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Editorial

Articles

The Middle East, Africa, Feminism, and BRICS

As usual, this issue of *Air and Space Power Journal–Africa and Francophonie* addresses diverse topics relevant to our time and its readers in 185 countries. In "The Benefit Principle As Applied to Middle East Oil: Implications for US Energy Policy," professors Mohammed Akacem, John Faulkner, and Dennis Miller base their policy prescription on the following benefit principle of taxation: those who benefit more from the provision of a public good should pay more of the tax. National defense is a commonly recognized public good. Large consumers of petroleum and petroleum products benefit most from the US military's defense and projection of power in the Middle East to secure access to petroleum. However, all US taxpayers bear the monetary burden that supports such defense. To correct this inequity, the authors suggest a tax on petroleum at the retail level that better reflects the military costs associated with providing oil from the Middle East. A direct benefit of such a tax will be to diminish US dependence on Middle East oil by allowing the price at the pump to reflect all costs.

Turkey is a "model" for Muslim democracies to follow in the post–"Arab Spring" Middle East, according to Prof. Hayat Alvi's article "The Postsecular Republic: Turkey's Experiments with Islamism." She believes that Turkish secularists are becoming increasingly anxious, fearing that the country is heading towards harder-line Islamism. Similar fear permeated postrevolution Tunisia and Egypt, whose Islamists have been removed from power. However, Turkey's Justice and Development Party (AKP) and President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan have persisted despite serious challenges. Professor Alvi examines Turkey's experiments with Islamism and its drive to transform into a postsecular republic. Her field research and interviews have led to findings in this study that highlight the Erdoğan government's unwavering determination to relegate the republic's fierce embrace of secularism to the rearview mirror while playing a greater role in regional politics for what it sees as geopolitically strategic objectives.

Prof. Jack Kalpakian argues in "Ethiopia and the Blue Nile: Development Plans and Their Implications Downstream" that disputes over the Ethiopian Blue Nile dams are a result of identity construction and nationalism in the Nile basin, especially in Egypt. Normally, pressures produced by droughts and climate change would lead to cooperative behavior because upstream dams represent a premium for everyone. Egypt, however, has consistently rejected win-win approaches to integrated water management in the basin because it views itself as the owner of the Nile, a perspective rejected by nearly all other riparians, including Sudan. At present, the shifting of the balance of power in the Nile basin away from Egypt and towards Ethiopia has

led to a change in Sudanese policy out of sheer necessity. Professor Kalpakian concludes with a discussion and reflections about risks facing citizens in the region, particularly the religious minorities in Egypt and Ethiopia.

In "Feminism and the Politics of Empowerment in International Development," professors Carole Biewener and Marie-Hélène Bacqué address the turn to empowerment within the international development arena. They do so by contrasting the left feminist approach to empowerment that developed out of community-based activism in South Asia in the mid-1970s with neoliberal and liberal discourses about empowerment that emerged within the World Bank in the mid-1990s. The authors discuss the alternative politics at play in these three approaches to empowerment by highlighting their different conceptualizations of agency, subjectivity, and power. They conclude by considering some of the key issues facing a left feminist empowerment project today, arguing that—given the current context in which powerful mainstream liberal conceptualizations of empowerment have taken center stage—it is especially important for feminists to pursue a "postcapitalist politics" that connects empowerment to alternative, noncapitalist visions of the economy.

Prof. Mikhail Troitskiy's article "BRICS Approaches to Security Multilateralism" informs us that over the past two decades, China, Russia, and India have hammered out four types of reactions to problems posed by developed nations of the West in the fields of technology, international doctrine, and security strategy. Some of those reactions—such as undertaking asymmetrical measures, imposing international legal or ethical constraints on Western initiatives, and mirroring Western innovation—were confrontational. Yet, oftentimes a conciliatory or even cooperative approach prevailed so that conflict among the "aspiring powers" and the West was avoided. Beijing, Moscow, and New Delhi usually sought to strike a balance between confrontation and cooperation with the challengers. However, the Ukraine crisis of 2014 heralded Russia's move towards a showdown with the United States and its allies. While Moscow has been trying to change the status quo forcefully by precipitating an anti-Western coalition, Beijing and New Delhi have refrained from endorsing a direct assault against the interests of the United States and its allies, deflecting Moscow's demands for a collective counterbalancing strategy.

