

International Security



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The **Brooklyn College Journal of International Affairs** is a publication of the student body of the Brooklyn College Masters Program in International Affairs

The 2014 – 2015 Edition examines the issue of Security. Beyond the international conflict that has long been the focus of international relations, the study of security has expanded to include issues of democracy, human welfare, the environment, and other problems that define the security of people around the globe on a daily basis.

This edition of the Journal reflects this breadth of analysis, with articles ranging from international organizations and climate change to democracy and culture.

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Editorial Thoughts...

By Joe Lattanzi

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One of my ambitions as editor of the *Brooklyn College Journal of International Affairs* was to publish an issue which featured articles varying in subject matter, style, and perspective. It was also my hope that the presented material would be capable of speaking to a wide audience. Though our academic training has increased our capacity to understand and analyze complex world events, we should prioritize our ability to translate what we have learned in an accessible fashion for those outside our field of study. As such, I felt it important that the articles in this journal establish a link between the intricacies of global affairs and the everyday lives of Americans.

To initiate this goal I planned to review the highest grossing and most controversial American film of 2014: *American Sniper*. So that I could understand the furor which has erupted on the extreme ends of our political spectrum in response to this film, it was my intention to approach this review as objectively

as possible, setting aside my personal beliefs while ignoring my assumptions about the politics of the film's director and protagonist.

Yet as I took my seat in the darkened theatre, notebook and pen in hand, I couldn't help but think I was about to watch either one of two films: a film which celebrates the life and deeds of an American hero, or a propaganda piece attempting to justify what many consider to have been an unnecessary war. But as the closing credits began to roll, I was baffled. Though the context of the film was simplified, characterizing the enemy as aimless savages and the hero and his comrades as indisputable defenders of freedom and justice, I did not sense that the message of the film was overtly political. In many ways, this film is an updated Western, relying on exaggerated portrayals of conventional archetypes while glossing over relevant circumstances which could dilute the good versus evil narrative.

Hoping to uncover the origin of the debate which the film engendered, I then decided to read the

eponymous memoir upon which the screenplay was adapted. Though I found many aspects of Chris Kyle's attitudes toward the war in Iraq somewhat misguided, I did not find a discernible political message in the memoir; if anything, Chris Kyle's words read as a love letter to his fellow soldiers, his country, his family, and most prominently his respect and affection for firearms. Though the eventual goal of the invasion may have been to democratize Iraq, Kyle's objective was simply to protect his fellow soldiers and countrymen the only way he knew how.

What was I missing?

In hindsight, it would seem that the polarization over *American Sniper* is related more to our own preconceived notions and ideologies than upon the content of the memoir or film itself. For those who feel that the U.S. invasion of Iraq was unwarranted, omitting the socio-political history of U.S.-Middle Eastern relations which spurred the insurgency fosters a misleading portrayal, ignoring the relevant nuances undergirding our military engagement. For those who feel that it is our patriotic duty to unequivocally support the missions our military forces are assigned to by our political leaders, any form of dissent is tantamount to treason.

As students of international affairs, we attempt to discern why states behave in the ways that they do. We analyze the motivations behind consequential decisions by considering theory; is the international structure of States supreme, or can individual actors and domestic and international institutions temper our anarchic complex? The essence of these questions may be influenced by our individual perspectives on human nature and the potential for change. If you believe in a Hobbesian state of nature, then man is innately self-interested and can only be tempered through forceful coercion. Yet if given the proper education and tools, could man be capable of a Platonic enlightenment? Or is there a Lockean compromise in which we qualify our trust in mankind by creating contracts and systems of justice in an effort to prevent and/or rectify any future misconduct?

Whether obvious or not, our political ideologies are inextricably linked to our assumptions about human nature. The attitudes we project are a response to

these assumptions. But allowing the source of our political ideologies to remain hidden in the subconscious hinders our ability to interpret political events in an unbiased fashion, further entrenching dogma in the place of legitimate discourse.

I think that this phenomenon is at the heart of the conflict over *American Sniper*. Though I believe that the U.S. invasion of Iraq is one of the most disastrous foreign policy decisions of our time, I knew that I had to divorce myself from this opinion as I watched the film, lest I misinterpret its message. Certain characters and events in the film were modified or conflated from the original account, and the screenplay disregarded pertinent details which may have provided a broader context for the insurgency's existence. Yet I do not think that these alterations and deficiencies were politically motivated, but were intended rather to heighten the dramatic impact of the narrative. It should be clear: this movie is not trying to evaluate the wisdom or the complexity of the invasion. Though perhaps overshadowed by violence and machismo, I think that *American Sniper* the film is attempting to portray the internal workings of a man who would come to be known as "The Legend" for his superior prowess as a Navy SEAL sniper on a personal, rather than political level.

Yet at the same time, to equate displeasure over the chosen narrative of the film as an unpatriotic attack on its protagonist and the men and women he represents is to ignore the true source of discontent. The weapons of mass destruction which provided the impetus for the war in Iraq were never unearthed. There is no evidence that Iraqi leaders played a role in the 9/11 attacks in the United States. In addition, many Middle Eastern scholars and policy wonks have provided compelling insights which indicate that the creation of the Sunni insurgency and the presence of Al Qaeda forces in Iraq coincided with the U.S.-supported de-Ba'athification of the Iraqi government and armed forces. In other words, the strife which the U.S. military sought to combat may be a product of our own foreign policy decisions.

Yet to at least respect these sentiments, if not to agree with them, one must be willing to admit that gray areas can exist; an admission which *American Sniper* the film and memoir fail to allow. Though not found in the memoir, in the film Kyle's father tells him that there are three kinds of people in the

world: wolves, sheep, and sheepdogs. This Manichean perspective in which individuals can fit only one mold (predator, prey, or protector) may be representative of those fans who cannot accept criticism of the film's narrative or of U.S. foreign policy in general. Life is dichotomized into good and evil (a term which is used incessantly throughout both memoir and film), we are right, they are wrong; you are either with us or against us. Though this mindset may simplify complex matters, it does so by willfully ignoring the varied interests and perspectives which create tension.

One of the most upsetting effects of this rationale was the proliferation of menacing posts on various social media outlets directed indiscriminately toward Muslim and Arab communities by *American Sniper* acolytes shortly after the film's release. These incidents would provide further confirmation for the film's detractors that the oversimplified portrayal of the conflict is aggravating an already misunderstood debate.

What I find most frustrating about the divide which *American Sniper* has spawned is that, essentially, both sides of this clash are promoting the same interest: the safety of our military. For devotees of this film, Chris Kyle was a hero because he protected so many American servicemen while in

Iraq. For the film's critics, had the U.S. not invaded Iraq at all, so many American (and Iraqi) lives would not have been in need of protection. Yet despite this commonality, the most vociferous voices within this debate cling to their reflexive assumptions about the opposition, completely missing the fact that they share the same concern.

