambo and I when he spoke and would often place his hands on the table when making a point. Though he made an impression during our interview, I cite his 2010 evaluation because he most clearly articulated this process then, noting,

> "I have good relationships with youth in a way that when I go to youth now, I tell them how it used to be how our elders used to have a malpractice, a malpractice of people cutting one another's stomach and drinking blood as a sign of friendship whereby one would say, "let's drink our blood so that you may promise to me that you give my son your daughter to marry her." I find that as a bad practice and I tell it to the youth because people would get married without dating, without even loving one another. You would get… you would marry someone you don't even know you have never even felt in love with. So we share that with youth and we get to criticize our culture where it was weak."

After learning why this ritual of exchanging blood was practiced (to symbolically arrange a marriage) and discussing it with an elder, Philippe wanted to share his knowledge and informed opinion with his peers. Phillipe's comment that he was able to "criticize culture where it was weak" is significant, in that it conveys the authority he felt to criticize traditions and the past, and suggests the importance he sees in thinking critically about his culture in order to determine how to go about life in the present. These sentiments reflected numerous statements made by youth in my own interviews and in others in the 2010 evaluations that they now "know" or "can choose how to go about life". As Nelson told me via Tambo, "knowing about the history of the nation, he has known how to handle himself in the society… when he compares the life in the past and life now, he comes up with a way how he can live a much better way…" It is thus by interpreting the information they gain about Rwandan culture, tradition, or history and using it in their day to day lives that participants felt they were able to judge their own behaviors as "good" or "bad".

This process of thinking critically about traditions and the past highlights a difficult task faced by many youth in Rwanda: reconciling what they know about their country's history and traditions with their understanding of how to act appropriately and deal with problems they face in contemporary society. One problem is determining the accuracy of what they are taught about history and culture in their school curriculum. As Elisabeth King highlights in her evaluation of the Rwandan education system, students learn different versions of history from schools and local sources, are aware that the history curriculum they are being taught in schools omits important events of the past, and struggle to define for themselves the meaning of the vague term "Rwandanness," a new way of identifying oneself in the post-genocide regime that ignores ethnic divisions of the past (King 2006: 205, 206, 209). The following excerpt from Nelson's interview highlights the differences between what is taught in schools and "the culture" and how he deals with both.

> *Tambo for Nelson:* "…what you learn in school sometimes is different from the culture. So sometimes you talk about something you learned from school and someone who knows it from the traditional point of view, he finds it so different.
> *Z:* So how do you know what to believe or take as truth?
> *T for M:* Yeah, that you try to listen to what culture or the elders are to say about it. Then you compare it to what you learn from school. Then you come up with what can help you. That you compare the two. Then you are picking one of which is help to you.

Nelson indicated that in order to problem solve and make decisions in his everyday life, he must take into consideration what he has learned from school and "the culture" and evaluate which information can best guide his choices.

The cultural identities that the Rwandan youth ultimately assume are mediated by different forces from which they draw resources and ideologies. The youth move between spaces in which they navigate different ideologies of history and "culture," seeing opportunity to "play" with definitions of what it means to be "Rwandan." Thus, they are agents of constructing a notion of their own "cultural identity", one that allows them to deal with contemporary problems using a self-constructed combination of beliefs entailed in these ideologies, formulating their own understanding of "how to go about life" in the post-genocide period.

Turning to the specific ways in which youth interacted with other young people and elders following the storytelling, we see how their knowledge of and desire to navigate "how to go about life" motivated their conversations and reinforced their sense of moral and "cultural" authority.

In the first section of the ethnographic piece of this thesis, I mentioned how the SFH project has perhaps worked to reconfigure the generational hierarchy in Rwanda. By offering them the opportunity to speak with their elders face to face in an unconventional setting, the storytelling allowed youth to forego conventions of respectability, symbolically reducing the distance between generations. As their comments revealed, the storytelling did embolden youth to begin speaking to their elders in an opinionated fashion, engaging them in critical conversations about culture. Additionally, youth began to assume authority and leadership when interacting with their peers and those younger than them: advising them on problems, encouraging them to think positively about their lives and the future, engaging them in conversations about culture and the past. In this vein, SFH youth did appear closer to elders and were distinguished from their peers. However, considering that in their engagement with both their elders and peers they relied on their position as youth—as insightful yet respectful conversation partners to elders, as relatable mentors to their peers and those younger than themselves—indicates that their new societal position was that of a responsible, knowledgeable, engaged young person.

Conclusion

Considering Stories for Hope in Byumba—the elements of the project that drew participants, the event itself, the secondary storytelling it engaged participants in, the ways it encouraged youth to make changes in their lives—there are several themes I would like to highlight. First is the self-perpetuating nature of the storytelling that was crucial to the program's success. SFH called for youth to think critically about what they desired to ask their elders concerning personal, local, and national history and traditions. Furthermore, the organization prompted them into a conversation with an elder and facilitator trained to ensure the experience would be a positive one, and that they would get to discuss the issues and questions on their minds. Thus, it provided youth the opportunity to start thinking, speaking, and engaging with elders in ways they had previously feared. Although the storytelling was a singular event, it opened the door for young people to continue interacting with people in the way they had during that conversation, sparking a desire to ask and giving them the skills with which to communicate. Participants understood that they had partaken in an important, unique experience. It was not to be taken for granted and, as the CD would help them remember, not to be forgotten.

Second, to help sustain the young participants' curiosity and desire to interact with others, participating elders and sociotherapy facilitators were present as knowledgeable and encouraging figures to whom they could turn. In this way, the success of the storytelling was contingent upon the local environment in which it was implemented. It is difficult to speak to whether or a not a positive community dynamic influenced the success of the program in different regions. However, it is noteworthy that, in the other circumstances under which the storytelling was deployed, SFH worked in conjunction with organizations promoting resilience and reconciliation based in the target communities. It was thus in the hands of SFH's Rwandan employees and participants to bolster the emotional, intellectual, and social growth of youth. I noted earlier that one of my research questions concerned the implications of the humanitarian work being done by SFH and other organizations working with children. A compelling yet troubling implication of such work, noted by many anthropologists, is that educated individuals from Western nations have the right and the obligation to improve or save the lives of disempowered, underprivileged children in other nations (Howell 2006: 161; Scheper-Hughes and Sargent 1990; Stephens 1996). However, upon examination of the mission, model, and implementation of SFH, it becomes clear that the program relies upon and assumes the strength of community leaders and Rwandans of the next generation. Rather than position itself as organization that will "save" Rwandan youth, SFH offers communities a tool designed by Americans and Rwandans exchanging knowledge and ideas, modeled after the Rwandan oral tradition. The solution that Dr. Pasick offered to Rwandan officials who had asked for her help was successful because local leaders were eager to implement it and improve the lives of young people in their communities.

Moving from structure to reported results, we arrive back at the remarkable ways youth made changes in their lives after volunteering to participate in SFH. Although encouraged by others, youth were the ones who took the skills, knowledge, and opportunities they were given by the storytelling; they improved their relations with relatives and community members, in the process strengthening their understanding of the past and gaining optimism for the future. Youth embraced the chance to ask questions about traditions and the past – questions that they were discouraged from asking in schools – in order to better determine how to go about life in the present. Their focus on traditions and culture hints to how they were working to define the "Rwandanness" school curriculums insist they share as part of a national identity or heritage by seeking reliable, but non-divisive, information about practices of the past. Thus,

they used the storytelling to better understand the vague policies of unity thrust upon them in the post-genocide period, forming perspectives on their country's past and culture with respect to the constraints of censorship. On a second, similar level, young adults of SFH achieved new respect from elders and youth in their community, all the while respecting social etiquette and generational hierarchy. As leaders to peers and young conversation partners to respected elders, SFH youth became active, important members of the community, assuming responsibilities appropriate to their societal roles.

I noted before that a condition of speaking with Rwandans as a short-term visitor, particularly with youth from SFH, is the doubt one has to maintain in regards to the truthfulness of what an interlocutor is saying. While young peoples' responses indicate they were exercising agency in innovative and important ways, my interviewees may have been working to present me and SFH with a certain censored, polished, wholesome image of their lives. If this is the case, it is still significant that youth understand the ways they need to position themselves in relation to discourses about history, the genocide, and social hierarchy to construct an appropriate, idealistic image of their lives for an outsider. Whether they were creating the illusion that they were operating in accordance with these social codes or actively following them, youth demonstrated a keen awareness of censorship and social hierarchy in Rwanda.

We see SFH's stunning results as the product of cross-cultural collaboration, a community support system, and the agency that empowers youth who understand history and tradition in the post genocide period. The youth participants' translated words highlight the potential that lies in reviving an oral tradition disrupted by conflict, as well as their own power to reinvigorate and re-conceptualize notions of culture in Rwanda. However, the uncertainty with which I and SFH regard this data – the gaps in trust and understanding generated by our lack of time spent in Rwanda – points to the need for further research on youth and social change in Rwanda. Time-intensive fieldwork would reveal the complexities of young peoples' everyday lives, of their thoughts and opinions on their country's past and future, providing us insights on a generation coming of age in Rwanda. Taking the time to gain the trust of informants and understand the nuances of contemporary social dynamics in Rwanda would allow us to properly listen to youths' own stories, which illustrate a resilient generation struggling to negotiate history and unity.

Appendix: Interview Templates

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Questionnaire for Kinship Study Subjects

1. What was your relationship with your elder like before participating in the story-telling program? How did you meet him/her?

2. What was it like to ask your elder questions? Was it different from the ways you talked to him/her in the past?

3. How did the storytelling discussion compare to other discussions you had had with people who are older than you? How did it compare to discussions you had with your peers or family members who are your age? Who are younger than you?

4. Do you now seek advice from anyone in your community? Who? Do you think the storytelling

process impacted your decision to seek advice from this person?

5. To whom do you give advice? Why do you think these people ask your opinions when they have problems?

6. Who do you live with? Please describe your relationships with them. Do you feel your relationships changed after participating in the storytelling project?

7. Do you have a group of people you consider to be your family? Who are they? How did the storytelling impact your relationships with these people?

8. Do you still listen to the CD made during the storytelling? How often? Have your perceptions about the story changed after listening to it many times?

9. Do you share the CD with anyone? Who? What is it like when you listen to the CD together?

10. What type of role do you feel you play in your family? In your community? How do you see yourself in relation to others?

Example of Modified Questions Template for Phillipe

1. How did you hear about Stories for Hope? Why did you come?

2. What was your relationship with your elder like before participating in the story-telling program? How did you meet him/her?

3. What was it like to ask your elder questions? Was it different from the ways you talked to him/her in the past?

4. You asked many questions about Rwandan culture and traditions. Why? How did having those questions answered by an elder impact your life?

5. You also asked questions about advice for parents (about planning a family or planning for a kid's future), but you are not a parent. Why did you ask for this type of advice?

6. How did the storytelling discussion compare to other discussions you had had with people who are older than you? How did it compare to discussions you had with your peers or family members who are your age? Who are younger than you?

7. Who in your community knows you participated in the storytelling? What do you think they think of the process?

8. Do you now seek advice from anyone in your community? Who? Do you think the storytelling process impacted your decision to seek advice from this person?

9. To whom do you give advice? Why do you think these people ask your opinions when they have problems?

10. Who do you live with? Please describe your relationships with them. Do you feel your relationships changed after participating in the storytelling project?

11. Do you have a group of people you consider to be your family? Who are they? How did the storytelling impact your relationships with these people?

12. Do you still listen to the CD made during the storytelling? How often? Have your perceptions about the story changed after listening to it many times?

13. Do you share the CD with anyone? Who? What is it like when you listen to the CD together?

14. What type of role do you feel you play in your family? In your community? How do you see yourself in relation to others?

15. Would you be interested in having another conversation with an elder using stories for hope? Why?

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The Effect Of the 2006 Agricultural Input Subsidy Program on Malawian Agricultural Productivity and General Social Welfare

Sasha Parameswaran

The role played by the agricultural sector in economic development in sub-Saharan Africa has been contentiously debated. Yet several reforms, be they pro-privatization or government-directed, have failed to demonstrate increases in yield as much as Malawi's 2006 Subsidy Program. Despite its notoriety for defying the advice of the international community, the program's specific effects on economic and social development has lacked rigourous statistical analysis. The first part of the paper will set the context for the 2006 program, including past failures of policy, their negative effects on both agricultural and social development, and historical reasons against subsidization. The second part of the paper will involve statistical analysis of agricultural production, comparing yields across several countries before and after the intervention period, as well as assessing the impact of policy on social indicators. The last part of the paper will weigh both the normative and positive conclusions set out by the paper, and determine the "Malawi Model's" possible implications for the future of development.

Introduction

The subsidization of industries in sub-Saharan Africa has been contentiously debated since the end of the colonial era. The gravity of the subsidization issue is apparent given that the agricultural sector employs the majority of the population in most countries in sub-Saharan Africa. There are two main arguments that direct policy. The first promotes protectionism and government subsidization of the agricultural industry. The second orients policy in a free market model, in which the global and national markets find equilibrium and promote individual empowerment. Both theories have had difficulty acquiring universal support in developing nations in Africa.

The latter theory spurred the creation of the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) in Africa in the 1980s. SAPs continue to be enforced and critiqued today. SAPs were founded on the premise of keeping governments accountable to their people, while preventing them from overspending to further political motives. The governments of developed countries and international financial institutions would require certain policy choices that promote a free market environment to be made by leaders in the developing countries before new or reduced rate loans are granted. It was believed that these goals would foster social and economic development. Nevertheless, Africa is still the poorest continent, and has failed to match the pace of economic growth of other areas of the developing world. Agricultural exports tend to be weak, despite being the largest sector in most African economies. Economist William Easterly

claims that this is actually due to the weak enforcement of SAPs.[1] Governments and international financial institutions (IFIs) preoccupied with short-term goals of political survival have reneged on their promises to monitor these policies and the actions and behaviors of participating governments from developing countries . As a result, foreign aid can help to prop up corrupt governments and only temporarily staves off crises in a reactive nature, rather than proactively promote a nation's development.

Yet one may argue that all governments can be labeled as "corrupt" (least of all that of the United States). While many African governments are not wholly accountable to their people, "true" democracies do exist on the continent. Malawi has been democratic since 1994, holds competitive multiparty elections, and has seen two presidents under different parties since political reform. Yet, its decision to go against advice from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank sets it apart from other African governments.

Malawi, considered one of the poorest countries on Earth, went against the advice of international donors by subsidizing their agricultural industry.[2] Since 2006 the country has enjoyed a prolific period of maize production.. Although Malawi has imported maize in the past from Zimbabwe during times of crisis, it has now turned into a net exporter of food, becoming a major contributor to the World Food Program's emergency food aid stocks.[3] Amidst rising global food prices, it appeared that Malawi instantaneously achieved a self-sufficient food secure economy. This unique policy turnaround, and its notable effects, has attracted much academic attention due to its paradigm-shifting policy of anti-privatization beliefs.

This paper will assess the effects of the 2006 program on Malawi's agricultural sector as a case study for effective domestically-driven policy. While Malawian maize production did increase, it has not been critically studied in the context of other intervening variables. This study will attempt to identify the effects of the program, alongside other economic factors, on maize production. An understanding of this relationship precedes our role it can have in Malawi's macroeconomic development.

Literature Review
Historical Context for the 2006 AISP Program

Nations in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) have a largely generalized reputation of possessing corrupt governments and neo-patrimonial tendencies. Robert Bates hypothesizes that the failure of the agricultural sector to reach its full potential in SSA is in large part due to the conflicting interests of government and local farmers in this region.[4] This framework is often applied to state-guided policy in Africa, and it still underlies current development proposals.

Not so ironically, this "African" trend has its roots in colonial practices. When the British established Nyaasaland, or current-day Malawi, they established a centralized agricultural marketing board. As the sole seller and buyer of crops, this parastatal agency was meant to support smallholder farmers—those owning or renting less than 50 acres of land—in times of crisis by providing global market access and subsidies as a safety net. Instead, it functioned as a monopsony that bought from producers

and sold their commodities on the world market to accrue profits.[5] While these profits were meant to make their way back to smallholder farmers, they essentially acted as an extra tax stream. The British also took ownership of the most fertile land and sold these estates to European buyers.[6] This dispossession of land not only robbed smallholders of the most productive land, but also undermined the local chiefs who consorted with the buyers. [7]

After the country's independence in 1964, the new government of Malawi built on this colonial legacy. Under the autocratic leadership of Life President Hastings Kamuzu Banda, the agricultural board operated as yet another instrument with which to consolidate his rule. The large European estates transferred hands into the elite of Malawi. These wealthy landowners garnered political favor for the agricultural subsidization that would ultimately benefit them.[8]

Throughout his regime, Banda claimed to use profits from smallholder production to support macroeconomic stability. These funds were to be used to augment foreign reserves and support the economy in the long run, but were instead used at the smallholders' expense. These reserves, which were to serve as a buffer against high global market prices, were used by the Banda government primarily for urban development.[9] Additionally, agricultural prices were kept low to increase the real wages of urban workers, in an attempt to attract more workers to the cities.[10] Many African nations sought to catch up with many other foreign economies through state-guided industrialization and often viewed agriculture as an obsolete economic sector.[11]

A fear of such displays of African neo-patrimonialism is often still used to justify the policies of the West. The structure of state-marketing boards gave all forms government intervention in agriculture a bad reputation. In addition to being liable to corruption, state-led initiatives are believed to impede free-market development. Under neoclassical economic theory, the free-market, were it to be free of many intrusive state-led initiatives, would create the optimum prices for consumers and producers alike, and would thus work to reduce poverty. Theoretically, it should also equalize exchange rates across sectors, reduce demand for imports, and raise foreign exchange earnings.[12] However, the World Bank later repeatedly changed its view on such policy conflicts.

Government-directed agricultural reforms were made in response to other important economic events, such as the oil shocks in the 1970s, domestic political and economic factors and structural adjustment programs. Kherallah claims that these interventionist policies were largely offset by the effects of the very external macroeconomic conditions such as the oil shocks of 1973 and 1979 and African currency overvaluations.[13] Maize productivity increased most in Zambia, Kenya and Zimbabwe.[14] African policy

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1 William Easterly, The White Man's Burden, Penguin Press 2006 pp. 115.
2 Joshua Kurlantzick, "The Malawi Model" The Democracy Journal, Summer 2009. pp. 60.
3 Ibid. pp. 62.
4 Robert Bates, Markets and States in Tropical Africa, UC Berkeley 1981. pp. 81.

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5 Ibid 12.
6 Brigdal Pachai, "Land Policies in Malawi." Journal of African History. 1973, pp. 18.
7 Ibid 5.
8 Ibid 7.
9 DeGrassi, Aaron "Neopatrimonialism" and Agricultural Development in Africa: Contributions and Limitations of Contested Concept" African Studies Review, Volume 51, Number 3, December 2008. pp. 3.
10 Bates 36.
11 Kherallah, Mylène et. al. 2002. Reforming Agricultural Markets in Africa. Baltimore, MD: IFPRI/Johns Hopkins University Press. pp. 13.
12 Kherallah 20.
13 Ibid 10.
14 Denning et al. "Input Subsidies to Improve Smallholder Maize Productivity in Malawi: Toward an African Green Revolution." PLOS Biology, Volume 7, Issue 1, January 2009. pp. 2

makers pointed to the successes garnered by those African governments attempting to directly subsidize small farmers, but in the 1980s, SAPs halted any progress or experimentation into such policy efforts.

As mentioned, the agricultural estate sector grew at the expense of smallholder farmers under Banda. Market liberalization in the 1980s favored the estates even more. While the markets should have attracted workers to earn higher wages at the estates, this policy assumed easy labor access. The reality was that families could not realistically maintain their commute to work on the estates.[15] The withdrawal of subsidies removed any kind of safety net for smallholders. While a move towards estates may make sense in theory, it fails to account for infrastructural development. Market liberalization was only successful in those nations where infrastructure was well developed.[16] In these nations, employees could easily commute from their traditional farmlands to work on the larger estates.

More importantly, SAP policies ignored traditional patterns of communal land ownership. [17]Families were quite understandably reluctant to sell the land that had been under family ownership for generations. The World Bank did attempt to promote the devolution of large estates to smallholders, but again the issue of communal land ownership made this inefficient.[18] Additional land ownership would have split up the family, and few families had sufficient credit to expand their land tenure.[19] Furthermore, where an individual lives is often identified in terms of kinship. Thus, farmers leaving their land represented a departure from their familial history and a "rupture of identity."[20] SAPs assumed a smooth market transition, but failed to take into account these cultural factors that have dictated life in Malawi for generations.

Due to these restrictions, or rather in response to empirically observed failures, the World Bank and other donors pushed for an export-driven economy. Nearly all farming in Malawi has been subsistence farming. In Malawi, "maize is life"–the primary staple crop of choice, and the country's economy has long been driven by maize production.[21] Yet, in the eyes of donors, African states could use their low-yielding land to produce cash crops, which could raise revenue to import food at low global prices rather than attempt to achieve domestic food security.[22]

Burley tobacco is one such cash crop that was pursued by certain Malawi farmers in direct response to donor policy. Initially burley tobacco production was solely reserved for the estates. Since this generated the most agricultural revenue per hectare, the estate owners (be they the Europeans during colonial times or the Malawian elite after independence) had much sway over policy restrictions on smallholder farmers.[23] From 1964 onwards, burley tobacco farming was a sign of patronage in Malawi.[24] Land tenure was highly classist, with greater ownership of land held by a select group of Malawians, leading to greater social prestige, perpetuated by these added restrictions. Consequently, there was much valid skepticism directed towards the government by the IFIs.

Post-independence, this was one of the main reasons why the smallholder sector failed to grow, despite agricultural support from the government. As little as 20 percent of smallholder profits made its way back from ADMARC (the Malawian agricultural board) back to smallholder farmers.[25] Nevertheless, in 1987 Life President Banda committed himself to promoting domestic maize availability in the name of food security.[26] This set the precedent for the politicization of maize production in Malawi seen even to this day under President Mutharika.

In the adjustment decade of the 80s, the World Bank pushed even further for an export-led economy. This policy intended to reduce state neo-patrimonialsim and empower smallholder farmers. Given the problems of domestic drought and political instability in Mozambique, Malawi's main source of food imports, the country was short on both food and cash.[27] Like many other sub-Saharan African nations at the time, Malawi turned to the Structural Adjustment Loans provided by the World Bank for economic support. Under these conditions, food prices were kept artificially low and burley tobacco cash crop producer prices, through ADMARC, were raised.[28] In theory, this would make food more available to consumers and increase real and nominal wages across the board. However, with the removal of input subsidization, maize production plummeted.[29] Maize production is much more reliant on inputs than tobacco, and thus became the less profitable crop.

While these market forces promoted an export economy, the shift to burley tobacco production made the Malawian economy heavily reliant on exports, leaving it vulnerable to a "Dutch disease" of sorts. The World Bank and other international actors favored this move towards globalization which fit into David Ricardo's idea of comparative advantage. In other words, if an economy has a low opportunity cost in providing a certain good/service, then it ought to provide it. However, this mentality assumed easy market access for smallholder farmers, when smallholders frequently incurred high costs to gain such access.[30] Such a move would also make Malawi's economy, of which agriculture makes up a third of GDP, incredibly sensitive to price and demand fluctuations on the international market.[31]

The commercialization of agriculture had jarring effects on gender dynamics. Farmland in Malawi is passed down matrilineally, as farming is seen traditionally as a "female" occupation. Men marry into families and move to their wives' land.[32] As a result, women were culturally and economically tied to their land. This left the men to go out and find floating employment to give additional support to

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15 Chirwa et al. "Evaluation of the 2006/7 Agricultural Input Supply Programme, Malawi." Malawi Department of Agriculture and Food Security. 2009. pp. 20.
16 Nicholas Minot and Todd Benson "Fertilizer Subsidies in Africa: Are Vouchers the answer?" IFPRI Issue Brief No. 60, pp. 3.
17 Pauline Peters "Bewitching Land: The Role of Land Disputes in Converting Kin to Strangers and in Class Formation in Malawi" Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol. 28, No. 1, Special Issue: Malawi. March 2002, pp. 159.
18 Pachai 18.
19 Ibid.
20 Peters 160.
21 Chirwa et al. 2008, pp. 19.
22 Kurlatzick 4.

23 Walter Knausenberger and Richard Tobin "Dilemmas of Development: Burley Tobacco, the Environment and Economic Growth in Malawi" Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol. 24, No. 2. Jun. 1998, pp. 406.
24 Peters 163.
25 Knausenberger 406.
26 J. Harrigan. "Uturns and Full Circles: Two Decades of Agricultural Reform in Malawi 1964-2000." World Development 31(5), 2003. pp. 850.
27 Harrigan 849.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
30 Chirwa et al. 20.
31 Harrigan 847.
32 Peters 165.

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the household.[33] With the commercialization of agriculture, particularly through the greater emphasis on tobacco production, this compounded stress on gender interactions and tended to undermine the independence of the female producer. Men assumed the responsibility to trade their family's produce on the open market. Experience shows that a greater amount of blame has fallen on women when wages are insufficient to promote food security.[34] This is despite the fact that more of the earnings are procured by the male traders.

The growing of tobacco on a large scale also has severe environmental impacts. A new focus on tobacco promoted agricultural extensification, with a need to increase acreage. Also, tobacco requires curing in wooden sheds, which are only durable for two years.[35] With market forces running unrestrained, Malawi had one of the highest rates of deforestation, losing 3 percent of forest cover each year. [36]Furthermore, growing tobacco over the long-term depletes soils of nitrogen potassium and phosphorus 10-36 times more than standard crops.[37]

Of course, Malawi was not the only producer of tobacco during these SAPs. Different incentives, from a globalized standpoint, failed to align favorably for the Malawian export market when the majority of cigarette manufacturers were based in the United States. Malawi still had to compete with other producers of tobacco from elsewhere. Furthermore, the US enforced legislation that required the cigarette companies to purchase at least 75 percent of its tobacco from American producers.[38] Malawi, therefore, had strong contenders who did not always use free market policies themselves in the global market for tobacco.

With a drastic reduction in food production, the Bank eased its conditions on the Malawian government. This was due to observed sharp increases in fertilizer and seed prices. In 1987, with the Bank's approval, the government reintroduced subsidies to farmers and intervened to raise smallholder prices.[39] The Bank completely reversed its policy and acknowledged that structural constraints, namely poor roads and lack of smallholder credit, hindered a neoclassical supply response to price incentives.[40] Despite (or because of) the sporadic shifting between neoliberal policy and state-directed intervention, GDP growth was only 1.6 percent annually between 1980 and 1994, about half the growth rate of Malawi's population.[41]

From 1992-1993, aid was withheld from the Malawian government due to Banda's suppression of pro-democracy proposals. Coupled with severe droughts from 1992-1994, the economy stagnated significantly.[42] These events produced enough political pressure for Banda's dictatorial government to yield to a new democratic government.

Ironically, the division between the Bank and the Malawian government widened upon

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33 Jonathan Kaunda "Agricultural Credit Policy, Bureaucratic Decision-Making and the Subordination of Rural Women in the Development Process: Some Observations on the Kawinga Project, Malawi" Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol. 16, No. 3 (Sep., 1990), pp. 422.
34 Peters 153.
35 Knausenberger 405.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid 414.
38 Knausenberger 413.
39 Harrigan 854.
40 Ibid. 852.
41 Ibid.
42 Harrigan 852.

democratization. The new government was formed on the platform of promoting food security, and reaffirming maize as Malawi's primary crop. One of its most crucial policies was its reformation of the agricultural board. ADMARC's monopsony over smallholders was dismantled, preventing any more funneling of money towards the bureaucratic elite.[43] However, it did not do away with the parastatal completely. ADMARC would have a crucial role later on.

The Bank heavily criticized the government for "equating maize production with food security."[44] While the Bank stated in 1995 (with evidence) of the danger that a focus on tobacco would lower maize production and make the economy too reliant on international markets, it completely reversed its position in 1997. Harrigan suggests that this was simply a knee-jerk reaction by the Bank, automatically opposing any government policy that did not follow the Washington Consensus.[45] The more the government tried to be interventionist, the more the Bank staunchly opposed them. The Bank wrote off the first democratically elected government in Malawi, whose policy directions it considered to be political maneuvering with little to do with development. While no government is perfect, this opposition reflected the Bank's paternalist lack of trust in African governments at the time.

Recent History

The introduction of free markets and reduction of government intervention were meant to reduce debt and develop an open market (but was perhaps belied by a more multinational agenda). After all, the subsidization of American farmers has substantial notoriety. The failure of state-guided policy is frequently blamed on the inefficacy of rent-seeking behavior of African governments.[46] The result was a drastic increase in fertilizer and seed prices. Denning and his colleagues note that fertilizer free-markets were only successful in Kenya, where there was a high level of infrastructure and where the people met a certain threshold of financial stability.[47] Other studies have shown that fertilizer uptake increased in some countries after free-market introduction, while in others it decreased.[48] They conclude that policy largely determines prices, but does not account for market access and other crucial variables to agricultural productivity. Despite having plenty of fertile land, Africa only consumes 1 percent of the world's fertilizer.[49]

Three assumptions belie these policies. Developed nations did not play by the same rules, and continued to subsidize their agricultural industries, both in an attempt to appease lobbying American farmers and reduce a reliance on oil by developing bio-fuel technology.[50] The policy also assumed that each nation would be able to craft the programs to suit their own needs. Yet, more often than not, governments tried so hard to fulfill their donors' conditions for funding that they could not invest in key areas, such as roads, agricultural training and storage containers. It was assumed that the devolution of power from agricultural monopsonies would be a smooth one. The poor credit access of small-scale farmers and the mismatch of incentives between producers and private traders precluded such a smooth transition.[51]

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43 Ibid.
44 Ibid. pp. 854
45 Ibid. pp. 856
46 Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Alastair Smith. The Dictator's Handbook, Public Affairs 2011. pp. 25.
47 Denning et al. 3.
48 Minot pp. 142.
49 Denning et al. 2.
50 Kurlatzick pp. 9
51 Kherallah et al. 83.

The first major nationwide subsidy, the Targeted Inputs Program (TIP), was implemented in Malawi in 1999.[52] This program led the way for the extensive reforms that would follow. The system did improve seed and fertilizer access for select small farmers, but the program encountered several logistical problems such as market displacement and late and unequal distribution; the program exacted heavy costs on the government's budget.[53] Nevertheless, the program did prompt increases in production, and had positive effects on crop sustainability mechanisms such as crop diversification, seed spacing and advanced farming techniques.[54] The majority of smallholders supported such a program. The donors who funded the program in conjunction with the government, however, pulled out due to its inefficiency.[55] Although there were valid criticisms of the program, donors failed to propose a viable alternative that would prevent the onset of food insecurity among the relevant populations. Moreover, the costs of food imports and welfare transfers would represent an even greater stress on the budget.[56] These donors would oppose reforms 6 years later.

Malawi suffered a severe drought in 2005. Intense subsistence cultivation, in the absence of fertilizer and adequate rainfall, depleted soil viability. Due to a lack of irrigation systems, agricultural seasons were highly unpredictable based on rainfall patterns.[57] By late November, nearly 5 million were in need of food aid.[58] Tired of the neoliberal policy imposed on Malawi by the International Monetary Fund, President Mutharika announced he was "tired of begging for food from the West."[59] Mutharika started to implement a widespread Agricultural Inputs Subsidy Program, by which the government distributed seed and fertilizer across the country at one-third of the market price, through a redeemable coupon system. While this program subsidized both maize and tobacco for smallholders, the rate of tobacco subsidization was about one-quarter that of maize subsidization.[60]

The government distributed packs through the Village Development Committees in each of the 28 districts.[61] The government also appointed ADMARC as the sole buyer and seller of maize, with fixed prices at which ADMARC bought and sold the commodities.[62] This was to sidestep the hoarding practiced by private traders that had characterized the free market, which ultimately marginalized smallholder farmers during the adjustment years.[63]

National maize production doubled after the first year of implementation, and tripled the year after that. These statistics are critical to food security analysis, as 97 percent of households grow maize,

which "accounts for 60 percent of total calorie consumption."[64] Production was sufficient to get most families through the poor harvest months, when rainfall is scarce.

Summary of Similar Studies

Ariga and Jayne present a cautious picture about the efficacy of government intervention in the sector like the Agricultural Input Subsidy Program. They found that in Kenya, subsidy systems were often implemented in areas with easy access to commercial fertilizer markets, primarily the wealthier areas of the country.[65] Not only did this not reach those who needed it most, but it also displaced the market for commercial fertilizer sellers. They assert that frequently, larger commercial farming estates capture the government subsidies at their lower than market price.[66]

The efficacy of the 2006 AISP program has lacked any robust academic analysis. One study, performed by several notable scholars familiar with Malawi's agricultural reforms, attempted to quantify the effects of the subsidy program alone with little statistical rigor. The study, conducted by Denning et al, compared the yields of two clusters of smallholder fields in the Blantyre region of Malawi. Unlike this study, they did not investigate across time or national borders, but instead examined fields exposed to the subsidy and control fields that did not receive government support. They found that rainfall accounts for between 25-35 percent of production, assuming that the subsidy program was responsible for the remainder of the increase.[67]

There were many shortcomings to this study. Firstly, it was conducted in the Millennium Development Village of Mwandama, an essential petri dish for development strategies. As a result, other variables may have been introduced that would magnify the effects of the subsidy (such as better access to clean water, educational facilities, etc.) Secondly, their study focuses solely on one village and across two years (pre- and post-intervention). Furthermore, the Blantyre district, in which they conducted the study, is the most fertile region of Malawi. This research fails to account for varying levels of the subsidy across several districts where soil fertility is unfavorable, and uses a very narrowly focused difference in differences model. By excluding less fertile regions of land, and assuming that rainfall was the only relevant control, the study ignored the possibility that there were other intervening variables that would diminish the perceived effect of the subsidy. Third, while Denning's study claims to have a high number of observations (11,000 farming households), it only observes 110 fields.[68]

While the study certainly had its merits, I will build on their limited analysis by performing a broader time-series experiment and by using non-policy countries as a baseline of comparison in addition to pre-intervention Malawi as a baseline of comparison. The goal of my analysis is to assess the long-term success of the subsidy program, its positive socio-economic externalities and its applicability to other regions for broader development strategies.

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52 While the TIP program continued on as late as 2004, a drastic reduction in funding in 2002 gradually limited its
    reach (Minde and Ldovu 2007).
53 Rowland Chirwa "The Impact of Starter Packs on Sustainable Agriculture in Malawi" Ministry of Agriculture
and Food Security .UK August 2000, pp. 40.
54 Ibid.
55 J. Minde., and P. Ndlovu. "How to make agricultural subsidies smart." Paper Prepared for Contribution to the
Ministerial Seminar, Maputo, Mozambique, 8 June 2007, Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System
for Southern Africa. Mimeo. pp. 42
56 J. Harrigan. "Food Insecurity, Poverty and the Malawian Starter Pack: Fresh Start or False Start?" Institute for
Development Policy and Management. University of Manchester, 2005. Pp. 20.
57 Harrigan 2005 pp. 6.
58 Denning et al. 1.
59 C.M. Dugger "Ending Famine, Simply by Ignoring the Experts." New York Times.
60 Chirwa et al. 12.
61 Denning et al. 5.
62 Masina, Lameck. "Malawi Donates Surplus Food." African Business No. 342 (May 2008) pp. 67.
63 Ibid.

64 Denning et al. 1.
65 Ariga, J., T. Jayne, and J. Nyoro. 2008. "Trends and Patterns in Fertilizer Use in Kenya, 1997- 2007." Working
Paper, Egerton University, Tegemeo Institute, (footnote continued from previous page) Nairobi. pp. 37.
66 Ibid 39.
67 Denning et al. 5.
68 Ibid.

Research Design

HYPOTHESIS 1	THE 2006 AGRICULTURAL INPUT SUBSIDY PROGRAM HAD A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND WAS A CRUCIAL FACTOR IN THE MAIZE SURPLUS IN THE POST-INTERVENTION HARVESTS. YIELD/PRODUCTION = SUBSIDY(X1) + RAINFALL(X2) + ELEVATION(X3) + SOIL(X4)
NULL HYPOTHESIS 1	THE SURPLUS MAIZE IN THE POST-HARVEST PERIOD WAS NOT DUE TO THE SUBSIDY PROGRAM, BUT IN LARGER PART DUE TO FAVORABLE CLIMACTIC CONDITIONS.
HYPOTHESIS 2	THE 1999 STARTER PACK PROGRAM HAD A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON PRODUCTION (ALBEIT A LESS PROMINENT ONE THAN THE 2006 FISP PROGRAM). YIELD/PRODUCTION = SUBSIDY(X1) + RAINFALL(X2) + ELEVATION(X3) + SOIL(X4)
NULL HYPOTHESIS 2	THE STARTER PACK PROGRAM HAD LITTLE OR NO EFFECT ON PRODUCTION.
HYPOTHESIS 3	THE 2006 AISP PROGRAM HAD POSITIVE BENEFITS, BEYOND AGRICULTURE, ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS. SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS = SUBSIDY(X1) + RAINFALL(X2) + ELEVATION(X3) + SOIL(X4)
NULL HYPOTHESIS 3	THE 2006 AISP PROGRAM HAD NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS. SOCIO -ECONOMIC FACTORS = SUBSIDY(x1) + RAINFALL (X2) + ELEVATION (X3) + SOIL (X4).

General Design

My general design is a mixed-effects Equivalent Time-Series Design spanning the pre- and post-reform period of 1999-2011, using a GLS regression. My unit of analysis is administrative districts in Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Angola, Cote D'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Rwanda, Ghana, Benin, Senegal, Togo and Cameroon for a total of 201 district units of observation. Since the subsidy programs were implemented in Malawi, much of the study focuses on all of the eight Agricultural Administrative Districts (ADDs) in the country. These districts were artificially created by the Ministry of Agriculture, but are composed of the 28 smaller political sub-districts. They aggregate up to the national level, so they include all nationwide data. Relevant data on maize production, inputs and other variables are available through the Ministry's survey and census database.

In another similar analysis, I compare Zambian and Mozambique districts that border Malawi across regions and across time, in order to more specifically control for other confounding variables and leave only the policy effects of the subsidy subject to analysis. This will consist of 4 different clusters of districts on either side of Malawi's border.[69]   Since these clusters are geographically very similar, it compensates for the limitations of my climatic control data. The analysis includes all of the same control variables used in the above multi-district GLS regression.

The chief dependent variable of the experiment is maize yield (in tons/km2) in the different regions. I measure variation of production levels, year by year, in absolute values and compare them to a baseline number. The study uses both the data for 2005 as a baseline (the year preceding the AISP implementation) and an average of data for the pre-reform period. I use both baselines to avoid selective errors. Since my panel data is unbalanced, comparing averages of the pre-and post-reform periods is also more efficient.

The subsidy program was introduced in response to the poor harvest season and low rainfall of 2005, and thus statistics from this year may skew the results. By using the vital statistic of area of maize under "crop," the number of smallholder farms, number of farm estates and farm acreage is comparable. However, through the Malawian National Census of Agriculture and Livestock, such statistics are available for analysis, and may indicate where investment is key (for instance, perhaps investment should be channeled into only those areas where large estates have been established). For instance, greater seed availability allows for greater spacing and can allow for an increase in fallowing and crop rotation.[70] Thus, these variables actually provide a front-door path (causal effect) rather than a back-door path (spurious effect).