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The Benefit Principle As Applied to Middle East Oil

Implications for US Energy Policy

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The benefit principle, well known in public finance theory, suggests that people who benefit most from a good or service should pay the taxes associated with the public provision of that good or service in proportion to the benefits they receive.[1] The United States has violated that principle of public finance since it began military expenditures to maintain access to Middle East oil in the 1930s.[2] Over time, this practice has amounted to hundreds of billions and possibly several trillions of US dollars (assuming inflated current dollars). That is, rather than paying for military costs at the gas pump as direct users, all US federal taxpayers share the cost of US military presence and involvement in the Middle East—not just those who use petroleum and petroleum products the most.

In a very real sense, the small consumer of petroleum and petroleum products carries a disproportional burden of the socialized costs of these large military expenditures.

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The authors are thankful for comments by a reviewer from the US Energy Information Administration.

For this reason, we propose that the price of gasoline sold in the United States more accurately reflect the military costs of US presence and involvement in the Middle East.

We wish to increase fairness according to the benefit principle. Specifically, users should pay in proportion to the benefits they receive, and doing so would improve efficiency of resource use. If the United States continues to exclude the high military costs associated with providing imported Middle East oil, all US users of petroleum and its derivative products will continue to overconsume a good whose cost is actually more than the retail price indicates. Basically, that price—as applied to gasoline originating from the Middle East—is distorted.[3] Without an appropriate tax, the price signals to consumers that petroleum from the Middle East costs much less than it does.[4] Therefore, demand proves greater than it would if the price reflected this hidden cost.

This article seeks to move the market price (retail price) closer to a market-efficient equilibrium, thereby internalizing the external costs of higher taxes now imposed on the frugal consumer of petroleum products rather than the large users. Doing so would also impart information to the consumer to utilize the petroleum resource more sparingly.

An Opportune Time for the Tax

Four major mileposts make this an opportune time to implement a tax. First, the United States has experienced a boom in shale oil and gas development.[5] This boom significantly lessened US dependence on imported oil from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) from over 5 million barrels per day in 2004 to about 3.5 million by October 2013.[6] Second, Canadian tar-sand development has allowed the United States to substitute Canadian crude oil for that from the Middle East: "Crude oil imports [from Canada] by the United States averaged a record 2.6 million bls/d [barrels per day] in 2013, up about 15% from their 2011 level."[7] Third, China has overtaken the United States as the biggest consumer of OPEC oil imports.[8] China's purchases of OPEC oil have risen from about 1 million barrels per day to about 3.7 million.[9] Fourth, the price of oil has recently fallen below $100 per barrel, as reflected at the gas pumps. An additional tax on gasoline at this time would not impose an undue burden on the consumer since the tax would be offset by the lower gasoline prices.

Together these four events have significantly changed US interests in Middle East oil. The United States became less dependent on that oil through establishing more self-sufficiency and by increasing its use of oil from Canada, a stable and peaceful northern neighbor. To a great extent, these changes have permitted China to replace US interests in assuring safe access to Middle East oil. Even so, the United States maintains a significant military presence in the Middle East despite these substantial changes, its withdrawal from Iraq, and its ongoing departure from Afghanistan.