Both ends of the political spectrum will continue talking over one another until we can collectively admit the impact which our preconceived notions have on our politics. Once unburdened from our prejudices, perhaps we can engage in an impartial dialogue as we parse the most prominent security issues which confront the international community. As this issue of the *Brooklyn College Journal of International Relations* explores the Iranian nuclear debate, the struggle between industry and the environment, the righteousness of international interventions, and the democratic prospects for the Persian Gulf monarchies, I challenge the reader to disregard his or her presumptions concerning these controversies. Approaching these affairs with an open mind may be the first step in objectively evaluating the competing interests which create international conflict while also revealing intersections of accord, a position from which productive foreign policies should be created.



Why Diplomacy with Iran is not Appeasement and How it Can Work

By Craig Erickson



For more than a decade, perhaps the biggest threat to international security has been the potential for Iran to develop nuclear weapons, which has been of particular concern to the United States and Israel. After years of on and off diplomacy, and a June 30, 2015 deadline to reach a final agreement, the United States and its negotiating partners are closer than ever to a comprehensive deal to limit Iran's nuclear program. Although an anticipated framework agreement was reached in early April, negotiations for a permanent deal are to continue until the June deadline.

The negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program have been compared by its critics to the appeasement of Nazi Germany prior to World War II. As of now that comparison is inaccurate. Iran is being asked to make concessions with regards to its nuclear program, and has been sanctioned by the United States, the United Nations, and the European Union.

However, the U.S. and its negotiating partners must ensure that diplomatic efforts do not devolve into appeasement. If the U.S. and Iran do not reach a

comprehensive deal by the end of June, or if Iran violates the terms of a deal, the U.S. and its partners must respond by reinstituting sanctions to further weaken Iran's already fragile economy and must not repeal those sanctions without conditions. However, if Iran does keep its end of the bargain, a permanent agreement can reduce the threat of Iran developing a nuclear weapon, just as diplomacy was responsible for ending the Cold War by precipitating the demise of the Soviet Union.

In 2002 it was revealed that Iran had constructed a uranium enrichment plant and a plant to produce heavy water, signifying the development of a nuclear program. Since then, the United States, in conjunction with the United Nations, the European Union, China, and Russia have engaged in diplomatic efforts to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. Iran alleges that its program is for peaceful purposes only, such as advancements in energy and medicine, however much of the world is skeptical of this claim. For many years, diplomacy was ineffective, as various attempts at compromise have not led to a lasting agreement. The fact that Iran has reneged on agreements

which have been reached has made diplomacy more complicated.

In November 2013, Iran reached a temporary deal with the P5+1, a U.S. led coalition which also includes Great Britain, France, Germany, China, and Russia. The deal called for the lifting of international sanctions against Iran in exchange for "strict constraints" on Iran's nuclear program, including limits on the enrichment of uranium and increased transparency of its program in the form of inspections of nuclear facilities. The deal was seen as a "first step," as per Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, towards an as-yet to be finalized comprehensive agreement. Throughout March of 2015, the P5+1 and Iran have been engaged in negotiations, which were further publicized by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's speech before the U.S. Congress in early March, in which he criticized the potential deal. This round of diplomacy, however, has seemingly been the most constructive to date, and has produced the best chance at reaching a permanent deal.

Although the framework agreement was not completed before the March 31, 2015 deadline, negotiations continued until a deal was reached on April 2. The terms of the framework agreement prevent Iran from enriching uranium above the level needed to produce weapons for fifteen years and render Iran unable to develop plutonium weapons by requiring it to rebuild a heavy water reactor. Additionally, Iran is to only keep one-third of its centrifuges used to enrich uranium, while a site hidden within a mountain near the Iranian city of Qom, which is of particular concern to the U.S. because of its inaccessibility, is to be used for research only. To ensure that Iran is obeying the terms of the agreement, the International Atomic Energy Agency is to conduct "the most robust and intrusive inspections" to date in order to ensure that Iran does not "cheat," as per U.S. President Barack Obama. In exchange for limitations and inspections with regards to their nuclear program, sanctions against Iran are to be lifted, although President Obama and Iran disagree on the pace of lifting sanctions; Iran wants sanctions to be lifted immediately, while Obama wants sanctions to be lifted gradually. However, Obama and U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, the U.S. representative at the talks, have ensured that

sanctions will be reinstituted if Iran does not abide by the terms of the deal.

Diplomacy with Iran has been compared by its critics to the appeasement of German Chancellor Adolph Hitler prior to World War II. In September 1938, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain met with Hitler at Munich and agreed to allow Germany to annex the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia. Germany had already annexed Austria earlier that same year; Hitler promised Chamberlain that the annexation of Sudetenland would be his last acquisition of territory (Merriman 1207, 1232-1235). This deal is often cited as giving Hitler the impulse to continue his quest for territory; although Chamberlain thought that the Munich agreement would avert war because "with Hitler's appetite satiated he could be trusted to make no further territorial demands in Europe" (Smart). Chamberlain, however, was severely mistaken.

In March 1939, less than six months after the Munich meeting, Germany marched into the Czechoslovakian capital of Prague, which was followed by the invasion of Poland in September of the same year, initiating World War II less than a year after the Munich meeting. Chamberlain's successor, Winston Churchill, was an outspoken opponent of appeasement, feeling that Britain "should be rattling the national sabre" in order to stand up to Hitler. When Churchill ascended to Prime Minister in 1940 he was seen as the savior that would rescue Britain from its weakened position caused by appeasement (Smart; Merriman 1236-1238, 1244).

In a speech in front of the U.S. Congress in March 2015, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu expressed his own fears, shared by many, when he said "the greatest dangers facing our world is the marriage of militant Islam with nuclear weapons." He also implied that the current negotiations were a form of appeasement by mentioning the Nazi regime and stating "this deal...would only whet Iran's appetite for more;" drawing comparisons to appeasement's purpose of "satiating" Hitler in his quest for territory (Smart). In response to Netanyahu's speech, columnist Charles Krauthammer wrote "Netanyahu offered a different path in his clear, bold and often moving address, Churchillian in its appeal to resist appeasement." Additionally, as early as October 2013, U.S.

Senator Mark Kirk, in an editorial directed towards British Prime Minister David Cameron, urged Cameron to follow Churchill's "legacy" when dealing with Iran by "demanding" than Iran "abandons its illicit nuclear programme."

Despite the comparisons, there are noticeable differences between the appeasement of Germany and diplomatic efforts with Iran. Iran is being asked to make concessions on its nuclear program, such as reducing its capability to produce weapons and agreeing to inspections. Hitler did not have to make any concessions at Munich; he only made a promise to curtail German aggression, which Chamberlain naively accepted. Additionally, the United States, the United Nations, and the European Union have sanctioned Iran numerous times over the past ten years for continuing to enhance its nuclear capabilities.