My dependent variable will also be analyzed using a line graph for Malawi. While data may not be available for all years in all districts, cross-national level statistics can be used for long-term analysis (which includes both the Starter Pack Program of 1999 and the 2006 Agricultural Input Subsidy Program), while ADD-level data can be used for more recent analysis, from the 2002 drought year to present day. The independent variable will be the 2006 Agricultural Inputs Subsidy Program. Each of the ADD districts has various rates of subsidization, and will be regressed against the yield to assess the specific impact of the policy on production. Coupon distribution ranges from 10 percent in the Shire Valley ADD to 74 percent in the Mzuzu ADD. In other words, areas with a higher rate of subsidization that show correspondingly higher production rates would support the claim for the state subsidy program (see Hypothesis 1). The other international districts will serve as baseline controls (0 percent subsidized) against the Malawian districts. The subsidy program variable will also account for other front-door path variables such as input use (fertilizer and seeds), input quality (hybrid seeds as opposed to cheaper Open Pollination Variety seeds), and on-site practical training.

I account for major backdoor paths using linear regression analysis and my Equivalent Time-Series Design. Since Malawian farms are essentially devoid of irrigation systems (only 2 percent of accounted farmland), rainfall is the only other main input not accounted for by the subsidy program. The construction of my hypotheses account for this fact, in that any crop production increases not accounted for by subsidy programs are presumably accounted for by rainfall levels.

Along with rainfall, measurements of elevation and soil composition are included in the multivariate regression analysis. Other unpredictable and inestimable data will be taken into account with my 3-country comparison, assuming near-identical environmental attributes. Institutional capacity can

69 See Appendix for map of district-cluster groups.
70 Chirwa et al. 2000. pp. 40.

be overlooked, as the enacting of the policy itself can account for such a difference. The development of similar programs in other Sub-Saharan African nations would warrant a similar study comparing institutional structure across nations. Yet, for this study, the cross-country comparison of similar land areas can lend external validity to the study, and allow it to be relevant to other fertile areas of Sub-Saharan Africa.

The study focuses on maize production since Malawi's economy (and thus its subsidy program) is built around this staple crop. All other countries studied have significant maize economies as well--which account for over 50 percent of national GDP--and thus their inclusion should not significantly detract from any conclusions made by the study.[71] Regression analysis will also considers the effects on employment and diversification across sectors other than agriculture (85 percent of the workforce are subsistence farmers in Malawi). These statistics can ascertain whether the subsidy program had a significant effect on the increase in exports and thus contributed to wages of subsistence farmers to enable them to diversify beyond subsistent farming.

Two main periods will be central to the study. In 1999, the Targeted Inputs Program (TIP) subsidy was introduced, which distributed free fertilizer and seed to various regions across the country for four years, before being removed from the budget for high cost and international opposition. Unlike the 2006 program, it was not built around market forces, and was thus criticized for having high rates of commercial displacement and liability to corrupt practices. Post-2005 data will show the effects of the more refined AISP program. The implementation of the second program is subject to Campbell and Stanley's "Testing" threat to internal validity, as the first program may have in part contributed to the logistical successes of the subsequent program.[72]

Data

All of my maize production data was obtained online through the CountryStat page on the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) website.[73] This database compiled data from national estimates conducted by the various Ministries of Agriculture of each nation. The same database provided the total land area (all in km2) reserved only for maize cropping. I combined these two variables to create a new variable for total annual yield (tons/km2). By controlling for the degree to which land was used for maize, I could more accurately determine a GLS-generated linear relationship between environmental controls and crop production (e.g. a country with a large landmass may have a larger production of maize than Malawi despite the same level of rainfall). Outliers with abnormally large yields were ruled out due to endogeneity issues, such as small areas of land.

My experimental independent variable (the percentage of households that received the subsidy in some form) was based on survey data collected by the Malawian Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security in 2007 (NACAL).[74] This survey provided sub-national estimates of the percentage of smallholders who received seed and fertilizer coupons, with a relatively skewed distribution across districts (Table 1). One

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71 CIA Factbook. Accessed 31 January 2012.
72 Campbell, Donald T., Julian C. Stanley, and N. L. Gage. Experimental and Quasi-experimental Designs for Research. Chicago, IL: R. McNally, 1966.
73 See endnotes.
74 The National Census of Agriculture and Livestock (NACAL) was conducted by the Agriculture Statistics Division of the National Statistical Office (NSO) in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFS) between October 2006 and October 2007.

concern was back door paths favoring certain districts (i.e. those districts with the most fertile land would be targeted the most by the subsidy programs). Again, controlling for the variable "area designated for maize" helped nullify these effects. Due to the lack of survey data beyond the 2007 census, I used these statistics for all years following the implementation of the 2006 Agricultural Input Subsidy Program.

TABLE II: Subsidization Rates of Agricultural Development Districts

ADD District	Subsidization Rates
KARONGA	48
MZUZU	74
KASUNGU	68
SALIMA	28
LILONGWE	47
MACHINGA	52
BLANTYRE	59
SHIRE VALLEY	10

Map 1: Map of Agricultural Development Districts

There were three statistics that could be used to measure the extent of the subsidy, all taken from the 2007 agricultural census. The first measure was the percentage of households that used the subsidies for composite maize seeds. These seeds could be reused and are less risky, tend to yield less than non-

composite maize seeds. The second measure was for the percentage of households that obtained hybrid seeds from the subsidy program. These seeds yield more, but are riskier to use in the event of an off-season, during which the fields are subject to unfavorable weather.[75] The last measure, arguably the one that best captures the reach of the AISP program, was the percentage of households that received the coupons in each district. Surprisingly, no districts attempted to sell the coupons (although this statistic may be subject to survey bias), and only one district had less than an 80 percent usage rate.[76] I combined these two variables—percentage of households that received the coupon and percentage that used them to buy fertilizer—to get the most accurate measure of the effects of the subsidy.

Rainfall was the most crucial independent control variable. As the subsidy program variable captures the exposure to fertilizers and seed, and since there are almost no irrigation systems, rainfall was the next essential input. Annual rainfall data was much more difficult to find across years at a sub-national level. Data was compiled from various government sources similar to those that provided agricultural data.[77] Unfortunately, the data for each country was not collected under one database, so the consistency of measurements was a concern.

One encouraging aspect of the rainfall data available was that most measuring stations were located near or at areas of agricultural productivity. The rainfall measures for Tanzania were taken in conjunction with the agricultural estimates.[78] As a result, there was no need to aggregate data collected from different nodes in each district, and rain inputs were optimally measured.

Elevation statistics were aggregated through ArcGIS software. Since maize grows better on low even terrain, elevation was another suitable control for use in this study.[79] District-wide elevation measurements were averaged through zonal statistics and applied to each unit of analysis. Although these measurements were rather crude, the districts were often small and homogenous enough to not generate inaccurate estimates. GIS files were taken from the CGIAR Consortium for Spatial Information (CGIAR-CSI).[80]

Deriving soil data was somewhat more complicated. Various soil maps were available to access through ArcGIS, such as soil type, soil constraints or degree of soil tillage. In order to best aggregate the different variables affecting soil quality, a more generalized variable was used, named "quality of soil affecting low to moderate levels of inputs."[81]

The GIS map represented the soil quality ranging from no constraints (0) to very severe constraints (3).[82] By attributing dummy values to each color representing soil quality and joining it with district border data, an average value was calculated to determine the soil quality of the region (¬+0.1).

District mapping data was taken from the Global Administrative District Mapping database, developed by the International Rice Research Institute and the University of California, Berkeley.[83]

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75 Denning et al. 3.
76 NACAL Report pp. 42.
77 FAO CountryStat, Tanzania's Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Malawi's Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. Accessed February 2012.
78 Ibid.
79 Denning et al. pp. 4.
80 DIVA GIS Country Database. Accessed January 2012.
81 FAO GeoMapping Database. Accessed February 2012.
82 See Appendix for map of soil quality.
83 See DIVA GIS.

These district maps were used for joins with elevation and soil data for all of the regions studied.

Table III. Summary Statistics of Malawi pre-2006 AISP Intervention

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
yield	38	1.031495	.2944215	.2816902	1.595585
rainfall	45	1030.956	362.1535	506	1928
elevation	48	831.625	307.6771	220	1158
soil	54	.3	.5298629	0	1.5
year	54	2002.5	1.723861	2000	2005

Table IV. Summary Statistics of Malawi post-2006 AISP Intervention

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
yield	30	1.907248	.6654895	.5191457	3.070594
rainfall	17	1130.588	285.2554	553	1671
elevation	48	831.625	307.6771	220	1158
soil	54	.3	.5298629	0	1.5
year	54	2008.5	1.723861	2006	2011

Table V. Summary Statistics of Control Countries pre-2006 AISP Intervention

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
yield	1411	1.19734	.6736001	0	3.903374
rainfall	391	863.8166	382.2771	13	2380
elevation	1477	480.1591	456.7821	16	2067
soil	1528	.7834097	.7136163	0	2.75
year	1528	2000.846	3.524529	1987	2005

Table VI. Summary Statistics of Control Countries post-2006 AISP Intervention

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
yield	729	1.170773	.6350786	.0001283	3.606061
rainfall	204	959.0382	591.8612	0	6005
elevation	855	417.7099	433.3995	16	2067
soil	898	.8139198	.7521437	0	2.75
year	898	2008.173	1.561181	2006	2011

Results

Shortcomings of the Data

Based on other studies and statistics, I expected there to be correlation between all of my independent variables and yield. Instead, none of my independent variables were strongly correlated with the dependent variable, despite all of my data being on the same micro-level scale. Whether my regressions included 483 observations (by collapsing the unbalanced panel data and finding the means of each of the statistics before and after the 2006 reform) or 2534 observations for annual statistics, there were no correlations above 0.30 (Table 2.).

Table VII. Correlation of Variables in Non-Collapsed Dataset

Independent Variable (IV)	Coefficient(X)	Standard Deviation (SD)	SD*X	Average Yield(Y)	SD*X/Y	Percent of Increase Due to IV
% Households Subsidized	0.014	7.42	0.1039	1.17	0.0887	8.87%
Rainfall(mm/yr)	0.0003	385	0.1155	1.17	0.0987	9.87%

As mentioned earlier, accurate and consistent measurements of rainfall were difficult to access, and thus can contribute to the low correlation coefficients shown above. Additionally, there were only 647 observable measurements of rainfall, which limited the confidence intervals substantially. This shortage of data hampered the 3-Country Analysis.

My subsidy data was also limited. As I only had data for one year, the same statistics were used for multiple years in the intervention years. In districts outside of Malawi, I assumed there to be a 0 percent subsidy level both pre-intervention and post-intervention. While this may not necessarily be true in countries outside of Malawi, there were no other significant subsidy programs in other sub-Saharan African nations other than those that preceded the Structural Adjustment Programs that were introduced in the 1980s and the limited Zambian credit-based program.[84] Alternatively, this experiment may be interpreted as a comparison between Malawi's AISP program and agricultural policy in the other units of analysis. As a result, it is safe to assume a near zero-level degree of subsidies in the other 12 nation states studied.

On the other hand, the low correlation between yield and soil quality and elevation is rather surprising. The data was incredibly specific to each district, and each had a standard deviation as large as its own mean (z-scores of .95 and .93 to soil and elevation respectively). This paper assumes that these two environmental variables are irrelevant to yield, when sufficient amounts of inputs are accessible by smallholders, corroborating previous literature.[85]

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84 Ariga and Jayne pp. 37
85 Denning et al. pp. 4

Multicountry Analysis of the Agricultural Input Subsidy Program

The analysis of all two hundred and one districts in my 13-country dataset was done in a collapsed fashion. Each observation was split depending on the unit of analysis and the variable "post-reform." The pre and post-reform statistics were averaged to give a reasonable view of the data without aggregating the data too greatly. This also helped make up for the missing observations of rainfall in the unbalanced panel dataset.

Table VIII. Multi-Country GLS Regression of Factors on Yield

	(1) yield	(2) yield	(3) yield	(4) yield	(5) yield
subsidy	0.0141*** (0.00214)	0.0136*** (0.00246)	0.0147*** (0.00263)	0.0148*** (0.00265)	0.0148*** (0.00266)
rainfall		0.000248* (0.000126)	0.000297* (0.000135)	0.000296* (0.000139)	0.000293* (0.000139)
post			-0.0743 (0.0583)	-0.0747 (0.0587)	-0.0746 (0.0588)
soil				0.00892 (0.0876)	0.00984 (0.0891)
elevation					-0.00000687 (0.000116)
_cons	1.155*** (0.0393)	0.830*** (0.133)	0.800*** (0.139)	0.794*** (0.149)	0.799*** (0.162)
N	456	160	132	132	132

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$

A time-series based GLS regression was done within each unit of analysis, comparing the data of the pre and post reform periods. Given the drought of 2005, as well as the less extensive (albeit pre-existing) Targeted Inputs Program, both the average of the statistics in the 2000-2005 period and the statistics of 2005 were used as a baseline of comparison. Surprisingly, the results reported almost exactly the same coefficients. This suggests that the improvements of the subsidy program on crop production were the same compared to the drought year of 2005 and the subsidized years preceding the drought.

This would support "Null Hypothesis 2," in which the yields observed during the TIP implementation years did not differ statistically from yields during the drought years. This suggests that rainfall was the only relevant factor affecting production.

Where yield was on average 1.19 tons per km2, the subsidy accounted for 0.014 tons per km2 for each percent of the smallholder population subsidized (the coefficient for the "subsidy" independent variable). Multiplying this regression coefficient by the standard deviation of the subsidy program (7.91) and dividing it by the average yield, we determine the subsidy to have a 9 percent positive contribution to yield (supporting Hypothesis 1). Substituting 81.2 (the percentage of the population who are smallholders[86]) we see an increase in national production by 94 percent. The similar results shown by using both baselines demonstrates that the marked increase in production in Malawi was not simply due to the comparison with the 2005 drought season: comparing the post-intervention yields to both the average pre-intervention yields and the 2005 yields shows the same results due to the effective controls of rainfall. As such, we can have confidence in the success of the rainfall data controlling for the differences. By doing a similar analysis with the rainfall statistics, we determine that rainfall actually accounts for about 9.87 percent of yield with an increase in rainfall by one standard deviation (385mm/yr) and an 8 percent yield increase with an increase of precipitation by 200mm/yr. In the report done by Denning and his colleagues, an increase in rainfall by 200mm/yr (between the drought period and the following year) contributed to a 32 percent increase.
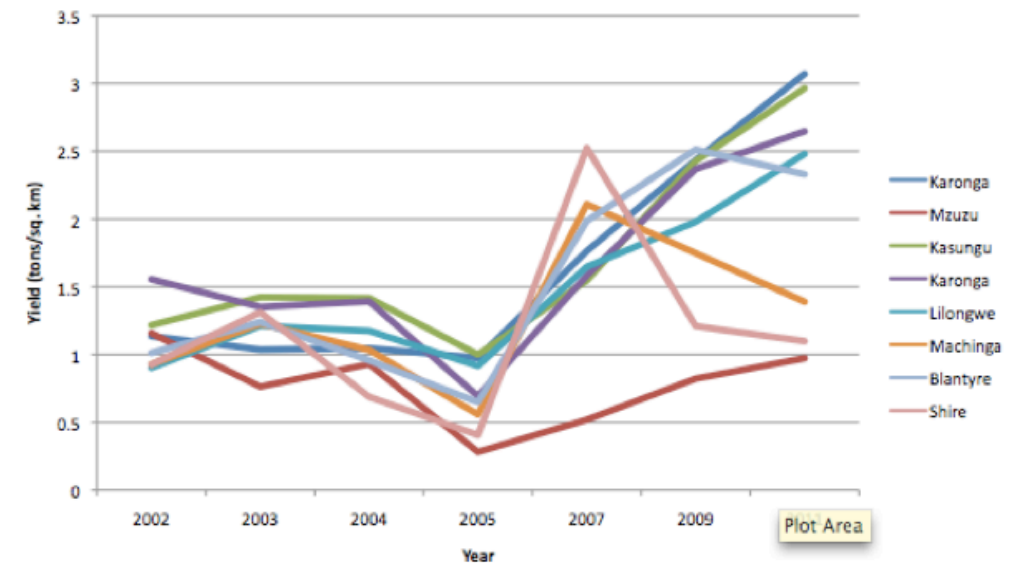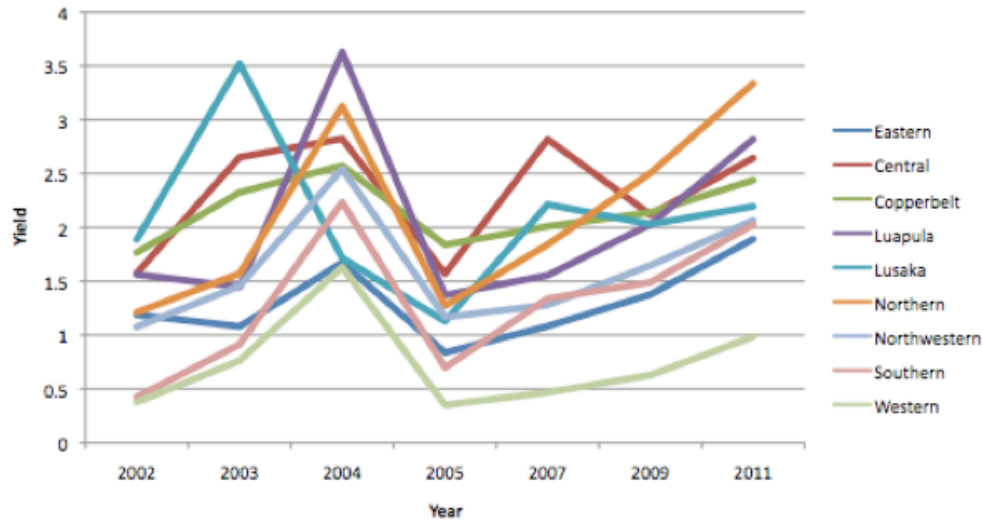

Figure 1. Yield in Malawi Districts

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86 NACAL Report pp. 14

Figure 2: Yield in Zambian Control Districts

*While it is hard to make objective judgments based on visual data, both graphs illustrate an increase in production in Malawian districts and neighboring Zambian districts. This can be attributed to favorable rainfalls post-2005. However, it is also clear that Malawi's increase in yield was much more drastic. This

Independent Variable (IV)	Coefficient(X)	Standard Deviation (SD)	SD*X	Average Yield(Y)	SD*X/Y	Percent of Increase Due to IV
% Households Subsidized	0.014	7.42	0.1039	1.17	0.0887	8.87%
Rainfall(mm/yr)	0.0003	385	0.1155	1.17	0.0987	9.87%

As expected, none of the other control variables were found to have any statistical significance.[87] While seemingly unlikely, the apparent lack of importance of soil quality and elevation may be explained by how the yield was calculated. By controlling for the area of maize that a district dedicates its land to, it may

filter out less suitable land for growing food crops. Nevertheless, in direct reference to previous literature, smallholders cannot easily extend their land tenures.[88] Most land is inherited through their families, and depending on a number of variables (gender, caste, and other social determinations), farmers can end up with farmland normally ill suited for growing crops. As other studies have shown, advanced fertilizers and seeds can overcome these environmental constraints, given a certain threshold of guaranteed rainfall.[89] It is also noteworthy that with or without these control variables, the coefficients for the subsidy and rainfall more or less remain the same (Table VIII).

3-Country Analysis

Since my units of analysis in my multi-country analysis varied from districts in southern Africa to upper-west Africa, I understood the difficulties in controlling for climatic variables in a simple time-series linear regression. The advantages of Denning's study was that it used two randomized groups (one experimental and one control) that did not differ but for the manipulated variable. It did not, however, factor in the differences in policy across country borders, where climate differences would be minimal (especially considering the small land area of Malawi).[90] Even though farming households in the control group did not receive the subsidized inputs, it may have benefited from other spillover effects provided by the national policy (such as improved crop techniques).

In doing a smaller scale regression between districts in Malawi, I attempted to control for these differences in policy. When the independent variable was "percentage of households given the subsidy," I failed to come up with significant results (P-value = 0.112). Rather than showing no effects, this regression could simply not confirm a strict mathematical relationship between the level of subsidy and production between the districts (most likely due to the small N=22 compared to the larger N=201 in the earlier multi-country analysis).

However, regressing a dummy variable (borderXpost) for the subsidy program against yield showed significant results (P-value= 0.002).

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87 Peters pp. 159

88 Peters pp. 159
89 Chirwa et al. 2008, pp. 3
90 See Appendix for map of district clusters.

Table X. 3-Country Analysis: GLS Regression of Factors on Yield

	(1) yield	(2) yield	(3) yield	(4) yield
border	0.448	0.0540	0	0
	(0.180)	(0.106)	(0)	(0)
post	0.558**	0.0572	0	0
	(0.0871)	(0.0839)	(0)	(0)
borderXpost		0.788*	0.930**	0.938**
		(0.199)	(0.154)	(0.170)
rainfall			-0.00106**	-0.00115**
			(0.000169)	(0.000193)
soil				0.0103
				(0.0830)
elevation				0.000268
				(0.000106)
_cons	0.679*	0.929**	2.041**	1.900**
	(0.161)	(0.123)	(0.279)	(0.318)
N	22	22	14	14

Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Note: Border is a dummy variable for Malawi=1, Mozambique and Zambia =0. Post is a dummy variable where pre-AISP=0 and post-AISP=1.

Tables XI-XIV: Post- AISP Intervention:
Summary Statistics of Malawi and Neighbouring Countries Pre- and Post-Intervention

Table XI: Summary Statistics for Malawi Pre-Intervention

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
yield	7	.983266	.1597085	.7830501	1.264429
subsidy	7	0	0	0	0
rainfall	7	996.7286	274.8024	800.1667	1584.5
elevation	7	856	343.5773	220	1158
soil	7	.3857143	.612178	0	1.5

Table XII: Summary Statistics for Malawi Post-Intervention

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
yield	7	1.828064	.531312	.7714295	2.312977
subsidy	7	54.28571	19.1221	16	76
rainfall	7	1077.286	225.9474	851.5	1547.5
elevation	7	856	343.5773	220	1158
soil	7	.3857143	.612178	0	1.5

Table XIII: Summary Statistics for Neighbours Pre-Intervention

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
yield	4	.9292729	.234314	.6980797	1.221748
subsidy	4	0	0	0	0
rainfall	0				
elevation	4	604.25	230.8136	298	857
soil	4	1.05	.5259911	.5	1.5

Table XIV: Summary Statistics for Neighbours Post-Intervention

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
yield	4	.9864281	.2940014	.7463155	1.415214
subsidy	4	0	0	0	0
rainfall	0				
elevation	4	604.25	230.8136	298	857
soil	4	1.05	.5259911	.5	1.5

 The regression shows that growing crops in Malawi or growing crops before or after the intervention period has no significant effect on production. However, it does show that growing crops in the post-intervention period in Malawi significantly increases production. By substituting the standard deviation

of the subsidy dummy variable into the linear regression equation (.476*0.787), we see that, on average, it contributes to a 30 percent increase in production. While this regression did not determine a concrete qualitative relationship between the level of the subsidy program and yield, it did come to the same conclusions as the multi-country analysis and Denning's analysis: the subsidy program has significant positive effects on production.

Table XV: 3-Country Analysis: Effect of Malawi AISP (BorderXPost) on Yield

Independent Variable (IV)	Coefficient(X)	Standard Deviation (SD)	SD*X	Average Yield(Y)	SD*X/Y	Percent of Increase Due to IV
BorderXPost	0.787	0.476	0.375	1.24	0.302	30.20%

*Note: Rainfall, border, post, elevation and soil were all insignificant (Table X.).

Results III: Effect on Social Indicators and Public Opinion

While an increase in maize production is notable, this study also intends to examine the positive externalities of the Agricultural Inputs Subsidy Program on development in general. By studying the effects of the subsidy on people's food security, cash income, view of the national economy, view of their own well being, view of national economic policy, and levels of support for the president, we can determine the broader effects of the subsidy policy. Naturally, this data is more liable to survey bias.

Dependent Variable (DV)	Coefficient of Subsidy Effects(X)	Standard Deviation of Subsidy (SD)	SD*X	Average Value of DV(Y)	SD*X/(Y)	Percent of Increase Due to Subsidy
Food Security	-0.00716	29.9	-0.214	1.62	-0.13209877	-13.20%
Income	-0.0051	29.9	-0.152	2.37	-0.06413502	-6.40%
Economic Policy	0.0139	29.9	0.415	2.35	0.17659574	17.70%
State's Welfare	0.0143	29.9	0.427	2.31	0.18484848	18.40%
Personal Welfare	0.019	29.9	0.568	2.63	0.21596958	21.60%
Employment	0.00361	29.9	0.108	0.634	0.170347	17.03%

Across the board, the subsidy program had positive effects of respondents' outlook, with the exception of trust in President Mutharika (which yielded no significant results). This analysis illustrates that a higher rate of subsidization generally tends to improve people's access to food and cash income. When including the standard deviation of the program across districts, we see that people's incidence of food and cash shortage decreases by 13.2 percent and 6.4 percent respectively. The program also improved people's view of the government's interventionist economic policy, the health of the national economy and their own financial security (see Table XVI). The first two regressions are least likely to be subject to survey bias, although all five regressions are in some ways subject to this phenomenon. Thus, it can be said with confidence that the subsidy program positively influenced cash income and food security.

	(1) food	(2) cash	(3) econ	(4) natecon	(5) persecon	(6) pres	(7) employ
subsidy	-0.00716*** (0.00184)	-0.00510** (0.00184)	0.0139*** (0.00148)	0.0143*** (0.00161)	0.0190*** (0.00224)	0.000759 (0.00164)	0.00361* (0.00151)
_cons	1.817*** (0.0816)	2.512*** (0.0746)	1.970*** (0.0679)	1.920*** (0.0800)	2.108*** (0.104)	2.543*** (0.0733)	0.538*** (0.0709)
N	52	52	52	52	52	52	50

Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Conclusion

My results show that the 2006 AISP played an integral part in the massive surplus of maize production enjoyed in recent years. This study refutes the claim that the increase in production was simply a "regression to the mean" following the strain on agriculture caused by the 2005 drought. According to my multi-country regression, reaching all 81 percent of the smallholders in Malawi would nearly double yield (Table. IX), an even larger effect than that shown by Denning et al. The program works best when combined with good rainfall. In 2009, the Malawian government estimated that 12 percent of the population rose above the poverty line since the introduction of the 2006 program.

Observers often question the sustainability of the program. The initial program cost the government $60 million USD, but is capable of generating benefit-to-cost ratios between 0.76 and 1.36 . With further improvements to the model, as well as extending its reach to as many low-income farmers as possible, costs have only risen even higher. This model of development also leaves the program incredibly sensitive to global fertilizer and maize prices. Should prices spike or plummet, the costs may drastically outweigh the benefits.

Another problem that subsidies pose is the skewing of the free market. While the subsidy may support the purchase of inputs, it may create a "tragedy of the commons" situation in which less vulnerable farmers hoard fertilizer when prices are low, driving up prices for other farmers later on. While the program is meant to target the "poorest" farmers, this market skew may alter the definition of who needs the subsidy the most. On the other hand, rather than replacing the role of the private trader, government intervention can provide sufficient competition to break the monopoly by private traders and give them the incentives to build a fairer market for smallholders.

As such, international financial support and investment is crucial. Yet, only 9 percent of World Bank loans fund agriculture. Considering how important agriculture is to most developing countries and the vast proportion of subsistence farmers in these countries, donors should consider promoting the adoption (and adaptation) of the "Malawi Model."

Additionally, a government-directed subsidy program, such as this one, is more likely to support farmers on the land that they already have and have had for generations. Considering the disruptions to social structure referenced earlier in this paper, the adoption of a free market-based model may not have the same positive effects on production that the AISP program had (at least not yet). Communities need time to develop and adapt to an economy where different sectors must coexist. Economic policy, therefore,

is sometimes better made with consideration of social interactions. Rather than denying people individual economic freedom, government support through the subsidy program can allow smallholders to better make decisions beyond agriculture. Amartya Sen wrote about how government intervention ought to enhance an individual's "positive freedom," rather than imposing a "negative freedom" .

The results demonstrate that the presence of a subsidy program is not enough to guarantee success. The Targeted Inputs Program, which preceded the 2006 AISP program, failed to make a significant increase in agricultural production. Yet, the TIP program was critical in helping policy-makers design its much more effective successor. Donor governments and agencies should not use one failure as a basis for withholding funding for future projects, particularly when that withholding would be simply to serve their own political and economic interests. Malawi suffers from fewer climate constraints than most other African nations, so the same program cannot be implemented everywhere. Climate, population density, level of infrastructure, and government centralization all determine the specific design of other programs. To replicate the success of Malawi, other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa must similarly craft programs through trial and error.

Even Malawi's program can be further improved. Other proposals towards agricultural supports include the building of irrigation systems. Both my study and Denning <2009> indicate that rainfall (or irrigation inputs) play a significant role in agricultural yields. Due to the uncontrollable variability of rainfall, a government-led push for the development of irrigation systems may be another means of promoting food security. However, neither study has shown whether rainfall or subsidies (in the form of fertilizer and seed inputs and education programs) has a greater quantitative impact on smallholder yields.

Providing fertilizer and seed inputs is seemingly the most practical form of government support for the agricultural sector. First, developing widespread irrigation systems would be a logistical nightmare. Second, during years of sufficient rainfall, these irrigation systems would be redundant. Third, these systems would require long-term maintenance, demanding further government involvement. While the subsidy program also poses the problem of long-term government intervention, the qualitative data prove that it also has a positive benefit on income (Table. XVI).

Another step the government can take is capitalizing on the emerging communications network across the continent. The use of mobile phone technology has been one of the greatest successes of African entrepreneurship. Such technology can be useful to farmers in determining real-time prices for their crops, and can reduce the reliance on inefficient middlemen.

International financial institutions and other international agencies can play the role of monitoring these agricultural systems. While allowing regional governments to direct their own national policy, they should ensure that political leaders are not simply introducing a program to boost political appeal. As this paper has pointed out, the politicization of maize, in part, contributed to President Mutharika's advocacy of the 2006 AISP program.

For all its shortcomings, the AISP program can help farmers buffer against shocks and customize their farming practices to suit local conditions. For example, by improving access to more advanced and expensive inputs, such as the riskier but higher yielding OPV seeds, farmers can prepare for favorable rainfall conditions by using the high yield seeds and increase overall production. The government also provided, on a limited scale, post-harvest storage bins in the 2008/09 subsidy program. Such policy espouses Sen's "Positive Freedom." In times of crisis, whether they be caused by droughts or external price spikes, a developing economy simply cannot cope with the shocks of market forces acting through private traders.

Future studies on this topic could build on my analysis, and hopefully come to even more applicable conclusions. One shortcoming of my study was the lack of microscopic data. Ideally, I would have studied the yields of several clusters of two villages on either side of the border of Malawi in the same time period. My rainfall data was not only sparse, but lacked specificity. Rainfall is most crucial during the germination of the maize seeds, and can have a significant effect on production. As such, it is very difficult to measure and compare the effects of ideal rainfall conditions and the subsidization of inputs. While neither of these constraints severely affected my analysis, had I more time and resources to collect such data, my conclusions would be even more robust. Hopefully, a future study can, with hindsight, better judge the program's gradual macroeconomic effects.

Future studies could also include an analysis of subsidizing cash crops in conjunction with staple crops. Tobacco production helps improve food security for subsistence farmers by allowing them to purchase additional maize when they cannot procure enough food from their own harvest. It can also help crop diversification, which both benefits land cultivation in the long term and promotes the growth of staple crops. Farmers could also have greater real wages to purchase commercial items and non-maize food products.

The real question remains: can similar subsidy programs significantly alleviate extreme poverty? This study has determined that the program has had a huge impact on agricultural production, which in turn raised real and nominal income for smallholder farmers, both the largest and poorest social group in Malawi. Yet, this paper does not argue that subsidizing grain alone will not solve "world hunger." Rather than eating maize, poor households seek (and require) complex and diverse calories just as wealthy households do in the West.

What agricultural subsidies can do is help Malawi break into the global food market; like Brazil, it can become a sustainable net exporter of food crops. This increase in income can help create a larger tax base, which can both sustain the program and finance other government services that have positive externalities for the community (social safety nets, public health initiatives, etc).

Even if all the poorest agriculture-dependent economies improved their yields as Malawi's did, it is unclear whether they would succeed in today's globalized economy. While the growth of the most developed economies was driven by the growth of the agricultural sector, today's developing economies cannot enjoy the same luxuries as they did (such as the benefits of colonialism). Malawi's success came from following the examples of agricultural protectionism set by the US and Europe.

Developing countries may in fact succeed because of self-interested Western incentives. With the advent of biofuels, maize subsidization in the West has started to play a role in the geopolitical agenda of energy self-sufficiency and environmental advocacy. This increase in demand has engendered a hike of global food prices. While this is currently a negative for the world's poor, perhaps developing agricultural economies can use this as a way to break into the global market, and use this growth to diversify into other sectors.

Robert Bates states that the incentives for farmers are based on three different markets: the commodities market, the inputs market and the consumer market   As witnessed in the Malawi case study, government policy can help line up these incentives to promote food security. This has to be done through central planning. Asia's Green Revolution was supported by state-run subsidies, rural credit and investment in infrastructure.

Malawi appears to be following a steady course. It is investing primarily in maize production, but also promoting some tobacco production to augment wages and diversify crops (without it being too socially and environmentally detrimental).   Tobacco production is being kept low in order to keep prices high, while high maize production is keeping domestic prices low. Both policies increase the real wages of the poor.

The world's economies have typically followed a certain path. Nearly all economies were built on agriculture. From the age of industrialization, employment shifted towards manufacturing and service industries. The third stage of development, in a market economy, was the emergence of the financial sector. This has been the path most successful economies have taken today (with minor "hiccups"). This pattern is what the IFIs claim to advocate for developing economies. However, I hypothesize that state intervention must fulfill the traditional role of the financial sector in a globalized economy. Since most economies are globalized, they are liable to volatile foreign investment and competing price fluctuations. In order to promote its nation's growth, part of the government's financial role ought to include a degree of protectionism. Perhaps once an economy is developed enough, it can create its own financial system and will not have to rely on government intervention. By producing wages and savings, subsidies can help stabilize the borrowing-lending patterns that have otherwise caused smallholders to default and create socio-political instability, and possibly create a new class of "lenders".

The IFIs must allow developed nations to play by the same rules as developed countries, and have confidence in government where it is warranted. Though no government policy is perfect, Malawi's determination may slowly be changing the attitudes of donors: the UK's Department for International Development donated $8 million to the subsidy program in 2009 .

For all its shortcomings, the program has staved off severe poverty-inducing food insecurity. In times of crisis, subsistence farmers must sell assets to get what food they cannot produce themselves. Without these assets, economic growth and diversification cannot occur. The subsidy program will not be sustainable forever, and Malawi's economy must reach the point where it can support itself. Yet, it can be one of the many key investments integral to alleviating poverty. Whatever outcome Malawi achieves, good or bad, it will prove invaluable to development practices for other developing nations.