Consequently, the smallest and least direct consumers of petroleum are hit with the heavy tax externality that does not discriminate between the biggest and most direct beneficiaries of US military expenditures in the Middle East. Ironically, these expenditures are increasingly subsidizing China, the United States' major trade rival, by providing

it safe access to Middle East oil at the expense of all US federal taxpayers. This occurs even though the United States imports less oil from the Middle East than does China.[10]

By historic standards, petroleum prices are quite high. On 4 March 2014, spot prices were selling for about $103.30 per barrel.[11] In June 2008, the price of crude spiked as the world watched the United States ease monetary policy to combat the Great Recession. In today's prices, the cost actually reached $143.02 per barrel. In a 20-year period from October 1993 to October 2013, the price rose from $27.06 per barrel to over $100.[12] Recently, this price has fallen.

Historically, high oil prices have enabled the provision of oil from more costly sources, especially the tight oil deposits in shale, the tar sands of Canada, and oil from deep-ocean drilling. Concerning US oil shale deposits for some fields, "Energy producers on average need oil prices of about $96 a barrel to break even on wells drilled in the Permian layers known as the Cline Shale and Mississippi Lime. Other areas of the Permian [in Texas] need a price of just $70 to $74."[13] For Canadian tar sands, the estimated minimum price of international crude oil necessary to maintain a 10 percent profit return is $70 per barrel.[14] The high oil prices have led to decreased energy use in the United States. Despite its large population and growing economy, America uses about as much total energy as it did in 2000—less than 98 quadrillion BTUs per year.[15]

Methods

A coherent and viable US energy policy has yet to be put forward. Commentaries on why oil prices are so high vary.[16] Many people fail to appreciate that gasoline prices would be much higher were it not for the implicit subsidy that exists because of the US military presence that safeguards oil shipments in the Gulf.

This article proposes two more estimates; however, they exclude the costs of recent US involvement in Iraq. Were we to include US military expenditures in the recent Iraq war, we would have to consider a cost on the order of 1 trillion US dollars. Therefore, we limit ourselves to an estimate of costs *without* that military involvement. Thus, our two estimates are on the conservative side.[17]

Pinpointing the real military cost is problematic because data on military expenditures specifically targeted to protect access to Middle East oil are difficult to determine. Moreover, the mere presence of US forces and the projection of American military power influence and affect both the futures market and traders. Ultimately, reducing the risk premium lowers prices.[18] Nevertheless, the importance of this issue has led to our policy recommendations, which would allow for more transparency and a retail price of gasoline that would reflect the full cost of delivering gasoline from the Middle East to the US consumer—unlike a gasoline price that now hides it.

Estimated Dollar Cost of US Military Presence in the Middle East

Through its military expenditure in the Middle East, the United States has helped to insure stable petroleum supplies to purchasers throughout the world.[19] The full cost of

this insurance is difficult to estimate, but this is no excuse for ignoring the significant, positive externality it provides consumers, middlemen, and countries that produce petroleum. One factor complicating the price of this insurance is the cost of the war on terrorism declared by the United States after the attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on 11 September 2001. Since this subsidy has existed long before declaration of the war on terrorism, one could argue that both costs—of insurance and of the war on terrorism—are inextricably bound. This notion seems true since an unsuccessful waging of that war would jeopardize stable access of the petroleum-dependent nations of the world to Middle East oil.

US concern about that access has existed for decades. Perhaps the major demarcation of America's interest began in 1943 when it declared that Saudi Arabia was "eligible for direct 'Lend-Lease' economic assistance, even though Saudi Arabia was a noncombatant."[20] Two years later, on 14 February 1945, on the Great Bitter Lake in Egypt, President Roosevelt met with Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud (Ibn Saud), founder of Saudi Arabia and its king from 1932 to 1953.[21] The king raised the question about how much he could rely upon the support of the United States militarily.[22] Two years later, "his Majesty wished to know how and in what manner he might rely on the United States" to protect the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from possible uprising.[23]

The United States appreciated the kingdom's loathing of godless communism and felt, therefore, that Saudi Arabia would offer a bulwark against communist expansion in the Middle East.[24] In 1951 the US Department of State outlined a "Comprehensive Statement of the United States Policy" toward Saudi Arabia, the major oil producer in the Persian Gulf at that time:

> It is a major objective that Saudi Arabia's economic possibilities be developed to provide more services and diversify national income, since it is a primitive country which needs development in every kind of public enterprise to raise the standard of living, stabilize the economy, and promote trade and diversification of domestic industry. It is also our purpose to assure for ourselves and our friends and allies the strategic advantages of Saudi Arabia's geographical position, petroleum resources, and the continued general antipathy of the Saudi Arabs for communism.[25]

James Mann reported that as early as 1977, during the beginning of the Carter administration, Paul Wolfowitz—then a Democrat and employed at the Pentagon—produced the "Limited Contingency Study," which outlined Department of Defense (DOD) contingency planning involving US protection of the oil-producing capability of the Persian Gulf nations.[26] Furthermore, James Baker, secretary of state during the first Bush administration, clearly indicated that our interest in the 1991 Gulf War with Iraq was oil:

> Q: But some people have used the posthumous line "Hey it [Kuwait during the 1991 Gulf War] was just a gas station, and the gas station had changed hands." You didn't see it like that?

> Baker: No, we did not see it that way, absolutely not. No. Let me say the reason we didn't see it as a case of the gas station just changing hands is because it has been a policy in the

United States for a long time that we had a *vital national interest at stake in preserving free access to the oil of the Persian Gulf*. I think everybody in the United States—I'm not aware of anybody in our government [who] has said "This is just a gas station changing hands."[27] (emphasis added)

Thus, history indicates that the United States has purposefully maintained a military presence in the Middle East to insure stable supplies of oil. Further, the cost of that presence is financed through the US tax system but remains mostly absent at the gasoline pump. Consequently, the general taxpayer subsidizes the large, direct consumers of gasoline, resulting in greater gasoline demand than there would be if the cost of US military presence were embodied in the price at the gas pump.

Existing Estimates

Several energy specialists have made estimates of what the price per barrel of oil should be if the cost of the US military presence in the Middle East were included in the price of petroleum (table 1). According to Amory Lovins and Joseph Romm, "Even before Iraq invaded Kuwait, U.S. forces earmarked for gulf deployment were costing [US] taxpayers around $50 billion a year—nearly $100 per barrel of oil imported from the Persian Gulf."[28] Adjusting for inflation to 2013 dollars, these costs are about $84 billion and $130 per barrel.[29] Given that each barrel of oil yields 42 gallons of gasoline, if the cost were passed on to consumers, the pump price would come to $3 more per gallon than the present pump price.

Table 1. Estimates of the increase in the price of oil by including US military costs in the Middle East (2013 US dollars)

Author	Year of Estimate	Annual Military Cost	Persian Gulf	US Oil Imports	Estimated US Consumption	
		billions	Cost per barrel[a]			Cost per gallon
Lovins and Romm[b]	1992/93	$84	$130	$27	$13	$0.31
Hall[c]	2003	$129	$148	$29	$18	$0.42
NDCF[d]	2003	$57	$66	$13	$8	$0.19
Delucchi and Murphy[e]	2004	$33–91	$39–107	$7–20	$5–13	$0.11–0.30

[a] The cost per barrel is derived by dividing the annual military cost by the average annual number of barrels imported or consumed during the period of time five years before to five years after the year of the estimated cost. See US Energy Information Administration, "Annual Energy Review," tables 5.1 and 5.4, accessed June 2013, http://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/annual/index.cfm#petroleum.
[b] Amory B. Lovins and Joseph J. Romm, "Fueling a Competitive Economy," *Foreign Affairs* 71, no. 5 (Winter 1992/1993): 49.
[c] Darwin C. Hall, professor of economics at California State University, cited in Laura Cohn et al., "Taming the Oil Beast," *Business Week*, 23 February 2003, 106, http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/stories/2003-02-23/taming-the-oil-beast.
[d] Milton R. Copulos, *America's Achilles* [sic] *Heel: The Hidden Costs of Imported Oil; a Strategy for Energy Independence* (Alexandria, VA: National Defense Council Foundation, 2003), 32, 36.
[e] Mark A. Delucchi and James J. Murphy, "U.S. Military Expenditures to Protect the Use of Persian Gulf Oil for Motor Vehicles," *Energy Policy* 36, no. 6 (2008): 2253–64.