Sanctions have targeted the assets of individuals and companies involved in the nuclear program as well as Iran's central bank. Additionally, the transfer of nuclear technology and the sale of arms to Iran have been banned, and an embargo has been imposed on Iranian oil exports. These sanctions "have all but crippled the Iranian economy" (Borger and Dehghan), particularly by reducing revenue from the sale of oil, which has been aggravated by the declining price of oil. These economic woes have led to high levels of unemployment, particularly among Iranian youth, and higher levels of inflation, although the rate of inflation has gone down since 2013.

By contrast, the British allowed the Germans to profit off their aggression. After Germany annexed Austria, the British gave the German government access to Austrian funds that had been deposited in the Bank of England, and following the German advance on Prague, the British allowed Germany to "transfer...Czech gold deposits from London banks to the German-occupied state" (Merriman 1232-1233, 1236).

Diplomacy can be effective in diminishing threats to international security, as it proved useful in helping to dismantle the Soviet Union and end the Cold War. The Helsinki Accords, which began in 1972 and culminated in the Helsinki Final Act in 1975, "set events in motion that forced widespread political and social changes in the Eastern Bloc"

(Morello, "In Iran Nuclear Talks"). After three years of discussions between thirty-five nations over human rights, "cultural exchanges," and the maintenance of Europe's borders, the contents of the Helsinki Final Act favored Western Europe and the United States by keeping open the possibility of the peaceful change of Europe's borders and allowing for information to flow between Western and Eastern Europe (Hanhimaki 37-40, 46-47, 50-52; Peterson 63).

In the 1980's, President Ronald Reagan, previously a critic of the Helsinki Accords, accepted the U.S. role in the Helsinki agreement, and used it to encourage the Soviet Union to institute reforms. This led to the release of political prisoners and allowed for Soviet citizens to emigrate in increasing numbers. It can be argued that these reforms did more to bring about the collapse of the Soviet Union and the re-alignment of Eastern Europe's borders than "Reagan's praise of US democracy and military build-up" (Peterson 76, 79, 84-86; Hanhimaki 54).

What finally convinced the Soviet Union to accept the terms of the deal was a shift in the U.S.'s position during the accords. At first the U.S. took the middle ground between the Soviet Union and Western Europe so as to not alienate either side. However, before the accords culminated, the U.S. had sided with Western Europe (Hanhimaki 47, 53). This shift shows how parties with mutual interests can put pressure on their competitors when they collaborate with one another. Diplomacy with Iran has received broad international support; it was the U.N. Security Council which tasked the P5+1 to handle nuclear negotiations with Iran, and E.U. Foreign Minister Catherine Ashton headed the 2013 negotiations which led to the aforementioned temporary deal in November of that year. There has also been international support for placing economic sanctions on Iran if they do not cooperate, as the U.S., the U.N., and the E.U. have each previously sanctioned Iran over its nuclear program.

By contrast, there was no effective coalition of nations to stand up to Hitler. Churchill had advocated that Britain form an alliance with the Soviet Union, however, Chamberlain failed to do so. Consequently, in order to "smash the will of Britain and France to defend Poland," Hitler signed

a non-aggression pact with Russia a little more than a week prior to the invasion of Poland and the outbreak of World War II (Merriman 1234-1238; Smart).

Amid the most recent negotiations with Iran, Benjamin Netanyahu called for “a better deal” to be reached in his address to Congress, while U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell called the potential pact “a very bad deal” because Iran would be permitted to keep its “nuclear infrastructure,” such as its centrifuges. Netanyahu concurred with McConnell, expressing concern that permitting Iran to keep its centrifuges would allow for Iran to have a bomb within a year if it chooses to restart its nuclear program, which Iran would be capable of doing if it reneges on a deal. Additionally, as part of the framework agreement, Iran will be permitted to increase the level of its enriched uranium in fifteen years. Netanyahu warns that these conditions, combined with the easing of sanctions, would allow Iran to be prosperous and capable of developing a nuclear weapon; although Netanyahu used a ten-year timeframe. Netanyahu’s idea of “a better deal” would be imposing conditions which would require Iran to dismantle its nuclear infrastructure along with guarantees that it would stop its support of militants in the Middle East and calling for the destruction of Israel.

Obama called the framework agreement “a good deal” and had previously stated that he would veto proposed legislation that would pre-emptively sanction Iran if a deal is not reached by the end of June. This stance has received support from British Prime Minister David Cameron, who contacted U.S. Senators earlier this year urging them to refrain from passing additional sanctions against Iran, so as to not complicate the negotiation process.

One area of agreement among all parties is that military action against Iran is not an option at the moment. The U.S. is still war weary from over a decade of fighting in the Middle East. Netanyahu did not advocate military action in his speech before Congress, although Israel in the past has destroyed nuclear reactors in Iraq and Syria. The debate is over the conditions of an agreement that would be most effective in preventing Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. Obama’s current goal is to keep Iran at the bargaining table, which is why it would not be prudent to pass additional

sanctions that would undoubtedly anger Iran.

However, if a deal is not agreed to by the end of June, or if Iran reneges on a final deal, the Obama administration must keep its word and must join Congress in reinstituting sanctions to ensure Iran is punished for keeping its nuclear program intact. Allowing Iran to walk away from the table or breaking the terms of a deal without facing consequences would be analogous to appeasement.



Netanyahu’s and other’s fears of a nuclear armed Iran are not without merit. Iran has a history of reneging on previous agreements involving its nuclear program, including a 2003 deal with France, Germany, and Britain to suspend uranium enrichment and make its program more transparent, and a 2009 deal to ship uranium abroad to be made into fuel for medical use. With regards to transparency, in 2009, France, Britain, and the U.S. revealed intelligence about secret underground nuclear facilities in Iran, which as previously mentioned, was addressed by the framework deal. Iran has not earned, and probably will never earn, the complete trust of the U.S. and its negotiating partners. Therefore Obama must not be naïve as Chamberlain was at Munich, and must be prepared to cooperate with Congress in sanctioning Iran if they do not cooperate with an agreement.

Winston Churchill believed that if Chamberlain had not appeased Germany, Hitler would have been

viewed as weak by the German people and subsequently overthrown (Smart). As previously mentioned, current economic sanctions against Iran have had a “crippling” effect on the nation’s economy. This has caused Iran’s leaders to fear that discontent over the nation’s economy could result in revolt against the regime (Kaplan 18). Iran has recently experienced mass protests, most notably the 2009 “Green Movement,” an anti-authoritarian protest made up of mostly university students or recent graduates, which began in response to purported voter fraud following the re-election of the previous Iranian President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. The regime responded to the Green Movement with a heavy hand by killing and imprisoning large numbers of opposition members. However, now the regime is likely taking into account the Arab Spring uprisings which have occurred since then, which have been responsible for taking down regimes in Tunisia and Egypt, and has led to ongoing unrest in Syria (Ghitis).