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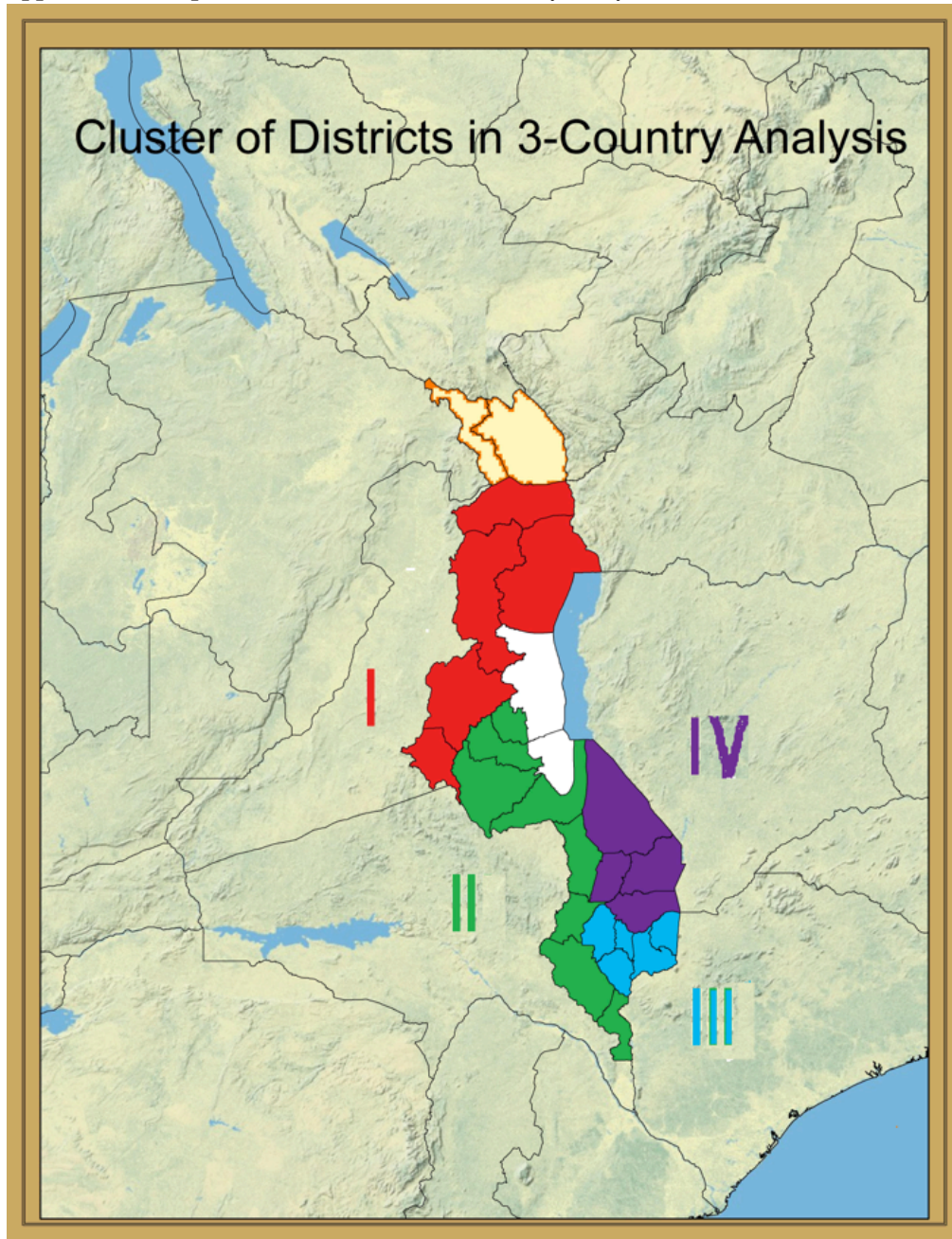
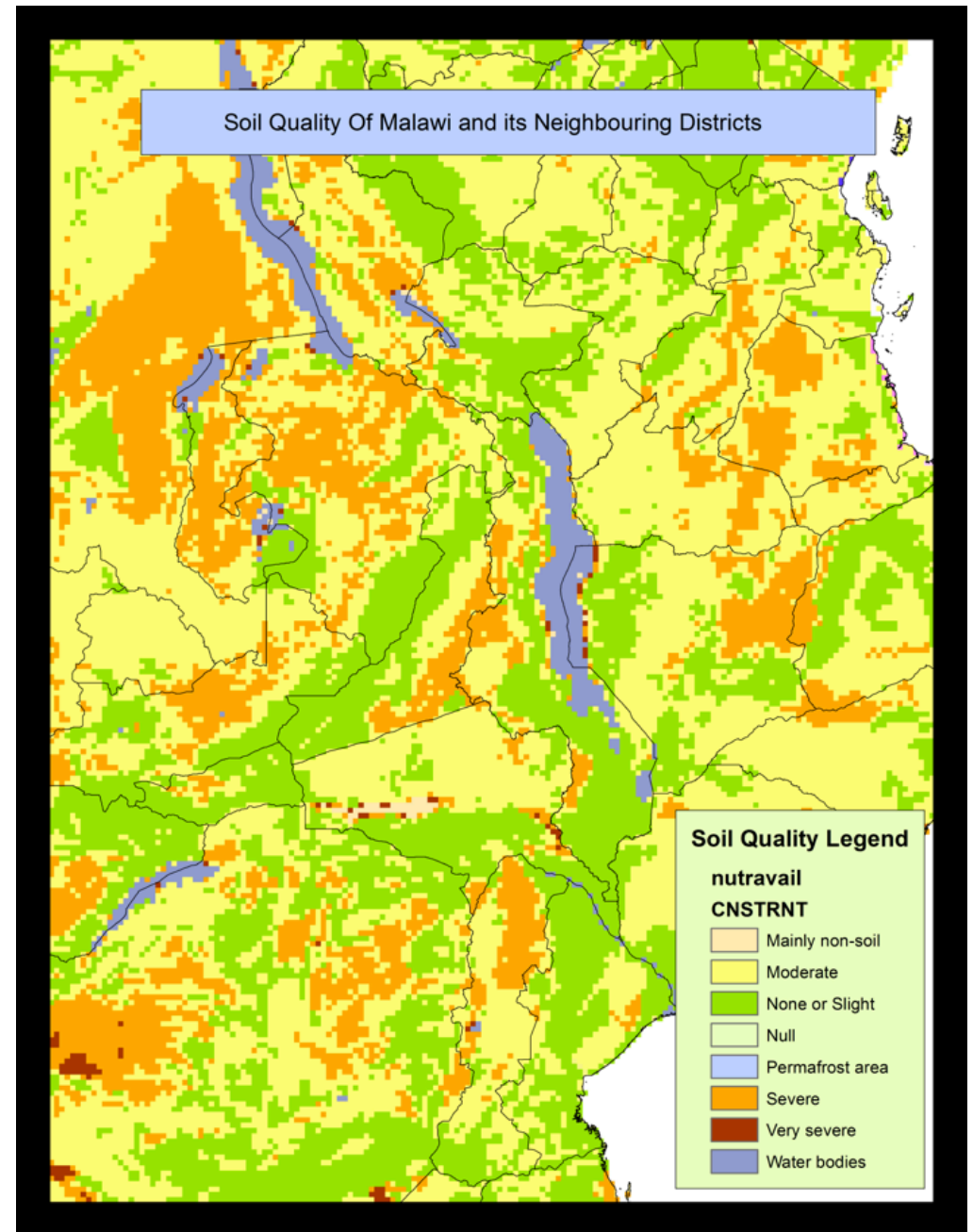**Appendix I: GDP Growth of Malawi and other Sub-Saharan African Nations**
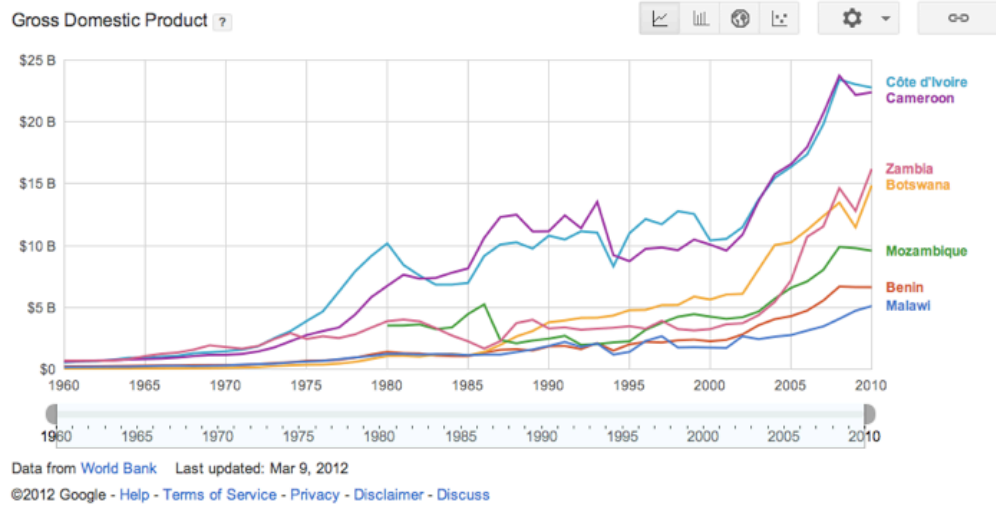
Appendix II: Map of Units of Analysis
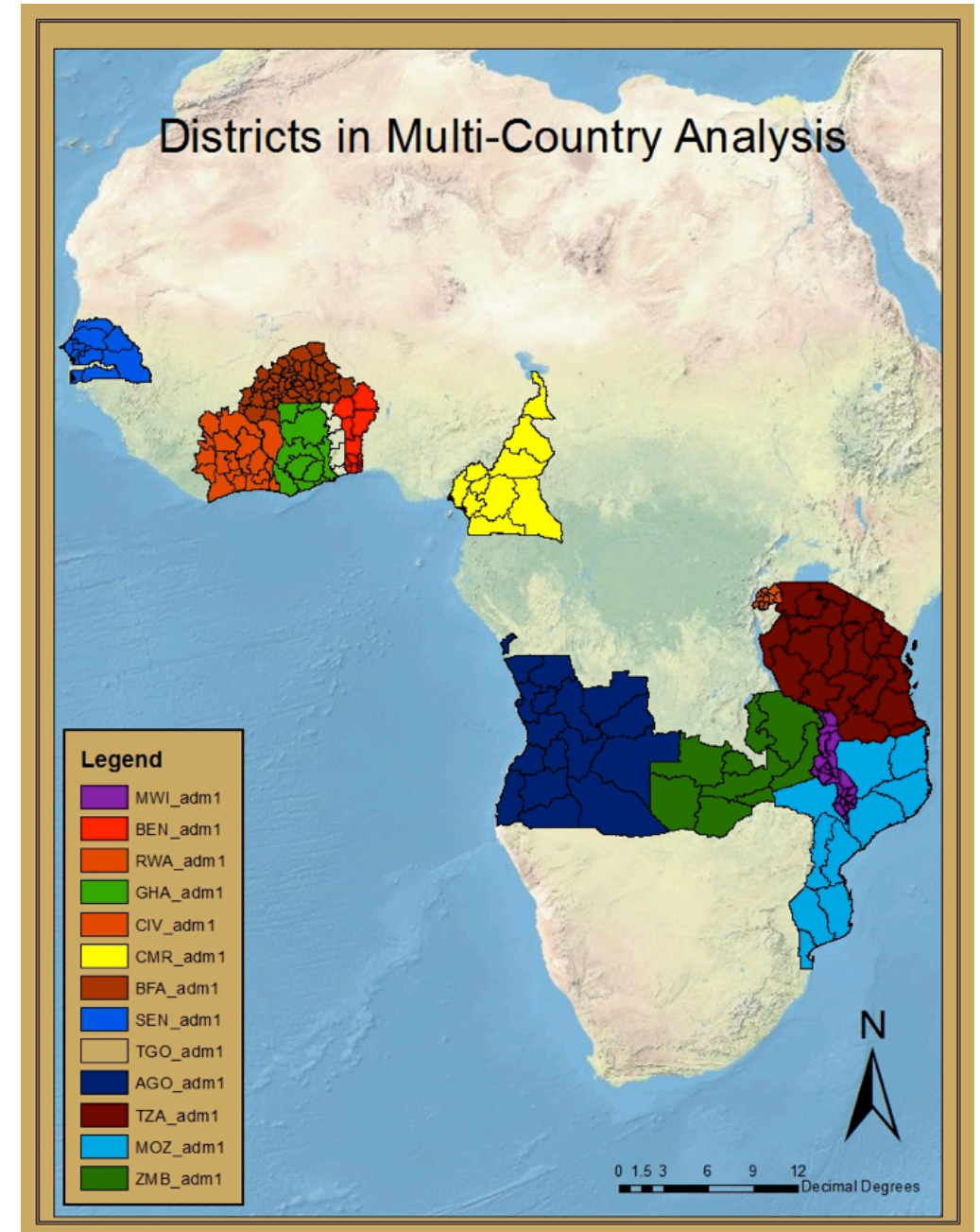
Appendix III: Map of Cluster Districts in 3-Country Analysis

Appendix IV: Sample Map of Soil Data

Which Nations like BITs Best?: Determining Partners for Bilateral Investment Treaties

Tess Manning

Bilateral investment treaties are perceived as one of the strongest and most legitimate international institutions. These treaties encourage the flow of foreign direct investment into developing countries by protecting investor's interests with a legal contract. Two contracting states enter into a BIT to protect the interests of investors and businesses in either country. However, not all countries are willing to utilize BITs as a trade mechanism. This study argues that countries with large differences in democratic institutions and property rights are more likely to enact BITs in order to protect investments. A probit regression of dyadic BITs shows that countries enter these treaties depending on the specific regime type of their partner; dyads of a strong democracy and a transitional democracy are likely to enter into a BIT, . Bilateral investments treaties effectively overcome institutional gaps in some situations, but still reflect investor hesitation in institutionally weak governments. Thus BITs are most frequently used between different regimes

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Foreign direct investment (FDI) is a highly desired tool for growth in developing countries. Most poor nations have limited options for growth, but FDI brings an influx of capital, employment, productivity improvements, and technology. FDI flows increased heavily in the 1980s and promoted economic opportunities and competition in the developing world. Some of the least developed countries (LDCs) naturally attract FDI with their potentially prosperous economic markets. However, economic indicators are not the bottom line for investment criteria. Multinational corporations (MNCs) and foreign firms are more likely to send money to a country with strong political and legal institutions. MNCs from more developed nations are wary of investing in countries whose political and economic structures present significant investment risks. Investors must analyze whether or not a government has strong incentives to against their best interests by either expropriating foreign capital or implementing domestic economic policies that might decrease the value of investments.

When host governments promise to protect foreign investments, investors do not always perceive these commitments to be credible. Preferences of a host country's government can be volatile and change at any time to align with new interests. Leaders with a short-time horizon or small discount rate may find the benefits of exploiting foreign capital to be greater than the long-term benefits of national economic growth.

Investor countries overcome this hold-up problem by importing outside institutions that protect their investments in a host nation. The most popular and credible legal institutional tool that confronts this commitment problem is a bilateral investment treaty (BIT). Countries increasingly sign BITs, which can provide information on a partner's interests as well as increase the costliness of breaking protective commitments. BITs provide essential protection or compensation for expropriation, national treatment for investors, most-favored nation rights, and third-party arbitration provisions for dispute settlement. BITs assure MNCs that investments will flourish in conditions comparable to the MNC investor's political environment. Even if the host country violates the BIT, investors know that complaints will be settled in court.

Recent literature confirms that BITs increase total FDI inflow into developing countries. Yet there is great variance in which country pairs actually sign BITs. BITs encourage FDI flow, but some countries sign BITs while others do not. This paper examines polity levels of trading-partners as they relate to BIT enactment.

MNCs look to invest in countries with strong democratic political institutions that provide greater checks and balances to prevent rent seeking or negative policy changes that hurt investors. This is in part intuitive, as MNCs are generally registered in multiple democracies, most of which are Operation for Economic-Development (OECD) countries. Governments with more autocratic or unstable power structures have low incentives to protect foreign investments. MNCs consider enteral policy choices and institutional changes when making international investment decisions.

The argument logically follows that a country pair with similar institutional structures finds less of a reason to enter into a BIT. Two strong democracies respect legality and trust one another when investing across borders. This reasoning also suggests that two countries with similar autocratic institutions will be less interested in a BIT, as neither values protective policies. However, a country with stronger institutions will desire investment insurance when trading with a regime that is less likely to protect investments. Ultimately, the greater the difference in the quality of institutions between two countries, the more likely these countries will enter into a BIT.

This paper finds that a greater difference in polity levels between two democratic countries does indeed increase the likelihood of entering a BIT into force. The results also show that though two countries with different regimes frequently enter into BITs, these partners can have similar institutional qualities. BIT usage broadly reflects the hesitation of MNCs to invest without credible commitments from a given trading partner.

Literature Review and Theory

The Race for FDI

While an increase in capital alone will not lead to higher economic growth in a developing country, there is no doubt that foreign direct investment opens economic opportunities of these countries. FDI increases employment, promotes managerial and productivity improvements, and most importantly, encourages technology transfer to the host country (Jensen 2003). When the world decreased traditional foreign development aid in the 1980s, private financial flows to developing countries soon took its place. By 2003, FDI reflected the greatest resource flows to the developed world (Neurmayer and Spess 2005). , Attracting and competing for FDI became and continues to remain a central interest for governments of developing countries. By 2005, developing nations were receiving more than 36% of all inward FDI flows

(Büthe, Milner 2008).

Despite the increase in FDI, firms in OECD countries are wary of investing in poorer countries where governments have strong incentives to expropriate foreign capital or implement domestic economic policies that decrease the value of investments. Although MNCs may negotiate individual agreements and contracts with host governments, these agreements establish little credibility or assurance in these negotiations (Tobin and Busch 2010). When developing nations work to attract FDI, a "dynamic inconsistency" problem may arise if the initial preferences of a host government were to shift after the commencement of business. (Neumayer and Spess 2005). Although a developing country may promise equitable treatment and protection to an MNC, the host executive may change policy at any time to align with new interests (Büthe and Milner 2009). If a political leader has a short time horizon, he will value the exploitation of foreign capital over most potential long-term benefits from foreign investment on economic growth (Büthe and Milner 2009). For instance, host governments can encourage foreign corporations to develop industries only to prematurely revoke their licenses and replace them with domestic firms.

Introduction of the Bilateral Investment Treaty

In order to protect the investments of its registered MNCs, developed countries increasingly sign bilateral investment treaties (BITs) that contain specific provisions regarding foreign assets. BITs serve as legal institutional tools, which aim to overcome disparate political realities between any two contracting states. As an international institution, a BIT provides information on developing countries' interests while also increasing the costliness of breaking commitments (Büthe and Milner 2009). Neurmayer and Spess find that BITs compensate for poor institutional quality and are most successful in countries that would otherwise be more likely to break commitments in FDI (2005). Today BITs have converged to reflect a set of largely standardized provisions that include protection or adequate compensation for expropriation, national treatment for investors, most-favored nation rights, and most importantly, a third-party arbitration body for dispute settlement (Tobin and Busch 2010, Neumayer and Spess 2005, Büthe and Milner 2009). One of the most relevant provisions of the BIT currently is the protection of contractual rights, which includes financial assets, stocks, intellectual property, and licenses (Guzman 1998). MNCs of a contractual state expect to be treated the same as domestic firms in the host country. In the event of a violation, a reputable international court settles the dispute.

BITs significantly interfere with a country's sovereignty, as any public policy regulation can be challenged in a binding investor-to-state settlement in an international arbitration court as long as it negatively affects investors (Neumayer and Spess 2005). The investment treaty essentially "[trades] sovereignty for credibility." Both partners consider the arbitration settlement a serious commitment, not to be taken lightly internationally. Most BIT complaints are taken to the World Bank's International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). With both national reputations and investor finances at stake, the third-party arbitration clause in BITs holds nations accountable for all transgressing policies.

One instance of alleged contractual violation by a contracting state occurred in February 2012; the Supreme Court of India cancelled the operating license of the Russian conglomerate Sistema, an MNC that owns over half of a joint telecom venture with an Indian company. This license revocation blatantly violated the Russian and Indian bilateral investment treaty, which entered into force in 1995. Russia filed a dispute with the government of India, and thus invoked the BIT article that explicitly protects licenses. If India fails to uphold its treaty obligations, Russia can bring the dispute to the ICSID.

Once a nation is party to a BIT arbitration clause, it can rarely escape a dispute. Venezuela is infamous for its frequent and unpredictable expropriations and domestic exploitation of foreign capital. However, even though Venezuela withdrew from the ICSID in February 2012, the state is still responsible for settling 21 pending cases involving dishonored BIT commitments that are valued at a total of $40 billion dollars. The strength of the BIT lies in its ability to hold nations accountable for nearly any contractual violation or act of expropriation. If a country does not compensate corporations for violations, greatly needed international investors will withdraw from the host country.

Empirical analyses showing the effect of BITs on FDI inflow to a country are controversial and mixed. Recent significant papers include negative correlations of BITs and dyadic FDI flow found by Tobin and Rose-Ackerman (2005) as well as positive correlations found by Salacuse and Sullivan (2005) and Neurmayer and Spess (2005). Most recently, Büthe and Milner, as well as Kerner, used aggregate FDI data for a country to show that the signing of BITs does in fact increase overall FDI flow into developing countries (Büthe and Milner 2009, Kerner 2009). When a country enters into a BIT, it signals to the international community that it is prepared to uphold commitments. Governments around the world find that BITs attract FDI, and by 2002 there were 2,181 BITs worldwide (UNCTAD 2003). Foreign investors and countries respond well to BITs, as they secure the serious commitment of host governments to protective strategies.

Determining Investment Partners

Many questions remain as to which types of countries are more likely to sign BITs. Although BITs are increasingly popular as international institutions, not every rich OECD nation signs a BIT with a developing country. Likewise, not every developing country is willing to jump into a binding investment treaty. Entering into a BIT results in a significant loss of sovereignty for less institutionally developed countries. The African International Legal Awareness program even held a BIT workshop in 2011, helping inform the region of the serious obligations BITs require.

The main criteria to consider when analyzing BIT enactment are those characteristics of a country that would attract FDI in the absence of external institutional protection. Previous literature demonstrates that stronger democratic institutions are linked to greater property rights protection (Olson 1993, 2000, North and Weingast 1989). Recent studies have also found that FDI flows are associated with democratic political institutions; as greater checks and balances prevent executive rent seeking that harms foreign investors (Jensen 2003, Li 2006). Thus the protection of property rights must be investigated at a level deeper than a broad dummy regime type. Witold Heinsz measures these checks and balances as an index of domestic institutional veto points or "domestic political constraints" (Henisz 2000). Büthe and Milner use these domestic political constraints in place of simple regime type and find them to be a strong predictor of inward FDI (Büthe and Milner 2009).

Thus more developed investor countries will consider not only economic indicators such as market size and economic growth, but also the specific political environment of a potential host country. MNCs are largely concerned about expropriation, contract violations, and unpredictable domestic policy changes that could devalue investments. Countries consider the possibility of "dynamic inconsistency" and the unexpected shifts in host preferences. The weaker the domestic political constraints of a regime, the riskier the investments. Li finds that autocracies are more likely overall to expropriate resources than democracies (Li 2009). Foreign investors must take political stability, executive power, and institutional

quality, into account when investing.

Determining BIT Partners

A BIT serves as an outside institution to protect foreign investors from adverse political unpredictability. But which countries actually enter into BITs? A corporation has two choices when determining the most profitable market in which to invest their capital. Capital can be invested domestically or in a foreign market. If a domestic market is saturated, then a flourishing foreign market may seem appealing. However, in an institutionally weak host country there is a high risk for lost capital. In this situation, a BIT can potentially overcome investment uncertainties and institutional gaps. A country with stronger domestic institutions will desire maximum investment protection when dealing with a host country that has a different and weaker standard for certain sociopolitical structures, such as property rights, for example.

On the other hand, two investing countries may have similar levels of institutional caliber. In this instance, in the choice between keeping its money at home and investing in a foreign country, both options might pose similar risk. There may be less urgency in providing additional investment security in the form of a BIT between these two countries. This is particularly true for two strong democracies that respect legality domestically and have no incentive to deny investment protection to fellow democracies. The theory predicts that other similar types of regimes, such as autocracies or anocracies, will enter into fewer BITs between one another as well. These countries are typically vying for FDI from more developed and democratic countries.

Hypothesis

In the aforementioned theoretical framework, two countries with similar institutional levels do not feel pressure to enter into a BIT in order to attract FDI. The hypothesis predicts that a dyad with a significant difference in democratic institutional standards will enter a BIT into force.

HA0: A country's regime type does not determine whether a BIT will be entered into force.

HA1: The greater the difference in regime type is between two countries, the more likely the countries will enter a BIT into force.

Research Design

The test is a large N study with a cross-sectional time series design. The research uses a probit model with fixed time effects. The unit of analysis is the dyad year. The democratic polity data available covers all countries from years 1945-2010. Observations of country pairs begin in 1972, which is the date of the first BIT entered into force. This time period includes variable data for the five years previous to each BIT entered into force. The independent and control variables are each lagged five years. This five-year span creates a window to examine the level of democratic or autocratic institutions in a country, which may trigger the desire for a signed BIT to be entered into force. These five years aim to give a close representation of a country's political, institutional, and economic climate before a signed treaty is entered into force.

The test is first run including all controls, using observations of BITs from 1985-2010. The test is run a second time dropping two control variables, but including all observations from 1972-2010.

Dependent Variable: Date of Entry into Force of a Bilateral Investment Treaty

Data for a BIT signing and entry into force between country pairs (BITijt) is found in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) list of Investment Instruments online. This study considers BITs entered into force and does not consider signed BITs, as only treaties entered into force are legally binding. The BITijt is measured as 1 in the year that the treaty is entered into force between dyad partners and each subsequent year. The variable is measured as 0 otherwise.

Independent Variable: Polity Difference

For this hypothesis, the main independent variable is **Polity Difference**, which captures the difference in democratic levels between two countries. Democracy is measured by the Polity IV scores (POLITY, POLITYDIFF), which give qualities of democratic and autocratic authority. Polity Difference is the absolute difference of a dyad's Polity IV scores. The Polity IV score ranges from -10 (hereditary monarchy) to +10 (consolidated democracy). Autocracies range from around -10 to -6, anocracies from -5 to +5, and democracies from 6-10. The polity measurements include qualities of executive recruitment, constraints on executive authority, and political competition. The score accounts for institutional changes in the central governing authority. These aggregated measurements are quantitative demonstrations of the political environment in a country, which affect central policy choices and institutional changes that are important to foreign investors.

Control Variables

Foreign investors and MNCs seek out host countries with economically profitable markets. Thus the control variables used in this research design account for economic factors that attract FDI. The first control is **Market Size** (GDP), measured by the GDP of each country. MNCs typically invest in large markets where they can sell their goods and services. The second control is **Economic Growth** (GDP-GROWTH), measured by the year on year percentage change in GDP. High growth and economic development attract foreign investment, as a potentially large and efficient market will bring higher sales and profits. An additional significant economic indicator that is controlled in this study is **Trade Openness** (TRADE). Trade Openness is measured as the sum of imports and exports as a proportion of GDP. The higher the value of trade openness, the greater the opportunity for MNCs to export produced goods or services back to the investor countries or to other countries. The last controls are the human capital variables indicated by **Education** (SECSCHOOL) and **Labor Force** (LABOR). There are varied measurements for human capital and education in previous literature, but this research design uses the gross secondary school enrollment rate in a country and size of the labor force. With the increase in service investments over industrial investments, human capital has become particularly important to MNCs. Investors are attracted to host countries with a highly skilled and larger labor force.

The dyad pairs are distinguished in the results as country A and country B, where country A has the larger market size (GDP).

Table 1: Summary Statistics

Variable	Definition	Obs.	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
BITijt	Event of a BIT entered into force between countries A and B	839322	0.0320	0.176	0	1
Polity [A]	Polity IV Project Score of A on a scale of -10 to 10; a higher score indicates a more democratic country	651008	0.535	7.51	-10	10
Polity [B]	Polity IV Project Score of B on a scale of -10 to 10; a higher score indicates a more democratic country	638969	0.569	7.44	-10	10
Polity Diff	Difference of polity score between A and B	524663	7.88	6.36	0	20
GDP [A]	GDP of A, measured in 2011 constant billion USD (WB)	431720	3.07e+11	1.07e+12	3.46e+7	1.46e+13
GDP [B]	GDP of B, measured in 2011 constant billion USD (WB)	609493	3.47e+10	2.20e+11	1.33e+5	1.46e+13
GDP Growth [A]	Percentage (%) change in GDP of A (WB)	439695	2.99e+4	1.98e+7	-51.0	1.31e+10
GDP Growth [B]	Percentage (%) change in GDP of B (WB)	571815	6.72e+5	7.80e+7	-51.0	1.54e+10
Trade [A]	Sum of total imports and exports as a percentage (%) of country A's GDP (WB)	426215	66.0	45.0	0.309	445.91
Trade [B]	Sum of total imports and exports as a percentage (%) of country B's GDP (WB)	571930	72.5	42.7	-13.5	4.46e+2
Secondary School [A]	Gross secondary school enrollment rates (%) of A (WB)	342374	68.9	33.5	0	1.62e+2
Secondary School [B]	Gross secondary school enrollment rates (%) of B (WB)	365331	47.9	32.3	0	1.62e+2
Labor Force [A]	Total number (WB)	374682	2.47e+7	8.13e+7	4.58e+4	7.86e+8
Labor Force [B]	Total number (WB)	378324	7.10e+6	3.10e+7	9.29	7.86e+8

Estimation Equations

Hypothesis A:

$$BIT_{ijt} = \beta1(POLITYDIFF)_{ijt-5} + \beta2\ln(GDP)_{it-5} + \beta3\ln(GDP)_{jt-5} + \beta4\ln(GDPGROWTH)_{it-5} + \beta5\ln(GDPGROWTH)_{jt-5} + \beta6\ln(TRADE)_{it-5} + \beta7\ln(TRADE)_{jt-5} + \beta8(SECSCHOOL)_{it-5} + \beta9(SECSCHOOL)_{jt-5} + \beta10\ln(LABOR)_{it-5} + \beta11\ln(LABOR)_{jt-5} + \sum$$

The hypothesis is run under four different models. Countries are divided into three groups based on polity levels: democracies, anocracies, and autocracies. These four models examine a country's decision in all scenarios whether to enter into a BIT. Each model pairs distinct groups of trading partners together on the basis of their respective polity scores. `

The first model restricts the polity scores of both country A and country B as 6 or higher, observing only BITs between two democracies. The second model restricts the polity scores of both country A and country B as -6 or lower, observing only BITs between two autocracies. The third model restricts polity scores of both country A and country B between -6 and 7, observing BITs between two midrange countries, or anocracies. The fourth model restricts polity ranges by accounting for every possible combination of democracies with non-democracies as well autocracies with non-autocracies, observing only BITs between different regimes.

The first equation also only observes years 1985-2010, as these are the years that BITs became more relevant and credible investment instruments. In the 1980s, foreign investment began replacing traditional aid. It was also not until the late 1980s that certain regions around the world, including Latin America, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia ended policies that had previously prevented foreign investment, such as import substitution. These countries first began vying for investments in the 1980s, utilizing the BIT as an investment vehicle.

Hypothesis B:

$$BIT_{ijt} = \beta1(POLITYDIFF)_{ijt-5} + \beta2\ln(GDP)_{it-5} + \beta3\ln(GDP)_{jt-5} + \beta4\ln(GDPGROWTH)_{it-5} + \beta5\ln(GDPGROWTH)_{jt-5} + \beta6\ln(TRADE)_{it-5} + \beta7\ln(TRADE)_{jt-5} + \sum$$

The second equation does not include the control variables of Education and Labor Force and extends observations from 1972-2010. However, the earlier years are not the best representations of BIT behavior, as countries did not fully embrace the treaties as valuable legal instruments until the 1980s. The United States did not start its BIT program until 1977 (Guzman 1998).

Table 2: Impact of Polity Difference in dyadic pairs on entering a BIT into force (1985-2010)

Variables	Model 1: Two Democracies	Model 2: Two Autocracies	Model 3: Both Midrange	Model 4: Different Regimes
Polity Difference	.154*** (9.42e-3)	-.129*** (3.47-2)	-1.90e-2*** (5.84e-3)	-7.73e-3*** (1.20e-3)
GDP [A]	-3.46e-15 (5.86e-15)	3.61e-13*** (9.24e-14)	-6.46e-13** (2.67e-13)	5.40e-14*** (5.04e-15)
GDP [B]	-2.04e-12*** (1.17e-13)	-2.98e-12*** (8.19e-13)	-5.00e-12*** (1.14e-12)	1.49e-12*** (1.19e-13)
GDP Growth [A]	-2.80e-2*** (3.07e-3)	1.63e-2** (7.54e-3)	3.88e-3 (3.96-3)	6.92e-3*** (1.62e-3)
GDP Growth [B]	-1.34e-2*** (2.07e-3)	-2.11e-10 (1.67e-8)	-5.39e-10 (3.62e-8)	-1.71e-10 (1.21e-8)
Trade [A]	9.03e-4*** (3.08e-4)	-3.42e-3*** (1.23e-3)	-1.30e-3** (5.35e-4)	-9.20e-4*** (2.06e-4)
Trade [B]	-6.31e-6 (2.78e-4)	-1.78e-3** (8.99e-4)	3.22e-3*** (6.75e-4)	-3.19e-3*** (1.83e-4)
Secondary School [A]	9.63e-3*** (4.44e-4)	9.26e-3*** (1.80e-3)	1.50e-2*** (1.06e-3)	1.42e-2*** (2.92e-4)
Secondary School [B]	1.03e-2*** (4.39e-4)	1.11e-2*** (1.30e-3)	1.52e-2*** (8.75e-4)	1.28e-2*** (2.46e-4)
Labor Force [A]	1.87e-9*** (1.70e-10)	1.45e-9*** (1.98e-10)	6.15e-9*** (1.36e-9)	1.81e-09*** (5.87e-11)
Labor Force [B]	7.00e-9*** (3.52e-10)	2.86e-8*** (3.68e-9)	2.07e-8*** (2.07e-9)	1.30e-9*** (1.96e-10)
Observations	28,653	10,703	12,967	84,429

Note: *indicates significance where $p < 0.1$, ** is $p < 0.05$ and *** is $p < 0.01$.

Results and Discussion

The results for Hypothesis A, as shown in Table 2, vary across the four models.

For Model 1, the outcome shows that polity difference is a positive and significant determinant of a BIT entering into force between two democracies. There is a 3.9% marginal increase in BIT enforcement for every one percent increase in polity difference at the 1% level. As predicted, the null hypothesis is rejected. This result is consistent with the theory that the larger the difference in the quality of democratic institutions is between two countries, the more interested the dyad pair is in securing investments with a BIT. This behavior is particularly aligned with the interests of democracies. Developed countries that are strong democracies have a large economic interest in sending FDI to new markets, but are unwilling to risk protection of their investments. When two strong democracies consider investing in one another, the pair respects legality and upholds promises of foreign investment protection. A BIT serves no purpose as an investment instrument between strong democracies who have similar polity scores. When a strong democracy trades with a transitional democracy, the results are different.. Transitional democracies typically score a 6 or 7 on the polity indicator; although these countries claim to represent or adhere to new democratic values and institutions, a dynamic inconsistency still exists. Because these transitional countries recently experienced a regime change, strong democracies do not view their commitments to be credible as yet. The polity difference values between transitional democracies and strong democracies represent the highest values in Model 1, and our results show us that more BITs are enacted between transitional democracies and strong democracies than are enacted between two strong or two transitional democracies.

To illustrate these results, consider the following two examples. As of March 2012, Pakistan has been actively seeking a BIT with the United States. While the two countries have a robust trade relationship, the U.S. is hesitant to invest further in areas such as energy without a binding BIT. Although Pakistan currently classifies as a democracy with a polity of 6, in recent years its institutional quality has fluctuated to much lower levels. Thus, the U.S. does not have sufficient assurance of the legitimacy of Pakistan's commitments and consequently desires a legally binding BIT to protect any future investments with arbitration.

Many critics of BITs point out that Brazil has become a top investment destination without entering a single BIT into force. However, this case study is also consistent with the results of Model 1, as Brazil has been considered a strong democracy since 1985. Thus developed and wealthy investor countries that are typically democratic have confidence in Brazil's legal institutions and policy stability without a BIT.

The results for Model 2 reveal that polity difference is a negative and significant determinant of two autocracies entering a BIT into force. There is a 0.56% marginal decrease in BIT enforcement for every unit increase in polity differences at the 1% significance level. We are unable to reject the null hypothesis. It is important to note, however, that the least number of observations of BITs occur between autocracies. The limited amount of BITs is predicted, as autocracies are generally developing economies that compete for FDI from developed countries. Thus autocracies have little to no interest in entering BITs into force amongst one another. If autocracies do not value democratic legal and political institutions domestically, these countries are not likely to sacrifice sovereignty through a binding treaty and grant protection to foreign investors from another, and potentially unstable, autocracy. Treaty provisions such as conceding "national treatment" for MNCs can mean very little in many autocracies. The results indicate that if an autocracy does take on another autocracy as an investment partner, it typically concedes protec-

tion to a similar regime. Although this twist is not predicted by the hypothesis, it makes sense that the few autocracies investing in one another would not make large policy concessions to weaker regimes without guaranteed large influxes of FDI.

Model 3 shows that polity difference is a negative and significant determinant of two mid-range countries or anocracies entering a BIT into force. There is a 0.14% marginal decrease at the 1% significance level in the likelihood of these countries committing to a BIT if they have institutions of varying qualities. In this model, the null hypothesis is not rejected. However, the results for this group are intuitively similar to those of the previous autocratic group. There are also relatively small numbers of observations for mid-range polity countries entering into BITs. These countries vie for FDI from developed democracies and seek investment from those trading partners. Anocracies are less interested in sending limited capital to other developing countries. If two anocracies are present in BIT talks or negotiations, the country with the higher polity score will be less interested in investing in and negotiating a BIT with a lower scoring regime. A future paper could study the direct FDI flows between anocracy pairs, but a possible explanation for this phenomenon is that within this dyadic group the BIT serves as reinforcement for similar countries that do business together or whose leaders are in solidarity. Mid-range countries can use these BITs as signals of credible commitment to the more developed international community.

The outcomes for Model 4 reveal a similar negative and significant relationship between polity difference and the likelihood of different regime pairs entering a BIT into force. This includes democracies paired with non-democracies and autocracies with non-autocracies. The null hypothesis is not rejected, with a 0.12% marginal decrease in the likelihood of a BIT for every one percent increase in the polity difference of the dyad at the 1% significance level. This Model includes the largest number of observations out of all the Models tested.

The observed high frequency of BIT enactment between different types of regimes supports the hypothesis and the theory on which it is based. Two countries with large differences in polity do enter BITs into force. Investing democracies actively require the credible commitment of a BIT from non-democratic host countries. These non-democracies are willing to sacrifice policy regulation in order to attract large FDI flows from wealthy democracies. Likewise, if an autocracy is contending for FDI, it should expect to be bound by a BIT with a non-autocratic investing partner. The significant and negative relationship between BIT enactment (for a multi-regime dyad) and polity score difference in Model 4 suggests that within these pairs, those closest in polity enter into BITs. While BITs are utilized to overcome large institutional gaps, when two countries have different regimes, most countries achieve investment treaties with partners closest in institutional quality to them. Yet in this situation, "closest in institution quality" is still a significant difference. In these cases, BITs work as legal instruments promoting FDI flow, but they also reflect the inherent hesitations that countries have in dealing with unstable governments.

Across the four models, the control variables all proved to be significant as expected. Market size measured by GDP, trade openness, secondary school enrollment rates, and labor force were all extremely significant at the 1% level. The growth of a country's market, measured by the annual percentage change in GDP, varied significance levels across the models. The results for these controls confirm that investing countries are attracted to economic markets with potential for high profits.

Table 3: Impact of Polity Difference in dyadic pairs on entering a BIT into force (1972-2010)

Variables	Model 1: Two Democracies	Model 2: Two Autocracies	Model 3: Both Midrange	Model 4: Different Regimes
Polity Difference	8.04e-2*** (7.44e-3)	-2.00e-1*** (2.42e-2)	-5.68e-3 (3.96e-3)	1.4e-2*** (8.48e-4)
GDP [A]	3.62e-14*** (4.82e-15)	6.37e-13*** (5.05e-14)	1.41e-13*** (4.07e-14)	3.27e-13*** (7.17e-15)
GDP [B]	-3.47e-13*** (5.47e-14)	3.83e-12*** (6.18e-13)	1.50e-11*** (5.90e-13)	1.22e-13*** (3.87e-15)
GDP Growth [A]	-2.12e-2*** (2.35e-3)	2.95e-2*** (4.36e-3)	-5.36e-3** (2.48e-3)	-8.02e-5 (7.60e-4)
GDP Growth [B]	-1.21e-2*** (1.60e-3)	-2.38e-10 (1.45e-8)	-6.17e-10 (2.14e-8)	-3.27e-10 (1.11e-08)
Trade [A]	7.29e-4*** (2.43e-4)	-3.58e-3*** (7.97e-4)	1.88e-3*** (1.83e-4)	4.13e-05 (1.11e-4)
Trade [B]	-3.25e-4*** (2.25e-4)	-7.89e-4*** (5.91e-4)	7.46e-4** (3.20e-4)	7.00e-4*** (9.34e-5)
Observations	43,395	27,077	36,546	194,378

Note: *indicates significance where p < 0.1, ** is p < 0.05 and *** is p < 0.01.

When the test is run a second time, the control variables of Education and Labor Force are not included and the observations of BITs are extended from 1972-2010. The results for the hypothesis run with the second test, shown in Table 3, reflect some of the previous results found in Table 2 but also some new relationships. Once again, for Model 1, polity difference is a positive and significant determinant of two democracies entering a BIT into force. The results for Model 2 again show that polity difference is a negative and significant determinant of two autocracies entering into a BIT. Model 3 gives new results showing that polity difference is a negative but insignificant determinant of two mid-range countries or anocracies entering a BIT into force.

The outcomes for Model 4 differ from the first test, as they reveal a positive and significant relationship between polity difference and the likelihood of different regime pairs entering a BIT into force. In this second hypothesis, the null is not rejected and the hypothesis is upheld. The greater the difference in polity between two different regimes, the more likely a BIT was entered into force. This outcome confirms that the first BIT models from the 1960s and 1970s originally intended to overcome seriously large institutional gaps between countries.

The least number of observations is still between two autocracies and the highest number of observations is between different regimes.

While these results demonstrate the relationship between polity differences and BITs in earlier years, the power of marginal effects is more representative in Table 2. The years 1985-2010 observed in Table 2 encompass the period when BITs became credible legal instruments and international investment arbitration courts started gaining more legitimacy. Additionally, many countries ended policies such as import substitution in the 1980s, opening their markets for the first time to FDI competition. The first test uses a better window of time for observing country decisions.

Conclusion

There is no single consistent trend in the reasons countries negotiate and enter BITs into force between one another. The results of this study demonstrate that depending on their trading partners, countries utilize BITs for various purposes related to FDI initiatives. Though some of these purposes remain unclear, that is in large part testament to the nature of bilateral relationships. However, by breaking dyads into groups of regime types, this research design has prompted some interesting findings.

It may be expected that countries with striking differences in strength of protective political and legal institutions are likely to enter into binding BITs. More developed, democratic countries desire a credible commitment of investment protection from host countries in the form of a BIT. Institutionally weak countries are willing to sacrifice sovereignty and policy regulation in return for large flows of investment into their developing economies. However, this study finds that this hypothesis is not a standard rule for all pairs of regimes.

Democracies are the regimes most concerned with legitimate property rights and the results uphold these preferences. Two strong democracies are highly unlikely to enter into a BIT, as the governments trust that their investments and contracts will be respected. However, a strong democracy is likely to require a BIT when investing in a transitional democracy. A dynamic consistency still exists with a transitional democracy's promises, so investors need the assurance of investment security that a BIT can provide. Thus, BITs are important investment instruments for both democratic investors and hosts.