This price, of course, refers only to the petroleum imported from the Persian Gulf states. Once averaged in with total domestic petroleum consumption, the Lovins and Romm figure adds only about 31 cents to the domestic price per gallon at the pump.[30]

However, their estimate might be low in light of the escalation of US military presence in the last several years, as noted earlier in the example of US engagement in Iraq.

Simply by adding in the more than $100 billion cost of having troops and fighting wars in the Persian Gulf, California State University economist Darwin Hall determined that oil should cost at least $13 per barrel more.[31] This military approximation adjusts for inflation to $129 billion, and the cost per barrel of US consumption is estimated at $18 in table 1. Again, assuming 42 gallons per barrel, this would mean approximately 42 cents more per gallon of gasoline—a "rock bottom, lowball estimate," according to Hall that does not include other externalities such as possible costs associated with climate change.[32]

In its report *America's Achilles* [*sic*] *Heel: The Hidden Costs of Imported Oil; a Strategy for Energy Independence*, the National Defense Council Foundation (NDCF) estimated military expenditures for United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) at about $87 billion annually.[33] The command covers more territory than the Middle East and has other purposes besides defending oil. Therefore, the NDCF attributes half of USCENTCOM's budget to protecting the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf as a reasonable assumption and estimates a cost of about $57 billion (in 2013 inflation-adjusted dollars).[34] Dividing this figure by US oil consumption amounts to only 19 cents more per gallon.

Using earlier estimates, Mark Delucchi and James Murphy assume that the peacetime costs of defending the Persian Gulf were about $30–60 billion in 1991. They then estimated a small growth in expenditures of 0.5–1.5 percent per year and added wartime spending of $15–25 billion each year, based on the assumption that a trillion-dollar war would happen every 50 years. Thus, unlike the other estimates, theirs implicitly takes into consideration the cost of the Iraq war.[35]

Further, Delucchi and Murphy addressed the amount of military spending if there were no Persian Gulf, estimating savings in 2004 of $47–98 billion. Since not all expenditures in the Persian Gulf are for oil, they then examined the amount of military spending if the Gulf did not have oil, estimating savings in 2004 of $27–73 billion; that is, $20–25 billion of the military spending was for interests other than oil.[36] The figure of $27–73 billion of military spending for oil interests was adjusted for inflation to $33–91 billion in table 1. By means of a stepwise procedure, they eliminated other interests in oil and estimated the cost of defending the use of oil by motor vehicles in the United States at only $6–25 billion.[37] Table 2 summarizes their estimates of the cost of defending oil for these various purposes.

Table 2. The cost of defending each US interest in the Persian Gulf in 2004

Cost of defending (billions of dollars per year)	Low	High
Use of oil by motor vehicles in the United States	$5.8	$25.4
Use of oil by other sectors in the United States	$7.6	$21.6
Interests of US oil producers in the Persian Gulf	$4.5	$11.7
World economy from the effects of disruptions in the supply of oil from the Persian Gulf	$8.8	$14.7
US interests other than oil in the Persian Gulf	$20.3	$24.5
All US interests in the Persian Gulf (sum of the above)	*$47.0*	*$97.8*

Source: Mark A. Delucchi and James J. Murphy, "U.S. Military Expenditures to Protect the Use of Persian Gulf Oil for Motor Vehicles," *Energy Policy* 36, no. 6 (2008): 2253–64.

Numbers may not add exactly since they are displayed as rounded.

New Estimates of the Military Cost to Protect Oil in the Persian Gulf

Estimating the military cost is difficult because DOD budgets reflect function and service rather than region. Data on oil imports and consumption, however, are readily available. Once military expenditures are estimated, the cost per barrel is easily calculated.