Protests related to the Iranian economy have occurred recently. Earlier this year, teachers held protests over low wages. Additionally, to raise revenue, Iran is seeking to collect overdue business taxes (Bozorgmehr), which could cause discontent within the business community. On the other hand, the easing of sanctions could give Iran “legitimacy...thereby opening the floodgates of foreign investment” (Kaplan 18). These factors mean that the Iranian regime has the incentive to prevent its economy from deteriorating further. Therefore, increased economic pressure on Iran is not a form of appeasement, but an effective way to punish the regime for not reigning in its nuclear program.

Up to this point, diplomatic efforts between the P5+1 and Iran has not been appeasement due to the fact that Iran has and should continue to face economic consequences for failing to ensure that its nuclear program will not be used to produce a weapon. If a deal is reached by June 30 and all sides live up to their end of the bargain, it could very well end the threat of a nuclear armed Iran and perhaps, like the Helsinki Accords led to reforms in the Soviet Union, lead to more concessions from Iran in other areas. Therefore, diplomacy should be given a chance. However, if a deal is not reached by June 30 or if Iran reneges on a deal, the U.S. and its partners must take a more “Churchillian” stance. The United States, preferably joined by the United Nations and the European Union, must tighten the screws on Iran’s economy to ensure that Iran’s economic downturn continues. This could perhaps lead to unrest, the threat of which would hopefully cause the regime to change its priorities. Diplomacy should then only be continued if Iran meets certain conditions; perhaps Benjamin Netanyahu’s suggestion of Iran ending support for militants in the Middle East and a complete dismantling of their nuclear infrastructure should be considered. However, anything less than a “Churchillian” stance from the U.S. and their partners if Iran does not cooperate would be akin to Neville Chamberlain allowing Adolph Hitler to annex Sudetenland without extracting concessions. Allowing Iran to break an agreement, then to come to the table without conditions whenever it chooses will allow them to dictate the terms of diplomacy like Hitler did, and that is very dangerous for international security.

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Up Against Empire: Unifying struggles for Climate Justice

By George Ygarza



[Humans], with flesh, blood and brain, belong to nature, and exist in its midst, and that all our mastery of it consists in the fact that we have the advantage over all other creatures of being able to learn its laws and apply them correctly. - Engels, Transition from Ape to Man.

Edwin Chota, an indigenous Asheninka native from the Alto Tamaya-Saweto region deep in the Peruvian Amazonian jungle, had repeatedly warned regional and national authorities of the numerous threats he received. Edwin was a prominent environmentalist and anti-logging activist who had appeared in the *New York Times* and *The Guardian* speaking out against illegal loggers in his community. In the hopes of halting and prosecuting the perpetrators, he was vocal in his denunciation of these activities as he exposed the names and geo-locations of the appropriate parties. However, like so many other indigenous voices protesting against encroachments on their land, his complaints fell on deaf ears. In September of last year, Edwin, along with three other Asheninka leaders - Leonicio Quinicima Melendez, Jorge Rios Perez and Francisco Pinedo-were found murdered, reportedly shot by suspected loggers as they made their way to a community meeting to address the region's illegal logging crisis.

The tragic fate of Edwin Chota and his comrades is not an isolated incident occurring only in the remote jungles of the Amazon: communities and activists

confront similar threats to their livelihoods and their very existence from corporate backed invasions all across the globe.

A recent report published by Global Witness found that at least 57 environmental activists were murdered in Peru between 2002 and 2014. (*Global Witness*, Nov 2014) Yet this appalling record is only enough to place it fourth among the most dangerous countries for environmental activists worldwide, outranked by Brazil, Honduras, and the Philippines. Given their location and history as global peripheries which supplement Northern growth, it should come as no surprise that these countries are ground zero for conflicts between strong local resistance to corporations and the state policies which perpetuate the crisis. Located among the fringes of underdeveloped nations, these movements and activists face a much greater foe than mere business ventures and their criminal partners. No strangers to land expropriation, destruction of resources, violent suppression, forced displacement and emigration, many communities in the Global South who are confronting the exploitative practices of extractivist industries are not simply standing in the way of

profit margins; they are also challenging a new form of Empire.

As Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri describe: "The concept of Empire is characterized fundamentally by a lack of boundaries: Empire's rule has no limits" (Hardt, Negri *Empire* pg 16). This new form of Empire, a position currently occupied by the United States, is unrestrained by territorial boundaries and is a decentralized and dispersed power unlike the old European forms of Empire. As such, this dehumanization attempts to silence those who obstruct the expropriation and exploitation of their homeland by the forces of Empire.



This new form of Empire relies on its institutionalized extremity: parasitic corporations which have grown richer and more influential than states themselves, which Hardt and Negri observe are: "...no longer defined by the imposition of abstract command and the organization of simple theft and unequal exchange...They tend to make nation-states merely instruments to record the flows of the commodities, monies, and populations that they set in motion" (Hardt, Negri *Empire* pg 30). These transnational corporations are short sighted entities which do not value environmental conservation or sustainability when developing their profit agenda, nor do they consider the livelihoods of the indigenous peoples standing in the way of extraction. This extreme disregard is exemplified in the displacement and killing of activists in the Brazilian Amazon, anti-fracking activists in Mexico, community mining protesters in Colombia, and in the response from reactionary police forces toward protesters in northern Peru.

As activists continue to lose their lives in the battle for land preservation in the face of an encroaching Empire, millions of people are confronting the consequences of unabated capitalism and its corporate purveyor. Climate change has revealed the repercussions of the pervasive nature of Empire upon every corner of the world, subjecting communities to a precarious life dictated by state-supported profit motives. The first victims are the most vulnerable: rural communities susceptible to unpredictable changes in weather patterns, and poor people relying on weak infrastructures and utilities, many of whom work in the very fields and factories which supplement the profits of the corporations responsible for exacerbating the climate disaster.

Even the Western world is not immune to the exploitations of Empire, or its effects on the environment. Once resistant to the reactionary nature of Empire, environmental activists have been corralled and locked away under dubious and vague charges. Most recently, upon the release of documents obtained by the Freedom of Information Act that showed the FBI withheld documents which would have validated his entrapment defense (Steele, *Truth-out.org*), environmental activist Eric McDavid was released after spending nine years in prison. McDavid was charged with "conspiracy to use fire or explosives to damage corporate and government property" and would have served a total of almost 20 years. The US has expanded its definitions for terrorists and terrorism related crimes, casting a wide net under recent legislation such as the PATRIOT act, NDAA and the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act.

Reactionary state policies are part of the rising criminalization of protest and dissent which have developed in the post 9-11 era, expanding governmental overreach and repudiating laws through extrajudicial practices at home and abroad exemplified in the arrests of activists like McDavid and hundreds of others.