Autocracies and anocracies are the main contenders in competing for FDI from developed countries. These regimes should be willing to enter into a BIT with a democracy, which promises large amounts of capital inflow. These regimes should be less interested in investing in one another and consequentially, less inclined to enter into BITs within their polity group. The results demonstrate that when autocracies and anocracies do enter a binding treaty that strips part of their sovereignty, their partner is more often a democracy than it is a weak regime. The large implication of these results is that the developing world still does not or cannot use BITs as an outside institution to bridge gaps in trade protection amongst one another. This could be due to the limited investment environment itself. As developing economies evolve in the next few years, we will further observe the importance of BITs for weak regime dyads.

Overall, the most significant use of the bilateral investment treaty is found between different regime types. This study confirms that country pairs with different levels of protective institutions and standards for FDI treatment do frequently enter a BIT into force. But it also found that there are more BITs between two nations with different regime types but similar institutional quality than there are between two nations with different regime types and different institutional quality. Within these dyads the use of BITs still reflects the inherent hesitations MNCs and democratic countries have in investing in institutionally weak countries.

Bilateral investment treaties are currently one of the strongest and most legitimate international institutions. While these BITs cannot overcome all institutional gaps, their continued use will hopefully increase the flow of FDI into developing countries, generating more growth worldwide.

Appendix I: Sources of Variables

Variable	Source
BIT dyads entered into force	UNCTAD: Investment Treaties Online
Polity IV Score	Polity IV Database
GDP	World Bank Database
Percentage Change in GDP	
Trade Openness	
(Sum of Exports and Imports as a percentage of GDP)	
Gross % of Secondary School Enrollment	
Labor Force	

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The 2011 Protests in Saudi Arabia: A History of Social Opposition in the Kingdom

Alexander Bruski

Bilateral investment treaties are perceived as one of the strongest and most legitimate international institutions. These treaties encourage the flow of foreign direct investment into developing countries by protecting investor's interests with a legal contract. Two contracting states enter into a BIT to protect the interests of investors and businesses in either country. However, not all countries are willing to utilize BITs as a trade mechanism. This study argues that countries with large differences in democratic institutions and property rights are more likely to enact BITs in order to protect investments. A probit regression of dyadic BITs shows that countries enter these treaties depending on the specific regime type of their partner; dyads of   a strong democracy and   a transitional democracy are likely to enter into a BIT, . Bilateral investments treaties effectively overcome institutional gaps in some situations, but still reflect investor hesitation in institutionally weak governments. Thus BITs are most frequently used between different regimes

The images of protests in Tahrir Square and civil war in Libya have imprinted themselves upon popular culture. Broadcast and published around the world, they have become symbolic of the momentous social change that the region is undergoing. Yet it appears that the dramatic events that occurred in North Africa have drowned out parallel, if less successful, protests in other Arab countries. The widespread protests in Bahrain, Yemen, and Oman, for instance, have received relatively little attention from the media. Saudi Arabia's protests, in particular, have been overlooked by reporters and academics—a significant oversight, considering that it appears that the Kingdom might be the surest bastion of uncontested authoritarian rule in the region. Saudi use of the Peninsula Shield Force to quell protests in Bahrain suggests that rather than face popular opposition at home, Saudi Arabia is willing to use its powerful military in order to support authoritarian regimes in the future.

But the Saudi regime is far from monolithic and stable. The royal family itself is comprised of various factions divided along lines of succession, with differing views on political issues. With the death of the Crown Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz and King Abdullah's health declining, the question of succession has become urgent. Sensing opportunity, various princes have maneuvered themselves into positions of power. The question of succession has also become more significant because of the likelihood that the new regent will have to respond to deep social changes in Saudi Arabia. Last year, the country experienced a wave of protests that, although limited in their size, reflected the grievances of various Saudi Arabian constituencies.

Shi'ite anger over discrimination by the Wahhabi Sunni government, and Saudi intervention in majority Shi'ite Bahrain, erupted into several protests in the oil-producing Eastern Province. Thousands took to the street in the predominantly Shi'ite towns of Qatif and Al-Hasa in March and April of 2011.[1] At the same time, women's rights activists staged protests in the Western Hijaz and in the conservative province of Najd. They called for abrogation of the de facto ban on women driving. Even in the conservative stronghold of Riyadh, Islamic liberals founded the Umma Islamic Party, which calls for democratic liberalization and the abolition of the absolutist monarchy.

The Saudi regime repressed these protests with internal security forces, which opened fire against the Shi'ite protesters in Qatif and arrested the ten founding members of the Umma Party.[2][3] In Qatif, the protests led to gunfights between the National Guard and protesters, resulting in casualties.[4] Nonetheless, the government was forced to make some concessions to the protesters, announcing that women will be allowed to vote in the 2015 municipal elections and promising economic subsidies for the unemployed.[5][6] King Abdullah himself, generally considered a moderate reformist by Western press and foreign services, voiced his support for women drivers in a 2005 interview and prevented the lashing of a woman who was arrested for driving.[7][8] It is important to neither exaggerate nor underestimate the extent and impact of these protests on the Saudi regime.

These protests are the culmination of decades of popular opposition to the Saudi dynasty. Given Saudi Arabia's strategic significance as a major oil-producer and regional military power, the 2011 protests cannot be dismissed simply because of their relatively small scale. A detailed analysis of the opposition and its impact upon the regime is necessary for a complete understanding of the current sociopolitical situation in Saudi Arabia.

The main actors to consider are the Saudi royal family, the Wahhabi ulema (scholars), women's rights groups, Islamic opposition, and the Shi'ite minority--the last of which has produced the most organised and militant opposition movement. This paper traces the development of and interactions between these groups since the 1970s in order to place recent protests in Saudi Arabia in context. One of the core concepts analyzed is the role of Islam in Saudi politics; each of the groups in question has used Islamic rhetoric to support their claims. It remains to be seen whether this approach will lead the uncoordinated

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1 "BBC News - Saudi Arabia Police Open Fire at Protest in Qatif." BBC - Homepage. Web. 19 Dec. 2011. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12708401>.
2 "BBC News - Saudi Arabia Police Open Fire at Protest in Qatif." BBC - Homepage. Web. 19 Dec. 2011. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12708401>.
3 "Saudi Authorites Detain Founders of New Party." WebCite. Associated Press. Web. 19 Dec. 2011. <http://www.webcitation.org/5whAiOr55>.
4 "Saudi Police on High Alert - Middle East - Al Jazeera English." AJE - Al Jazeera English. Web. 19 Dec. 2011. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/11/2011112465955365750.html>.
5 "Saudi Arabia: Arrests for Peaceful Protest on the Rise | Human Rights Watch." Human Rights Watch | Defending Human Rights Worldwide. Web. 19 Dec. 2011. <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2011/03/27/saudi-arabia-arrests-peaceful-protest-rise>.
6 Abu-Nasr, Donna. "Saudi Women Inspired by Fall of Mubarak Step Up Equality Demand - Bloomberg." Bloomberg - Business & Financial News, Breaking News Headlines. Web. 19 Dec. 2011. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-03-28/saudi-women-inspired-by-revolt-against-mubarak-go- online-to-seek-equality.html>.
7 Transcript: Saudi King Abdullah Talks to Barbara Walters - ABC News." ABCNews.com: Daily News, Breaking News and Video Broadcasts - ABC News. Web. 19 Dec. 2011. <http://abcnews.go.com/2020/International/story?id=1214706>.
8 "BBC News - Saudi Woman Driver's Lashing 'overturned by King'" BBC - Homepage. Web. 19 Dec. 2011. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15102190>.

protest groups to coalesce around a set of common demands defined by a liberal understanding of the Hadith or provoke sectarian violence. as it has in the past. The extent of the influence of the Internet and social media on the opposition movements in Saudi Arabia is also yet unknown. What is sure is that it is necessary to look past ossified understandings of Saudi Arabia in order to discover the wide breadth of hidden struggles that exist in Saudi society--movements that hold the potential to be just as dramatic as other, more prominent Middle Eastern protests in 2011.

I. Saudi Arabia and Wahhabism

Before delving into the tumultuous political situation of the 1970's--a decade of economic and political challenges for the Saudi regime, and one that marks the beginning of organized political opposition to the House of Saud--one must be aware of certain fundamental characteristics of Saudi rule. Here, "al-Saud" refers to the Saudi royal family, whereas the adjective "Saudi" will indicate matters pertinent to the modern Saudi state, its ruling regime, or simply the country at large. This short review of modern Saudi history addresses the role of the Wahhabi ulema in legitimizing Saudi rule and policy; the long-standing grievances of the Shi'ite minority caused by Wahhabi discrimination; and the role of women as prescribed by Wahhabism. The Wahhabi ulema is, as such, the fundamental focus of this section. From the very beginning of the first Saudi state, which was dissolved in 1890, the al-Saud family was closely allied to the Wahhabi clergy. As such, the Wahhabi interpretation of the Quran has deeply affected Saudi society.[9]

Wahhabism is derived from the teachings of 18th century Islamic theologian Ibn Abdul-Wahhab, who placed special emphasis on the Tahwid, or the principle of oneness of God in his writings, and claimed to be the sole representative of this intrinsic concept to Islam. This led Wahhabi clergymen to denounce the practice of shirk, or polytheism, an example of which is the adoration of saints or graves. Wahhabis excommunicated those Muslims deemed mushirkeen, or polytheists. Given the large following they enjoyed in the Arabian Peninsula and the resulting power of their fatawa (sing. fatwa), or religious legal rulings, Wahhabis emerged as an important political force. As Guido Sternberg argues in his essay "The Wahhabi Ulama and the Saudi State," the al-Saud family struck a deal of mutual assistance with the Wahhabis, who effectively legitimized the Saudi wars of conquest against other tribes in the Arabic Peninsula through their religious teachings, while the al-Saud spread those very same teachings through their military campaign.[10]

In 1902, Ibn al-Saud reconquered ar-Riyadh, the seat of the previous Saudi Kingdom, and consolidated the Najd, a region traditionally inhabited by bedouins and lacking any noteworthy centers of population. This region was traditionally conservative and home to a variety of Wahhabi clergymen. Yet, as Guido Sternberg points out, this agreement inter pares had changed by the time Ibn Al-Saud founded the second Saudi state in 1935, after his conquest of the Hijaz and Najd regions.[11] The ulema was no longer a political player in its own right and was limited to supporting and legitimizing the ever more powerful Saudi regime. Fatawa issued by the clergy were still influential, but the clergy had begun

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9 Steinberg, Guido. "The Wahhabi Ulama and the Saudi State." Saudi Arabia in the Balance: Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs. Ed. Paul Aarts and Gerd Nonneman. Washington Square (N. Y.): New York UP, 2005. 11-34. Print.
10 Ibid, 22
11 Ibid, 24

to subject itself to the al-Saud's will, actively supporting government policy through the issuing of state-sanctioned fatawa. Clergymen also began receiving a salary from the state, and were thus de facto state officials.[12] At the same time, however, the ulema began wielding more power over social conventions in the Saudi Kingdom, and effectively dictated social customs through Wahhabi courts of laws and mutaween (religious police) who punished Saudi subjects that went against the Wahabbi understanding of the sharia (religious laws). This in turn led to deep rifts in Saudi society.

As Fouad Ibrahim argues in his The Shi'is of Saudi Arabia, the policy of excommunicating Muslims who were deemed heretical--a practice known as takfir--ultimately disenfranchised religious minorities in Saudi Arabia, including the large Shi'ite minority in the Eastern province. Wahhabi judges had made several elementary principles of the Shi'ite faith illegal, such as the Shi'ite clause to the Islamic declaration of faith which asserts "Ali is the vice-regent of God", a notion that contradicts the Wahhabi understanding of the oneness of God. According to Ibrahim, however, Wahhabi persecution of Shi'ite practices did not stop at outlawing religious practices, but also included heavy taxation of Shi'ite minorities, an obligatory levy, and restrictions on trade.[13]

Similarly, under the Wahhabi tenets, women were marginalized as the result of Wahhabi interpretation of the Quran. As Rob L. Wagner points out, there are no written laws against ikhtilat, or the mixing of men and women, but the judiciary power given to Wahhabi judges effectively means that women can be punished for going against social customs dictated by Wahhabism.[14] These customs forbid women from mixing with men without supervision, revealing their face, and dressing improperly before men outside of their immediate family. Legal sanctions against these "crimes" can range from fines to corporal punishment; capital punishment can be administered for offences such as adultery, though the death penalty is rarely, if ever, used, as it requires ocular testimony from at least four witnesses. While the enforcement of these unwritten rules varies from region to region--rural areas and the Eastern Province being somewhat more lax--the aforementioned customs effectively prevent women in Saudi Arabia from leaving their homes. The ban on women driving is one of the key components of the systematic oppression of women. Public transport systems in cities such as Riyadh have forbidden women from riding their buses, and riding in a cab or with a personal driver constitutes ikhtilat (the mixing of men and women) and is thus frowned upon if not severely sanctioned, effectively limiting women's mobility. The ban itself was implemented in 1991 following a fatwa issued by the late grand mufti, as the radicalization of the Wahhabi ulema after 1979 progressed, due to a series of events that affected the nature of the Wahhabi clergy in Saudi Arabia.[15]

II. 1979 and Political Islam

Wahhabism brought the al-Sauds to power and continues to legitimize their rule and affect Saudi society. As mentioned previously, Guido Steinberg details in his essay, "The Wahhabi Ulama and the Saudi State" how the ulema became subservient to state interest, and how the clergy became increasingly

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12 Okruhlik, Gwenn. "Saudi Arabia." Politics and Society in the Contemporary Middle East. By Michele Penner. Angrist. Lynne Rienner, 2010. Print. 404
13 Ibrahim, Fouad N. The Shi'is of Saudi Arabia. London: Saqi, 2006. Print.
14 Wagner, Rob L. "Saudis Debate Gender Segregation." Rob L. Wagner Archives. 23 Apr. 2010. Web. 10 Dec. 2011. <https://sites.google.com/site/roblwagnerarchives/s>.
15 Wagner, 2010

divided over their loyalty to the al-Saud family and the question of their legitimacy as Islamic rulers.[16] Following the increase in the number of foreigners working in Saudi Arabia's oilfields and the increasing influence of the United States in Saudi Arabia, fringe elements of the ulema grew more vocal about the perceived shortcomings of sharia law in Saudi Arabia.[17] Here Steinberg points to judge Abd al-Aziz Ibn Baz, who "rejected the presence of Americans and started agitating against their activities" in the 40s and 50s.[18] Ibn Baz eventually took the matter to court and publicly accused King Ibn Saud of having failed in his duties as an Islamic ruler by selling land and employing foreigners.[19] Despite popular support for Ibn Baz, the ulema eventually decided in favour of the Saudi King, dismissing Ibn Baz's accusations, showing that the ulema was still subservient to the al-Saud and that Islamist opposition to the regime, while budding, was the exception rather than the norm.[20]

This balance was to change, however, in 1979, a year that saw four major turning points in Saudi Arabia and the Middle East: the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the hostage crisis at the Great Mosque in Mecca, the Shi'ite riots in the Eastern province, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. As Gwenn Okruhlik argues in his chapter on Saudi Arabia, these events led to a stricter understanding of the sharia and greater control of Wahhabism over every-day life. The mutaween were given more freedoms and the Wahhabi ulema began to hold more sway on matters pertaining to social mores.[21] To understand this development, one must look at these events in detail, analyzing their causes and effects.

After all, there had been a marked increase in civil liberties prior to 1979. As Asef Bayat notes in Life as Politics, social customs had been less restrictive under the rule of Ibn Saud.[22] Additionally, the 1973 oil crisis had filled Saudi coffers, prompting large infrastructure projects and the influx of foreign labor. A group within the ruling dynasty known as the "free princes" simultaneously pushed for reforms,. envisioning liberties which were societal rather than liberal.[23] It is remarkable that prior to 1979, the practice of ikhtilat was much more tolerated, and that the principle of guardianship was not rigidly enforced.[24] These developments were seen with apprehension by some of the more reactionary elements of the Wahhabi clergy, yet it was the revolutionary branch, which followed the teachings of Ibn Baz, that ultimately stepped into action.

Perhaps the most dramatic outcome of the widening division within the ulema is the hostage crisis in Mecca, which left more than 400 dead and severely damaged the image of the Saudi regime. On 20 November 1979 Juhaiman al-Utaibi—a young "Wahhabi zealot" who proclaimed the arrival of the Mahdi, the Muslim penchant to the Messiah, and "demanded a return to the Islamic society of pious forefathers"—seized control of the Great Mosque in Mecca until French special forces were called in by the Saudi regime to storm the Mosque.[25] Al-Utaibi had studied under Ibn Baz and drew heavily upon

16 Steinberg, 2005, 26
17 Ibid, 24
18 Ibid, 25
19 Ibid, 25
20 Ibid, 26
21 Okruhlik, 2010, 401
22 Bayat, Asef. Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2010. Print. 121
23 Ibid, 25
24 Wagner, 2010
25 Steinberg, 2005, 27

his critique of the Al-Saud family, but he introduced a new revolutionary tone by severely criticizing the Al-Saud family for their corruption and oppression of the Saudi population. Nonetheless, Al-Utaibi was a convinced Wahhabi, denouncing the social liberalism in Saudi Arabia. Al-Utaibi was certainly a radical fundamentalist tinterested in preparing Saudi Arabia for a "day of judgment" rather than pushing a democratic agenda, but his confrontation with the Saudi regime still marks an important step towards the creation of an Islamic Liberal current.

The hostage crisis prompted the Al-Sauds to react to this open critique of their rule. In an effort to quench this new development in Islamism, they decided to give the remaining loyal members of the ulema more freedom to enforce their puritanical views on the Saudi society. By addressing the Al-Utaibi objections with social customs, the Al-Sauds were able to divert public outrage over their personal conduct and simultaneously repress the population by limiting the areas in which political mobilization could take place.[26] The "political street," envisioned by Asef Bayat as a place for people to coalesce around common interests through every-day life, thus ceased to exist, as cinemas, theatres, music halls and the like were banned and life became increasingly centered upon interactions within the family.[27] Simultaneously, the building craze of the 1970's had produced sprawling cities filled with high-rise buildings, but no parks or areas of recreation. Walking through Riyadh today, one is hard-pressed to even find stores or restaurants outside the gigantic malls patrolled by the mutaween, effectively ensuring that the public sphere is heavily monitored and restricted.

Despite these measures taken by the Saudi regime, Okruhlik goes on to mention how this new rhetoric, coupled with the return of many Saudi youth that had gone to fight in Afghanistan, led to an Islamist revival. While a "narrow Wahhabi interpretation of Islam came to dominate the national discourse," running parallel was a marked increase of grassroots Islamism that increasingly began to criticize the regime.[28] In private meetings, or majlis, these new Islamist groups could converse and criticize the Saudi regime's conduct, circumnavigating the limitations of the political street. According to Okruhlik, "popular" scholars had emerged by the end of the 1980s who opposed the state sanctioned fatawas and openly criticized corruption and waste among the regime.[29] Many of these new popular scholars had emerged, ironically, from the increased spending on Islamic education of the 80s that had been championed by the Saudi regime to further Wahhabi legitimization of the Al-Saud family. By the start of the Gulf-War, there was a strong Islamic opposition movement.[30]

III. 1979 and the Shi'ites

1979 also saw a wave of riots sweep through the Eastern provinces. Fouad Ibrahim traces the emergence of the Movement of Vanguards' Missionaries (MVM) as a political actor in Iraq, and the development of a new Shi'ite understanding of themselves and Islam in general.[31] Ibrahim stresses the teachings of Muhammad Taqi al-Mudarresi, an Iranian intellectual who rose to the leadership of the MVM in 1968.[32] Al-Mudarresi advocated a return to a purer form of Shi'ite Islam and the end of

26 Okruhlik, 2010, 401
27 Bayat, 2010, 213 ff
28 Okruhlik, 2010, 401
29 Ibid, 402
30 Ibid, 401
31 Ibrahim, 2006, 73
32 Ibid, 75

modern-day Jahiliyya, which he understood as the "state of ignorance in the Islamic classical sense, and refers to the pre-Islamic period."[33] Communism in particular was viewed as a symptom of the recent devolution to Jahiliyya, as was the Islamist support for political regimes.[34] These theological tenets were developed in Iran and mainly aimed at the Shah, but the long-standing alliance between Wahhabi ulema, the Al-Saud dynasty, and the large Shi'ite community in the Eastern province made Saudi Arabia a prime target for the MVM.

The MVM advocated a return to traditional Islamic values, which the new branch of the Wahhab ulema had discussed previously. In fact, Ibrahim placed the MVM into a region-wide wave of Islamic revival following the defeat of pan-Arabism in the 1973 war against Israel. For the Saudi Arabian context, existing grievances amongst the Shi'ite minority transformed this religious rhetoric into a revolutionary one championed by the Islamic Revolutionary Organization (IRO). Influenced by Doctor 'Ali Shari'ati, who Ibrahim describes as the "father of the Iranian revolution," Shi'ite Islam became a revolutionary ideology that stressed the need to "awaken" the Shi'ite community and saw revolutionary precedents in the Battle of Karbala and Hussain's revolt—two events which were pivotal in the development of Shi'ism.

Aside from this theological mobilization, Ibrahim also recognizes some economic grievances at the heart of the 1979 uprisings. The economic sanctions imposed by the Saudi state upon its Shi'ite subjects featured prominently in the short-term causes of the unrest.[35] The wage-difference between non-Saudi and Shi'ite Aramco workers sparked anti-Western sentiments amongst the Shi'ite, and mirrored the development of similar feelings in the Wahhabi clergy.[36] Coupled with severe shortcomings in the healthcare of the Eastern Province, Shi'ite felt that "their region and community have lagged behind others."[37]

At the same time, the Iranian Revolution of 1979 gave the Shi'ite minority an example to follow, leading to a marked mobilization of the Shi'ite community in 1979, beginning with what Ibrahim calls the "Intifada of 1979."[38] Demonstrations centered around Shi'ite festivals and hussainiyas, as the Shi'ite mosques were called. As Ibrahim puts it, these religious common denominators became "outlets for various religious and political movements within the Shi'is."[39] This finally came to its apex on November 25, 1979, as Shi'is in Qatif and Hasa demonstrated after the 'Ashura festivities under the guidance of Shi'ite clergymen.[40] Four days later, the Saudi regime, wary of Shi'ite militancy following the debacle at the Great Mosque, quarantined the Qatif region, and eventually opened fire against the protesters and killed 20 people.[41] The crowds began to appeal to a shared Islamic heritage, and chanted slogans such as, "The Prophet's religion is one without discrimination."[42] Thus, despite the theological discourse that preceded it, it can be argued that the 1979 intifada was ultimately a civil rights movement supported by Shi'ite rhetoric, rather than a purely religious uprising.

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33 Ibid, 81
34 Ibid, 87 ff
35 Ibid, 115 ff
36 Ibid, 115
37 Ibid, 115
38 Ibid, 117
39 Ibid, 118
40 Ibid, 119
41 Ibid, 120
42 Ibid, 120

IV. 1979 and its Legacy

1979 gave rise to a decade of hidden political struggles, ultimately culminating in another bout of open confrontation in 1990. It is important to stress that at no point were the two movements outlined in the previous section connected, or even supporting one another, despite the apparent similarities in their ideological aims. In both cases, however, we see an apparently monolithic and stable authoritarian regime, which is benefitting from an unprecedented economic boom and which has just instituted a cradle-to-grave welfare system, openly attacked by well-organized and wide-spread political opposition that draws legitimacy from the very same Islamic principles the Saudi state bases itself on. Although in both cases Saudi repression was effective and brutal in its quenching unrest, it did not stop the development of a new way of contesting the legitimacy of the Saudi regime. On the contrary, Okruhlik argues that an amorphous underground network developed, based around private majlis and fuelled by bootleg tapes of sermons and leaflets by these reformed clergymen.[43] This mirrors the development of Shi'ite political Islam under the Shah, as outlined by Kurzman in his The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran.[44] In fact, the MVM and its offshoot, the IRO, developed similarly around mosques and hussainiyas, although these organizations were decisively more structured and hierarchical than its Wahhabi counterpart.

Here Bayat's concept of a "post-Islamist trajectory" comes into play. Bayat identifies a trend common to the Middle East, by whichIslamist parties begin to voice demands for democratic reform through the use of Islamic rhetoric.[45] As Ibrahim outlines in his book, the IRO takes up the political grievances latent in the Shi'ite minority, and effectively "made revolutionary Shi'ism marketable ... [by explaining] the socio- economic conditions that plagued the Shi'is and the attitude they should adopt to deal with these conditions."[46] He explains that throughout the 80s youths who had previously associated with secular movements began to join the IRO, as it essentially offered an almost Leninist approach to Islam and addressed many of the real problems that preoccupied Shi'ite youths.[47] Similarly, while Fundamentalists of the new branch of the Wahhabi clergy adopted violent means to contest the Saudi regime, there was a parallel, more moderate movement that adopted a "liberal trend." Stéphane Lacroix outlines in his "Islamo-Liberal Politics in Saudi Arabia" how the debates between Islamists and Secular Intellectuals ultimately led to the development of a moderate reformist branch of the ulema. Here the rise of the practice of petitioning the Al-Sauds for democratic reforms became trademark tenets of what Lacroix labels "Islamo-Liberalism."[48] To Lacroix, some the hardcore neo-Salafis who were influenced by the renewed attention to a strict enforcement of the Sharia post-1979 ultimately became liberal as they matured from Salafist, indoctrinated youths to positions of authority.[49] Nonetheless, these movements merely simmered throughout the 80s and it would take a major event in the region to finally prompt an explosion of the latent opposition in Saudi Arabia.

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43 Okruhlik, 2010 401
44 Kurzman, Charles. The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2004. Print.
45 Bayat, 2010, 247
46 Ibrahim, 2006, 123
47 Ibid, 123
48 Lacroix, Stéphane. "Islamo-Liberal Politics in Saudi Arabia." Saudi Arabia in the Balance: Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs. By Paul Aarts and Gerd Nonneman. Washington Square (N. Y.): New York UP, 2005. Print.
44
49 Ibid, 45

V. The First Gulf War and Saudi Arabia

In 1990, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait sparked another bout of vocal opposition movements. Here the Saudi government decided to call in American troops, fearful of an Iraqi offensive into the oil-producing Eastern province.[50] This appeal to the United States was a universal shock, as the reformed ulema and the Shi'ite MVM responded badly to the news of American troops on Saudi Arabian soil, but even the loyal Wahhabi ulema coiled back in horror.[51] Nonetheless, the Council of Senior Scholars, the highest instance of the Wahhabi ulema and directly state-sponsored, eventually issued a fatwa condoning this new development in face of the real military threat posed by Iraq.[52] This renewed compliance, in what was perceived as yet another instance of poor decision-making by the Al-Saud dynasty, met the disapproval of the Liberal current and further divided the ulema. Steinberg describes 1990 as the biggest challenge to the integrity of the Wahhabi ulema as a legal institution since the 1871 loss of the Eastern province to the Ottomans.[53]

Lacroix shares this notion and ultimately sees the emergence of true political Islamism from this debacle.[54] This started through protests staged by what he calls the "liberal trend", which designates a "heterogeneous conglomeration of modernists, Pan-Arabists, leftist and Occidentalized intellectuals."[55] These groups consisted of disenfranchised members of society, and youths whohad quite simply had enough of the limitations on their personal freedoms, and might have even used this narrow political opening to champion social rather than political reforms. A petition signed in late 1990 by "liberal" intellectuals called for social, as well as political, reforms. The Islamist opposition soon jumped onto the growing sentiment of unrest while simultaneously denouncing a "secularist conspiracy" and criticizing the liberal intellectuals.[56] Many of the "popular" clergymen that had been the most vocal about the American troops in Saudi Arabia ended up signing petitions of their own, appropriating some of the liberal intellectuals' demands and championing an increase of religious institutional "control on Saudi society."[57] Lacroix contends that this was the first instance in which the entirety of Saudi Islamic institutions voiced a common set of demands that included both the loyal ulema and the wayward "popular clergy." Faced with this challenge, the Saudi regime created the Majilis Al-Shura, an appointed body of intellectuals and clergymen, which would advise the Saudi ruling family on matters pertinent to the state. Yet when it came to the institution of the Committee for the Defense of Legal Rights (CDLR), the Al-Sauds opted to arrest its six founding members and severely repress this new political Islam, in a move reminiscent of their more recent repression of the Umma Islamic Party.

Meanwhile, in the Eastern province a reform movement within the MVM began to push towards an increased focus on social and democratic demands as opposed to theological discussion and debate.[58] Unlike the Islamic current in the rest of the country, Ibrahim explains how the MVM was able to broaden its support base and increase its political sway over the Saudi regime through what is essentially Bayat's

notion of the "quiet encroachment of the ordinary."[59] The Shi'ite minority sought to broaden its influence on every-day life in Qatif and the rest of the Eastern province by emphasizing Shi'ite identity and history.[60] Thus. the focus of the MVM shifted from large rallies, like those that had been violently squashed in 1979, to quieter displays of Shi'ite culture, such as a renewed interest in legal religious events. In 1990, the movement capitalized on the wave of dissent and began pressing for broader political participation and checks and balances on the Al-Sauds.[61] In 1993 this new development culminated in an accord that effected the repatriation of many Shi'ite expat activists for the MVM's promise to curtail its inflammatory denunciations of the Saudi regime in their al-Jazira al-'Arabiyya publication.[62]

Despite having gained some initial concessions from the Saudi regime, both groups faced new challenges poised by this recent trend towards democratization. In the Islamic opposition, radical Sahawis began a terrorist campaign against the Saudi state and the American garrisons. Elements of the MVM opposed the 1993 accord, and the MVM grew increasingly fragmented during the 1990s. The leaders of these movements have reappeared in popular discourse, and people like Abd Al-Aziz al-Qasim and Abdullah al-Hamid, former Salafists and co-signatories of the CDLR petition in 1993, are now "main ideologues of the Islamo-Liberal trend," enjoying a large following of readers on the internet.[63] The radical Islamist trend has come under massive criticism following the September 11 attacks of 2011.[64] As the Saudi state cracked down on radical Islamist currents under U.S. pressure, these moderate and reformist groups have once again gained momentum and started a new wave of petitions in 2002 and 2003.[65]

Aside from these two movements, the 1990s saw the rise of yet another group of protesters, whose development has been followed with some interest in the Western media.

VI. Feminism in Saudi Arabia

Bayat describes how women successfully permeated Iranian society in the wake of the Islamic revolution and came to occupy an important part of the Iranian public sphere.[66] Women in Saudi Arabia are yet faced with even more restrictive customs than Iran. They do not have the option of striving towards employment as judge or run for political office, and in fact are not even allowed out of the house without a guardian. Women in Saudi Arabia may not have the opportunity to assert their demands by permeating the public sphere, but feminism is far from non-existent in Saudi Arabia.

The practice of protesting the ban on women driving can be seen as a very political act of militant feminism. As previously mentioned, the ban is one of the main restrictions to women's mobility in the country, and protesting against it has the effect of drawing discourse upon a variety of issues women face in their lives that go well beyond the liberty to drive cars. This became apparent on November 6,

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50 Steinberg, 2005, 29
51 Ibid, 29
52 Ibid, 30
53 Ibid, 30
54 Lacroix, 2005, 41
55 Ibid, 41
56 Ibid, 41
57 Ibid, 42
58 Ibrahim, 2006, 175

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59 Bayat, 2010, 56 ff
60 Ibrahim, 2006, 175
61 Ibid, 175
62 Ibid, 180
63 Lacroix, 2005, 45
64 Alr-Rasheed, Madawi. "Royals and Society in Saudi Arabia." Saudi Arabia in the Balance: Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs. By Paul Aarts and Gerd Nonneman. Washington Square (N. Y.): New York UP, 2005. 185-213. Print.203-204
65 Ibid, 54
66 Bayat, 2010, 97

1990, when women in Riyadh broke the newly instated ban on women driving in an act of open defiance to the Saudi state.[67] [68] It is noteworthy that the first CDLR petition was only signed after this protest, and that it did address the demands of the women protesters.[69] These challenges have struck the imagination of Western media, and public acts of women driving were reported more frequently than the simultaneous Islamist and Shi'ite struggles in 1990, and so again 2011.

Women have also become increasingly well educated, and over 70% of Saudi university students are now female.[70] This new and highly educated demographic is likely to become even more pressing in its demands, and concessions such as the introduction of ID cards for women and the abrogation of a law that prevents them from checking into hotels indicate a slow but steady trend towards greater mobility for women.[71]

As Madawi Al-Rasheed points out in "Royals and Society in Saudi Arabia," Princes of the Al-Saud family seek to legitimize their rule in the eyes of Saudi society by re-enforcing a notion of the "good and benevolent" ruler.[72] This includes portraying oneself as "defender" of the subjects, a notion King Abdullah has employed during the past years. Here two cases stand out in particular; the gang-rape of a young woman in Qatif in 2007, and the recent sentencing of a woman to a lashing for breaking the ban on driving in July 2011.[73] [74] In both instances the King pardoned women sentenced by an Islamic judge who was deemed too harsh. As a punishment for being with a man outside her family without a guardian at the time of the gang-rape, the woman in Qatif had been sentenced to 200 whiplashes. It is important to notice, however, that the King did not overturn the sentence itself, and that the pardon implies that a crime did indeed happen. It is therefore questionable just how much feminist movements can achieve by appealing to the protection of the Al-Saud family.

Islamic Feminism is taking hold of the women's rights movements in Saudi Arabia. Islamic Feminism presents a viable way in which women in the Saudi Kingdom can voice their demands and concerns without openly opposing Islam. By proposing alternate readings of the Quran, Islamic Feminism ultimately challenges reactionary elements of the ulema with the demands of women's.Asef Bayat describes some of the Islamist rhetoric which is being used against existing patriarchal readings of the Quran in Iran.[75] Here, Islamic feminists are particularly concerned with the notions of ikhtilat and guardianship, as these are the main hindrances to women's mobility. At the same time, they reject a Western notion of

67 Lacroix, 2005, 41
68 Okruhlik, 2010, 403
69 Lacroix, 2010, 43
70 Al Rafaw, Haya Saad, and Cyril Simmons. "The Education of Women in Saudi Arabia." Comparative Education 27.3 (1991). Print
71 Wagner, 2010
72 Al-Rasheed, 2005, 208
73 "Rape Case Brings Saudi Laws into Focus - World News - Mideast/N. Africa - Msnbc.com." Msnbc.com -Breaking News, Science and Tech News, World News, US News, Local News- Msnbc.com. Web. 19 Dec. 2011. <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/15836746/ns/world_news- mideast_n_africa/t/rape-case-calls-saudi-legal-system-question/>.
74 Jones, Sam. "Saudi Woman Driver Saved from Lashing by King Abdullah | World News | Guardian.co.uk." Latest News, Sport and Comment from the Guardian | The Guardian. Web. 19 Dec. 2011. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/sep/29/saudi-woman-lashing-king-abdullah>.
75 Bayat, 2010, 106

feminism.[76] In his article "Saudi- Islamic Feminist Movement: A Struggle for Male Allies and the Right Female Voice," Rob L. Wagner argues for the need of the Saudi feminists to find male allies which can further legitimize their claims for greater mobility and gender equality.

VII. Islamic Liberalism, 2011 and the Saudi Family

If the various fragmented opposition groups were to coalesce around a common set of demands based on these newly developed fundaments of Islamic-Liberalism, which is increasingly dominating the political discourse of these opposition groups, Saudi repression of dissent might prove increasingly difficult. As shown in this paper, Saudi Arabia already has a wide variety of opposition groups and a long history of protests against the Al-Saud family. In 2011, these movements reemerged from a relative lull in activity, and the recent protests can be taken as a sign of renewed political dissent in the Saudi Kingdom.

Yet the Al-Saud family is not only beleaguered by popular dissent, limited as it might be right now. The recent death of Crown Prince Sultan has in all likelihood brought on a reshuffling of the power dynamics within the ruling elite. In his book Succession in Saudi Arabia, Joseph A. Kechichian outlines some of the major actors behind the curtains of the Saudi regime. And while succession is governed by rules that enforce the succession of male heirs to Ibn Al-Saud, and the crown has, since 1953, been passed from brother to brother, Kechichian points to some determinant factors and currents that have governed Saudi succession in the past. He stresses the importance of the National Guard as a major tool for political power in the family, and emphasizes the appointment of Abdullah as head of the National Guard in March 1992, a year before his formal appointment as the Crown Prince.[77] The National Guard, as a security agency that runs parallel to the Saudi Army and is fiercely loyal to the Al-Saud family, is therefore a major political asset within the Al- Saud family.[78] Alleged frictions between the newly appointed Crown Prince Nayef and King Abdullah led Abdullah to begin organising his power base within the family, and appoint supporters to influential posts in the National Guard, and even local government.[79]

Yet Kechichian also points towards new young leaders, who have climbed the ladders of the Al-Saud hierarchy and have often studied in the West, and proven themselves open to moderate reforms. Some, like Muhammad bin Fahd, the governor of the Eastern province, have proven themselves able to "manage religious and ethnic problems rather well."[80] While Kechichian admits that these new leaders have criticised the demands of the CDLR and shown themselves to be unresponsive to the Islamo-Liberals, a lot might have changed in the years that passed since the publishing of Kechichian's book. Situated at important and influential posts in the Saudi hierarchy, they might decide to support popular dissent and thus undermine the influence of older, more influential groups such as the Sudayiri Seven, who count Crown Prince Nayef amongst their own, but have become increasingly isolated and decimated by old age.

Yet even apart from these Machiavellian power dynamics in the family, Islamic Liberalism as it has developed amongst the Shi'ite minority, the dissenting Islamo- Liberals and women's rights groups will continue to pervade popular dissent in Saudi Arabia. As of the writing of this essay women's movements

76 Peace and Conflict Monitor, Saudi-Islamic Feminist Movement: A Struggle for Male Allies and the Right Female Voice." Peace and Conflict Monitor. Web. 19 Dec. 2011. <http:// www.monitor.upeace.org/innerpg.cfm?id_article=789>.
77 Kechichian, Joseph A. Succession in Saudi Arabia. New York, NY. Palgrave, 2001. Print.
78 Ibid, 73
79 Ibid, 61
80 Ibid, 76

are continuing their protests, Shi'ite opposition becomes ever more virulent and violent, and even Islamic Liberalism might recoil from the damage it took from the arrest of the Umma Islamic Party leadership, as new blogs denouncing the Saudi regime and calling for change appear daily, and new leaders step forwards to carry on the legacy of the 1990's. It might be early to make predictions about the future of Saudi Arabia, and the admittedly unsuccessful nature of the protests of the past year might preclude and definitive conlcusions. Nonetheless it should be clear that Saudi Arabia cannot be overlooked in the chronicle of the "Arab Spring", and that we might look towards events in Saudi Arabia's near future with renewed interest.

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Post-Communism and Economic Crisis: Leftist Voting in the Economy in East Germany

Elizabeth Dana

The history of communism in Central and Eastern Europe has complicated the traditional economic voting model. The recent global economic crisis affords a unique opportunity to analyze the response of post-communist voters to economic trauma. This study of the 2009 German federal elections has found that East Germans who struggled most with the economic hardships brought on by the crisis not only turned away from the incumbent CDU/CSU party, but often turned toward Die Linke, the leftist party that represents much of the legacy of the GDR. As the results of this multinomial logistic analysis show, East Germans who felt most worried about the economic crisis or most negatively about their economic circumstances were consistently more likely to cast a vote for Die Linke.