Using more recent approximations of military expenses to protect oil in the Persian Gulf, we have made two new estimates of the military cost per barrel and per gallon over two periods of time (table 3). Much more comprehensive and complicated valuations of the cost of *conflict* in the Middle East come from the late Thomas Stauffer, who determined that from 1956 to 2002, this expenditure has been about $3 trillion (2002 constant dollars) or $4 trillion (2013 constant dollars).[38] However, these are "estimated costs . . . [and] can only illustrate an order of magnitude, and they will no doubt be subject to much disagreement, especially given the sensitivity of the subject matter."[39] The expenditures concern the conflict in the Middle East and are not limited to the costs of the US military presence. Stauffer's figures are comprehensive, including those associated with the following programs and events: Project Independence, the strategic petroleum reserve, the Iran-Iraq War, the Six-Day War of 1967, and the Yom Kippur War of 1973.

Table 3. New estimates of the additional increase in the price of oil by including US military costs in the Middle East (2013 US dollars)

Author of military cost estimate	Stauffer[a]	Stern[b]
Period of estimate	1956–2002	1976–2007
Military cost over period	$4.0 trillion	$3.4 trillion
Billions of barrels of oil during period		
Imported from the Persian Gulf	19	21
Imported from all sources	103	105
Consumed in the United States	264	211
Cost per barrel[c]		
Imported from the Persian Gulf	$206	$167
Imported from all sources	$39	$33
Consumed in the United States	$15	$16
Cost per gallon[c]		
Imported from the Persian Gulf	$4.91	$3.97
Imported from all sources	$0.92	$0.78
Consumed in the United States	$0.36	$0.39

[a] "US Cost of Conflict in the Middle East since 1956 Totals $3 Trillion, Says Stauffer," *Middle East Economic Survey* 46, no. 9 (3 March 2003), http://markt-daten.de/download/kriegskosten_stauffer.htm.
[b] Roger J. Stern, "United States Cost of Military Force Projection in the Persian Gulf, 1976–2007," 7, article in press, doi:10.1016/j.enpol.2010.01.013, accessed 13 April 2015, http://www.princeton.edu/oeme/articles/US-miiltary-cost-of-Persian-Gulf-force-projection.pdf.
[c] Military cost in the Middle East to defend oil divided by the quantity imported or consumed. See US Energy Information Administration, "Annual Energy Review," tables 5.1 and 5.4, accessed June 2013, http://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/annual/index.cfm#petroleum.

However, one might argue that any conflict in the Middle East could escalate into regional fighting that would threaten US access to Middle East oil. Stauffer's cost estimates began in 1956, the time of the Suez crisis, which involved control of the Suez Canal, on the main route of most oil tankers running from the Persian Gulf to Europe. If one accepts the premise that US expenditures in the Middle East are designed to maintain stability and thus prevent a major escalation of conflict that would endanger US access to oil, then it appears reasonable to include military costs from 1956 to 2002 in the calculation of gasoline per gallon.

According to the Department of Energy, the United States imported about 103 billion barrels of oil from 1956 to 2002.[40] Given Stauffer's estimate of $4 trillion (2013 US dollars) for US engagement in the Middle East from 1956 to 2002, we estimate that if that figure had been included in the price of gasoline, each gallon would cost about 92 cents more. Since imported oil eventually will be mixed with domestic oil, the actual price at the pump would have to be 36 cents higher.[41] This is the low end of our estimate because if expenditures in the Iraq war were included, it would be considerably more.

If we were to look at total imports of the United States from OPEC countries and factor in the additional cost per gallon at the US pump, we would find that the price per gallon for OPEC oil would have to increase by $1.82. However, when that oil is mixed

with the rest of imported oil and domestic production, the ultimate price increase at the gas pump would be the same—36 cents per gallon.[42]

Finally, the price adjustment for oil coming from the Middle East would remain the same as far as cost at the gas pump is concerned, but it is the most expensive oil if taken alone. The true cost per barrel of the 19 billion barrels of oil imported from the Middle East from 1956 to 2002 is more than $200 per barrel (almost $5 per gallon) higher than the market price. It represents the highest cost for imported oil on a per-barrel basis. Clearly, the United States does not get its money's worth while subsidizing domestic consumption and the rest of the world as well.