As journalists like Chris Hedges have described, these repressive actions in the United States are reflective of an insecure and shaken Empire which struggles to maintain universal control, one which uses distractions and circus trials to divert attention from the folly of Empire (Hedges, *Truthdig.org*). Tactics and policies once reserved for the fringes of the Empire (such as denial of rights, civil rights

abuses, torture, and massive surveillance) have been resurrected in the territorial homeland to ensure there are no interferences to the machinations of modern Empire.

As the state loses its power and influence, the tools of Empire (corporations and private entities) begin to replace the state itself as the sole operator of its functions and methods of control. As corporations exhaust the resources of the global South, they then turn to the North, where anything can be subjected to becoming an exploitable commodity. We find examples of this progression reflected in the deplorable state of mining towns in West Virginia, the proliferation of gas pipelines dissecting the American heartland and in the numerous oil disasters dotting the landscape.

Corporations view people as subjects who stand in the way of profit as they embark on their detrimental campaign of extra-activism, exploitation and contamination. Globalization has eroded state sovereignty and left behind a playing field where corporations make the rules and pull the strings of Empire. The effects of capitalist-driven climate change on individual societies have been disastrous as they are increasingly destabilizing global economic and social orders.

Around the world, indigenous communities are losing land titles as corporations encroach upon their ancestral homelands seeking to extract its natural resources. The rise in sea levels, and the droughts and floods caused by climate change

force many native communities across the globe to relocate to cities in their homeland and abroad, constraining local economies and resources.

The environmental refugees and activists fighting for their land emerge from the precipice of this climate disaster, reminding us of the approaching fate we all face if the excursions of Empire continue to expand.

Yet despite the subordinate position many communities across the globe endure in relationship to an encroaching Empire, those affected are making great strides to halt an interminable corporate assault. In Peru, one of the largest open pit gold mining projects has been put on hold since 2012 due to the efforts of many native communities in the Cajamarca region.

But these little victories are isolated and transnational corporations are just that: *transnational*, therefore the struggle against them necessitates a global effort interconnected among activists and communities. In order to counter the exploitation facilitated and expanded through the movement of capital and globalization, it is imperative that we build transnational and hemispheric alliances. We must dismantle Empire and restructure societies around a more just and equitable form of governance, one beyond the hands of corporations and their state hit men before we all suffer the same fate as that of the Asheninka leaders.

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Responsibility to Protect: Is military intervention as bad as we think it is?

By Deborah Hector



"Out of our memory...of the Holocaust we must forge an unshakable oath with all civilized people that never again will the world stand silent, never again will the world...fail to act in time to prevent this terrible crime of genocide....we must harness the outrage of our own memories to stamp out oppression wherever it exists. We must understand that human rights and human dignity are indivisible."

-Jimmy Carter, 39th President of the United States

During the Nuremberg trials of 1945-46, the sinister acts perpetrated against Jews and other ethnic groups in the detention camps of Nazi Germany would finally be revealed to the world. In response to these revelations, and inspired by a rallying cry of "never again," the United Nations was created with the intention of alleviating international conflict.

The mandate and growing influence of this international body would lead to the liberation of colonial territories previously administered by Western powers. And though the spirit of this emancipation was morally sound, it would unintentionally engender local and international rivalries, often leading to mass civilian casualties.

It can be argued that international interventions have existed as far back as the Trojan War. Yet the ascendancy of state sovereignty as an unassailable bulwark has challenged the legality of

contemporary mediations, particularly with regard to former colonies.

To address the tensions between the act of international intervention and the sanctity of state sovereignty, the Canadian government created the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) in 2000 and in 2001 introduced a resolution called *The Responsibility to Protect* (R2P). Believing that no nation of people should ever be subjected to crimes against humanity or genocide, the aphorism "never again" has been replaced with the idea of a "responsibility to protect" as a rationale for international intervention on behalf of those who could not or would not do for themselves.

So that the consequences of R2P may be fully appreciated, it is essential to understand its composition and its prescriptions for international intervention. To gauge the wisdom of its directive, it is helpful to examine the conditions and effects of

various international interventions which may have embodied the principles of R2P, if not its legal particulars. As state sovereignty is often cited in resistance to foreign interference, it is also imperative to reevaluate the interpretation and potential manipulation of this concept, and to consider situations in which state sovereignty and international law should be compromised for the greater good.

There are four standards which buttress R2P: basic principles, foundations, elements, and priorities. The first of the two basic principles mandates that each state is obligated to protect its citizens from themselves and from those within and/or outside the state who wish harm upon its citizens. Secondly, whether suffering as a result of insurgency, repression, internal war and/or state failure, international forces may intercede on behalf of these victims only if the state in question is unwilling or unable to offer protection.

The foundations which support R2P consist of four dictums: state obligations are intrinsic to the concept of sovereignty; the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is obligated to maintain international peace and security under Article 24 of the UN Charter; legal obligations from human rights and protection declarations, covenants and treaties, and from international humanitarian and national laws binds countries to the idea of R2P; and lastly, the developing practices of states, regional organizations, and the Security Council serves as evidence that the idea of R2P has become an emerging global norm.

Three elements are addressed in R2P as well; the responsibility to prevent, to react, and to rebuild. The responsibility to prevent ensures that the global community addresses the root causes of internal problems or any other man-made crisis which would adversely affect an entire population. The responsibility to react dictates that the global community must respond to situations of large-scale human suffering which require international intervention. The responsibility to rebuild is related to military interventions in which the international community must agree to aid in full assistance of the recovery, reconstruction, and reconciliation of any state subject to intervention.

The last of the four standards of R2P prioritizes which crises require international intervention.

Preventative measures must be exercised before intervention occurs. When intervention is necessary, it is incumbent upon the international community to implement the least intrusive and coercive methods possible, unless otherwise required.

Though a last resort, military interventions must contend with the concept of state sovereignty. As such, the ICISS has provided four instances which legalize this interference within the confines of R2P. Under the just cause threshold, evidence must provide for a 'large scale loss of life', "genocidal intent", or "ethnic cleansing" by governmental bodies or private citizens which the state apparatus is either unable or unwilling to address, before outside forces may intervene.

Precautionary principles must also be considered prior to intervening militarily. States can only intervene when they have the right intention, which is to prevent or end human suffering. To avoid the mischaracterization of a military intervention as having ulterior motives, multilateral efforts are preferred and must be supported by accounts within and surrounding the conflict which corroborate the evidence of any human rights violations. The scale, duration, and intensity of a planned attack are also considered precautionary principles and must be clearly defined and appropriate so as not to exacerbate the discord being addressed. The intervention must also have a great chance of success and should not cause more strife than would otherwise be experienced in the absence of the intervention. The last of these principles mandates that only the UN Security Council has the authority to commence a military intervention.