Introduction

In the 22 years since the fall of the Berlin Wall, Central and Eastern Europe have undergone tremendous changes. Democratic governments have been elected, engagement with the West has been achieved, and Soviet policies and institutions have largely been dismantled. The former Eastern Bloc, excluding Albania and parts of the former Yugoslavia, has fully integrated into the EU.[1] Over the last two decades, Central and Eastern Europe has rejected its communist past and aligned itself the West, and it has been rewarded with international support and rapid economic growth. Perhaps no former Communist-ruled country has experienced this quite as dramatically as East Germany, which not only gained its independence from the Soviet Union in 1989, but also unified with West Germany, one of the most powerful and successful countries in Western Europe. Though the East German economy is still significantly weaker than its Western neighbor, it is still part of one of the most politically and economically powerful countries in the world.

Communism continues to influence residents of the former Eastern Bloc, including East Germany. The system produced tangible economic advantages for many individuals— free or heavily subsidized housing, for example, and negligible levels of unemployment. Many Germans continue to feel affection for the East German state, the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Germans call this manifestation of nostalgia, specific to characteristics of life in East Germany, "ostalgie" – a hybrid of the words for "east" (*ost*) and "nostalgia" (*nostalgie*). This phenomenon manifests mainly in pop culture, notably in the movie *Goodbye Lenin!* and the sale of GDR souvenirs at Berlin tourists sites such as Checkpoint Charlie and the Brandenburg Gate.

The recent economic crisis has placed severe strain on the capitalist system in the former Soviet Bloc. Banks have failed, the Euro has faltered, and the unemployment rate has risen in many countries.

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1 The Eastern Bloc consisted of Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania and Yugoslavia. Of the former Yugoslav nations, Slovenia is the only current EU member.

Germany has recovered quickly, but continues to assist EU member countries that are struggling economically. In the wake of one of the most traumatic global economic crises the world has ever seen, one could expect East German voters, as well as people throughout the former Eastern Bloc, to react differently than their compatriots who have only experienced capitalism. Could those who remember communism, or those who have only heard about it, engage in a kind of political "ostalgie?" Might leftist parties, like Germany's Die Linke, experience gains from East German voters who are disillusioned with capitalism and wish to revert to a more socialist economic system?

Literature Review

Political scientists have extensively debated the effect of economic conditions on voting trends. Most agree that, as Michael Lewis-Beck wrote in his paper, *Comparative Economic Voting: Britain, France, Germany, Italy,* "At least at the aggregate level, a significant relationship exists between national economic conditions and electoral results." But, as Lewis-Beck pointed out, "beyond that, the experts do not agree."[2]

In his seminal paper on economic voting in Western Europe, Lewis-Beck found that, like American voters, Europeans were strongly affected by macro-level considerations of the national economy. But they also took their personal economic situation into consideration when voting, especially when they felt they could assign some responsibility for their economic well-being to the incumbent government.[3] As expected, a bad economy resulted in a vote against the incumbent. Although Lewis-Beck's conclusion – that personal economic situation influences voting decisions – is important, his research only examines Western European countries (including West Germany). As other scholars have concluded since the end of the Cold War, four decades of socialism is a significant additional variable shaping voting practices.

Joshua Tucker's work, which examines economic voting in the former Eastern Bloc in the decade after the fall, is especially helpful in complicating the story of economic voting in former communist countries. Tucker examines economic "winners" and "losers" during the region's post-communist transition to a market economy. In Russia, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic, he finds that, throughout the transition,

> it is parties identified primarily with the 'Old Regime' that predated the transition that enjoy more electoral success in regions with more economic losers, whereas the 'New Regime' parties that are most closely identified with the movement away from communism consistently enjoy more electoral support in regions with more economic winners.

Though he tests an Incumbency model—one that is in keeping with traditional economic voting theories—Tucker concludes that a "Transitional Identity" model is more applicable to the former Eastern Bloc. This model complicates traditional economic voting theory by positing that post-communist voters are more concerned with a political party's economic values than with the current government's economic policy. Old Regime parties have often received high rates of voter support in economically struggling areas relative to the nation as a whole even if they oversaw an economic decline and/or the transition to a Free

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2 Michael Lewis-Beck. "Comparative Economic Voting: Britain, France, Germany, Italy." American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 30, No. 2 (May, 1986): 315.
3 Lewis-Beck, 325.

Market economic system. Significantly, Tucker observes that these transitional identities are tenacious—their "stickiness" has not diminished over the decade, though he concedes that changes in parties and the emergence of new parties may eventually eliminate any connection to their transitional forebears.

Alexander Pacek does not identify a radical shift away from the traditional incumbency model in Eastern European democracies. His study of Bulgaria, the former Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, and Poland finds that areas hardest hit by economic hardship turned away from incumbent parties, though both conventional and extremist opposition benefited from this dissatisfaction.

In the former East Germany, the relationship between the economy and voting is similar to the one explained by Tucker and Pacek, though identifying a clear "Old Regime" party can be problematic (see below). Glasgow and Weber employed data on Germany to explore the lasting legacy of communism and its effect on citizen perceptions of governmental responsibility for the economy. They investigated whether voters believe that a victory for their preferred candidate would produce an improvement in their own economic fortunes. They used post-election surveys, rather than an election study, to research the effect of political events on individuals' predictions of the economic future. They found that the most important factor was whether respondents were "economic individualists," defined as those who did not see their economic fortunes as the responsibility of anyone but themselves. Through their analysis of the survey data from 1994, Glasgow and Weber found that East Germans looked more favorably upon socialism, were less economically individualistic, and were more likely to associate candidates' success with their personal economic well-being than their West German counterparts. While both individualists and non-individualists felt that their preferred party's victory could improve the nation's economy as a whole, it was only the non-individualists—largely East Germans—who believed that a particular party's electoral success could affect their own pocketbooks.

In the 22 years since the fall of the Berlin Wall, political scientists have attempted to determine the effect of four decades of communism on current economic voting in post-communist Europe. Generally, it seems that the lasting effects of socialism have complicated the traditional economic voting model, making voters more receptive to Old Regime or extremist parties in times of economic turmoil. Exposure to communism might also make voters more favorable to socialism and less economically individualistic. Although Germany is somewhat unique—unification has bolstered East Germany's democracy and economy in a way that other former communist countries have not experienced—it is worth investigating whether these principles hold true for East Germany in the wake of the 2008 economic crisis.

Party Politics in Germany

There are six major political parties in Germany, occupying 598 seats in the lower house of the legislature: the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), Christian Social Union (CSU), Social Democratic Party (SPD), Free Democratic Party (FDP), The Left (Die Linke), and Alliance 90/The Greens (Gruene). CSU is a Bavarian sister party to CDU (they do not compete directly against each other), so for the purposes of this study, they are combined as CDU/CSU. After the 2009 election, CDU/CSU formed a center-right coalition with FDP, led by chancellor Angela Merkel. The center-left SPD constitutes the primary opposition, and Die Linke and Gruene are smaller opposition parties. This new ruling coalition marks a major change, as CDU/CSU and the more liberal SPD had ruled in a coalition since 1998.

Germany's government operates as a parliamentary system with a bicameral legislature. The lower house, or Bundestag, is of greater interest to this research, as members of the upper house are not

popularly elected. Federal elections in Germany include two rounds of voting. In the first vote, 299 candidates are selected in single-member constituencies in a first-past-the-post system. The second vote elects a state-wide party list, from which the other 299 members are proportionally allocated.

Though there is no viable communist party in Germany today, Die Linke's platform is closer to the policies of pre-1989 East Germany than that of any other party.. Die Linke is a portmanteau of the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) and WASG, a breakaway party of left-wing social democrats. PDS is a post-transition successor party to the Socialist Unity Party, the communist party that ruled the GDR until 1990. Though Die Linke is two degrees removed from the Socialist Unity Party, its ideology is further to the left than any other party currently seated in the legislature (it adheres to a philosophy of democratic socialism). Some of the leadership has carried over, and the co-chairs of Die Linke, Klaus Ernst and Gesine Lötzsch, both had ties to the Socialist Unity Party before its dissolution. Die Linke has maintained many of PDS's socialist economic positions, as Coffe and Plassa determined in a study of Die Linke's party platform. It garners most of its support from former East Germany and won 54 seats in the 2009 election, making it the fourth largest party in the Bundestag after CDU/CSU, SPD, and FDP. Though it is not technically a communist party, Die Linke's direct links to the Socialist Unity Party and its leftist platform make it the closest to a viable East German Old Regime party.

The Global Financial Crisis and the 2009 Federal Election

In the wake of Lehman Brothers' announcement of bankruptcy in September 2008, the world entered the worst global economic slump since the Great Depression. In fear of a domino effect from American banks' struggles, many Western governments injected funds into their national financial sectors. Consequently, banks have weathered the recession, but the global economy took a major hit because "credit flows to the private sector were choked off at the same time as consumer and business confidence collapsed." A weakening export market generated a 4.7 percent contraction in the national economy over the course of the winter—the worst recession since World War II. Chancellor Angela Merkel administered a $110 billion dollar stimulus package to kick-start the German economy, which has mostly recovered. At the time of the national election on September 27, 2009, however, voters had recently experienced a massive economic trauma.

The 2009 federal election heralded a general rightward shift in the German government. A new ruling coalition emerged, consisting of CDU/CSU and FDP. For the first time in ten years the center-left SPD had become the opposition party. SPD remains the primary opposition, though Die Linke and Gruene also hold seats outside of the ruling coalition. Die Linke earned 12.2 percent of the national vote and gained 22 seats, bringing the party to 76 total seats (Table 1). In East Germany, Die Linke placed second only to CDU/CSU, earning 25 percent of the vote. Though the national ruling coalition pushed farther right, some voters, especially those in East Germany, clearly felt an attraction to the leftist policies of Die Linke.

Table 1: National Results for 2009 Federal Election

	Party List (second vote)		Total	
	Percent	Seats	Percent	Seats
CDU	27.3	21	31.2	194
CSU	6.5	0	7.2	45
SPD	23.0	82	23.5	146
FDP	14.6	93	15.0	93
Gruene	10.7	67	10.9	68
Die Linke	11.9	60	12.2	76

Research Design

The German Longitudinal Election Study (GLES) collected the data analyzed in this study. Since 2008, GLES has consistently and accurately studied voting in German federal elections. For this study, I will use one component of the GLES: the rolling cross-section campaign survey with a post-election panel wave for the 2009 federal Bundestag elections. Subjects in this survey were interviewed over the phone in two waves, pre-election and post-election.

Germany is a particularly fruitful subject for such analysis because it is possible to compare former East Germany with former West Germany. Though they share a language, culture, national economy, and political system, East Germany, or the "New Lander" (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Brandenburg, Sanxony-Anhalt, Saxony, and Thuringia, still maintains important differences from the West. In addition to the forty years of divided political history, the unemployment rate in the East is nearly double that in West on a consistent basis. Additionally, Germany is the only former Eastern Bloc nation for which data are available for a post-2008 election.

The dependent variable in this study is voting for Die Linke in the lower house in the 2009 federal election. The unit of analysis is the individual voter. As explained above, the German electoral system gives each voter two votes: a vote for an individual candidate and a second vote for a party list. The second vote is the dependent variable. This is the standard practice for measuring party preference in election studies of Germany.

Measures of economic turmoil constitute the most significant independent variables for this investigation of the effect of the economic crisis on vote for Die Linke. This study finds that the strongest indicators of the economy's effect on vote for Die Linke are a measure of worry about the economic crisis (*econfear*) and a voter's perception of his or her own economic situation (*ownecon*). This study also scrutinizes the level of responsibility voters assign to the national government for their own economic well being (*econresp*), in order to investigate Glasgow and Weber's claim that East Germans are more likely to both look more favorably upon socialism and to blame the government for their economic troubles. An East-West dummy variable is used to separate voters by location.

Worry about the economic crisis is measured by responses to the survey question, "How worried are you about the current economic crisis?" on a scale of 1 to 7, with "1" meaning "not worried at all" and "7" meaning "very worried." A voter's personal economic situation is measured on a 5-point scale by responses to a survey question asking, "How would you describe your own current financial circumstances? Is [the answer] very good, good, so so, bad or very bad?" How voters assigned responsibility for their own economic circumstances is tested by a survey question on personal economics and governmental responsibility: "To what extent are the policies pursued by the federal government over the last four years responsible for this development?" The answers fall on 5-point scale, on which "1" means "very much responsible" and "5" means "not responsible at all."

To control for other effects on vote for Die Linke, the study includes variables for age, gender, education, profession, union membership, local population, and whether or not a voter lives in Berlin. It hypothesizes that age is particularly significant, as young voters have had little exposure to a pre-1989 East Germany and are therefore less likely to feel nostalgia for communism. Profession is included in an attempt to mitigate social cleavages that might affect vote choice. Dummy variables for "farmer," "manual worker," "civil servant," "white collar worker," and "freelance/self-employed" measure profession. For the purpose of this analysis, however, "farmer" and "manual worker" are excluded or discounted because of limits on data gathered in East Germany.

The sample consists of 4027 subjects who responded to both the first and second survey waves. The approximately 2000 subjects who did not respond to the second wave are not included in the dataset. Of those 4027 subjects, 3268, or 81.2 percent, live in West Germany. 759 respondents, or 18.8 percent, live in East Germany, indicating a slight oversampling. Though limiting the study to East Germany significantly decreases the size of the sample, there are still enough observations to conduct a fruitful analysis.

The dependent variable, vote, is measured by responses to the post-election survey question asking respondents how they cast their second vote in the 2009 federal election. The study eliminates minor parties and non-voters, and focuses on the five major parties that win the most seats in the Bundestag: CDU/CSU, SPD, FDP, Gruene, and Die Linke. In this sample, CDU/CSU received 31 percent of the vote, SPD 24 percent, FDP 17 percent, Gruene 15 percent, and Die Linke 11 percent. In East Germany, Die Linke received 25 percent of the vote.

This investigation uses a multinomial logit model of statistical analysis, allowing for the prediction of probabilities of multiple possible outcomes—in this case, vote for one of the five major parties—given an independent variable and a set of explanatory variables. Die Linke is used as the base outcome, meaning that the coefficient for each party is a measure of the probability of an individual casting a vote for that party over Die Linke. A generic model of the equation looks like:

$$Y_i = B_0 + B_1 econfear + B_2 age + B_3 male + B_4 education + B_5 berlin + B_6 townsize + B_7 union + B_8 civil + B_9 whitecollar$$
$$+ B_{10} freelance + e$$

where i indicates individuals, Y_i is the dependent variable, B_0 is the constant, and $B_1 econfear$ is a vector of the independent variable—in this case, worries about the economic crisis. The study estimates a multinomial logit regression where the dependent variable, a categorical variable representing vote choice, can take on the values CDU/CSU, SPD, FDP, Gruene, or Die Linke.

Results

According to this model, East German voters who experienced the economic crisis more strongly—as measured by responses to questions about their worries about the crisis and their personal economic situation—were more likely to vote for Die Linke than the incumbent CDU/CSU, and by some measures, more likely to vote for Die Linke than any other party. The regression results for the independent variable measuring worry about economic crisis show that voters who were more worried were more likely to vote for Die Linke than CDU/CSU and FDP, with 99% confidence. CDU/CSU and FDP are the most fiscally conservative options among the five major parties, so it is plausible that East Germans concerned about the economic crisis, and the future of the welfare state it threatened, might avoid the conservatives in favor of the much more liberal Die Linke.

Table 2. Results for Multinomial Logit on Worry about Economic Crisis

	CDU/CSU	SPD	FDP	Gruene
econfear	-0.277***	-0.176	-0.367***	-0.286
	(0.079)	(0.086)	(0.100)	(0.113)
age	-0.224	-0.439	-0.554*	-0.712***
	(0.181)	(0.191)	(0.211)	(0.221)
male	-0.625*	-0.407	-0.386	-0.525
(dummy)	(0.229)	(0.252)	(0.282)	(0.311)
education	-0.122	-0.071	-0.151	0.172
	(0.102)	(0.113)	(0.126)	(0.145)
berlin	-0.910	0.114	-0.462	-0.217
(dummy)	(0.453)	(0.428)	(0.553)	(0.480)
townsize	-0.030	-0.047	-0.083	0.079
	(0.050)	(0.056)	(0.062)	(0.071)
union	-0.527	-0.403	-0.567	0.200
(dummy)	(0.320)	(0.350)	(0.421)	(0.398)
civil	1.229	0.064	0.210	0.411
(dummy)	(0.604)	(0.737)	(0.805)	(0.807)
whitecollar	0.632	0.088	0.472	0.299
(dummy)	(0.260)	(0.283)	(0.312)	(0.344)
freelance	0.703	-0.547	0.145	0.610
(dummy)	(0.379)	(0.494)	(0.494)	(0.479)

Obs: 631
Standard errors in parenthesis

***$p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, *$p<0.1$

In calculating the predicted probabilities of voting based on this regression, the study finds that voters who had been "not at all worried" about the economic crisis had a 30.8 percent chance of voting for CDU/CSU, a 22.9 percent chance of voting for FDP, and a 17.6 percent chance of voting for Die Linke. In comparison, those who rated themselves "5" on the 7-point scale of economic worry ("7" being the most worried) were more likely to vote for Die Linke than any other party, with 99 percent significance across parties. These voters had a 35.2 percent chance of voting for Die Linke, while the chance of voting CDU/CSU was 24.9 percent, 23.6 percent for SPD, 8.6 percent for FDP, and 7.7 percent for Gruene. Voters who rated themselves highest on the worry scale—who had been "very worried" about the economic crisis—were also much more likely to vote for Die Linke than the incumbent CDU/CSU. These voters had a 30.2 percent chance of voting for CDU/CSU and a 40.9 percent chance of voting for Die Linke. For complete results on the predicted probabilities, see Table 6 in the Appendix.

The gender control variable did not prove significant when it came to voting for CDU/CSU over Die Linke, and the age variable only proved significant for FDP and Gruene. Age is hypothesized to be an important control variable. Throughout Central and Eastern Europe, communist and socialist parties draw most of their base from older voters who remember the communist regime and still feel loyal to it. Further investigation of the age variable is conducted below.

The results for the variable measuring a voter's personal economic situation are even more striking, with voters who felt more negatively about their economic situation more likely to vote for Die Linke than any other party at the 99% confidence level. Again, age was significant when comparing to Gruene, as well as for FDP. In this regression, gender no longer had any effect on vote for any of the parties.

Table 3: Results for Multinomial Logit on Personal Economic Situation

	CDU/CSU	SPD	FDP	Gruene
ownecon	-0.687***	-0.645***	-0.592***	-0.711***
	(0.144)	(0.155)	(0.175)	(0.206)
age	-0.302	-0.508	-0.616**	-0.783***
	(0.185)	(0.195)	(0.212)	(0.224)
male	-0.538	-0.368	-0.246	-0.460
(dummy)	(0.229)	(0.253)	(0.278)	(0.310)
education	-0.170	-0.130	-0.173	0.126
	(0.105)	(0.116)	(0.128)	(0.147)
berlin	-0.819	0.218	-0.393	-0.124
(dummy)	(0.456)	(0.434)	(0.552)	(0.483)
townsize	-0.044	-0.061	-0.097	0.065
	(0.050)	(0.057)	(0.061)	(0.071)
union	-0.565	-0.432	-0.637	0.132
(dummy)	(0.322)	(0.354)	(0.420)	(0.401)
civil	0.953	-0.206	0.016	0.118
(dummy)	(0.613)	(0.746)	(0.810)	(0.821)
whitecollar	0.420	-0.115	0.275	0.086
(dummy)	(0.264)	(0.290)	(0.315)	(0.349)
freelance	0.754	-0.476	0.231	0.675
(dummy)	(0.382)	(0.498)	(0.492)	(0.480)

Standard errors in parenthesis
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The predicted probabilities reflect much of the same pattern, though the story breaks down slightly when analyzing the probability of vote based on the specific survey responses (see Table 7 in Appendix for full results). Voters who rated their personal economic situation as "good" had a 35.4 percent chance of voting for CDU/CSU and 22.2 percent for SPD, compared to a 17.2 percent chance of voting for Die Linke. However, these voters who felt positively about their economic situation were even less likely to vote for FDP (14.7 percent) or Gruene (10.4 percent). Voters who felt "very bad" about their economic well-being, however, had the highest chance of voting for Die Linke, 70.6 percent, with 99% confidence.

It is important to note that this phenomenon is not wholly unique to the East German dataset. Similar results are obtained when running the same multinomial logit regression with West German voters and German voters overall.

To more closely examine the influence of age on the relationship between economic factors and vote, this study includes multinomial logit regressions for each age category: under 30, 30 to 50, and over 50. The analysis finds no significant relationship between fears about the economic crisis and vote or personal economic situation and vote for the two younger categories. However, for voters over 50, the results are much more meaningful, though not as definitive as when examining East Germans as a whole. When using the econfear variable, over-50 voters who were more worried were more likely to vote for Die Linke

than CDU/CSU and FDP, at the 99% confidence level. When using the ownecon variable, voters more concerned about their economic situation once again were more likely to choose Die Linke over CDU/CSU, and over SPD, with 99% confidence.

Table 4. Economic Variables and Party Vote for Voters Over 50

	CDU/CSU	SPD	FDP	Gruene
econfear	-0.348***	-0.168	-0.491***	-0.309
	(0.131)	(0.112)	(0.137)	(0.161)
ownecon	-0.747***	-0.724***	-0.558	-0.524
	(0.186)	(0.213)	(0.230)	(0.298)

Obs: 346
Control variables omitted from table
Standard errors in parenthesis
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

When examining the predicted probabilities for this regression of voters over 50 years old, however, the pattern breaks down. None of the probabilities generated when separating out the voters by survey response are statistically significant for either independent variable. When examining the general patterns displayed by the regression coefficients, the relationship between a negative view of the economy and vote for Die Linke seems clear for over-50 voters. Once the data are separated out to predict the voting probabilities based on specific survey responses, however, the pattern disappears. This is somewhat surprising, given that communist and leftist parties throughout the former Eastern Bloc draw most of their voters from older populations, and older voters are considered to be the most loyal to Old Regime parties.

The data do not tell a clear story: there is no significant correlation between the expression of a negative view of the economy in a particular survey response and an older respondent's decision to vote for Die Linke. Further research is necessary to determine whether loyalty or nostalgia—in conjunction with voters' views of the economy—influenced some Germans' decision to vote for Die Linke. Such an analysis of voter support for Die Linke in the former East Germany would be extremely productive, as the region is economically and culturally distinct. East German voting patterns differ significantly from those in the West. In this sample, for example, Die Linke only gained 8 percent of the vote in West Germany and 11 percent overall. Amongst East Germans, in contrast, Die Linke earned 25 percent of the vote. Although this model may not produce a convincing contrast between East and West Germany, voters in the two regions clearly behave differently when they go to the polls, making an investigation of vote for Die Linke in East Germany a worthwhile endeavor.

Analyzing the model by gender also yields interesting results. Male voters who were more fearful about the economic crisis were more likely to vote for Die Linke over CDU/CSU (95% confidence) and FDP (99% confidence), which is consistent with East Germans as a whole. However, there are no such results for women alone—the econfear variable is not significant in determining the probability of voting for any other party over Die Linke. For men, their personal economic situation was a significant predictor

of vote for Die Linke over CDU/CSU and SPD (both at the 99% confidence level), while for women, ownecon predicted vote for Die Linke over CDU/CSU and Gruene (both at the 95% confidence level).

Table 5. Economic Variables and Party Vote, by Gender

	CDU/CSU		SPD		FDP		Gruene	
	econfear	*ownecon*	*econfear*	*ownecon*	*econfear*	*ownecon*	*econfear*	*ownecon*
Men	-0.336**	-0.779***	-0.288	-0.792***	-0.554***	-0.466	-0.265	-0.419
	(0.119)	(0.214)	(0.130)	(0.240)	(0.153)	(0.251)	(0.171)	(0.311)
Women	-0.227	-0.618**	-0.091	-0.471	-0.248	-0.660	-0.379	-0.843**
	(0.113)	(0.200)	(0.125)	(0.220)	(0.141)	(0.261)	(0.160)	(0.291)

Control variables omitted from table
Standard errors in parenthesis
*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

When dividing the sample by gender, the number of statistically significant predicted probabilities is limited (see Tables 8 and 9 in the Appendix for full results). However, the probabilities confirm that women generally had a lower likelihood of voting for Die Linke than men, when taking measures of the economy into account. For voters who rated their level of economic crisis worry as "5", men had a 46.7 percent chance of voting for Die Linke, while women had only a 29.3 percent chance. Compared to the same group of voters' likelihood of voting for CDU/CSU—27.1 percent for men, 27.7 percent for women—it seems that there is some sort of gender difference at work here. This pattern is confirmed by examination of the variable for personal economic circumstances. Men who rate their economic situation as "bad" had a 39.9 percent chance of voting for Die Linke, while women in the same group had a 29.9 percent chance.

There are many possible reasons for this gender gap, and further investigation is needed to explain it fully. These results show a pattern diverging from the traditional story of gendered voting; women in East Germany in the 1990s were documented to be significantly more left leaning than men. Further study is necessary to see if there has been some sort of reversal in that trend, though these results certainly imply a gendered difference in economic-based voting One possible explanation is that men might feel the burden of economic crisis more if they are the primary breadwinners, and therefore might be more attracted to the socialist economic policies of Die Linke as a possible solution to their economic troubles.

In line with Glasgow and Weber's findings about the relationship between socialism and economic individualism, 28 percent of East Germans had held the government "very much responsible" or "somewhat responsible" for their economic situation, compared with 21 percent of West Germans. Forty-three percent of West Germans had held the government "not responsible" or "not responsible at all," while only 35 percent of East Germans had fallen in this category. East Germans apparently bring this lack of economic individualism and socialist influence to the polls with them, as the results show that East Germans who assign more responsibility for the economy to the government are more likely to vote for Die Linke than any other party (see Table 10 in Appendix for full results). Analysis of the predicted probabili-

ties for this regression gives an even clearer picture of the relationship between perceived responsibility and vote (see Table 11 in Appendix). Voters who held the government "very much responsible" for their own economic situation had a 51 percent chance of voting for Die Linke, compared to a 12.5 percent chance of voting for CDU/CSU, 19.5 percent for SPD, and 11 percent for FDP. Clearly, those voters in East Germany who hold the government most responsible for their economic woes are still strongly attracted to the leftist policies of Die Linke.

Conclusion

Less than 20 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the world has experienced one of the greatest economic upheavals in modern history. Though political science has previously investigated how a history of communism can complicate traditional economic voting theories, this economic crisis offers a unique opportunity for studying economic voting and the communist legacy in Europe. How might an historic failure of capitalism affect voters in a post-communist nation?

This study of the 2009 federal elections in the former East Germany attempts to contribute one small answer to this large question. As the results show, voters who felt more negatively about the economy in 2009 were consistently more likely to vote for the leftist, Old Regime party, Die Linke. This is most dependably true when compared with the incumbent CDU/CSU, which confirms the traditional idea of economic voting: when the economy is bad, voters turn against the incumbent. But, by several measures, East German voters who were struggling economically were more likely to vote for Die Linke than any other party, including the more mainstream, liberal SPD party, showing that additional mechanisms are at work. As the results imply, this proclivity for voting for a leftist party in the face of economic hardship could very well be a form of political "ostalgie." It seems that for many East German voters, when the capitalist system stumbles, the socialist, Old Regime positions of Die Linke are an attractive alternative.

Throughout 2010, Germany's economy made up most of what it had lost in the economic crisis, though the East continues to lag behind the West economically. Germany has also been deeply involved in attempting to rectify the Eurozone crisis, bearing a good portion of the cost of the Euro bailout. When Germans head to the polls again, as they are will in September 2013, it the East German voting response, and how Die Linke fares, will be of great interest, especially given the changes in the economy since the 2009 elections. 2013 marks nearly a quarter century since the end of communism in the region. This study shows, however, that when economic turmoil threatens post-communist voters, the past is never that far behind.

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Appendix

Table 6. Predicted Voting Probabilities for Worry About Economic Crisis

	CDU/CSU	SPD	FDP	Gruene	Die Linke
Not worried at all	0.308*** (0.618)	0.197*** (0.059)	0.229*** (0.062)	0.090 (0.044)	0.176*** (0.055)
2	0.324*** (0.050)	0.212*** (0.044)	0.199*** (0.043)	0.095*** (0.029)	0.171*** (0.040)
3	0.366*** (0.036)	0.187*** (0.029)	0.131*** (0.025)	0.123*** (0.024)	0.193*** (0.029)
4	0.312 *** (0.043)	0.158*** (0.033)	0.138*** (0.032)	0.085*** (0.025)	0.307*** (0.042)
5	0.249*** (0.042)	0.236*** (0.041)	0.086*** (0.027)	0.077** (0.025)	0.352*** (0.047)
6	0.108 (0.060)	0.256** (0.091)	0.195 (0.081)	0.088 (0.061)	0.353*** (0.102)
Very Worried	0.302*** (0.093)	0.179 (0.074)	0.068 (0.048)	0.043 (0.042)	0.409*** (0.100)

Obs: 631
Standard errors in parenthesis
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 7. Predicted Voting Probabilities for Personal Economic Situation

	CDU/CSU	SPD	FDP	Gruene	Die Linke
Very good	0.300*** (0.081)	0.181 (0.073)	0.190* (0.072)	0.178* (0.067)	0.151 (0.064)
Good	0.354*** (0.028)	0.222*** (0.024)	0.147*** (0.021)	0.104*** (0.018)	0.172** (0.022)
So so	0.284*** (0.032)	0.184*** (0.027)	0.133*** (0.024)	0.065*** (0.017)	0.333*** (0.034)
Bad	0.243*** (0.065)	0.140* (0.050)	0.127 (0.050)	0.129 (0.052)	0.362*** (0.073)
Very bad	0.049 (0.048)	0.096 (0.066)	0.092 (0.065)	0.057 (0.058)	0.706*** (0.109)

(0.109)
Obs: 631
Standard errors in parenthesis
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 8. Predicted Voting Probabilities for Worry about Economic Crisis, by Gender

	CDU/CSU		SPD		FDP		Gruene		Die Linke	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Not worried at all	0.344*** (0.090)	0.223 (0.100)	0.143 (0.067)	0.264 (0.106)	0.272** (0.086)	0.153 (0.086)	0.070 (0.050)	0.130 (0.086)	0.172 (0.073)	0.230 (0.102)
2	0.219*** (0.058)	0.487*** (0.088)	0.250*** (0.062)	0.174* (0.067)	0.218*** (0.059)	0.125 (0.060)	0.057 (0.027)	0.133 (0.059)	0.256*** (0.063)	0.081 (0.046)
3	0.346*** (0.052)	0.395*** (0.053)	0.221*** (0.045)	0.155*** (0.039)	0.132*** (0.037)	0.127*** (0.031)	0.090*** (0.037)	0.142*** (0.037)	0.211*** (0.044)	0.181*** (0.041)
4	0.293*** (0.066)	0.352*** (0.059)	0.194*** (0.057)	0.139*** (0.042)	0.093 (0.041)	0.156*** (0.045)	0.066 (0.032)	0.093* (0.035)	0.354*** (0.068)	0.260*** (0.054)
5	0.271*** (0.078)	0.277*** (0.054)	0.145 (0.058)	0.276*** (0.054)	0.047 (0.033)	0.092* (0.033)	0.070 (0.040)	0.061 (0.028)	0.467*** (0.089)	0.293*** (0.055)
6	0.000 (0.000)	0.197 (0.104)	0.376 (0.175)	0.195 (0.103)	0.165 (0.117)	0.175 (0.098)	0.000 (0.000)	0.148 (0.098)	0.459 (0.181)	0.285 (0.212)
Very Worried	0.168 (0.116)	0.416*** (0.134)	0.073 (0.073)	0.250 (0.115)	0.064 (0.067)	0.048 (0.049)	0.060 (0.067)	0.000 (0.000)	0.635*** (0.152)	0.286 (0.123)

Obs: 309 men, 322 women
Standard errors in parenthesis
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 9. Predicted Voting Probabilities for Personal Economic Situation, by Gender

	CDU/CSU		SPD		FDP		Gruene		Die Linke	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Very good	0.389*** (0.124)	0.249 (0.114)	0.268 (0.115)	0.078 (0.076)	0.152 (0.085)	0.252 (0.130)	0.123 (0.072)	0.186 (0.106)	0.068 (0.067)	0.234 (0.112)
Good	0.334*** (0.041)	0.398*** (0.042)	0.247*** (0.038)	0.202*** (0.034)	0.154*** (0.032)	0.119*** (0.028)	0.064** (0.022)	0.123*** (0.028)	0.201*** (0.035)	0.158*** (0.031)
So so	0.235*** (0.046)	0.342*** (0.047)	0.160*** (0.039)	0.211*** (0.040)	0.113*** (0.034)	0.125*** (0.033)	0.034 (0.017)	0.078*** (0.026)	0.458*** (0.055)	0.243*** (0.043)
Bad	0.206 (0.090)	0.272** (0.095)	0.087 (0.061)	0.183 (0.078)	0.106 (0.073)	0.142 (0.071)	0.202 (0.116)	0.104 (0.060)	0.399*** (0.115)	0.299*** (0.097)
Very bad	0.00 (0.00)	0.080 (0.081)	0.092 (0.093)	0.085 (0.083)	0.278 (0.177)	0.000 (0.000)	0.215 (0.191)	0.000 (0.000)	0.415 (0.178)	0.835*** (0.112)

Standard errors in parenthesis

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 Table 10. Results for Multinomial Logit on Economic Responsibility

Table 10. Results for Multinomial Logit on Economic Responsibility

	CDU/CSU	SPD	FDP	Gruene
econresp	0.357*** (0.103)	0.370*** (0.115)	0.327* (0.125)	0.551*** (0.144)
age	-0.148 (0.185)	-0.369 (0.195)	-0.434 (0.212)	-0.543 (0.227)
male (dummy)	-0.542 (0.227)	-0.333 (0.253)	-0.248 (0.277)	-0.423 (0.313)
education	-0.105 (0.103)	-0.163 (0.115)	-0.127 (0.126)	0.152 (0.146)
berlin (dummy)	-0.945 (0.453)	0.083 (0.432)	-0.515 (0.550)	-0.253 (0.485)
townsize	-0.044 (0.050)	-0.055 (0.057)	-0.094 (0.062)	0.072 (0.072)
union (dummy)	-0.586 (0.320)	-0.444 (0.354)	-0.669 (0.420)	0.073 (0.402)
civil (dummy)	1.335 (0.609)	0.184 (0.742)	0.321 (0.805)	0.524 (0.819)
whitecollar (dummy)	0.534 (0.261)	0.016 (0.287)	0.376 (0.311)	0.154 (0.384)
freelance (dummy)	0.678 (0.382)	-0.501 (0.499)	0.202 (0.310)	0.443 (0.495)

Obs: 625
Standard errors in parenthesis
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.

Table 11. Predicted probabilities for Government Responsibility for Personal Economy

	CDU/CSU	SPD	FDP	Gruene	Die Linke
Very much responsible	0.125** (0.043)	0.195*** (0.052)	0.110* (0.041)	0.059 (0.033)	0.510*** (0.067)
Somewhat responsible	0.285*** (0.045)	0.170*** (0.037)	0.164*** (0.037)	0.065* (0.024)	0.316*** (0.046)
Moderately responsible	0.378*** (0.033)	0.169*** (0.025)	0.126*** (0.022)	0.095*** (0.019)	0.233*** (0.028)
Not very responsible	0.329*** (0.046)	0.242*** (0.042)	0.174*** (0.037	0.092*** (0.027)	0.163*** (0.035)
Not responsible at all	0.244*** (0.048)	0.234*** (0.048)	0.145*** (0.039)	0.166*** (0.040)	0.210*** (0.046)

Obs: 625
Standard errors in parenthesis
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Understanding Iran's Role in Post-2003 Iraq

Brooke Fisher

Following the American invasion and occupation of Iraq, the method of understanding Iraq through its geostrategic value became increasingly prevalent amongst Arab and Western politicians and journalists. One of the manifestations of this approach has been the rise of a discourse that focuses on "Iran's influence in Iraq," which is depicted as unmediated, harmful, and deterministic. This study seeks to question that assumption and examines how policies of the Iranian government are interpreted and shaped by various Iraqi political actors through a close examination of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq and the Sadrist movement, two Iraqi political groups which are commonly referred to as proxies of the Iranian government. This study demonstrates that factors such as the political aims, histories and structure of the organizations of Sadr and SCIRI are critical in shaping their relationships with the Iranian government and the Iraqi polity. Therefore any "influence" wielded by the Iranian government in Iraqi politics is deeply mediated by Iraqi actors and their interaction both with other elites and Iraqi society. This study suggests that a complete understanding of post-Saddam Iraq should not simply consider Iraq on a regional or international level, but instead must also deal with historic and current domestic Iraqi politics and society.

In 2009, Lara Logan, a correspondent for CBS news, interviewed General John Abizaid, then the commander of all US forces in the Middle East. The interview focused on the situation in Iraq and was in response to an appearance by General Abizaid before Congress which attempted to chart a new course for American forces in Iraq. While the interview began with a focus on the violence that was occurring and the losses that American troops had sustained, it quickly turned towards a discussion of the role of the Iranian government in the Iraqi conflict. In addressing violence against American soldiers, Gen. Abizaid stated,"At the same time that the government of Iran is talking about stabilizing Iraq, these Revolutionary Guard Qods Force people are supporting the Shia death squads of some of the various splinter--"

Logan interrupted this comment by asking, "So, aren't we already at a war with Iran through its proxies in Iraq?"

To which General Abizaid replied, "No," claiming that instead the situation in Iraq is less of a proxy war, and more of a moment in which the United States is laying ground rules regarding political and military conduct by which the Islamic Republic is expected to abide. Logan's response quickly steers the interview back towards depicting proxy warfare, asking, "I know that's a political issue. But would you concede that Iranians are helping to kill American soldiers in Iraq?"

"I think that Iranians indirectly are working not only against our presence there, but also against the Iraqi government," Abizaid says.

Making this statement clearer, Logan spelled out, "Which at the end of the day means their money, their weapons, their support is helping to kill American soldiers in Iraq,"

Gen. Abizaid concluded the issue by saying, "At the end of the day, the Iranian government is not working to stabilize Iraq and they need to be."[1]

This interview followed a formula that has become predictable in the later stages of the American occupation of Iraq. The issue of violence is raised and then rapidly followed by an inquiry about the involvement of Iran. Painting the situation in Iraq as a "proxy war" between the United States and its regional allies on one side and the Islamic Republic of Iran on the other raises regional tensions and threatens escalation into a larger conflict which will further disrupt the country and the region. These statements also have the more pervasive effect of "whitewashing" the situation in Iraq. The concept of "Iran's menacing influence in Iraq" is often used to deflect attention away from real issues ingrained in the U.S. project of occupying and reconstructing Iraq. By making the Iranian government a scapegoat for the violence in Iraq, the US government is able to protest its innocence in its failure at the planned "reconstruction" of Iraq and hide grave errors in judgment and planning.