This estimate calls for a clear US energy policy that takes these expenditures into account. That policy should recognize that even though the share of oil imports from the Middle East has decreased over time, the region still plays an important role in terms of the worldwide oil supply. Reliance on Middle East oil is forecast to increase in the years to come with more demand from developing economies such as China's.[43]

Roger Stern claims to have made the first estimate of projecting military force in the Persian Gulf derived entirely by quantitative methods. Since DOD budgets reflect function and service rather than region, he uses the proportion of aircraft carriers allocated to the region as a proxy for the proportion of DOD budget allocated to that area since Army and Air Force units are rarely deployed to combat operations without Navy units. Stern calculates the cost of Persian Gulf force projection at about $6.3 trillion for 1976–2007 and $351 billion in 2007 (both in 2008 dollars).[44]

The Stern estimates apply to all of USCENTCOM, which includes the Persian Gulf and Southwest Asia. The NDCF multiplied its estimate of the command's expenditures by about 70 percent to arrive at the amount applicable to the Persian Gulf.[45] Since the United States has interests in the Persian Gulf other than oil, the NDCF multiplied its estimate of USCENTCOM expenditures by about 50 percent to determine the amount applicable to oil in the Gulf.[46] We assume the same factor in table 3.

Stern also included supplemental spending for the Persian Gulf beginning in 2001. We assume that these supplemental budgets were for the Iraq war. Although many people argue that the war might not have occurred if not for oil, to be conservative and consistent with our previous estimate, we did not include costs associated with it.

Results: Summary of Estimates

Most of the six estimates discussed in this part of the article are fairly consistent, suggesting that if the military expense of defending oil in the Persian Gulf were added to the price of gasoline, the latter would cost about 30–42 cents more per gallon.[47] Although these estimates include the cost of military conflicts, they do not include the full expense of the second Iraq war, which began in 2003.[48] Joseph Stiglitz and Linda Bilmes estimated that the cost of the Iraq war, including expenditures likely to be incurred in the future (e.g., caring for injured veterans), will likely exceed $3 trillion.[49] Adding this cost and the above estimates to the pump price of gasoline would likely increase it by more

than a dollar per gallon. Our estimates using the adjusted Stern data are similar to those from the Stauffer data (table 3).

Discussion

Addressing the Free Rider Problem: Nations, Middlemen, Refineries, Distributors, or Consumers?

In the previous sections, we showed that the United States historically has designed policy to help insure safe and stable access to Middle East oil for itself and the rest of the oil-importing world. US military expenditures in the Middle East continue to protect the rest of the world from a serious disruption of oil flow. In defending this free flow of petroleum, the United States, in effect, has provided the world a public good. Nations that have enjoyed this flow have benefited from US expenditures and cheaper oil but have not contributed to the insurance policy, having paid none, or an insignificant share, of the costs. In the traditional sense of the concept, they are "free riders."

The traditional method of taking care of a free-rider problem has been to employ, in Garrett Hardin's words, "mutual coercion, mutually agreed upon."[50] One way of doing so would involve deploying a multinational military force in the Middle East to carry out what the United States has been accomplishing on its own. The only multinational agency capable of such action is the United Nations. Funding for that organization comes from the treasuries of member states but ultimately from the citizens of member countries in the form of taxes or decreased domestic expenditure. Unfortunately, the strategic aims of the United States and the politics of the United Nations have often been at odds. The multinational defense option is neither a likely nor a realistic option.[51]

Because oil is a fungible resource, all nations that purchase it in the international market have benefited from lower prices than they would have paid if this source of oil had been constricted or blocked. In a sense, the international market for oil is one large market. The oil that one nation does not buy, another nation will. Any decrease in the supply of oil in the international market is almost immediately felt internationally since purchases are made from this large, interconnected market.