Only the right authority may lawfully approve an international intervention; this specification serves as the third tenet which legitimizes such actions. Before any state or group of states may commence a military intervention, the matter must be approved by the UNSC. Though exhorted to act in an immediate fashion, the UNSC is allotted a set

amount of time to evaluate the appropriate evidence and to make a final decision. Whether or not the issue at hand involves their own country or the various interests of their country, all five permanent members of the UNSC are urged to abstain from exercising their veto power; an action

which could threaten the credibility of this UN body. In the event that the UNSC fails to act or rejects a proposal, the UN General Assembly may enact an Emergency Special Session to address this outcome. Additionally, regional and sub-regional actors may be allowed to intervene with the approval of the UNSC.

The implementation of operational principles is the last prerequisite prior to the authorization of military intervention. There must be a specific and agreed-upon goal which includes procedural measures, provisions for post-conflict governance, and a clear exit strategy. A commensurate level of resources must be supplied and a clear chain of command and equal communications must be established as well. Additionally, military efforts must be coordinated with humanitarian organizations to ensure that the concerns of those in danger are properly being addressed.

Though clearly defined, there have been incidents following the establishment of R2P which have defied its statutes, challenging the validity of its purview. Under UNSC resolution 1973, in 2011 NATO interceded on behalf of Libyan protesters threatened by then President Muammar al-Gaddafi. Though the no-fly zone which was in place at the time fell under the auspices of R2P, the subsequent bombing of pro-Gaddafi Libyan troops by French fighter jets was a violation as they occurred prior to exhausting all non-military measures.

Yet for many, this breach was a necessary action which would save the lives of a significant portion of the Libyan population. According to Anna Spain:

“...the prevention of genocide or crimes against humanity becomes a justifiable reason for the Security Council to authorize forceful intervention for the following reason. The Council cannot very well fulfill its mandate of restoring or maintaining international peace when such egregious violations of a culture of international peace are allowed to occur unchecked. The Council does not have to stop genocide, but it does have to try. Acts like this destabilize the very infrastructure of international law and the values upon which it is based” (Deciding to Intervene, p.901).

When evaluating the substance of mandates such as R2P or the potency of the UNSC, it may be more valuable to consider the consequences when military intervention is avoided in the name of international law. Throughout the Rwandan civil war of 1994, a lack of evidence prevented the establishment of a mandate which would have protected Tutsi Rwandans by foreign forces, perhaps saving 800,000 lives. Similarly in 1995,

had UN peacekeeping troops been granted the right to use force, some 7,000 Muslim men and boys may have been saved from a massacre which occurred in Srebrenica.



The occurrence of natural disasters may represent another instance in which the ethos of R2P must be assessed in relation to the revered concept of state sovereignty. In the wake of cyclone Nargis in 2008, some 140,000 inhabitants of Myanmar were reported dead or missing. Myanmar military leaders would deny much-needed humanitarian assistance offered by the international community; this blockade was removed only after the Myanmar military accepted the assistance of the Indian government. Yet had international relief been admitted sooner, or had the appropriate international bodies devised a forced humanitarian intervention on the grounds that the Myanmar government was unable or unwilling to properly address the crisis at hand, the amount of lives which could have been saved will never be known.

Fears of infringing upon state sovereignty and/or being denied approval by the UNSC may have been given precedence, allowing for these atrocities to occur. Yet the privilege which sovereignty affords should not obscure the

obligations each state must respect within its boundaries; state sovereignty should not be assumed if a particular governmental apparatus is grossly deficient in providing for its citizens. Sovereignty, “...is not just a protection for the state against coercion by other states...It is also a means of locating responsibility for the protection of people and property and for the exercise of governance in

a territory” (Newland, Patrick & Zard, 2003:36). However, it is worth noting that the majority of states which have been subject to international intervention are former colonies of the Western powers which typically initiate intervention efforts. As such, many developing states interpret Western intervention in the name of R2P as disguised imperialist measures intent on imposing foreign ideals and beliefs.

When R2P is offered as a rationale for international intervention, the apprehension certain UNSC states exhibit should also be considered. If the conditions which prompt calls for mediation are expanded or reinterpreted, the frequency of intervention could be augmented, as could the subjects of intervention. This logic could explain why states with dubious human rights records, such as Russia and China, are often hesitant to embrace R2P principle.

How can we rectify the spirit of R2P with the sanctity of state sovereignty? In *Realizing the Responsibility to Protect*, Alex Bellamy provides three adjustments to R2P which may mollify this tension. Preventative recommendations should be revised to provide exact measures which states may undertake before an intervention occurs. For Bellamy, R2P should be invoked only in response to genocide and mass atrocities; though this limitation could hinder the legal means with which other human rights abuses may be addressed. International peacekeeping forces should be more effectively utilized and should be afforded explicit mandates. So that international interventions are not portrayed as imperialistic, it is also suggested that peacekeeping forces should come from developing states, though they may be comparatively inexperienced.

It is evident that the concepts and directives embodied within R2P do not fully mitigate the adversarial relationship between international intervention and state sovereignty, yet this deficiency should not compromise its development as an international institutional norm. Though the League of Nations was the brainchild of American President Woodrow Wilson, U.S. lawmakers denied our entrance to the League citing fears that doing so would too greatly compromise our sovereignty. But as the atrocities committed during World War II were disclosed, it became apparent that certain accommodations would be necessary for the sake of international security; an admission which facilitated the establishment of the United Nations. As the extenuating circumstances which prompt internal and regional conflicts become increasingly complex, further concessions must be made so that effective interventions may limit human suffering. Failure to act, regardless of legal limitations, may exacerbate and extend tensions which could otherwise be limited. It is perhaps telling that though the Rwandan civil war technically ended in the summer of 1994, bursts of violence continue in the region and have permeated across neighboring Congo, necessitating the assistance of the largest peacekeeping presence in the world. Though controversial, international intervention remains an essential component of the United Nations mandate. And though far from perfect, the precepts of Responsibility to Protect provides a coherent strategy for addressing concerns of state sovereignty and should therefore be improved upon as it continues to serve as a beneficial point of reference for future international interventions.

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The Persian Gulf Monarchies: Reform, Political Liberalization, and Democratization

By Arsalan Alam



The six Persian Gulf Monarchies of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE and Oman have much in common: language, religion, family ties, tribal rule, economic and political systems, enormous petroleum reserves and the rapid transformation of their societies in a short span of time. Since their formation in 1981 during the Iran-Iraq war, they have been faced with an increased security dilemma from Iran and also, since the Persian Gulf War in 1990, from Iraq. They have relied on Western military support for protection and have successfully maintained power over the resources of the region and ruled their respective countries with an iron fist

Political Scientists have long debated the reasons for the Gulf Monarchies' survival and have proposed that it is due to unique cultural factors in the Gulf that includes a paternalistic tribal tradition in which many of the states have been ruled by the same family for two-and-a half centuries. The rulers have been astute in balancing competing internal and external interests, and in creating a 'national myth' that legitimizes their power. Monarchy has survived as a form of government in these states because of external factors, protection by foreign powers, oil revenues, development of the rentier states, and small homogeneous populations. Apart from the reasons for their survival scholars also debated the issue of the trends towards

democratization in the region. Monarchies of the GCC have no free press, no political parties, few trade unions, a system of slavery under which foreign workers are exploited, and abuse of power by the government whereby they can either buy off their potential opposition or suppress it. The private sector in the Gulf monarchies is formed by family ties and kinship relations and works closely with the government to maintain its power and favored position. Thus the government and powerful authorities have no control to force major changes in these autocratic regimes.