Crucially, this rhetoric not only heightens regional tension and glosses over U.S. incompetence; it also tends to write Iraqi political leaders out of their own history. Attributing the actions of these leaders and their parties solely to the manipulations of the Iranian government denies the agency of these political leaders and dismisses their actions. Portraying Iraq as a game of chess between the governments of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States is reminiscent of the language of Orientalism used throughout the 19th century as the Western countries scrambled to colonize Asia, Africa and the Middle East in an attempt to secure their status over their other European neighbors, erasing the roles of colonized peoples in their own histories. The repetition of this language in regards to Iraq effectively marginalizes issues of importance to Iraqi society and encourages a view which only regards Iraq from the standpoint of its regional and international strategic value.

This rhetoric takes two major forms: military and political. As coalition troops came under increased attack due to a rising insurgency, it became more and more common for commentators, politicians, and military personnel to attribute the insurgency to foreign agitation. Shia militias such as the Badr Brigade and the Mahdi Army were linked with the Iranian government, which was accused of arming, training, and providing these militias with logistical support. Drawing linkages between these militias and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corp (IRGC), or, more specifically, the elite Qods force, depicts the armed conflict as a struggle between the United States and the Islamic Republic, not between the United States and various Iraqi groups who opposed the occupation. Politically, this rhetoric overlooks the actions of Iraqi political parties, reducing them to extensions of the Iranian government and denying the Iraqi independence of thought and action. Again, this serves to depict the political atmosphere and issues in Iraq as conflicts between the United States and Iranian governments, and not as conflicts between dueling opinions in Iraq. This effectively writes Iraqi politicians, and to a greater extent, all Iraqis, out of their own history by failing to recognize their role in their political process. Because of this erasure, it has become necessary to question what role Iraqi political parties play in shaping the politics determining the course of Iraq's future. In order to approach this question it is necessary to evaluate the assumption that some Iraqi political parties solely reflect policies of the Iranian government. To this end it is useful to question through which political actors Iran's influence is mediated and how these parties shape and change their relationship with the Iranian regime.

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1 Daniel Schorn. "Gen. Abizaid On Stabilizing Iraq." CBSNews. CBS Interactive, 11 Feb. 2009. Web. 29 Nov. 2011.

As a method of approaching this question I will study the two Iraqi political parties which have most commonly been construed as Iranian proxies in political and academic circles: the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) and the movement surrounding the young cleric Muqtada al-Sadr. The purpose of studying Shia parties and not Sunni parties is two-fold: firstly, these are the movements that are most often associated with the Iranian government in the media and public discourse. Sunni political movements, when they are associated with an outside force, are much more commonly linked to other nations such as Saudi Arabia or groups such as al-Qaeda, which leads to a different set of issues and questions.

Furthermore, in the increasingly sectarian atmosphere of post-Saddam Iraq, these parties seem to be playing a critical role in laying the foundation of Iraq's new regional policy – specifically its policy towards Iran – and have developed unique relationships with the Iranian government. By studying SCIRI in conjunction with the Sadrist movement I will demonstrate that the nature of the relationships between these groups and the Iranian government is shaped not only by the foreign policy interests of the Iranian government, but also by the history, organizational structure, and goals of these individual parties. Furthermore, because of the agency exercised by these parties in their relationships with the Iranian government, any influence that the Iranian government may wield in Iraq is not abstractly injected into Iraqi society and politics but rather is highly mediated by the political aims of Iraqi actors and their interactions with other Iraqi elites and with Iraqi society.

SCIRI is the party which is most obviously connected with the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. SCIRI was founded in Iran and its militia, the Badr Corps, was trained and supplied by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. SCIRI was a highly organized opposition force during the reign of Saddam Hussein and, as such, transitioned into the post-Saddam period efficiently. One of the most difficult challenges SCIRI has faced during this transition is reconciling its history and goals with the Iraqi public. This has distanced SCIRI from its benefactors in Tehran and put an emphasis on the Iraqi context in which they operate. This party demonstrates the effects that internal Iraqi concerns have on Iraqi political parties and the roles those effects play in the political leaders' decisions regarding their relationship with Iran. On the other hand, the movement of Muqtada al-Sadr is important to examine because its relationship with the Iranian government is highly volatile and leaders, from both the Iranian government and the Sadrist movement, are very vocal. The anti-Iranian stance taken by al-Sadr is complicated by the fact that some of his interests are similar to the Iranian regime's and his party is pursuing some policies the Iranian government would support. The dialectic between al-Sadr and the government of the Islamic Republic is visible to the public and has had an effect on other Iraqi parties, such as SCIRI, and Iraqi politics in general. It should be acknowledged that there are other parties that have been associated with the government of Iran; for example al-Da'wa is often cited as an Iranian proxy, but the SCIRI and the Sadrists exhibit two distinct approaches, both in the Iranian government's approach to them and in the parties' responses to the policies of the Iranian government.[2]

It is appropriate to conceive of these two relationships as patron-client relationships. The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran dispenses aid and political support to both SCIRI and the Sadrists in exchange for the opportunity to influence policy and maintain a presence in Iraqi politics. However, understanding this as a patron- client relationship should not diminish the agency of either SCIRI or the Sadrists, as clients are not merely servants to the commands of their patrons. As political scientist James Scott phrased it, "while a client is hardly on an equal footing with his patron, neither is he entirely a pawn in a one-way relationship. If the patron could simply issue commands, he would have no reason to cultivate a clientele in the first place."[3] Clients cannot, and should not, be understood solely through their relationship with their patron, as both clients and patrons are responding to conditions and events which are outside of the scope of this relationship. Through their responses to these external circumstances, clients are able to change and shape the relationship to their patron. It is important to remember that this relationship's primary purpose is to improve the circumstances of both parties, and if this is no longer happening, or a new option appears, the client may choose to alter this relationship. Waterbury examines this in terms of the likelihood that a client would terminate its relationship with its patron, stating, "However legitimate they consider their dependent status, clients are far more likely to terminate a relationship if some alternative means for achieving their ends become available."[4] While neither SCIRI nor al-Sadr have terminated their relationship with the Islamic Republic, they have demonstrated a willingness and capability to alter this relationship. SCIRI in particular has stepped away from its relationship with the government of the Islamic Republic in recent years because it relies on the U.S. government to help it gain institutional power. It has also distanced itself from Iran as part of a campaign to expand its support base within Iraq, responding to the anti-foreign currents within society. On the other hand, al-Sadr has never been a typical client of the Iranian government.

Traditionally a series of temporary alliances on an as-needed basis, he has been moving closer to the Iranian government recently due to United States pressure. This paper will explore patron-client relationships through the perspective of the client with a focus on how clients are able to actively shape their relationships by means of their responses to external circumstances. Both SCIRI and al-Sadr aptly demonstrate the agency of clients in patron-client relationships.

To examine these parties and their relationships with the government of Iran, it is important to first examine the origins and historical background of each of these groups. The histories of these groups indicate both how these parties are able to mobilize support and influence Iraqi society, and how they relate to the Iranian government. Additionally, these histories indicate how the Iranian government has approached its relationship and crafted its policy with each of these parties. Finally, understanding the history

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2 Al-Da'wa is a key party in Iraqi politics both throughout the reign of Saddam Hussein and in the post-2003 environment. Da'wa is typically portrayed as an Islamic party which, because of its ideological leanings, is in the service of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Despite this Da'wa will not be included in this study for several reasons. Firstly, while Da'wa and members of Da'wa have been present and active in every Iraqi government since the fall of Saddam, this is often presented as sort of a "compromise" between dueling parties. In part this is because the traditional social base of Da'wa has partially been absorbed by new political parties. Specifically, Da'wa had typically attracted the urban lower classes however much of this demographic has been absorbed into the Sadrists movement. The other reason that Da'wa will not be included in this study is because its relationship with the Iranian government is remarkably similar to the relationship that SCIRI has developed. Da'wa and SCIRI both had developed a relationship with the Islamic Republic before the fall of the Iraqi regime in 2003 and in their attempt to transition into the post 2003 Iraqi environment have attempted to distance themselves, at least rhetorically, from the Iranian government.
3 Ernest Gellner and John Waterbury. Patrons and Clients in Mediterranean Societies. London: Duckworth, 1977: 22.
4 Ibid. 330.

of the relationships helps to determine how these parties react to Iranian policies, allowing us to evaluate how independent these parties are from the Iranian government. A thorough examination will find that these political parties are not merely vessels through which Iranian government policy is channeled, but are instead active political agents who are primarily interested in responding to the political exigencies in which they now operate.

To deny that the government of the Islamic Republic in Iran has been involved in Iraqi politics in the post-2003 era is erroneous and not the intention of this study. The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran does play an important role in Iraqi politics and shaping the future of Iraq; this role, however, is mediated through the needs of Iraqi political leaders and the society to which these Iraqi political leaders must respond. Therefore, this interplay between the Iranian government and new Iraqi political leaders – in this case the leaders of SCIRI and the Sadrist movement – should be understood in terms of a relationship, rather than as a unidirectional influence. Furthermore, instead of being based on religious ideology, as is often assumed by Western politicians and pundits, this relationship is based on political calculations made on both sides of the relationship. This study aims to examine how SCIRI and the Sadrist movement shape and change the relationship that has developed between themselves and the Iranian government. It is my contention that the ways in which these two groups have approached their relationship with the Iranian government is contingent on their relationship with their social base, Iraqi society in general, and the new demands of Iraqi politics.

A Brief History of Iranian-Iraqi Relation

Iran and Iraq have a long history with many cultural, religious, political, and economic ties. Historically, Iraq was a contact point between the Ottoman Empire and the Safavid Empire, and because Iraq served as a frontier zone between these two populations there was a continual cultural and intellectual exchange between them. Through pilgrimages to the holy cities of Najaf, Karbala, and Qom, corpse traffic, intellectual traffic in the form of seminary students, and cross-border systems of patronage, complex networks of personal and economic relationships developed.[5] These networks have only become more pronounced as a result of vast population exchanges between the two countries.

Betwen 1979 and 1980, in an effort to secure his power after the Iran-Iraq war, Saddam Hussein deported all Iraqis of "Persian origin," mainly Shia Iraqis. Over 15,000 alleged "Iranians" were deported in the first three months of 1980 alone.[6][7] These waves of deportations were followed by an estimated 100,000 refugees who fled the violence following the 1991 uprising against Saddam's regime and the poor economic conditions created by UN sanctions.[8] These waves of immigration created "soft links" between the populations of Iran and Iraq in the form of family, social, and business relationships.[9] In the wake of the fall of Saddam's regime, many Iraqis who had been living abroad returned to their country, enhancing the layered connection between the populations of these countries. For example, many Iraqi clerics who had been living in Iran returned to Iraq in the hope that they would be able to help mold their country's

future. This has left an important personal and social connection between the seminaries of each country. Placing this issue in perspective, Rosemary Hollis writes, "These Shia Iraqis are not about to renounce their Iraqi nationalism to make common cause with Iran, but their religious and family ties across the border contribute to a supra-national dynamic that will have an effect on developments in Iraq."[10]

These deep ties between the two populations are underwritten by a historical animosity stemming from competition over regional hegemony and fundamental differences in the self-perception of each government. The 1968 ascension of the Ba'ath party in Iraq and the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran drastically isolated the regimes from each other due to competing regime structures, ideologies, and regional ambitions that would ultimately lead to the Iran-Iraq War.[11]

Ideologically, the Ba'th regime promoted pan-Arabism and envisioned itself as the leader of a pan-Arab state. In terms of the Pahlavi regime, this simultaneously excluded Iran, which claims a Persian heritage, and challenged the Shah's vision of himself as a leader of the region. The Ba'th regime's conception of itself as a regional leader of pan-Arabism would later put it into conflict with the Islamic Republic. Both governments viewed themselves as regional leaders and both had different views on the direction the region should take, which only escalated after the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran.

The Islamic Republic developed a new form of governance based on Velayat el-Faqih, or guardianship of the jurist. In essence, Velayat el-Faqih challenged the legitimacy of secular government and was a direct challenge to the avowedly secular Iraqi regime. Furthermore, the concept of propagating Islamic governance and spreading the revolution was viewed as a threat by Iraq and the greater region. The Islamic Republic saw itself as the religious and cultural leadership of this region, challenging the Ba'th leadership's vision.

These various tensions would culminate in the eight-year Iran-Iraq War, launched in an effort by Saddam to extend his regional power. The war resulted in enhanced nationalist feelings in both countries, as evidenced by the lack of Iraqi Shia defection to Iran. National identity was privileged over sectarian identity, demonstrating that while religious connections and commonalities are important, they are not, in and of themselves, a reason for political allegiance. Understanding this aspect of Iraq's history allows for an understanding that the alliances some Iraqi parties have made with Iran in the post-Saddam period are not reliant on sectarian or religious similarities but are instead based on political expediency.

The Iran-Iraq war changed the foreign policy outlook of the Iranian government. The length and brutality of the war inflicted lasting devastation on the populations of both countries. From Iran's perspective. the war was one of aggression incited by an ambitious neighbor. Furthermore, the use of chemical weaponry and the international community's lack of a response led the Iranian government to conclude that the international community was not concerned with the security of the Iranian populace and that it would be better for Iran to rely on its own policies for protection. Iraq was perceived by Iran as a threat, the rebirth of which would need to be prevented after the fall of Saddam. Developing a friendly relationship with the new Iraqi government was a preventative measure to cultivate both peace and reconciliation.

While the 1991 uprising in southern Iraq was an internal Iraqi issue, it does have some bearing on the relationship between Iran and Iraq. The Iranian government was largely uninvolved in this incident, and did not provide help to the Shia communities who were facing repression. In fact, the IRGC

5 Yitzhak Nakash. Reaching for Power: the Shi!a in the Modern Arab World. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2006.

6 Hanna Battatu. "Iraq's Underground Sh!'a Movements: Characteristics, Causes and Prospects." Middle East Journal 35.4 (1981): 591.

7 While these deportations augmented a rhetoric which demonized the Islamic Republic the activities of al-Da'wa which prompted these deportations, and their espousal of Wilayat al-Faqih, posed a legitimate threat to the regime of Saddam Hussein. See: John L. Esposito. The Iranian Revolution: Its Global Impact Miami (Fla.): Florida International UP, 1990: 92.

8 Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr. The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future. New York: W.W. Norton, 2007: 62.

9 Ibid.

10 Rosemary Hollis. "Iraq." The World Today 60.7 (2004): 4-6. JSTOR. Web. 17 Aug. 2011. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40477260>: 5.

11 Lawrence G. Potter, and Gary G. Sick. Iran, Iraq and the Legacies of War. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

used this opportunity to enter Iraq and attack MEK bases, a pragmatic maneuver that demonstrated the Iranian government's concern for its political goals over its concern for the well-being of fellow Shia communities. According to Ray Takeyh, Iran did not support the uprising because it feared that Iraq may disintegrate and that the resulting chaos would spill over into the borders of Iran, encouraging separatist movements.[12]

Examining Iran's experience of the Iran-Iraq war and the 1991 uprising demonstrates that the Iranian government's policy towards Iraq has been overwhelmingly guided by practical concerns over an aggressive neighbor. This practical approach towards its relationship with Iran has continued after the fall of Saddam. According to Ray Takeyh, "Tehran's promotion of its Shiite allies is intended to prevent the rise of a state dominated by a Sunni elite, whose pan-Arab aspirations have led to tense relations—even war—with Iran. Tehran has no illusion that Iraqi Shiites are willing to subordinate their communal interests to Iran's national ambitions, but hopes that a Shiite-dominated government will provide it with a sympathetic and accommodating neighbor."[13]

While the history between Iran and Iraq is an important component of a full understanding of Iran's desire to be involved in the new Iraqi government, it is also important to look at the current political and economic factors to see what is motivating this relationship today. These include economic forces, border security, U.S.- Iranian relations, and Iran's regional ambitions. Economically, Iran and Iraq have developed a burgeoning trade relationship around Iraq's economic recovery following a decade of sanctions and years of war. Iran and Iraq have signed several major trade agreements involving the export of natural gas to Iraqi power plants, the transportation of natural gas through Iraq to the Mediterranean, and the creation of a free trade zone. Additionally, Iranian businesses are poised to assist in many of Iraq's reconstruction projects, including the rebuilding of hospitals, schools, hotels, airports, and restaurants. In part, this relationship reflects efforts by the Iraqi government to concentrate on its "natural trading partners" in the region, and is an example of how Iraq has an active hand in formulating its relationship with the Iranian government. [14] This relationship has also helped alleviate some pressure from Tehran, however, which has faced repeated waves of increasingly strict international sanctions. As such, the Iranian government would want to maintain a strong political relationship in order to ensure that its economic interests will not be threatened by instability or the installation of a hostile government.

Beyond general violence and social turmoil, specific political issues have resonance in both countries, such as Kurdish nationalism. Due to Iran's sizeable Kurdish population, the Islamic Republic does not want the formation of an independent Kurdish state which may encourage Iranian Kurds, or other ethnic minorities, to agitate for autonomy. From this perspective, the Iranian government would not want Iraq to disintegrate into separate sectarian enclaves. Cultivating relationships with various political factions in Iraq allows the Iranian government to support parties it believes will be able to create a relatively strong government.

As the United States was largely in control of Iraqi politics following the fall of Saddam's regime, the Iranian government's actions in Iraq are part of a dynamic between the United States and Iran. Due to the fraught nature of U.S.-Iranian relations, it is understandable that the Iranian government would view the current U.S. presence on its borders with trepidation. The Iranian government's involvement in

Iraq can be understood in part as an effort to ensure the United States does not install a government which would be hostile to Iran's interests. This is particularly salient due to the fact that President Bush initially framed the war in Iraq as a first step towards vast changes in the Middle East which would eventually force the regime in Tehran to step down or change radically. In a speech in 2006 President Ahmadinejad urged for stability in Iraq as a method of hastening the departure of US troops, saying, "The more [the Iraqi] government is successful in establishing security, the weaker the foreigner's reasons and pretext will be to continue their occupation."[15] The relationships that the Iranian government has cultivated with various Iraqi political factions is part of an effort to counter a U.S. policy which has consistently and purposefully excluded and threatened the Iranian government.

Iran has a historical ambition of regional hegemony, traditionally opposed by Iraq. By pursuing policies that establish economic, social, and political connections between Iran and Iraq, the Iranian government is attempting to extend its soft power and its circle of influence. Iran does not aim to install an Islamic government in Iraq or pursue religious aims, but instead pragmatically focuses on establishing a friendly government with connections to Tehran.

These current political interests, and the history of tensions that precede them, elucidate reasons the government of Iran is interested in developing a relationship with Iraq's new government. Iran's policy regarding Iraq is not driven by religious motives, but past concerns and future ambitions. The primary tactic the Iranian government has chosen to address these ambitions and concerns is the creation of political and economic ties. The creation of these ties, particularly political ties, does not occur in a vacuum, and the direction these relationships take is not solely determined by the Iranian government. Rather, it is mediated through the parties the Iranian government is allied with, such as the SCIRI and the Sadrist movement, which, as will be shown, are not under the direct control of Iran. They independently shape their relationship with the Iranian government.

Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI)

Of all the political parties that have risen to power after the fall of Saddam, SCIRI is most often depicted as a proxy of Tehran. Despite the close ties the SCIRI has developed with the government of Iran, however, describing this party simply as a proxy of the Islamic Republic discounts its political maneuverings in post-Saddam Iraq. Since the fall of Saddam, SCIRI has focused on formalizing its institutional power through its relationship with the United States and by attempting to expand its mass base of support in Iraqi society. In order to better understand SCIRI's relationship with the Islamic Republic and how SCIRI takes an active role in shaping this relationship, it is necessary to first examine how SCIRI has attempted to achieve power in post Saddam Iraq, emphasizing the historical reasons for its decisions, and then to examine what impact these decisions have had on its relationship with the Iranian government.

Initially Iran had helped to form SCIRI with the intention of maximizing its influence within the Iraqi opposition and, eventually, a new Iraqi government (which was assumed would come to power after the success of Iran in the Iran-Iraq war).[16] In continuing its relationship with SCIRI, the Iranian government is attempting to further its goal of having a measure of influence within the Iraqi government. Immediately after the fall of Saddam, SCIRI seemed to be an increasingly powerful party that had grasped control of many levers of state power, while simultaneously being easier to negotiate with than

12 Ray Takeyh. Guardians of the Revolution: Iran and the World in the Age of the Ayatollahs. New York: Oxford UP, 2011: 136.

13 Ibid. 237.

14 Suzanne Maloney. Iran's Long Reach: Iran as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2008: 43.

15 Thabit Abdullah. A Short History of Iraq: From 636 to the Present. London: Pearson Longman, 2003: 173.

16 Reidar Visser. "Basra, the Reluctant Seat of "Shiastan" Middle East Report 242 (2007): 23-28.

al-Sadr's movement due to its high levels of organization, clear leadership, and political sophistication. As such, SCIRI was the party best able to create effective government and maintain stability in Iraq, while simultaneously eliminating the threat that the state could become a rival or threat to Iran. According to the International Crisis Group, Iranian leaders hope that SCIRI will help serve the interests of the Iranian government in Iraq, "which are to bring the country enough within its [Iran's] sphere of influence that it never again will threaten or invade or use weapons of mass destruction against it, as it did during the 1980-1988 war."[17] Given the personal and political ties developed between the leaders of SCIRI and personnel at various levels of the Iranian government, a relationship exists on both a formal and informal level between these groups. Through these relationships, the government of Iran is allowed a window into internal Iraqi politics and is able to voice its concerns in a more effective manner than it would if it were simply a disconnected outside force.

SCIRI also benefits from this relationship. It is important to understand that SCIRI is approaching its relationship with Iran from a position of semi-governmental authority, meaning that SCIRI became a highly influential force within the Iraqi government after the fall of Saddam. Due to Iraq's incomplete sovereignty at this time and the process through which SCIRI achieved power (elite bargaining and coalition building rather than electoral contestation) SCIRI has never been secure in its grip on power. As such, SCIRI must consider its relationship with foreign powers on two levels: how this relationship could help them cement their domestic power, and how it could affect broader Iraqi and regional politics. Continuing their relationship with the Iranian government makes sense on both of these levels.

The Iranian government provides civilian and military aid to SCIRI. This aid helps SCIRI to widen its support base among Iraqi society, mainly Shia communities, by providing social services and welfare. This has been characteristic of SCIRI's relationship with the Iranian government since its beginning. Utilizing Iranian logistical support and financial assistance, Mohammad Baqir al-Hakim was able to build institutions that have given him access to a popular support base. This support base would be accessible to his brother Abdul Aziz al-Hakim and his son Ammar al-Hakim after him. Prior to 2003, these institutions operated largely outside of Iraq, serving the population of exiles and refugees who arrived in areas such as Iran, Jordan, and even the UK. Notable institutions of al-Hakim include the al-Sadr foundation in Tehran, an agency offering welfare services to deportees, and the Markaz al-Tawthiq (Documentation Center), which would document and provide aid to Iraqi refugees arriving in Iran.[18] After 2003, some of the exiles who had been served by al-Hakim's networks would return to Iraq and form a social base for SCIRI's political program. As SCIRI has transitioned into the new political climate in Iraq, it has shifted its utilization of Iranian funds towards internal Iraqi issues. It has utilized these funds to help run electoral campaigns, ensuring maintained institutional power while it worked to build its support base. Additionally, the military aid which is provided by the Iranian government allows SCIRI to arm its militia, allowing it to both offer protection to its targeted communities and to challenge other powerful militias, such as Muqtada al-Sadr.

On a larger level, SCIRI recognizes Iran's importance as a neighbor and a permanent and powerful actor in the region. Developing a relationship with the government of Iran has allowed SCIRI to essentially get a "head start" on formal diplomacy, as it is familiar with the lay of the land and the actors involved. Given the recent economic investments Iran has made in Iraq and the contributions Iran has made to Iraq's

17 Shiite Politics in Iraq: The Role of the Supreme Council. Rep. no. N70. Baghdad: Internal Crisis Group, 2007.
18 Faleh A. Jabar. The Shi'ite Movement in Iraq. London: Saqi, 2003: 249.

reconstruction effort, it is in SCIRI's interest to continue its relationship with the Iranian government. Additionally, Iran is one of Iraq's largest neighbors. From SCIRI's standpoint as a major player in the government, maintaining friendly relationships with Iran is part of a governmental policy of encouraging the development of positive relationships within their immediate nregion. SCIRI has maintained its relationship with the Iranian government because of these political and economic incentives and not because of a blind loyalty.

The History and Origins of SCIRI

SCIRI was formed in Iran in 1982 under the guidance of al-Hakim. Al-Hakim was exiled to Iran in 1982 as a result of Saddam's persecution of key al-Da'wa figures.[19] Al-Hakim had been an important leader of al- Da'wa in the 1970s and the early 1980s, but his followers were members of various groups, including al-Da'wa, the Marjaeeya movement, and the Islamic Action Organization.[20] SCIRI's founding was meant to bring together his followers and provide organization to Iraqi opposition groups facing severe repression in Iraq and suffering a blow to organizational leadership due to the death of Baqir al-Sadr.[21] The goal of SCIRI was to create a "government in exile" which would be dedicated to the overthrow of Saddam's regime.[22] Initially SCIRI resembled an umbrella organization of various opposition groups more than an opposition party with its own program and goals. During the early years of the group, however, separate parties, such as al-Da'wa, came to view SCIRI as an effort by the Iranian government to compete with them and contain their influence, and subsequently left the group.[23] Despite the formal departure of these parties, SCIRI was able to continue to draw on their social base for support, though its primary appeal was now to members of the urban mercantile middle class. At this point, SCIRI developed an independent program and ideology largely based on the writings of al-Hakim, emphasizing pan-Shi'ism and a political role for religious leaders.[24]

The founding of SCIRI was closely followed by the founding of the Badr Corps, the armed wing of SCIRI (recently renamed the Badr Organization). The population exchange between Iran and Iraq in the 1970s and 80s, and the Iran-Iraq War from 1980-1988. Between1979 and 1980, Saddam expelled thousands of Iraqi Shia, many of whom would relocate to Iran. The Badr Corps recruited from the ranks of these refugees, and many of those who did not take up arms joined the political branch of SCIRI.[25] The Iranian government helped to fund, train and organize the Badr Corps "with the aim of maximizing its military influence within the Iraqi opposition."[26] In the context of the eight year Iran-Iraq War, the Badr Corps came to be viewed as "doing Iran's dirty work."[27] It is believed by many Iraqis that the Badr Corps, and by extension SCIRI, was involved in the torture of many Iraqi prisoners of war throughout this

19 Juan Cole, "Shiite Religious Parties Fill Vacuum in Southern Iraq." Middle East Research and Information Project (2003). Middle East Research and Information Project. 22 Apr. 2003. Web. 16 Oct. 2011. <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero042203>.
20 Dilip Hiro, The Longest War: the Iran-Iraq Military Conflict. New York: Routledge, 1991: 97.
21 Battatu. "Iraq's Underground Sh!'a Movements: Characteristics, Causes and Prospects." Middle East Journal 35.4 (1981): 593.
22 Gregory Gause, The International Relations of the Persian Gulf. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009:172.
23 Shiite Politics in Iraq: The Role of the Supreme Council. Rep. no. N70. Baghdad: Internal Crisis Group, 2007.
24 Reidar Visser, "Basra, the Reluctant Seat of "Shiastan" Middle East Report 242 (2007): 27.
25 Yitzhak Nakash. The Shi'is of Iraq. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton UP, 2003: 277.
26 Reidar Visser. "Religious Allegiances among Pro-Iranian Special Groups in Iraq." CTC Sentinel (2011). Combating Terrorism Center. West Point. Web. 29 Sept. 2011. <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/religious-allegiances-among-pro-iranian-special-groups-in- iraq>
27 Patrick Cockburn. Muqtada Al-Sadr and the Battle for the Future of Iraq. New York: Scribner, 2008: 53.

period. It had close ties with the IRGC and was initially led by an Iranian colonel. The Badr Corps, at the behest of the Iranian government and SCIRI's leadership, fought on the side of Iran during the Iran-Iraq War with the aim of toppling Saddam's regime, which was SCIRI's ultimate goal.

The fate of SCIRI was closely tied to the success of the Iranian war effort at this time. The fledgling regime in Tehran hoped that the formation of SCIRI would help to ease the transition to a friendly regime after the end of Saddam's government. Namely, SCIRI was intended to assume power in Baghdad at the conclusion of the war.[28]

The Iranian war effort was ultimately unsuccessful in toppling Saddam's regime. As Iranian troops withdrew from Iraqi soil, SCIRI and the Badr Corps withdrew as well. SCIRI was never able to exert great influence in Iraq.[29]

In 1991, following Iraq's invasion and forced withdrawal from Kuwait, southern Iraq and northern Iraq rose in a revolt against the oppressive regime of Saddam Hussein. Despite the obvious opportunity this event provided for SCIRI, its participation was marginal. The Badr Corps was deployed from across the Iranian border but quickly withdrew when Saddam's forces mounted an assault. The lack of participation was not due to a lack of will on the side of SCIRI or the Badr Corps, but instead a rejection from local Iraqis, who "distrust[ed] them as Iranian agents with only their own interests in mind."[30] This event foreshadowed some of the problems SCIRI would face after 2003.

At this point, the political functioning of SCIRI was largely relegated to Iranian soil. While SCIRI was a major opposition force to Saddam's regime, its location limited the scope of its political impact and forced it to focus on building ties with other opposition groups and launching small-scale military operations. Various cross-border raids were carried out by the Badr Corps but the group was never strong enough to confront Saddam's military directly. Refugees and POWs who were able to return to Iraq and had come in contact with SCIRI faced severe reprisals by Saddam's regime.[31]

The al-Hakim family, a notable religious family which has long been famed for their rankings in the clerical hierarchy and their subsequent provision of social and educational services, became a target of the regime's repression, leaving a legacy of suffering and death. Despite this, the al-Hakim family—and the clerical network associated with them—were able to provide modest social welfare networks to the urban poor.[32] The formation of these social networks, however minimal, combined with the legacy of suffering faced by the al-Hakim family, would help provide the party with some claim to legitimacy in post-Saddam Iraq.

SCIRI in Post-2003 Iraq: Claiming Institutional Power

The nature of the relationship between SCIRI and the Iranian government is a product of the history of SCIRI's founding. As an organization formed under the tutelage of the Islamic Republic within the borders of Iran, and surviving largely on the aid provided by the Iranian government, it seems simple to conclude that SCIRI is beholden to the Iranian government. The development of SCIRI's relationship with the Iranian government after it returned to Iraq and secured a foothold demonstrates SCIRI's

response to the dynamics of Iraqi domestic politics and society.

One advantage of SCIRI's life in exile was the ability of SCIRI to organize, create internal cohesion, and develop institutional methods for decision-making. Politically, SCIRI developed important organizational tools that served it well during the period immediately following the fall of Saddam. SCIRI had developed a shura, or council, in which decisions on party policies and actions were made. In 1986, the shura was split into a two-tier system consisting of a Majlis Shura and a lower General Assembly, both of which would debate party issues and decisions. Ultimate authority, however, rested with the Executive Committee, comprised of trusted associates of al-Hakim.[33] The command structures of both SCIRI and the Badr Corps were clear. Because SCIRI had already established an organizational structure and settled internal power struggles, it was able to concentrate on seizing and solidifying its power in post-Saddam Iraq.

This structural advantage over other opposition groups helped SCIRI to formulate and transition into the new institutional structure being built in post-Saddam Iraq, but at the cost of connecting with Iraqi society. The structure of SCIRI is important when examining its relationship with Iran, because it gives us an idea of how the Iranian government and SCIRI relate to each other. SCIRI has developed along much the same lines as a vertically organized political party with an identifiable elite core. This has allowed Iran to deal with SCIRI on an elite-to-elite basis, relying on traditional politicking and personal relationships.

SCIRI is often referred to as an "Iranian creation," and thus viewed as divorced from the needs of Iraqis who remained in Iraq throughout the period of Saddam's rule and the UN sanctions. SCIRI's linkage with Iran and the American occupation compounded the effects of its removal from daily realities of life in Iraq. The history of SCIRI has left a legacy of distrust between the party and members of society. Many residents of southern Iraq feel SCIRI betrayed them, providing them with a false sense of hope for return to Iran and allowing them to face massive reprisals. "SCIRI lives with a legacy of massive popular distrust, and even a sense of betrayal, resulting from its ill-considered attempt to hijack a popular revolt to suit its own narrow objectives."[34] The role of the Badr Corps in this affair was not forgotten, neither, however, was Badr's role in torturing Iraqi POWs during the Iran Iraq war. This "legacy of distrust" would be critical in SCIRI's effort to build a mass base of support.

The dynamic between SCIRI and its Iranian benefactors has entered a new phase marked by SCIRI's return to Iraq and its assumption of actual power. What this has meant is that SCIRI may no longer declare policies and loyalties abstractly, but instead must respond to the needs and demands of the Iraqi population while simultaneously attempting to maintain its grip on the reins of power. The leadership of SCIRI recognized a distance between itself and society and understood that it would have difficulty mobilizing at the grassroots level on a large, intensive scale. This meant that SCIRI could not easily gain power through street politics. It was, however, in contact with the foreign power now formally in control of Iraq and had access to the institutional mechanisms of power. This led SCIRI to seize power through institutional means, working in and with the new U.S.-formed Iraqi government and expanding their social base by forming coalitions and patronage networks. Once SCIRI achieved institutional power, it focused on seizing control of critical ministries, such as the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Finance, where it could continue to develop patronage networks while simultaneously maintaining a critical posi-

28 Chabli Mallat, "Religious Militancy in Contemporary Iraq: Muhammad Baqer As-Sadr and the Sunni-Shia Paradigm." Third World Quarterly 10.2 (1988): 699.

29 Patrick Cockburn, Muqtada Al-Sadr and the Battle for the Future of Iraq. New York: Scribner, 2008: 53.

30 Peter Munson, and Steven Metz. Iraq in Transition. Washington, D.C.: Potomac, 2009: 101.

31 Shiite Politics in Iraq: The Role of the Supreme Council. Rep. no. N70. Baghdad: Internal Crisis Group, 2007.

32 Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future. New York: W.W. Norton, 2007: 86.

33 Faleh Jabar, The Shi'ite Movement in Iraq. London: Saqi, 2003: 240.

34 Shiite Politics in Iraq: The Role of the Supreme Council. Rep. no. N70. Baghdad: Internal Crisis Group, 2007.

tion in the Iraqi government. In the words of the International Crisis Group, "SCIRI's current power is the outcome not of activities tested in an open electoral contest but of its steady march through post-war institutions and tactical alliances forged along the way."[35]

SCIRI has attempted to turn its institutional power into actual power on the ground through two methods: creating and extending patronage networks among the urban Shia communities (largely catering to its middle class base but also attempting to make inroads amongst the lower classes), and seizing control of the state security apparatus. Because most of the distribution of government services is in the hands of key ministries controlled by SCIRI, government jobs and contracts are handed down to people with personal connections to SCIRI, giving it a large amount of influence in post-Saddam Iraq.[36]

In 2005 SCIRI took control of the Interior Ministry and Badr forces were allowed to infiltrate the security services. These security forces have been used to protect Shia citizens from insurgent attacks, gaining some measure of popularity for SCIRI. Clashes between the security services and rivals of SCIRI, including various Sunni militias and al-Sadr's Mahdi Army, have also been critical in solidifying SCIRI power on the ground.[37] In the 2004 siege of Najaf, Iraqi security forces staffed by members of Badr assisted U.S. troops in fighting the Mahdi Army to a standstill, resulting in al-Sadr calling for a ceasefire and withdrawing the Mahdi Army from Najaf and neighboring cities. From this point onward, the security of urban Shia communities, previously co-opted by al-Sadr, was left to state security services, which were monopolized by SCIRI. Building patronage networks and seizing control of state security helped SCIRI create a larger social base, but to truly connect with Iraqi concerns, SCIRI would need to tackle the new circumstances of Iraqi society.

Responding to Societal Demands: SCIRI's Efforts to Distance Itself from Iran

Many Iraqis perceived SCIRI as an Iranian creation since it was developed under Iranian tutelage. Furthermore, throughout the Iran-Iraq War, SCIRI had fought on the wrong side of a deeply nationalistic war. SCIRI would have to address this perception in order to progress in the new Iraqi system. SCIRI's efforts to distance itself from Iran would become an important aspect of the SCIRI- Iranian relationship. But SCIRI had also made many Western contacts during its life in exile, most notably the United States, and had to reconcile this with the role of the U.S. as occupier in Iraq. SCIRI would have to learn to balance these two relationships against each other and against the local demands of the Iraqi people.

The conception of SCIRI as an Iranian creation is a reflection of its history and origins. As a group that developed in Iran and fought with Iran in the 1980s, SCIRI was quickly pegged by both Western and Iraqi political leaders and Iraqi civilians as an Iranian proxy through which the Iranian government was attempting to control Iraqi politics. This was compounded by a rise in xenophobia after the initial months of the American occupation. These sentiments, perhaps best vocalized by Muqtada al-Sadr, decried exiles who, according to this logic, had not experienced the harsh reality of Saddam's repression and the desperation caused by years of sanctions, and were therefore unable to effectively address the concerns of Iraqi society. SCIRI lost legitimacy, not only because it was largely composed of exiles, but also

because it had allied with a former enemy of Iraq. This "legitimacy deficit"[38] derived from SCIRI's close association with the government in Tehran and was compounded by its support of Iran during the Iran-Iraq War. Its ranks were composed of both POWs and army deserters leading "many Iraqis to label it as a movement of traitors."[39] According to the International Crisis Group, "If SCIRI/ISCI has so far failed in achieving respectability, it is because it has never quite managed to shake off its past as an Iran-bred group of exiles with a narrow sectarian agenda enforced by a potent militia."[40] SCIRI would need to overcome the perception amongst Iraqis that it was under the control of Tehran in order to expand its support base.

To tackle the issue of its connections with Iran, SCIRI has taken several steps, all of which amount to an attempt to distance itself from the Iranian government and stress its Iraqi roots. On the surface this is in response to the rhetoric of al-Sadr who has condemned foreign interference in the new government, but more importantly it is a response to the feeling of both members of Iraqi society and members within SCIRI that SCIRI is disconnected from the daily realities of life in Iraq. In the words of a senior official quoted by the International Crisis Group, "There is a difference between an organization founded in a given country and one that declares its loyalty to that country. When we left Iraq, no one was willing to receive us, except Iran and Syria. The Arabs and Europeans supported Saddam's regime. This does not mean that Badr is an Iranian organization or loyal to Iran."[41] While he is specifically referring to the Badr Brigade, his comment can be extended to SCIRI's political organization as well. By stressing its Iraqi roots and de-emphasizing its connections with Iran, SCIRI is attempting to transition into Iraqi society as Iraqis instead of as foreigners.

Shedding its revolutionary character has also been an important step in SCIRI's progression from an oppositional party to a governing party. Notably it dropped "Revolution" from its name in 2007, becoming the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq. This implies a new sense of normalcy; SCIRI is no longer a party striving to overthrow a government but now one who is settling into the task of running a country. The dropping of "Revolution" from its name helped to resolve an association between SCIRI and the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Because SCIRI's name was coined with the blessing of the Iranian government at a time when Iran still preached—and hoped that SCIRI would be a vehicle for—the spreading of its revolution, changing it symbolized that SCIRI was no longer looking to export Iran's Islamic revolution. 'Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim, who took control of the party after the assassination of Baqir al-Hakim in 2003,[42] launched a press campaign to improve SCIRI's image. It largely focused on indicating that the group would be moving away from the religious authorities in Iran and closer to those in Najaf, vowing that the group would no longer be looking toward Ayatollah Khamenei for political guidance but instead turning toward Ayatollah Sistani.[43] This was in conjunction with a shift in rhetoric to emphasizing democracy and nationalism. The intention of these acts was to reshape the party's image by refocusing society's preoccupation with its Iranian connections towards its Iraqi nationalist credentials and increase popularity among Iraqi voters.