As far as democratization goes, scholars who specialize in this region argue that the monarchies of the Middle East (GCC, Jordan and Morocco) do not meet the requirements of democracy. They define 'political liberalization' as granting greater freedom and rights to the people of these nations and 'democratization' as incorporating more public sectors into the decision process of the government. According to Rex Bryner, Bahgat Korany and Paule Noble, in the long run however the monarchies of GCC, Jordan, and Morocco represent an interesting set of cases in which slow and steady political changes are taking place supported by the coexistence of pluralism, monarchical institutions, and some tradition of constitutionalism.

In this paper I will first present the historical background of Gulf States, from colonial times to the creation of the Gulf Cooperation Council in 1981, and then onto the Post Gulf War period. Second, I will describe the factors explaining why democracy has not been enforced in these nations by the United States, by highlighting the economic, political, and regional interests of both parties involved. Third, I will find the path of democratization by applying liberalization policies; fourth answer the question of whether democracy is an effective form of governance for these monarchial oil regimes? And fifth, instead of promoting democracy would political liberalization, combined with monarchial rule, be much better for the GCC nations and the region as a whole?

Historical Background/Facts The formation of the oil monarchies began in the late 1880s under British colonial rule. During this time “most of the ruling families had already established their supremacy over the tribal areas that later became independent states” (Kamrava 77). The support of the colonial master provided a strong foundation in transforming the ruling class into royal families who were successfully governed by mixing British diplomatic protection with traditional tribal legitimacy, and bands of tribal recruits. When oil was first discovered and sold during the 1950s and 1960s, it changed the political landscape of these states bringing the bureaucratization of the monarchy, creating a modern civil system, armed forces, and establishing a pyramid power structure - with the royal family acquiring the top position while the civil service came second, and the armed forces, third.

The discovery of Oil in the 1950s became the largest source of public revenue and single biggest component of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the six Persian Gulf monarchies. One reason why the Gulf monarchies did not encounter any form of social complaint or political uprisings was the fact that from the 1950s to the 1980s the enormous amount of wealth acquired by the monarchies was spent on keeping their nationals happy, thereby minimizing any discontent.

However, the real threat to the production, distribution, and price of oil came in 1981 with their two strong neighbors Iraq and Iran went head to head with each other leading to the creation of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) as a shield to

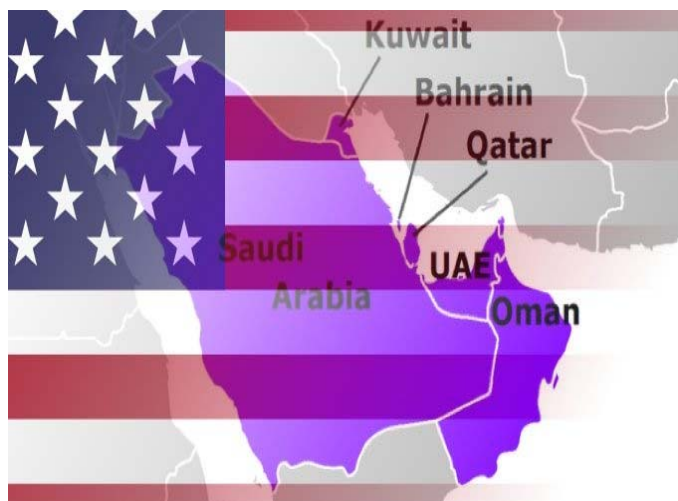
protect their neighbor's social, political, and economic interests in the region. But the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 revealed the vulnerability of the GCC states to external threats, their inability to defend the region, and “drained their treasuries with the physical damage, military costs, and dislocation of economies”(Bahgat 321).

In fact it was the events of the Gulf War that made the GCC states realize that the only way to ensure their security was to depend on the aid and support of Western powers. Thus the Gulf monarchies formed new security agreements between themselves and the United States, joint military exercises were conducted, and the Gulf became the prosperous market of Western arms deals. “From 1989 to 1993 the Saudi kingdom spent USD 8,039 million making it the third leading recipient of major conventional weapons in the world” (Ibid 322). UAE ranked 17 in the world and was spending USD 2,491 million on weapons, and Kuwait ranked 21 and spent USD 2,308 million.



U.S and Persian Gulf Monarchies Interests The United States has used the traditional notions of Realpolitik; a system of politics based on a country's situation and it's need rather than on the ideas about what is morally right and wrong. For example to construct and maintain the balance of power and protect the sovereignty, domestic identity, and regime security of the monarchies, after driving Saddam's forces out of Kuwait, the United States became the defender of the Persian Gulf, ensuring that its core interests were fulfilled: a continual flow of oil and gas trade, protecting the movement of maritime traffic through Suez, and guaranteeing the safety of their key partners Israel and Saudi Arabia.

Under the senior Bush administration the agenda of promoting democracy and freedom was adopted in the Middle East, specifically among the monarchies of the Gulf in the hope that democratization would follow as a natural consequence of economic freedom. Professor David Pollock, a senior fellow at the Washington Institute who specializes in the political dynamics of Middle Eastern countries, argues that US policy toward the Persian Gulf monarchies shifted after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks when Saddam's regime was overthrown from power in 2003. The junior Bush administration placed a lot of emphasis on reform and democratization in the Middle East, which was supposed to act as a shield to protect their interests from terrorism, extremism, and al-Qaida. However, the United States was not looking for true revolutionary changes in the Gulf region, especially in terms of replacing the monarchical rule with democratic law. The United States' main concern was maintaining its power and control over the strategic location of the Gulf.



What does this mean for Persian Gulf Monarchies? Without subsequent pressure from the United States and Western powers, limited reforms have taken place, though they do not challenge the tribal and family based system of governance. The reason Gulf monarchical regimes have been stable over the years is because of a strong legitimacy (bond) between their nationals and the tribal families. "Nevertheless, the oil monarchies have developed institutions and patterns of rule that have considerably cushioned

their vulnerability against popular uprisings or other similar domestic threats" (Kamrava 77). Tribal identity and values continue to hold a prominent place in the political life of these oil monarchies, and the essence of tribalism is optimized by the royal family. For example, tribal practices such as Shura (consultation), and Majlis (advisory council) continue to remain important symbols of the state's power. Apart from linking tribalism into the state system, the oil monarchies use the offerings of the state as patronage in the form of state education, medical treatment, food, housing, and employment to establish direct relations with the tribesmen, tribal leaders, and paramount shaykh of other tribes.

However, reforms were introduced by the monarchies not to improve the livelihood of their citizens, but to elevate their status in the eyes of the international community, to establish bilateral relations, and to sign trade agreements and exchange security deals with their American and European allies. Liberalization has taken place in the Gulf countries without substantive US pressure, but significant progress has not taken place since the US administration began to actively promote their strategic policy agenda instead of political reform agenda. Democracy promotion in the Persian Gulf by the US and EU should not be seen as encouraging further political reform, but rather as fostering a more plural civil society that would bring more drastic changes through liberalization.

Democratization through Political Liberalization

Political Liberalization can serve as a good starting point for regimes to direct themselves toward democratization; however, Persian Gulf monarchies do not meet the minimal standards and requirements such as rule of law, separation of powers, protection of basic liberties (speech, assembly, religion and property), constitutional liberalism and state based moderate capitalism. Instead of democratization, Persian Gulf monarchies are more inclined toward political liberalization to carry out reforms and to maintain the status quo of rule. Why are they successful when it comes to political liberalization?

Middle Eastern monarchies, especially the Persian Gulf states, are comfortable with opening political liberalization -- unlike presidents of republics or states -- because executive power in the form of the cabinet will be more responsible to the King and

less responsible to the legislative body; social pluralist groups can be accommodated under the existing political system with minimal discomfort. Political liberalization is used by monarchial regimes to adjust the balance of power within the regime coalition. When regimes become separated from their populations following a long period of political repression, they become less accustomed to the strength of many social and political groups but also to members within their regime.

Another useful aspect of political liberalization for the monarchies is the ability to provide a democratic agreement in return for unpopular and unsupported policies by the public. With state based incentives and economic structured policies reversing the tensions that painful economic reforms brought works as a turning point. For example, the rise of the Majlis al-Shura in Saudi Arabia in 1992 after the end of the Gulf War prompted the middle class and liberal minded Saudi citizens to rise against the ruling authority and demand social, political, and economic changes. Apart from the benefits of using political liberalization policies, one advantage is that it can be easily manipulated. Ruling families can suspend parliaments if their demands outweigh their benefits, as happened in Kuwait in 1999 and 2005. Changes in the constitution and election laws act as survival strategies. Thus, political liberalization is far better for Persian Gulf monarchies than making the efforts of transitioning to democratization, which would destroy the stability of their state and ruin the future of their people.

Is Democratic Transition a Good Form of Governance? There is little hope that democratic governments will emerge out of autocratic regimes. Thus, a reliable strategy would be to implement the distribution of resources and forces to make it possible for the leader or group in power to dominate everyone else. But the dispersion of power works only if it is effectively supported by institutional checks and balances, otherwise fragmentation and internal strife will result.

Many Middle Eastern scholars have pondered over the conceptual problems that the Arab-Islamic world faces when it comes to political development. However the elites and citizens of the Arab World, especially the oil rich monarchies of the Gulf, see the United States as the biggest obstacle to democracy and any future for reform in their

societies. They see the American quest for democracy as an avenue for greater military, economic, and political interference in the region, promoting and safeguarding Israel, while turning a blind eye toward the Palestinian issue. As the superpower of the world, the United States assumed the responsibility of using its military and technological superiority in this region to protect its three vital interests: oil, the state of Israel and the eradication of terrorism. To maintain their interests in the Persian Gulf, and to expand their military presence, the United States has sought the assistance of the Saudi Royal family for many years, especially during the 1990 Gulf War and during the 2003 Invasion of Iraq.

Is democratic transition a good form of governance for the Middle East Oil Monarchies? From the point of view of the citizens of these monarchies yes, but from the point of view of the US and the ruling elites no, because that would result in the collapse of the power structure in the region, which would seriously damage both the monarchies and US interests, and goals. "Power remains personal, egocentric, and public decisions remain largely reflections of personal preferences and the self-interests of the top leaders" (Ibid 432).

The bottom line is that current US strategic interests do not require democracy promotion in the Arab-Islamic world. Rapid democratization may lead to civil war, ethnic tensions, social strife, radicalism and anti-American sentiment.



"Democratization is a messy process, that no great power can afford to pursue it with utter consistency,

and that there are serious limits to the role that outsiders can play in coaxing democratization along”(Bellin 119). Since outsiders have neither the interest nor the endurance to advance it, democratization should emerge internally from among the social, cultural, religious, and political factions of the GCC states who will be aware of the costs and benefits of their calculations and the consequences of challenging the status quo of rulers in power.

Conclusion Reform in the Oil Monarchies of the Middle East is possible, despite the similar pattern of rule they all follow. The political, social, economic, and institutional tools that the monarchies have used for their survival proves to be viable points for comparison. The Persian Gulf monarchies are the subtype of authoritarian regimes; most of them share a general mentality of preserving social and cultural traditions while encouraging economic and political development. There also exists some form of limit on their monarchical power and authority by institutions, though they do strongly crack down on violators who show resistance to their family and hereditary governance. But they also respect social protected space, encourage political participation, obey constitutional norms, and allow their citizens to exercise their choice.

The six GCC states rely heavily on the United States and other Western powers for security, political support, bilateral agreements, trade relations, and upgrading their image in the international community. Because of their strategic location in the region and their support of U.S. hegemony, the United States has never fully implemented the process of democratization upon these regimes nor has there been any

accountability of their abuse of power. Due to this reason the oil monarchies have used different methods of strengthening relations between regime coalition and society, mostly by buying the support of political, religious, social, and tribal groups. And because of the support they have received from the US they have shown favoritism among their citizens, discriminated others, encouraged the promotion of local elections, shown resilience to women's role in the society, and allowed some form of political participation.

Looking at the future however, political liberalization is a much better option than democratization for the GCC states. Liberalization allows the mobilization of a pluralist society without the fear of raising a resurgent civil society which can dismantle the regime. Political liberalization also allows the monarchies to choose their partners beforehand and gives them the freedom to apply the divide and rule measure more successfully. Further increased political liberalization can help the oil monarchies survive the economic and political storms that might result from the emergence of true supporters of democracy.

If democracy emerges in the Persian Gulf monarchies, will it survive without jeopardizing the cultural, economic, political, and security situation? Yes it will jeopardize the situation and it will seriously damage the interests, goals, and agenda's of the United States. Rather political liberalization combined with monarchical rule is better for the GCC nations and the region as a whole because by preserving the autocratic rule and allowing liberalization to flourish we might witness the emergence of democratization in the near future.

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