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35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
37 John Ehrenberg. The Iraq Papers. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010: 507.

38 Ibid.
39 Peter Munson and Steven Metz. Iraq in Transition. Washington, D.C.: Potomac, 2009: 29.
40 Shiite Politics in Iraq: The Role of the Supreme Council. Rep. no. N70. Baghdad: Internal Crisis Group, 2007
41 Shiite Politics in Iraq: The Role of the Supreme Council. Rep. no. N70. Baghdad: Internal Crisis Group, 2007: 9.
42 Al-Hakim was killed in 2003 in an attack at the Imam Ali mosque, which was claimed by Al- Qaeda in Iraq. This attack was significant because it signaled an increase in sectarian violence and a rise in the identity politics from which SCIRI and al-Sadr both benefit.
43 This campaign was launched partly in response to a generational divide within the party structure. The older members of the party, exemplified by Baqir al-Hakim were supportive of the "idea of a Khomeini-like clerical rule" while the younger generation were more interested in a form of activist Islam which focused less on a clerical elite ruling society and more on building connections between Islamic structures and society. See Munson 101.

SCIRI's members profess belief in the principle of Willayat e-faqih, and many declare their loyalty to Ayatollah Khamenei. But following their return to Iraq and the backlash they faced as exiles and Iranian clients, SCIRI has increasingly relied on Iraqi religious authorities, such as Ayatollah Sistani, whose opposition to the Iranian system of government is well known.[44]

Despite the fact that some SCIRI members may be adherents to Khomeini's ideology, the leadership of SCIRI has moved away from this official position to one more nationalist in its outlook. In a statement following SCIRI's return from Iran, al-Hakim emphasized his group's independence from the Iranian government in terms of ideology:

"Wilayat al-faqih was something that had to do with Iran and the Iranian constitution. Even when we were in Iran, we were neither with it nor against it. But after our return to Iraq, we had to work according to the reality on the ground. We used to accept Ayatollah Khomeini's resolutions because we were in Iran, and he was the leader, but SCIRI came to Iraq and now we are in Iraq."[45]

The International Crisis Group suggests that strict adherence to a particular doctrine doesn't matter because, relative to other Iraqi groups, SCIRI has more in common with Iran. "Even if SCIRI's adherence to Khomeini's ideology was never more than pro forma, the party has had a closer affinity to Iran ideologically, militarily, and politically than any other Iraqi actor."[46] Fuller, an American political analyst, goes further, stating that ideology in fact matters very little in terms of this relationship, suggesting instead that, while "al-Hakim's association with Iran would suggest a preference for the Iranian ideological position of support for clerical rule, conditions in Iraq will lead him to be pragmatic on this issue and Iran itself will be more interested in having direct ties to a major figure of influence in Iran than in his specific ideological stance."[47] To claim that the Iranian government supports SCIRI because the two share a common ideology ignores these important shifts in SCIRI's ideological outlook.

This is a key point. SCIRI and the government of Iran have a relationship which is based on political and personal relationships, not ideological affinity. While ideological affinity has not hurt the relationship, perhaps it is useful to view this affinity as a political tool developed in the course of the development of political and personal relationships, and not as the glue holding the relationship together. SCIRI's move away from formal adherence to the official ideology of the Islamic Republic is not inconsequential, but it signals a political astuteness and agency denied by statements that place SCIRI as a simple proxy of the Islamic public. SCIRI's shift in ideology reflects an attempt to modify its program to reflect a more nationalist perspective.

Cooperation with the U.S.: SCIRI's Focus on Institutional Power

According to the International Crisis Group, SCIRI began to diversify its support network for a variety of reasons, including "its disenchantment with Iran's passive approach toward the desired Islamic revolution in Iraq, its unhappiness about Iran's treatment of its followers as surly underlings, and the post-1990 U.S. hostility toward the Iraqi regime, which created new opportunities for mobilizing foreign

support".[48] SCIRI and the United States government shared a common goal: the overthrow of the Iraqi regime. As a practical actor, SCIRI's leadership was able to shift its attention away from the Iranian government in favor of another international actor it felt would be more effective in serving its interests. To this end, SCIRI cooperated with U.S. plans for regime change in Iraq. In 1992, SCIRI was a key player in the U.S.-sponsored Iraqi National Congress, a group of Iraqi exiles who helped to plan the demise of Saddam's regime.[49] In the run-up to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, SCIRI members were present at State Department meetings, and in 2002, at an Iraqi opposition meeting in London where a provisional governing council was formed, SCIRI was given 15 out of 65 seats.[50] SCIRI was willing to work with the United States before and after the invasion of Iraq in exchange for a measure of institutional power in post- Saddam Iraq. Returning to Iraq in the wake of, or perhaps on the wings of, an American invasion, SCIRI was closely associated with the US occupation and the ensuing chaos.

This relationship proved to be a double-edged sword, allowing SCIRI access to institutional means of power but questioning its legitimacy. SCIRI's relationship with the U.S. is contentious amongst Iraqi society and, because its continuance has proved necessary to maintaining SCIRI's grip on the levers of power, has been a difficult issue to address. The party leadership has adopted a policy of denouncing the U.S. presence in public, but is accepting it in practice by taking part in the institutions set up by the U.S. This approach is very similar to the approach SCIRI has taken towards its relationship with Iran. This has placed SCIRI in an intermediary position between the U.S. and Iranian governments, allowing it to diversify its support in an effort to meet its needs. With one hand it uses the United States government and military as institutional sources of power and involvement in the early stages of planning the new Iraqi government. With the other hand, it uses its relationship with the Iranian government to provide civilian aid in an attempt to expand its mass base. What is important to note about SCIRI's relationship with the U.S. government is that it allows SCIRI a measure of freedom in pursuing its relationship with Iran, allowing it to diversify its support among two powerful states, encouraging both to provide it with enough support to keep it from leaning further towards the other. This alliance signals SCIRI's ability to forge an independent path. From SCIRI's point of view, an alliance with the U.S. makes sense because it allows SCIRI access to institutional power, and has continued and strengthened this relationship without regard to the Iranian government's desires. This particular point of tension in SCIRI's relationship with the Iranian government demonstrates the flexibility a patron-client relationship can offer a client who has the option of seeking out another patron.

SCIRI's opposition to the 2008 agreement between the Iraqi government and the U.S. highlights SCIRI's disregard for the wishes of the Iranian government. Iran feared that this deal would become the first step in a long-term plan that would allow Iraq to be used as a base for an attack on Iran. SCIRI, on the other hand, believed that this agreement would allow it to further consolidate its power, as the US military would continue to supplement SCIRI's provision of security, which would critically guard against political and military attacks aimed at SCIRI. This would both buy SCIRI more time to build its support base and allow it to launch attacks against its various challengers. In the end, SCIRI's support of the bill

44 Gregory Gause. The International Relations of the Persian Gulf. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009: 172.

45 Shiite Politics in Iraq: The Role of the Supreme Council. Rep. no. N70. Baghdad: Internal Crisis Group, 2007: 16.

46 Iran in Iraq: How Much Influence? Rep. no. N38. International Crisis Group, 21 Mar. 2005. Web. 5 June 2011. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/iraq-iran-gulf/ir

47 Graham Fuller. Islamist Politics in Iraq after Saddam Hussein. Rep. no. 108. United States Institute of Peace, Aug. 2008. Web. 29 Dec. 2011. <http://www.usip.org/files/resources/sr108.pdf>: 5.

48 Iran in Iraq: How Much Influence? Rep. no. N38. International Crisis Group, 21 Mar. 2005. Web. 5 June 2011. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/iraq-iran- gulf/iran/038-iran-in-iraq-how-much-influence.aspx>.

49 Faleh Jabar, "The Worldly Roots of Religiosity in Post-Saddam Iraq." Middle East Report 227 (2003): 13.

50 Juan Cole, "Shiite Religious Parties Fill Vacuum in Southern Iraq." Middle East Research and Information Project (2003). Middle East Research and Information Project. 22 Apr. 2003. Web. 16 Oct. 2011. <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero042203>.

allowed it to be signed by parliament, with a proviso that Iraq would not be utilized as a base against Iran and with a timetable for US troop withdrawal.[51]

SCIRI has been a politically shrewd player in post-Saddam Iraq and has exhibited pragmatism in its dealings with its foreign patrons and Iraqi society. It has recognized that its status as a predominantly exile party has left it largely without a mass base amongst Iraqi society. Accordingly, SCIRI has relied on the existing party cadres and utilized its sources of foreign support to seize institutional power via government bargaining rather than electoral mobilization, then utilized this institutional power in an attempt to expand its support base.

Muqtada al-Sadr

Similarly to SCIRI, the nebulous movement of Muqtada al-Sadr has often been referred to as a proxy of the Iranian government. In many cases this seems to be a result of a labeling of the Sadrist movement as an Islamist movement and the assumption that the Islamic Republic supports Islamist movements, particularly if they are Shia. By simplifying the alliance between the Iranian government and al-Sadr to a matter of religious confession, we miss the political and pragmatic reasons and calculations for the relationship. The Sadrist movement, just like SCIRI, has been focused on securing power in the post-Saddam era and utilizes its relationship with the Iranian government as a tool in achieving this end. Any foreign policy the Iranian government wishes to pursue through al-Sadr's movement is highly mediated by al-Sadr's interaction with Iraqi politics and society. The relationship between the Iranian government, al-Sadr, and his movement has been actively shaped by al-Sadr's goals and his approach to power.

Muqtada al-Sadr has been received in Tehran several times since the fall of Saddam. In June 2003, Muqtada attended the 14th commemoration of Ayatollah Khomeini's death. It is reported that during his week-long stay he met with such influential figures as Ayatollah Khamenei; Mahmud Hashemi Shahrudi, the then-leader of Iran's judiciary and a former leader of SCIRI; and Qasem Sulymani, the commander of the Qods force and Iranian intelligence activities in Iraq. After this visit, American officials increasingly began to claim that Muqtada had fallen into the service of the Iranian regime, and that the Iranian government was playing both sides of the field by simultaneously supporting the government headed by SCIRI and arming and training al-Sadr's Mahdi Army.[52] In 2007, al-Sadr relocated to the holy city of Qom, where he remained until 2011, for the purpose of continuing his religious studies, ostensibly to achieve a higher clerical rank. It is also extremely likely that this move was coordinated with contemporaneous enhancement of U.S. troop presence (the "Surge"). During this time he studied under the auspices of Ayatollah Kazim al-Haeri, a prior associate of his father.[53] Throughout this period, his political base solidified through a series of elections in which his supporters would perform extremely well. He built on the success of the 2005 parliamentary elections and preformed well in 2009 local elections and 2010 parliamentary elections. His extended stay in Iran has raised questions amongst American and Iraqi officials about the independence of his movement, and in some ways demonstrates that due to US pressure, al-Sadr has been moving closer to the Iranian government.

The Revival of the Sadrist Movement: Muqtada al-Sadr in Post-2003 Iraq

In looking at Muqtada's ability to remobilize and expand this support base it is useful to examine the structure of the party and the formation of the Mahdi Army. Jabar disaggregates the Sadrist movement into "three disparate, homegrown components"[54] and distinguishes between those "components" resulting from an association with Sadiq al-Sadr and those which are new developments. The core of the group is identified as the young clergy and religious students who were influenced by Sadiq al-Sadr directly.

This clerical core marshals a second component of lay people whose support derives from the charity networks operating in the 1980s and 90s. These two components were largely organized by Sadiq al-Sadr. The third component, termed "spontaneous armed mobs," is recognized by Jabar as unique to post-Saddam Iraq and has been skillfully utilized and co-opted by Muqtada al-Sadr. These "mobs" "derive much of their momentum from the security vacuum after the fall of the regime".[55]

The primary method through which the "mobs" enhance Muqtada's popularity is that the people, predominantly young males, who were involved in them provided pools of recruitment for Muqtada's Mahdi army. As civilians would rise up in spontaneous anger at an instance of violence, the Mahdi army would help to organize and systematize their actions, demonstrating that it was possible to be part of an organized and effective movement, and ultimately recruiting members into the Mahdi Army. After the assassination of al-Hakim in 2003, for example, a large number of young men joined the Mahdi Army. This particular attack demonstrated two ideas to Shia communities. Firstly, the attack on an influential figure like al-Hakim moved the Sunni insurgency away from tit-for-tat retaliation attacks and into the realm of attacks against Shia communities writ large. Secondly, al-Hakim's death demonstrated that the US forces and the new Iraqi government could not protect Shias. These two ideas undermined the strategy of "patient endurance," which had been espoused by Ayatollah Sistani, and served as an impetus for many youths to join the Mahdi Army, both in light of the perceived failures of other available options and the perception of the Mahdi Army as able to provide effective outlets for their concerns.

Al-Sadr was also able to provide protection against those mobs which he did not co-opt. Followers of al-Sadr, both those in the Mahdi Army and those who were not militarized, were rapidly mobilized after the fall of Saddam's regime. Al-Sadr's response was almost immediate, as he had the ability to mobilize a pre-existing network within Iraq, an advantage none of the exile groups had. Al-Sadr was able to restore basic security and services to the masses, re-invigorating and expanding his networks and providing an immediate sense of control and authority to the areas under his control. Interestingly, his security operations actually began two days before the official fall of Baghdad on April 9, 2003, when his followers attacked police stations and arms depots and began to stockpile weapons.[56] The provision of security was crucial during this time period. Essentially al-Sadr managed to wrest control of the security apparatus, traditionally controlled by the state, away from an institutionalized system, and began to impose a bottom-up system of order. His followers stemmed looting, demanded the return of looted items, set up checkpoints, and provided security details to key locations such as government buildings and hospitals, even organizing garbage collection, a situation which continued for several months.[57] Al-Sadr also set up an informal judicial system based in mosques which would deal with local disputes, including such offenses as burglary

51 Ahmed, Ali, Michael Knights, and Michael Eisenstadt. Iran's Influence in Iraq: Countering Tehran's Whole of Government Approach. Rep. no. 1806. Policy Watch/ Peace Watch, 6 May 2011. Web. 22 Jan. 2012. http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=3359

52 Sabrina Mervin. The Shia Worlds and Iran. London: Saqi, 2010: 267.

53 Hamza Hendawi And Qassim Abdul-Zahra, Associated Press. "Aide: Iraq's Al-Sadr May Stay in Iran for Years." USA Today. Gannett, 22 Aug. 2008. 29 Feb. 2012. <http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-08-22-2900086072_x.htm>.

54 Faleh Jabar. "The Worldly Roots of Religiosity in Post-Saddam Iraq." Middle East Report 227 (2003): 18.

55 Ibid.

56 Sabrina Mervin. The Shia Worlds and Iran. London: Saqi, 2010: 225.

57 Peter J. Munson. and Steven Metz. Iraq in Transition. Washington, D.C.: Potomac, 2009: P 92.

and murder.92 Service provision became another key component of al-Sadr's post-regime policies. He capitalized on the remnants of his father's mosque networks to distribute aid to the needy including food, fuel, and medical aid. Al-Sadr even took the step of paying the salaries of municipal government employees who had stopped receiving pay during the chaos of the war. Patrick Cockburn recounts an interview with an official in the Sadrist movement who described the role the Sadrist movement played in improving the conditions in Sadr City:

"The economic situation in Sadr City became much better. Before people were using donkey carts, while now they have cars and good quality televisions. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs provides loans of $10,000 for projects… Many poor people who could only dream of an education under Saddam started doing intensive night study…"[58]

Street-level activism efforts both expanded al-Sadr's political base and clearly defined the role of al-Sadr and his followers in the community.

The result of the history of Sadiq al-Sadr's movement and the actions of Muqtada al-Sadr immediately following the fall of Saddam has been the development of a wide base of support. Muqtada al-Sadr has gained a sense of legitimacy from the prolonged suffering of his family and the fact that he never chose to go into exile. Sadiq al-Sadr is perceived as having made the ultimate sacrifice for the Iraqi people, perhaps specifically Shia communities, and Muqtada al-Sadr himself is seen as having suffered under the ravages of Saddam alongside his fellow Iraqis. This is a perception which al-Sadr manipulates heavily. His condemnation of Iranian clerics, exile leaders, and quietist clergy are all an attempt to play up his narrative of victimhood and enhance his legitimacy in the eyes of his Iraqi support base. More importantly, society perceived al-Sadr as having mobilized quickly to restore normalcy and fulfill government functions. Al-Sadr had stepped in as a de facto government in certain areas of the country during the first chaotic months of the American invasion and occupation. Al-Sadr and his forces had become a source of stability and the provision of aid, building upon the networks of his father to meet the needs of society.

Accordingly, al-Sadr recognized a close link between his group, the existing structures of his movement, and large segments of the urban Shia communities, and realized that he would be able to mobilize extensively at the grassroots level. Additionally, the systematic exclusion of al-Sadr from institutional means of power by the US and its allies (many of whom were the exiles who al-Sadr had vehemently criticized) demonstrated to al-Sadr that it would be difficult for him to seize power through institutional means. Al-Sadr focused on seizing power from ground up and emphasized his populism. He uses "language which appeals to those elements of society who feel disposed,"[59] focusing on addressing the everyday concerns of his base, such as security and essential services. Eventually, this support base would allow al-Sadr to transition into institutional means of power through elections.

Al-Sadr was skilled in using his removal from the new institutions in a manner that would garner him increasing support, and perhaps the best example of his reliance on populism would come in his response to the formation of the Iraqi Governing Council. Following the fall of Saddam, al-Sadr maintained his key position of opposition to the occupation and denigrated those who cooperated with the US occupation as collaborators. General Jay Garner initially invited al-Sadr and some of his deputies to attend a leadership conference in late April 2003, however, Muqtada refused. In May 2003, Lieutenant Paul Bremer assumed control of Iraq and began the process of formulating the Interim Iraqi Governing

Council. This time Muqtada al-Sadr was purposefully excluded.[60] Al-Sadr declared the IGC illegitimate and made the move of forming a parallel parliament. This parliament operated out of East Baghdad, specifically the al- Hakima Mosque,[61] and consisted of twelve committees, each with twenty people. They became responsible for "the Friday prayer, the health services, the media, the application of religious law, the courts, justice, electricity, telecommunications, and … the discouragement of vice and the encouragement of virtue."[62] Al- Sadr had created a populist government which, in some areas of the country such as East Baghdad, Basra, Baquba, Maysan, and Kirkuk,[63] superseded the official federal government. His focus on populism allowed him to solidify his mass base and eventually transition into the official institutions of power. When the Sadrists were able to transition into parliamentary politics, they remained focused on their populist appeal by taking charge of ministries which helped provide services to the Iraqi people such as the Ministries of Housing, Municipalities and Public Works, Labor, Water, and Health. Al- Sadr's method for achieving power and his attempts to strengthen and maintain that power on an institutional level largely relied on the support base which he had been able to cultivate through populism and service provision.

Balancing Societal Demands and Foreign Patronage

It is apparent that due to this grassroots approach to power, the first group to which al-Sadr must answer is his popular support base. This means that when the concerns of the mass base conflict with the demands of al-Sadr's connections in Iran, he typically will put the needs of his support base over the desires of the Iranian government. Again, the structure of the movement is crucial in regards to this equation. Al-Sadr is not the head of a traditional party, as his movement "lacks both a pragmatic ideology and formalized structures of decision-making and hierarchic integration".[64] Instead al-Sadr relies on multiple forms of legitimation, including militarism, populism, clientalism and a series of oppositions.[65] Because these methods of legitimation are highly dependent on the popular base of al- Sadr, and not al-Sadr himself or the elites surrounding him, it is crucially important for al-Sadr to maintain a relationship with the portion of society he represents. As such, he cannot stray far from popular will in order to cater to a foreign patron.

Al-Sadr's vehement anti-Iranian rhetoric represents an example of a moment when the concerns of Sadr's support base and Sadr himself outweigh any considerations of the concerns of the Iranian government. This rhetoric should be contextualized in an overwhelming sentiment against foreign interference in the country, be it Iranian or American or otherwise. Al-Sadr's denunciation of those who he perceived as "foreign agents," specifically SCIRI and Ayatollah Sistani, catered to this popular sentiment. It served to discredit two of his biggest rivals for power in post Saddam Iraq. The specific attacks on SCIRI, a group which has many ties to the Iranian government, threatened the possibility that SCIRI would emerge as a dominate force in a new government which would be friendly to Iran. It is clear, however, that this rhetoric has stopped neither the Iranian government nor al-Sadr from reaching out to the other side as a method of achieving various specific goals.

60 Sabrina Mervin. The Shia Worlds and Iran. London: Saqi, 2010: 261.
61 Juan Cole. "The United States and Shi'ite Religious Factions in Post-Ba'thist Iraq." Middle East Journal 57.4 (2003): 558.
62 Sabrina Mervin. The Shia Worlds and Iran. London: Saqi, 2010: 262.
63 Charles Tripp. A History of Iraq. Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge UP, 2007: 312.
64 Sabrina Mervin. The Shia Worlds and Iran. London: Saqi, 2010: 281.
65 Ibid.

58 Patrick Cockburn. Muqtada Al-Sadr and the Battle for the Future of Iraq. New York: Scribner, 2008: 171.
59 Roger Shanahan. "Shi'a Political Development in Iraq: The Case of the Islamic Da'wa Party." Third World Quarterly 25.5 (2004): 951.

Driven primarily by temporary and limited alignment of interests, the relationship between al-Sadr and the Iranian government is highly responsive to immediate events within Iraq. Recently, the emerging pattern is an increasing closeness between the Iranian government and the Sadrists as a result of military and political pressure from the US and the new Iraqi government.

Cultivating a relationship with al-Sadr allows the Iranian government access to a segment of the population it doesn't have access to through its main ally, SCIRI. SCIRI attracts a more middle class base, while al-Sadr attracts the urban lower classes. Through its relationship with al-Sadr, the Iranian government is able to diversify its contacts and expand its ability to access Iraqi society. Maintaining relationships with multiple groups with in Iraq allows the Iranian government to support some groups in certain policy areas and challenge them in others. These contacts are important in that they seek to undermine the US policy of excluding Iran from a role in Iraqi politics.[66] From the Iraqi viewpoint this inclusive approach to power acts as a counterweight to the U.S. approach towards Iraq, which has excluded or dismissed some actors, the Sadrists being notable among them, due to ideological reasons. Capitalizing on the failure of the U.S. to reach out to the Sadrists and the military and political pressure applied by the U.S., Iran has managed to find a foothold in a highly xenophobic organization which, unlike SCIRI, did not have close ties with the Islamic Republic prior to 2003.

The goals of the Iranian government and military establishment have often been compatible with al-Sadr's goals in terms of his struggle against the United States. While it is difficult to pin down exactly what the goals of the Iranian government are regarding the US troops in Iraq, academics broadly agree that the Islamic Republic wants to make the occupation costly for the United States, or that it wishes to drive US troops out of Iraq. Al-Sadr's opposition to the US occupation serves both of these goals, as his ultimate aim is to drive US troops from the country. But because of the limited size and resources of his group in comparison to the United States military, the way in which he would achieve this is by making the US occupation too costly in terms of money and lives to continue. The Iranian government, and specifically the IRGC, has the ability and skills needed to provide aid and training to the Mahdi army. In addition, the Iranian government has professed discomfort with a perceived "encirclement" by American troops, which is typically vocalized through statements focusing on the inappropriate nature of America's increasing involvement in the region. For example, in a speech given in 2010, President Ahmadinejad stated, "The region has no need for alien troops and they should return home and let the regional states take care of their own affairs."[67] Working with the Mahdi army allows the Iranian government to engage in a low-level and low-risk resistance to the U.S. presence in Iraq. In regards to the balance of power in internal Iraqi politics, the political aid Iran has supplied to al-Sadr has gone a long way towards keeping his movement alive as a political player.[68] During the 2010 parliamentary elections, Iranian political advisors advised the Sadrists on electoral strategy including "the optimal selection and placement of candidates,"[69] resulting in 40 seats for the Sadrist party.

This victory would allow the Sadrists to control seven ministries and largely replace SCIRI as the main rival to Prime Minister Maliki's party. Iranian material aid has been a factor allowing al-Sadr to

maintain his aid networks, thereby retaining his mass support base. For al-Sadr, his relationship with the Islamic Republic has helped him to gain and solidify his power by enhancing his populist appeal, through aid which has functioned in multiple ways, providing welfare services to his support base, combating the US occupation, and aiding a successful transition into electoral politics.

A Temporary and Limited Alignment

The extensive aid networks which al-Sadr had established after the fall of Saddam's regime were expensive to maintain, and the Iran government became a provider of aid.[70] While the amount of this aid is not large, it is often cited as one of the main connections between the Iranian regime and al-Sadr's movement. The provision of aid allows the Iranian government to make contact with the Sadrists in both a military and civilian capacity. Iranian government officials have been adamant about their attempts to reign in al-Sadr as he is considered to be an unruly and unreliable ally. In an interview with the Los Angeles Times, Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi explained, "We have not been guiding [Muqtada al-Sadr], we have not been financing him, but we have been trying to make him moderate, control him."[71]

In light of al-Sadr's vehement anti-Iranian rhetoric, his acceptance of this aid demonstrates a pragmatic decision which is grounded in the needs of his support base. For al-Sadr, aid offers an opportunity to fund the charity networks which have played a large role in his success. His receipt of this aid is a response to a short-term need with possible long-term benefits. Receiving aid from the Iranian government signifies an effort to counter American military and political pressure and achieve a level of power which will demand political representation regardless of the wishes of the United States government. Essentially, the acceptance of aid in all its forms—military, political, and civilian—has allowed al-Sadr to manage the balance of power in Iraq. As his group did not have the organization or foreign backing of other groups, specifically SCIRI, al-Sadr would have to build and mobilize his movement simultaneously.

Beyond the provision of aid, the party is confrontational and deeply oppositional towards the United States occupation. In al-Sadr's words, America came to Iraq not to protect or rescue it, but to transform it into a US military and civilian base. Since Iraq is the source of Islam, Arabism, and civilization, its occupation is actually the occupation of its surroundings and the domination over the Middle East and the entire region.[72]

The role of violence in this relationship is twofold. On one hand, it has allowed the Iranian regime a method of influence in regards to a highly xenophobic group. By providing money, arms, training, and logistical support through the IRGC, the Iranian government has been able to access a group otherwise impenetrable to foreigners. According to Cockburn, the loose organization of the Sadrists and their militia has allowed Iranian intelligence to penetrate some sectors of the group and set up military supply networks which could allow the Iranian government to exert a measure of influence over al-Sadr while simultaneously allowing for a direct flow of information from within the party to the IRGC.[73] On the other hand, this reliance on militant populism has made al-Sadr a costly and unpredictable ally as his militant resistance to the US occupation is a method to gain popularity, and he is largely unconcerned with possible impacts this may have across the border. By seizing on the party's opposition to the US occupa-

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66 Kayhan Barzegar. "Iran's Foreign Policy in Post-Invasion Iraq." Middle East Policy 15.4 (2008): 47-58.

67 "Iran Demands US Troop Withdrawal." Al Jazeera. 18 Apr. 2010. Web. 4 Sept. 2011. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news middleeast/2010/04/201041854124873989.html>.

68 Ibid

69 Ahmed, Ali, Michael Knights, and Michael Eisenstadt. Iran's Influence in Iraq: Countering Tehran's Whole of Government Approach. Rep. no. 1806. Policy Watch/ Peace Watch, 6 May 2011. Web. 22 Jan. 2012: 6. <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=3359>.

70 Juan Cole. "The United States and Shi'ite Religious Factions in Post-Ba'thist Iraq." Middle East Journal 57.4 (2003): 565.

71 Iran in Iraq: How Much Influence? Rep. no. N38. International Crisis Group, 21 Mar. 2005. Web. 5 June 2011. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/iraq-irangulf/iran/038-iran-in-iraq-how-much-influence.aspx>:18.

72 William Fulton, and Maseh Zarif. "Iran Tracker." Iranian Reactions to U.S. Withdrawal from Iraq. AEI Iran Tracker, 14 Nov. 2011. Web. 19 Feb. 2012.

73 Patrick Cockburn. Muqtada Al-Sadr and the Battle for the Future of Iraq. New York: Scribner, 2008: 168.

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tion, however, the Iranian government has found a common interest with the Sadrists.[74]

Limits to the extent of impact of aligned interests often arise from the final intention of each of the concerned parties. While they may agree on a short-term course of action during which an alliance is feasible, eventually this may break down as focus shifts from immediate circumstances to a longer-term objectives.

The first of these incidences is the 2004 siege of Najaf. The siege of Najaf was a conflict between the Mahdi Army and US Marines, backed by Iraqi government security forces. Lasting three weeks, it was ended by a ceasefire, the terms of which allowed for the disarming of al-Sadr's militiamen, but not their capture or detention. Al-Sadr was roundly condemned for his violation of the shrine city. In July of 2004, the religious communities in both Najaf and Qom decided that because of his "incitement of sectarian violence" he was stripped of his wakala, or representation – a privilege granted to him by the religious community because of his heritage, allowing him to collect and utilize religious dues.[75] Throughout this battle, the IRGC would supply al-Sadr's militia with arms and tactical support.[76] In fact, in gearing up for its confrontation with the United States Army, the Mahdi Army saw Iran as a pivotal source of weapons provision and military expertise. Ties would develop between the IRGC and the Mahdi Army through this aid network and specifically through this particular battle.[77] The outcome of this operation was neither a reliance of al-Sadr's group on the IRGC or the government of the Islamic Republic, nor a lasting friendship between al-Sadr and Iran. Instead, this battle would reaffirm the short-term nature of this alliance and highlight the limits on the two parties' alignment of interests. Immediately following the confrontation, the Mahdi Army was formally demobilized and disarmed, drastically curbing the opportunity for the Iranian government to supply al-Sadr with military aid. In the following year, the Iranian government focused its efforts and support towards aiding SCIRI in the 2005 elections. The Sadrist were no longer a primary concern for the Iranian government as they had an alternative vehicle through which to achieve their goals.

As the conflict wore on it became increasingly important, in terms of military aid and tactical support, that the Iranian government become more attentive to other parts of its strategy in Iraq than opposition to the US presence. The Iranian government was concerned with maintaining relative calm and stability in which elections could occur. SCIRI, which had a far less contentious relationship with the Iranian government, was likely to do well in the 2005 elections. The elections were much more likely to benefit the Iranian government's strategy than an unwavering support for al-Sadr's military conflict would. Al-Sadr's bid for power posed a challenge to SCIRI, highlighting his increasing ability to mobilize his support base effectively at a time when SCIRI was still looking to secure its support base. This would become a matter of concern for the Iranian government, as they recognized the short-term nature of their alignment with al-Sadr and favored the much more stable relationship which they had cultivated with SCIRI. To this end supporting al-Sadr was not seen as a worthwhile endeavor. The Iranian government urged calm and restraint. President Khatami urged action to end the fighting, stating, "What is happening in Iraq is a human and spiritual catastrophe, and immediate action must be taken to stop the spread of catastrophe,

particularly in the city of Najaf."[78] The IRGC continued to supply the Mahdi Army with small amounts of military aid, thereby retaining the possibility for future alliances with the Sadrists.

American troops, who were scheduled to leave Iraq before the end of 2011, had been involved in negotiations that would have prolonged their stay. These talks broke down over the issue of legal immunity for U.S.troops in Iraq, without which they would not remain.[79] Ultimately. this conflict would lead to the formal pullout of most American troops. Al-Sadr had been an outspoken critic of the talks, which may have extended the U.S. troop presence. In 2008, following the signing of the initial Status of Forces Agreement, al-Sadr called for a ceasefire, stating that he would wait to see if the United States pulled out in accordance with the deadline. When the possibility that troops would remain was raised, al-Sadr revived the possibility of ending the ceasefire. At this moment the interests of the Iranian government and al-Sadr aligned, and because of this alignment, the Iranian government supported al-Sadr's condemnation of the attempts at renegotiation.

The outcome of this repositioning will be crucial in the future Iraq government runs. Speaker of the Iranian Parliament Ali Larijani recognized this possibility in 2011 but insisted that this was not a reason for United States troops to remain in Iraq, stating:

The Americans must not believe that they can deceive the people of Iraq…. Some have warned that the American pull-out will perhaps create security problems, but the problem with this is that the occupation and terrorism help one another. When the occupation came into being, terrorism was attracted [to the region].[80]

This seems to be a positive development for the Iranian government, as it helped to end US military interference in Iraqi political affairs. In the words of Basij commander Mohammad-Reza Naqdi, "Today, the US has no option but to leave the Persian Gulf region and merely pulling out of Iraq will not be sufficient."[81] While both the true extent of the pullout and the actual impact this has on US interference in Iraqi politics remains to be seen, it does signify a lessening of a US military encirclement of Iran.

For al-Sadr the failure of the United States to renegotiate the status of forces arrangement shifts the security dynamic. Without U.S. forces to supplement government forces, many of whom are under the auspices of rivals of al-Sadr such as SCIRI, they now must rely upon their own bases to maintain control. This allows al-Sadr to further consolidate his power. Al-Sadr has been able to effectively mobilize his mass support base into political power. With the United States, which has almost consistently opposed al-Sadr's involvement in the new Iraqi government, being less involved in on the ground Iraqi politics, Sadrists have a chance to shift the power dynamic further in their favor.

The interests of al-Sadr and the Iranian government do not always align, In June of 2011 the Iranian government was responding to a concern that the United States government would use Iraq as a base for an attack on the Iranian government. Hassan Danaifar, the Iranian ambassador to Iraq, stated, "We informed the Iraqi officials that Iran will, of course, respond to any attack carried out against it from

74 Rouhollah K. Ramazani. Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 1988. Print.

75 John Ehrenberg. The Iraq Papers. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010: 316.

76 Vali Nasr. "When the Shiites Rise." Foreign Affairs 85.4 (2006): 58-74. JSTOR. Web. 5 Sept. 2011. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20032041>: 61.

77 Patrick Cockburn. Muqtada Al-Sadr and the Battle for the Future of Iraq. New York: Scribner, 2008: 202-203.

78 Nazila Fathi. "The Conflict in Iraq: Tehran; Muslim Nations Urged to Meet About Najaf by Iran Leader." The New York Times. The New York Times, 21 Aug. 2004. Web. 20 Feb. 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/08/21/world/conflict-iraq-tehran-muslim-nations-urged-meetabout-najaf-iran-leader.html?src=pm>.

79 "Obama: Iraq War Will Be over by Year's End; Troops Coming Home." CNN. 21 Oct. 2011. Web. 01 Jan. 2012. <http://articles.cnn.com/2011-10-21/middleeast/world_meast_iraq-ustroops_1_iraq-war-operation-new-dawn-iraq-and-afghanistan-veterans?_s=PM:MIDDLEEAST>.

80 Will Fulton, and Maseh Zarif. "Iranian Reactions to U.S. Withdrawal from Iraq." Iran Briefing. 4 Nov. 2012. Web. 10 Oct. 2011. <http://iranbriefing.net/?p=10136>.

81 Ibid.

within Iraqi territory."[82] The response by al-Sadr was immediate and definitive; he rejected any attack by Iran on Iraqi soil even if the target was "American Occupiers". High-ranking Sadrist MP Hakim al-Zamili later clarified by stating that al-Sadr rejected both the idea of "Iraq becoming a springboard for aggression against any neighboring country" and "Iraq becoming an arena for others to settle scores from within our territory."[83] The net effect of these statements is the advocation of a "middle path." Al-Sadr manages to reassure the Iranian government and warn the United States government by mentioning that Iraq will not be used as a "spring board." At the same time he warns both governments, but specifically with an eye towards Iran, that Iraq will not be used as "an arena" to settle scores. Despite the somewhat temperate language, this statement essentially rejects the concerns of the Iranian government in favor of the concerns of al-Sadr's supporters, who are focused on the possibility that their country may be pulled further into conflict.

It is a combination of flexibility, pragmatism and temporariness that characterizes the relationship between al-Sadr and the Iranian government. Viewing the increasing closeness of al-Sadr and the Iranian government as an inevitable outcome of a "courtship" of al-Sadr by the Iranian government or an alignment in ideologies disregards the concrete social and political factors that have made this alliance more appealing to al-Sadr in recent years. Their relationship is not only shaped through the foreign policy concerns of the Iranian government, but also by the history, organization, and goals of al-Sadr's movement. Its history and organization have led al-Sadr to focus on achieving power through populism. The goals of al-Sadr's movement and their ultimate divergence from the goals of the Iranian regime has led to the temporary nature of this relationship. Understanding al-Sadr as a proxy of the Iranian government precludes an understanding of why their interests may align on specific issues and where and why they will diverge. Al-Sadr's agency in shaping this relationship exemplifies the fact that Iran's role in Iraq is highly mediated by Iraqi actors and their interaction with Iraqi politics and society. Muqtada al-Sadr is first and foremost the leader of an Iraqi political party and should be understood as such.

SCIRI and al-Sadr: Relationships in a Comparative Light

To categorize SCIRI and the al-Sadr movement simply as proxies of the Iranian government both dismisses their agency and hides important differences between them.

In understanding how each of these groups relates to the Iranian government it is worth examining which factions in the Iranian government they have developed a relationship with. This mainly breaks down on generational lines, with SCIRI being associated with an older generation of Iranian politicians who came to be associated with reformism and Muqtada al-Sadr being associated with a newer generation of politicians who are identified with the neoconservative trend in Iranian politics. SCIRI's support network in the Iranian government was built in the early 1980s, when the party was being formed, and continued to develop throughout the 1980s and 1990s. This means that the ties which SCIRI's leaders developed in the Iranian government are with the older generation of politicians, many of whom were involved in the initial formation of the Islamic Republic. Politicians such as Rafsanjani, Khatami, Ayatollah Shahroudi, and Ayatollah Montazeri are associated with supporting SCIRI.[84] Al-Sadr's relationship with

the Iranian government is much newer, and thus, he has developed ties with a later set of figures, many of whom have come to be associated with conservativism.

President Khatami maintained the Iranian government support for SCIRI and Ayatollah Sistani and condemned the "divisive nature" of al-Sadr's movement.[85] In an interview with Time Magazine, Ayatollah Montazeri lamented the factionalism wrought by al-Sadr's Mahdi Army and concluded, "It is logical for a stable government in Iraq to be established under the leadership of Ayatollah Sistani and under the banner of the union of Shi'a, Sunnis, and Kurds, who are all Muslims."[86] After the election of Ahmadinejad and the entrenchment of the new conservative establishment, support for al-Sadr became part of the Iranian strategy in Iraq.[87] The support that al-Sadr has received in recent years has largely been funneled through the more conservative branches of the Iranian government, in particular the IRGC. Supporters of al-Sadr's movement include such figures as President Ahmadinejad, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei, Ayatollah Kazem Haeri, and Ayatollah Mohammed-Taqi Mesbah-Yazdi, a cleric close to President Ahmadinejad.[88]

Iranian influence in Iraq is mediated is through the structural party organization. This manifests itself in the different levels at which the Iranian government interacts with the members of the party. SCIRI and the Iranian government interact on an elite-to-elite basis while the Sadrist movement and the Iranian government have various levels of interaction, ranging from Muqtada al-Sadr himself to a loose infiltration of the militiamen who form part of the party's support base. SCIRI is highly organized and has a vertical party structure that was formed under the guidance of the Iranian government. The elites of this structure developed personal relationships with members of the Iranian political establishment. Perhaps the best example of these connections is Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi. Ayatollah Sharoudi was born in Najaf in 1948 and was active in resisting the Ba'th regime. He left for Iran in the early 1980s and became a founding member of SCIRI. He remained a member of the organization until 1982 and from this point forward was deeply involved in Iranian politics, serving as an aid to Ayatollah Khamenei and as the Head of the Judiciary from 1999 until 2009.[89] His personal involvement with SCIRI and his continued involvement in the Iranian government demonstrates a deep and pervasive connection between SCIRI and officials at the top levels of the Iranian government.

Al-Sadr's movement, on the other hand, is horizontally organized, comprising of various groups and militias, all of whom offer a formal allegiance to al-Sadr and his movement but functionally operate independently of the elite core of the group.

The Iranian government adapts its strategy according to the specific circumstances of each party. Iranian influence in Iraq is not abstractly injected into the Iraqi political process.

The relationships that the Iranian government develops with Iraqi political parties are also mediated by Iraqi society, as exemplified by the differing trajectories that these groups relationships with the Iranian government have taken. Crudely stated, the trends of these relationships have been roughly opposite. In the case of SCIRI, the party moved from a very close association with the Iranian government to

82 Hamza Mustafa. "Iraq: Al-Sadr Rejects Any Iranian Attack on Iraq." Asharq Alawsat. 21 June 2011. Web. 12 Jan. 2012. <Ashasrq alawsat Mustafa Iraq; al sadr rejects Iranian attack on iraq>.

83 Ibid.

84 Sabrina Mervin. The Shia Worlds and Iran. London: Saqi, 2010: 268.

85 Ibid. 267.

86 Ibid.

87 Ibid. 268.

88 Robert Dreyfus. "Muqtada Al-Sadr's Fiery Call: 'US Out of Iraq' | The Nation." The Nation. 10 Jan. 2011. Web. 04 Sept. 2011. <http://www.thenation.com/blog/157604/muqtada-al-sadrs-fierycall-us-out-iraq>.

89 Iran in Iraq: How Much Influence? Rep. no. N38. International Crisis Group, 21 Mar. 2005. Web. 5 June 2011. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/iraq-irangulf/iran/038-iran-in-iraq-how-much-influence.aspx>.

a conscious effort to distance itself from this association. Al-Sadr, on the other hand, initially took a stance of vehement rejection of the perceived interference by the Iranian government in Iraqi politics and has moved to a practical acceptance of Iranian support. This practical acceptance should be qualified, as it is largely temporary and is accompanied by a rhetoric of rejection. In response to this rhetoric, which would limit its accesses to Iraqi society and consequently a mass support base, SCIRI embarked on a campaign to limit its association with the Islamic Republic. This campaign included such maneuvers as a formal turning towards Ayatollah Sistani as a political leader, a name change, and the formalization of its relationship with the United States. The SCIRI distanced itself from the Iranian government in an effort to increase appeal in Iraq.

The situation of SCIRI can be contrasted with the situation of al-Sadr who, unlike SCIRI, had a large base of support amongst the lower class urban Shia communities. Al- Sadr's move toward the Iranian government was not based on his need to build a support base, but rather, a response to his exclusion from institutional power. In seeking support from Iran, al-Sadr was responding to an increase in pressure, both military and political, applied to him and his supporters by both the Iraqi government and the United States government. Al-Sadr's relationship with the Iranian government has not been characterized by desperation but rather has been based on specific issues which al-Sadr had already championed, the most obvious being his opposition to the United States' occupation. His acceptance of Iranian support has largely been geared towards a continuance of his policies, and not a change in them. The Iranian government chose to cooperate with al-Sadr on issues in which they found common interests, and to look to other allies when interests conflicted. It is also useful to consider that the alliance between the Iranian government and Muqtada al-Sadr largely occurs in short, sporadic episodes. It is not a long-lived relationship but rather a result of specific and immediate circumstances.

A temporal distinction arises out of the political aims of these parties and their specific approaches to power, and is reflective of the ways the Iranian government's interactions in Iraq are shaped by Iraqi politics. The relationship between SCIRI and the Iranian government has been stable and is a long-term alliance. The relationship between the Sadrist and the Iranian government, on the other hand, is characterized by its short-term and temporary nature. The difference in the temporal character of these relationships is based on differences in fundamental characteristics between the two groups. SCIRI's long-lasting relationship has evolved out of its history of being founded with the assistance of the Iranian government. Because of this history SCIRI and its leaders have developed relationships with multiple levels of the Iranian government. These relationships have been the cornerstone of aid networks that have allowed SCIRI to arm and train its militia and to provide social welfare to their potential support base. The long-term character of this relationship is also a function of SCIRI's reliance on patrons. SCIRI's approach to power has been deeply dependent on the assistance of external powers because of its lack of a stable support base within Iraqi society. The Iranian government has been able to provide SCIRI with the materials and assistance needed to both formalize its grip on institutional power through military aid and reach out to its potential social base, through welfare.

Muqtada al-Sadr's relationship with the Iranian government is of a more temporary and sporadic nature. The temporary nature of al-Sadr's relationship with the Iranian government arises out of differences in the ultimate goals of al-Sadr and the Iranian government. The Iranian government seeks a stable and friendly government in Iraq that will be able to both maintain stability within Iraq and not pose a threat to the Iranian government. Al-Sadr, on the other hand, is focused on gaining and maintaining

power for his group. Furthermore, since his rise to prominence, al-Sadr has been consistent in his rejection of foreign interference in Iraqi politics, and specifically Iranian influence. Al-Sadr and his movement are seeped in Iraqi nationalist rhetoric, and this has been an important part of the movements identity and al-Sadr's rise to power. His method for achieving power has also affected his relationship with the government of the Islamic Republic. He has largely relied on populist politics, particularly through the mobilization of networks of service provision and the organization of militias. This reliance on populism and militarism has made him an unpredictable and unreliable ally for the Iranian government as his primary concern has been, and will probably continue to be, appealing to his mass base. This combination of a difference in ultimate goals and al-Sadr's need to appeal to his mass base has created the temporary nature of the relationship between the Iranian government and al-Sadr's movement. Al-Sadr's movement has seen fit to cooperate with, or perhaps more accurately accept support from, the Iranian government on specific instances in which their interests aligned, however this alignment of interests is typically short-lived.

The difference in the temporal aspect of the relationship between these two parties and the Iranian government is due to the characteristics of the parties themselves, and is not determined solely by the Iranian government. Because of SCIRI's history and the personal relationships which this history has fostered, it has been a fitting long-term ally for the Islamic Republic. Similarly, because of al-Sadr's reliance on populism and his anti-foreign stance, his group is less suited for a long-term alliance but able and willing to sustain a series of short-term alliances predicated on specific issues which are of importance to both parties. What is important to notice about the temporal aspect of these relationships is that it is as much determined by the internal dynamics and goals of the Iraqi party as it is by decisions of the government of the Islamic Republic, which demonstrates that policies pursued by the Iranian government in Iraq are not directly enacted but rather are mediated through Iraqi actors and their interactions with Iraqi politics and society.

Highlighting the differences in SCIRI and al-Sadr's relationships with the Iranian government demonstrates the inappropriateness of lumping these two groups into the simple category of "Iranian proxies". This terminology ignores these essential differences and overlooks the separate relationships that have been forged. Examining these differences and the separate relationships allows us to understand that any policy which the Iranian government may want to pursue in Iraq is mediated the political actors whom are involved. SCIRI and al-Sadr do not simply absorb Iranian policy and pass it along but rather shape and change it according to the history, structure, and goals of their group.

Conclusion

Politicians, journalists, and scholars who comment on "Iranian influence in Iraq" base their comments on a material reality: that the Iranian government has played a role in post-Saddam Iraq. These statements are ultimately more misleading, however, than they are helpful. To speak of a disembodied and ambiguous "Iranian influence" in Iraq gives the impression that the government of Iran has unfettered access to Iraqi politics and is able to blithely manipulate Iraqi politicians and parties without any intermediary. It also has the dangerous effect of making Iraqi politicians, and the segments of the population that they represent, side notes in their own history. A more appropriate understanding of the role which the Iranian government has played in post-Saddam Iraq is to examine the channels through which it has attempted to reach out to the Iraqi populace. Political parties have been one of those channels, and it is worth attempting to understand why these Iraqi political parties would want to develop a relationship with

the Iranian government. In the words of Ahmed Ali, an expert in Iraqi political dynamics, "Iraqi political parties will work with Iran as long as it suits their interests. Once that criterion is no longer met, they will seek support elsewhere."[90] SCIRI and al-Sadr are two of the parties that have ties with the Iranian government and both of them demonstrate agency in developing this relationship, committing to policies that are deemed necessary by their leaders rather than obediently following all orders from the Iranian government. This analysis has demonstrated that the foreign policy of the Iranian government is not the only factor shaping the relationship between the Iranian government and SCIRI or the Sadrist movement. The goals of these parties, along with their histories and structures, are factors that are equally formative; therefore the actions of the Iranian government regarding Iraqi politics are not direct but rather are highly mediated through Iraqi political actors and their responses both to other elites and Iraqi society.

SCIRI's relationship with the Iranian government finds its basis in its history and founding. The deep ties that this group developed with the Iranian government during the 1980s and 1990s have extended beyond 2003. Despite the continuance of these ties, there was a fundamental shift in the relationship as a result of SCIRI's need to adjust to its new context. The primary challenge facing the SCIRI was its removal from society and, because of this, SCIRI would distance itself from its Iranian connections and emphasize its Iraqi nature in an effort to increase its appeal in Iraqi society. SCIRI's method for achieving power is also reflective of this schism from society. Its focus on achieving institutional power has led it to ally itself with the United States. Both this relationship with the United States and SCIRI's efforts to increase its appeal amongst Iraqi society have changed the parties relationship with the Iranian government.

Similarly, Muqtada al-Sadr's relationship with the Iranian government should be considered in terms of al-Sadr's efforts to gain and consolidate his own power. His rhetoric reflects a nationalist and populist appeal, and has often denounced Iranian influence in Iraqi politics. Al- Sadr's relationship with the Iranian government has emerged out of practical concerns, not ideological affinity or a feeling of camaraderie originating from religious similarities. The relationship between al-Sadr and the Iranian government has evolved out of a series of temporary interest alignments. Al-Sadr's increasing closeness with the Iranian government is partially a result of the military and political pressure that has been directed towards his group by both the United States and the Iraqi government. Due to this pressure, al-Sadr has looked for support from the Iranian government, particularly in areas where their interests aligned, such as opposition to the renegotiation of the Status of Forces Agreement. Despite this cooperation, al-Sadr has continued to pursue goals more focused on internal Iraqi politics than on Iranian policy goals.

These two parties demonstrate concerns for internal Iraqi politics in their actions, particularly in regards to their relationship with the Iranian government. For these groups, a relationship with the Iranian government is a tool wielded to gain and retain power. As Ali states, "The post-2003 period has shown the limitations of Iran's influence over its Shiite clients in Iraq, who will accept Iranian support when self-interests dictates they do so and seek support elsewhere when it does not."[91]

An examination of these two parties not only demonstrates their individual agency but also demonstrates that the "Iranian influence" is not abstractly injected into the Iraqi political process. The discourse which abstracts and "weaponizes" the actions of the Iranian government regarding Iraq feeds into

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90 Ali Ahmed, Michael Knights, and Michael Eisenstaedt. Iran's Influence in Iraq. Rep. no. 1806. Policy Watch/ Peace Watch, 6 May 2011. Web. 22 Jan. 2012. <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=3359>.

91 Ahmed, Ali, Michael Knights, and Michael Eisenstadt. Iran's Influence in Iraq: Countering Tehran's Whole of Government Approach. Rep. no. 1806. Policy Watch/Peace Watch, 6 May 2011. Web. 22 Jan. 2012. <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=3359>.

a larger discourse which is aimed at portraying Iran as a threat to regional and international security, while erasing Iraqi political actors, and more generally Iraqi society, from the history of Iraq. While regional and international considerations come into play when attempting to understand internal Iraqi politics, it is logical that when attempting to examine or analyze the politics of a country, one would consider the political parties and leaders of that country. To best understand how Iraqi political parties are unfolding post-2003, it is necessary to examine the policies pursued by Iraqi political parties and leaders rather then simply dismissing them as pawns in a game between more powerful players. Refocusing the discussion of Iraq towards Iraqi politics begins to evaluate Iraq not solely through its place in the international realm but also through the domestic political issues that drive and shape its policy.

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Drink Water and Drive On: Veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan Conflicts Go to College

Valerie Bogard

In a large classroom, in the middle of a lecture, the former soldier stood up. He alone stood in a sea of sitting students. The habit is a remnant of his military education: if a soldier gets tired during class and feels he's having trouble paying attention, he stands up, which forces him to stay awake, be alert, pay attention. He's spent the past six years of his life in the "Sandbox" and now he's moving to the schoolroom.

Matt has a perfectly straight line of exposed scalp, his gelled hair reminiscent of the 1940s. He dons a buttoned-up, long-sleeved purple and blue-checkered dress shirt, complete with a dark blue tie. It doesn't matter that it's just a Thursday. A tie is still necessary.

The twenty-something does everything with precision. He takes time to write the "@" symbol, especially the surrounding curve, the way an artist might carefully sketch. Even his conversation skills are immaculate. His responses are always short but not too short, not curt or disrespectfully short. He is a gentleman: the type you bring home and who addresses your father with "Sir" after every reply. Matt works at a veteran agency. He doesn't need to tell anyone that he's a veteran himself.

Books are stacked; there are no stray papers. He gives his desktop Mac an intent stare. It doesn't even occur to me that he's on Facebook or some other time-sucking Internet site. He is all productivity. He doesn't avoid distractions; he simply doesn't need them, all emotions duly accounted for and contained.

The pamphlet he gives me tells a different story. It warns of "emotional numbness and sleep disturbances, depression, anxiety, and irritability or outbursts of anger." It adds that, "Feelings of intense guilt are also common." They may present in "flashback episodes, memories, nightmares, or frightening thoughts." It urges veterans to seek help, to take advantage of the services and programs offered. But Matt didn't have any problems with his transition even though he attended University of South Florida immediately after returning home.

There's a military saying: "Just drink water and drive on," which means keep doing your job and suffer in silence. I'm reminded of the deceptiveness of nature. A calm river never reveals the turbulence below its surface.

Matt is introduced to a veteran who walks into the office. He quickly stands up behind his desk, fully facing the older man. His arms are flat by his side, back straight. He looks him straight in the eye. No blinking.

"He served in Korea," Matt's colleague explains about the visitor.

"Oh wow," Matt replies, "Thank you for your service. Happy Veterans Day."

~

If a soldier calls up Welby and tells him he wants to go to school. Welby asks one question: when do you get out?

Three years from now.

Okay, Welby replies, I will put it in my computer and keep you updated so you can apply on time.

Sometimes, they still don't. Veterans get their application fees waived but, like all bureaucratic tasks, there are still forms to sign, procedures to follow, like the required shots for measles, mumps, and rubella.

"Vets are like: I've been in the military. I have every shot possible known to man. But then with the D219 they're getting a waiver."

Welby Alcantara is the Veteran Affairs Coordinator at City College of New York. After getting out of the marines, Welby graduated from undergrad in two years.

"I went to summer school, I went to winter session, I was like I gotta graduate, I gotta graduate, I'm old! I felt very intimidated. I usually get those vets: 'I'm 27 years old and I wanna graduate tomorrow. How can I do this? I wanna take 15 credits, 18 credits. I can do it! I know I can!' It's like okay guy, calm down, it's okay."

Welby goes on with anecdotes about "his" veterans and about his own time in the military.

"When I was a student I used to be a member of the Future Educators of America and I never told anyone there that I was a vet. Nobody knew. Until one day it came up and I was like I was in Mogadishu. They were like 'What were you doing in Mogadishu?' I was like, 'I was a marine.' They were like 'Really you were a marine?' I was like, yeah, I was at the beach swimming and snorkeling and the rangers were all getting shot up…"

The last line he says sarcastically, exaggerating the contrast between his administrative job and the fighting of others. There's a brief pause. I resist the urge to ask him why he feels the need to water down his eight years of service.

"I'm a paper-pusher. I'm not a combat guy. I'm like a glorified UPS guy with a uniform."

Now Welby is a different type of paper-pusher. He attributes CCNY's strong veteran support system to good luck. They had a collection of higher-ups, who all happened to be veterans themselves or relatives of veterans and were more committed to the cause. Three years ago, when Welby was first hired as a part-timer, he worked 40 to 50 hour weeks. Now he's at the office ten hours a day Monday through Friday.

Welby soon segues into another story about his previous military experience.

"We were getting a new commander and we were there at 8:30, and we get our brown bag for breakfast and we're eating like sandwich, fruit and a little juice. 8:30. 9 o'clock. 10 o'clock. He was supposed to be there 9:30, 9:45, it was already 10:30 and we were like what in the world?! And the sun is coming up. North Carolina sun. In the bright light. And we were waiting about 120 of us. And then we see the plane. Okay." Welby goes into his "sergeant" voice. "'Alright, anybody who has a watch, anybody, raise your hand!' We raise our hands. He says (voice again) 'Okay put your clock time to 8:30 because the general cannot be late.'"

His tone changes just a little into one of a tired bureaucrat as "we" changes to "they."

"So that's a problem with a lot of military people, they get used to it. Just swing it. Shooting from the hip. And they get good at it."

There's some frustration in his voice. He's had to deal with veterans who turn in things last minute and once there's a complication, it's Welby who begs the registrar to enroll them anyway. But

as he knows, for the military last minute is: "Typical. Operating. Procedure."

~

"Veterans get labeled," Daniel tells me, "Even this new generation of veterans. They get redefined, public perception of what the word veteran means. I mean when I was growing up you think of the crazy dude at the VA with pins all over his jacket. And now it's like veterans are 25 years old."

That's the type of veteran who is before me. Twenty-eight years old, Daniel Hodd joined the military at the time most people start college. Even now it seems most civilians associate the word with old and disabled veterans from Vietnam or World War II. But with two wars that association will change. Daniel remembers the novelty of the concept of war in 2003.

"People had an interest because it was fresh but your peers at school, they grew up with the wars. They spent more time of their life with the United States at war than at peace."

College freshmen were nine years old during the Iraq invasion. Even though they grew up with the wars, the chances of actually encountering those who fought them are slim. Post 9/11 veterans make up only one percent of the population. As they head home, they can turn to the Post 9/11 GI Bill, which gives veterans full tuition for state colleges as well as housing and book stipends. More and more veterans are taking advantage of these benefits, confronting the other 99 percent in the schoolroom.

"Actually I was just talking with my roommate yesterday about this weird predicament that he and I face…"

Daniel's roommate was trained as a scout sniper, but doesn't want to be defined by the fact he's a veteran.

"It's like you're in school and even though you don't necessarily want to be a part of the college parties and all that crazy stuff, you kind of regret the fact that you're left out or excluded from it because you don't have the social ties with anyone. It's weird… So even though you don't want to be a regular college student, you kind of miss the fact that you aren't. But that could just be an effect of this transition, because the transition really doesn't stop. Ever."

I can't help but notice that Daniel uses the word "weird" twice to describe his experience.

Daniel, who is the president and founder of Armed Forces at Fordham, starts talking about his friend Gary who helps him run the club.

"Gary seems to… he's probably not that much different from when he was in the Marine Corp and people will probably say the same about me. You're just in a different role. If you talk to Gary he's still a United States marine, he's just in school."

This is confusing to me. Of course we are all influenced by the roles we've had in the past, but Daniel seems to be speaking about something more than that. I push him to try to define it more. I want to know what qualities make Gary a permanent marine, what makes him different from civilians.

"I don't want to say the way you conduct yourself because there's people that do pot, there's people that do all kinds of things you don't do in the military, but it's just a life change and a defining part of your life. It doesn't shake. It's not a job. You don't just take your uniform off and you're not a marine anymore. It's like it's with you…" he takes a short breath, "For the long haul."

The uniform reference reminds me of something Welby said: he compared it to basketball; the uniforms are like jerseys. Even when you take them off, you're still part of the team. Although the analogy makes sense, I'm still thinking in civilian terms. Aren't we all at least somewhat defined by our jobs?

Daniel is still trying: "Maybe grow my hair a little longer. But it doesn't really change you

because the military is you."

~

For a laid back guy, Alfonso frowns a lot. There's a natural ease to his gait and posture. He reminds me of a diplomatic brother, the type who breaks up fights amongst siblings and has them discuss the conflict afterwards.

I ask what he's studying: "Nothing. I'm just taking core requirements right now," he says, "Maybe social work."

"Can you tell me a little more about your service?" I ask.

Alfonso instantly frowns. He's the type of person who doesn't frown with the mouth but just with the eyebrows, almost an expression of confusion but with inklings of anger. Frankly, he tells me, there's nothing interesting about his time with the army. "I've only been shot at maybe once," he then corrects himself, "A couple close calls actually but nothing too crazy."

There's a pause as I scribble down that Alfonso has been shot at twice. I allow some time of silence for him to elaborate more about the "close calls": why he seemed to overlook one at first, why they seem to be "nothing interesting" but he doesn't fill the silence. I follow up with questions about his transition home, mentioning that other veterans cited an enduring adrenaline and pressure.

"Adrenaline? Pressure?" Another frown and a pause. "I almost got shot at a couple times and I'm glad to not have that anymore."

Alfonso doesn't go into too much detail about his emotions about the transition. Instead, like Daniel he describes it as "weird."

"Have you ever seen the movie Jarhead? Imagine that but it was like eight months long." Jarhead is a movie about the quiet boredom of war with a soldier protagonist frustrated by the lack of action.

Alfonso didn't like the time he spent in the military. He doesn't like to talk to other veterans. They bring things up in corny ways, or they lie about what they did or what happened to them. He doesn't know why they lie. It's just something they do.

I remember a scene in the movie. A sergeant asks a soldier if his father ever talked about his time in Vietnam:

"Sir, only once, sir!" The soldier replies. "Good! Then he wasn't lying."

There's yet another pause in the conversation, as if Alfonso can't quite communicate his experience to a civilian.

"You're not going to use my last name, right?" Alfonso asks. Before I get a chance to reassure him, he starts, "I remember one time… No, we're not going to talk about this." He shakes his head and adds, "That was craziness. I don't miss it at all. Not at all."

~

Welby's empire is a comfortable lounge with blue couches and a giant stuffed Scooby Doo with a t-shirt for the 82nd Airborne in the corner. Next to the lounge, there are four computers, a copier and a small bookshelf where vets can get tutoring. The office encourages veterans to contribute to its decoration, which results in an eclectic mix of memorabilia. On one wall hangs a signed picture of Colin Powell, below it are old packages of military MREs, or Meals Ready to Eat and covering the rest of the area are pictures of vet events, vet families, and vet ceremonies.

"Patience is something you need with veterans because sometimes they get very high strung," Welby tells me.

The bureaucracy of college is one big adjustment. He tells me one story: "We had a veteran who was a platoon leader in Afghanistan, he basically ran all aid and supply and money to about five villages and he learned how to speak Udism and he wanted it to be waived as foreign language, but they don't teach that here." Welby eventually got the veteran the credit. But navigating bureaucracy is not the largest obstacle.

"A lot of vets don't like to say I have a disability. I have this problem that if the school doesn't know it at the time, they try to hide it. They feel that nobody should know what their problem is."

The word "hide" resonates with me. I want to tell Welby about the long pauses, the elusive attitude of the interviews, but I'm sure it wouldn't surprise him. Military culture asks, "Are you hurt or are you injured?" If you're injured, you need to go to the hospital. If you see blood, you need to go to the hospital. If you're hurt, shake it off. Man up. Pretend it doesn't hurt; keep it hidden.

The college tries to address this by creating a supportive environment. Veterans have first preference at CCNY for wellness and counseling services. They also have two onsite counselors that keep it off the books, leaving the identities anonymous. The VA also gives veterans $1200 in tutoring money that few vets take advantage of. Typically, professors are much better than students at picking up veteran cues.

"A lot of the professors know how students behave and when a lot of the vets come in because they're a bit more mature, they act differently, they have a different perspective, they basically… the professors that have been teaching for a little while could tell who's who and what is their background."

But veterans don't always get along with their professors.

"A resume of a real eight year veteran: he's been to Korea, been to Japan, been to Afghanistan, been to Iraq. You have this professor who graduated high school, went to college until he got his PhD and now he's teaching 'What do you know about life?' A lot of the vets feel that they experience real life and they sometimes get very anxious at that."

By "anxious" I think Welby means "annoyed." A person who has been in this academic bubble, a womb of sorts, lectures you about life: you, who have seen war. Veterans get understandably frustrated, a feeling that persists when dealing with some of the other students.

Welby tells his veterans: "You're 27 years old, yes. That kid is 19, yes. You might not like what he has to say. I have many vets who come in here and say, 'Can you believe this student? This student did this, this student did that. I can't believe how disrespectful they were.' And I'm like, okay, take a leadership role. Tell that kid 'Look this is what is expected of you.'"

Within the lounge and offices, beliefs already ingrained in vets are honed. The community creates a home for military camaraderie. The veteran club meets every Thursday afternoon and sometimes has volunteer events on Saturdays. Welby just started a program in the fall where every veteran gets a battle buddy, a fellow student who basically acts as a mentor.

"If you are a good soldier and you bought into the military which I say 99 percent of them do, we take those core values: honor, integrity, responsibility and we basically focus on those core values and we implement them in your college life."

Even with Welby's enthusiasm, I have a hard time believing that concepts as abstract as those will help with the day-to-day frustrations of higher education. Honor, integrity and responsibility are all good things to strive for, but how would they help with 8 a.m. classes or piles of reading?

~

Welby had said most vets are "high-strung." Daniel, on the other hand, is instantly disarming, effortlessly easy-going. He claims the small bits of ingrained military culture don't occur to him anymore. Habits once demonized are now okay. Daniel demonstrates one example by rubbing his eye.

"That's nasty. That's disgusting. It's this whole nasty civilian, this word 'nasty civilians,' 'nasty civilians,' it kind of gets in your head."

He laughs but I don't understand why soldiers can't rub their eyes. "Well that's just one small example of a lack of discipline. You wipe your eye, you're getting crap in your eye: you can get sick. It's part of field hygiene."

As Daniel goes on about other military attitudes that seep into his civilian life, his attitude becomes less and less laidback. He starts telling me about the radio station he works at.

"I am frustrated all the time. Because I see nepotism and I see lack of accountability and it's not just here it's pretty much everywhere. And to me that's wrong because in the military it doesn't exist, at least not in the same way, and not nearly at the same scale."

There are other things that civilians don't get that the military had right. Daniel's tone of annoyance holds a hint of disappointment. His relationships with civilians are never quite what they are with veterans.

"You don't call someone or you're busy or you're off in something in your life and you're not maintaining that friendship. Not all times but sometimes they take it personally, like 'Where have you been?' You could not talk to a marine for ten years and call him up and be like 'Hey man, let's go get a beer.' And he's like 'Alright.'"

~

Since Kris Eglin got out in November 2011, it seems he's given a lot of time thinking about how to describe his transition, trying to articulate the effect of strict structure on the psyche. Even with all this contemplation, Kris hasn't found a perfect description, yet. After 18 minutes pass during the interview, he admits, "A lot of times you don't talk about it because you can't describe it."

He's getting his Masters in social work at Fordham so he knows how to roll complex issues over in his mind. And yet it's a bit surprising that Kris hasn't yet gone to any veteran events at Fordham. One might think he'd want to explore these issues with his peers. He says that although he would like to attend, he just can't fit it into his schedule. But he is grateful that he has the opportunity there.

"I'm not the only one. I don't feel I'm the only one, I can email people and certainly contact the network that way, but as far as face- to-face I haven't felt the connection yet."

This is the first indication that Kris is a newly integrated veteran. And despite his rhetoric, that fact gets more and more pronounced.

"You kind of wish something would push you in a direction. I find myself at a stand still with the motivating factor. Am I motivated? As much as I would be if there was someone there to push me?"

Questions make up the most of Kris' interview. I'm not usually the one who asks them, though.

He puts on the voice of a lieutenant: "Okay we need this training done. This is how it's done. Put together this training. Go do it."

Now he's a professor: "Here's a paper on this theory. Research it. Tell me what you think about it."

Finally, he is Kris again: "What do I think about it? Wait… what?" There are no straightforward demands. Just to think. For himself.

An inch of freedom can expand exponentially into an anarchic abyss.

"Just this morning, I have this feeling: I have to go to school. It's my obligation. I have to be there and I want to be there. But I don't have to go. If I don't go, nobody's going to yell at me, nobody's going to pick up the phone and wonder where I'm at. The accountability… you're counting on yourself now."

It's clear from Kris' voice that he's drawn to this opportunity to sleep in and forget commitments. He's taking four classes concentrated in two days a week. He has to commute six hours roundtrip on a bus from Pennsylvania every school day.

"I could have chosen not to get on that bus at four in the morning and I could have justified it to myself but at the end of the line the core values are 'No, I made this deal.' That value structure will always be there."

~

Alfonso is thinking about his time in the military again. "I'm grateful not to wake up at 6 every morning." I ask him if he misses anything about military culture. He thinks of a couple more things.

"You mean like bossing people around or going on patrols and maybe getting blown up by something because I could definitely live without that."

"I knew people had to do certain things in a certain way. It's like I'm a civilian I can just do what I want, there's no repercussions. You might get fired. Maybe."

Alfonso doesn't mention one positive thing about his service. With other students, he doesn't bring it up at all. He omits the eight years, discards them like shed skin, no longer a part of him, no longer of use.

"I never stayed anywhere longer than two years. I always was preparing to go somewhere else. Now I can do anything."

Alfonso tends to lean back when he's talking about his time, as if to say, "The military isn't a big deal." There's a stigma that every veteran is mentally unhinged. I can imagine other civilians inspecting every movement, every emotion, looking for hints of PTSD or some other mental disorder. Perhaps that's why they choose to keep quiet. And yet, even though most veterans are adjusted or become somewhat adjusted, that doesn't mean they weren't changed in some way. Alfonso got out of the military in December 2010 and started classes just a few weeks later.

"So you were only back for a few weeks before you started school, right?" I ask.

"No… I got out in December…" There's a pause, "Well… yeah, actually. Yeah."

"Was that strange? That seems really sudden."

"Everything just went by really fast, I didn't really think about it too much. I was just chilling and relaxing. I'm just glad it gave me something to do. I didn't think about it too much."

I ask if it was difficult adjusting to the workload.

He frowns, "Not really, it was just weird…" he says.

He pauses for a few seconds. I feel like this is the first time he's taken the time to think back about that period of time. It seems odd that he didn't realize there were only a few weeks between changing roles from soldier to student but then, as he said, he didn't like to think about it.

"Now that you mention it, it was kind of weird. First I was this fully independent person. Then I was sitting at my parent's place, taking classes."

Even though he's been out for over a year, he tells me at the end of the interview: "I'm still in the process of everything. I still feel that way sometimes. It's just weird that I'm my own boss, like no one tells me what to do. It's a weird concept."

Alfonso used the word "weird" 11 times through out the interview. "Weird" is generic. "Weird" means he doesn't want to talk about it; he doesn't want to think about it. There are no details, no emotion, no possibility for flashbacks to unpleasant thoughts attached to it.

~

"This is a lifelong process of what you want out of life."

Tom Murphy runs the workshop, called Edge4Vets, at Fordham. There are three of them over the course of the semester, with the themes of "Prepare," "Plan," and "Act." Veterans are given pre- and post- surveys. They even get workbooks. The goal of the workshops, as stated in the workbook, is "to help you gain CLARITY on your leadership strengths, get DIRECTION and SUPPORT to apply them- and give you a chance (through the Edge4Vets Corps) to HELP other vets."

I expect to see a roomful of rolling eyes, but instead there were only earnest faces.

There's John and Paul, older veterans in their sixties who went to Fordham after their service. They're here to show the veterans that "there is life after the military." Paul is a professor at Fordham Law School. John, now a general counselor for IBM subsidiaries, went to Fordham Law School five weeks after he left service. Paul tends to say things in broad, supportive ways, like, "You've done something for all of us; it's time for us to do something for you." Or "Do not doubt the value of the experience you have. It's unique. But if you position it well, it can go far."

The rest of the group is in their twenties and early thirties. Many of them are combat veterans. Four of them are starting school this year. None of them are fazed by the abstract self-help concepts. Their attention is not just polite: they want this.

John had a joke about how easy the military was: "They give you money, which you can't spend. They give you a place to sleep: a bunker. They give you something to eat: two meals a day…

"All you got to do is stay alive."

Everyone breaks into groups of four to five people. My group has Eric, Ky and Paul.

After explaining briefly what they hope to get out of life, work, and school, Eric and Ky start a casual conversation about what they did in the military. Ky tells him he dealt with EODs.

Eric responds, "Oh wow. Well I see you have all your limbs."

EOD stands for Explosive Ordinance Disposal. Eric asks if he's going to pursue a similar type of work in the civilian world. "No, no," Ky says straightaway, "I don't want to think about that."

"When people are trying to kill you, it's pretty clear what you're going to do," Paul adds.

I think of Alfonso. Like Ky, he had said he didn't want to think about it. Striving to not think can often be a goal. There is the infamous Nike line, "Just do it." For the sports brand, the slogan is less about what it's saying, "do, act, move," than what it's saying not to do: think, contemplate, wonder. In David Foster Wallace's "How Tracy Austin Broke my Heart," he says perhaps there is nothing at all going through the heads of successful athletes during those moments of intense concentration. Wallace explains "for top athletes, clichés present themselves not as trite but simply as true, or perhaps not even as declarative expressions with qualities like depth or triteness or falsehood or truth but as simple imperatives that are either useful or not and, if useful, to be invoked and obeyed and that's all there is to it." Like athletes, soldiers confront moments of great stress. They need endurance and quick action. Somehow they don't think. They allow the body to take over and follow with unyielding reverence those dictums of service.

As instructed, Ky meticulously draws a perfect pyramid around the words, "Action plan," "Skills," and "Beliefs." Beneath his concentration is something like control, as if by perfectly encasing these words, they now belong to him.

The workbook lists values taken from the Marine Corps and Army. Justice, Judgment, Dependability, Initiative, Decisiveness, Tact, Integrity, Enthusiasm, Bearing, Unselfishness, Courage, Knowledge, Loyalty, Endurance, Duty, Respect, Honor, Integrity. Welby's three, "honor, integrity, and responsibility" are all either explicitly or implicitly included.

Tom goes on with a quote from a former soldier, "Ernest Hemingway once said 'the test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposing ideas in mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function.'" Veterans must hold the values of service and the requirements of civilian life. They must learn to integrate them.

One veteran tells a story about applying to a job. He was in an interview and it was going well, but at the end of the interview the interviewer said they weren't going to hire him. He asked why.

"Because you never smiled once."

Tom says this is a good example. In the military, you can't smile. But in the civilian world, not smiling means dislike, hostility. The military code that you learned, though, that can always be applied.

~

Daniel talks about his deployments like they were a long time ago, yet he still sports the military "high and tight" haircut, with sides short and the top kept a little longer. Recently he's been debating whether or not to stay in the reserves. He could really use the time to focus on his studies, his future. But that would mean putting his needs before his battalion's, before soldiers he's known for ten years. Daniel's answer has always been: "if my buddies are going, I'm gonna be going." They're why he chooses to go back and forth to war.

"So when I got home I was 19 or 20 years old…"

Daniel is telling me about his first return. He was a soldier in Kuwait, then two days later a civilian in Brooklyn.

"When you spend a lot of effort and time switching off a bunch of emotions that you used to have, at that age and at that time it was difficult for me to turn them back on. So probably for a good two years I was readjusting and becoming myself again. And it was hard for me because I didn't realize it at the time, I didn't feel anything. I didn't feel a damn thing for two and half years. Really. Nothing. All I felt was angry. I would get angry at people. Angry at traffic. Especially traffic…I hate traffic."

Even though Daniel is laughing, his emphasis on "hate" isn't casual.

"I laugh about it now, but at the time I had a girlfriend who loved me and I was hurting her by not being there emotionally…"

"And then, like, I forget how the hell it happened but eventually I got to a point I just broke down, I broke into tears for like a half an hour. I called her up. I realized that I had shut off such a…I just shut off a lot of things. It's a really weird process."

This was the seventh time Daniel used the word "weird" to describe the process of returning in the interview. Given that Daniel constantly alternates between the military and civilian world, I thought he might finally solve the mystery for me. As much as he may want to, as much as he tries, there's something impossible about the task of describing his experience. In total, I've heard the word "weird" twenty times throughout the interview process. Part of it is that veterans think a civilian can't understand what they are talking about. But there's more than that: it's like all the military sayings coalesced into a toughness that won't be infiltrated, emotions that won't be released. This is the first time I've heard specifics about a breakdown from a vet.

"It's much easier to do a job if you don't have to feel, don't have to think about it. A part of you shuts off and you do what you gotta do. And deal with the rest later."

Daniel gives many reasons why the first return was so hard: he was young, the military hadn't yet created a transition program to address the issues of returning home, and, perhaps most importantly, the war in 2003 was different than war in 2008, when Daniel deployed again.

He doesn't go into any other details about the war in 2003. He says only: "the circumstances of the deployment in 08-09 didn't necessitate that sort of adjustment."

I remember one thing Welby had said, "Some of the people are crazy. They'll tell you yeah I went over there and this and that, but if you do some research of what they did they probably were a paper pusher or a truck driver. People that were really in bad situations… they don't really talk about it like that." Alfonso, too, hinted at the same phenomenon. Those who really "know" are either silent or vague.

In a book called The Truth about Freud's Technique , there's a line about psychoanalysis: "Concealment doesn't merely obscure truth. It contains it." I'm convinced the vets I interviewed never lied.

~

Considering he's only been out three months, Kris has clearly embraced nonmilitary freedoms. He's able to sport a brown goatee for the first time in ten years. Maybe it's this small but evident act of defiance that makes his remark so surprising.

"If someone came up to me asking, 'would you like to reenlist right now?'" He says, "Yes. I love the structure. I love what I was doing. I love having a role."

But moments later he changes his mind.

"I don't really want to go back to that. I'm a better person and I've evolved and I've learned much more than when I was in."

Inside Kris' head are two well-educated debaters.

"It was so easy to do," one explains about the military. "They just tell you be at the right place, at the right time, wear the right uniform, do the right thing. And you'll be fine. Which was really simple. Because you knew what you were wearing. And they told you where to go. And they told you what time to be there. So really you just had to show up."

But that's exactly what is so great about being back, the other debater counters: "No one's going to bother you if you don't show up."

There is no sergeant yelling in your face. There are no required uniforms. Options are limitless. The term resonates in the mind. The only deciding factors are your own whims and wants, looking out for numero uno. That's why he calls his decision to leave the army after ten years to pursue his education "selfish."

"The team was great. But you pull all that away. Now what do I do? It's just me. But that's what I wanted."

Kris says the last line almost like a question. Kris tells me that no matter how many times he tries to describe it, it will never be enough for me to understand. I ask if he could try to describe the military

anyway, laughing at how the question contradicts what he just told me. Kris sighs.

"You learn a lot about yourself… You relinquish certain things about yourself…"

All of a sudden Kris' face becomes strangely serene.

"You ever ride a rollercoaster?" Kris asks me after a moment.

"First starting, hear the click-click click-click click-click . You know it's coming. You have to have faith that that machine's gonna work, have faith that nothing's gonna go wrong but you still got that worry and the butterflies and as soon as you get to the top and feel the breaks release and that pahh…" there's a small smile, "That's the feeling. That 'Oh no.' But you've relinquished all that fear and control."

The smile fades but his face is still calm, "If you've never been in those situations, you don't know how to relinquish that feeling."!

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