The "middlemen" or the international oil companies also enjoy benefits from US military expenditures in the Middle East. Such expenses are a subsidy to international oil companies, insuring them safe and stable access to Middle East oil. This insurance is a cost they do not incur and thus do not pass on to customers.

There are at least two ways to include the cost of the US military presence in the price that consumers pay at the pump: tax the middlemen for each barrel imported from the Persian Gulf or tax the US consumer at the pump. Taxing the middlemen or the international oil companies for each barrel they sell in the United States would dissuade international oil companies from making that sale. It would divert the sale to oil-importing countries that do not tax the commodity—the equivalent of a tariff. Exactly who (consumer or international oil company) would bear the burden of the tariff would depend

upon the relevant elasticities of supply and demand for oil coming from the Persian Gulf. These elasticities, of course, would become more elastic with the passage of time.

In the short run, both consumers and suppliers would find it arduous to adapt to a tariff on imported oil were it imposed on an entity other than the consumer. Microeconomic theory argues that the more flexible side of the transaction would carry the smaller burden of the tax. But just who would be the most flexible in response to a higher tax is not clear since several transaction stages are involved in getting oil from the exporting nation to the ultimate consumer of petroleum products.

The sales chain runs as follows:

1. The petroleum-exporting nation's sale of the crude oil to the international oil company
2. The international oil company's sale of the crude oil to the refinery
3. The oil refinery's sale of the refined oil to the gasoline distributor
4. The gasoline distributor's sale to the gasoline retailer
5. The gasoline retailer's sale to the consumer

These transactions are also complicated in that petroleum-related businesses vary in the degree to which they are horizontally integrated and outsourced.

To avoid this complexity, we suggest the following. The US Department of Energy would keep account, as it does now, of how much oil comes from the conflict-ridden nations of the Middle East. The Pentagon would estimate the cost of US military presence and activity there, dividing it by the total barrels of oil imported to the United States from the Middle East and added to each gallon of gasoline sold in the United States at the gas pump.

Ultimately, consumer demand influences the quantity of petroleum supplied. In the long run, a higher price would dampen consumption. Proceeds from the tax would be used to defray the costs of US military presence in the Middle East. We realize that recommending such a policy is not easy because politicians are afraid to deal with any issue that involves raising taxes to reduce the federal deficit and debt—one that plays out in almost every presidential election.[52]

One criticism against this approach maintains that the gasoline tax is regressive since a larger percentage of a poor person's income is likely to be spent on gasoline than that spent by a rich person. To remedy this problem, federal personal income taxes could be reduced on lower-income earners proportionate to the increase that the gasoline tax would typically take from that person's total income. Doing so would restore some income equity to the program.

Advantages of the Additional Gasoline Tax

This approach offers several distinct advantages that fall into three broad categories: economic benefits, international political benefits, and resource benefits.[53]

Economic benefits. The economic benefits involve a more equitable and efficient allocation of the petroleum resource. Consumers of petroleum are not necessarily the

ones who pay the cost. American taxpayers in general subsidize heavy users of petroleum and petroleum-based products—an inequitable practice. The tax that we suggest above would move the tax system nearer to fulfillment of the "benefit principle," involving a closer correspondence between those who use the resource and those who pay.

State gasoline tax policy already employs this principle to support state road and highway construction and maintenance. Those who pay the tax—namely, drivers and owners of motor vehicles—benefit mostly and directly from the resulting roads and their maintenance.

On the other hand, when consumers pay less than the actual cost of petroleum, inefficiency results, leading to an allocation of petroleum not to the most preferred users but to all users who receive the implicit subsidy. Considerable waste of this nonrenewable resource occurs because the price does not reflect its true external cost, and the resource is overused.

International political benefits. A price of petroleum that better reflected actual costs than it does now would provide international political benefits. Perhaps the greatest would be that the United States would enjoy more petroleum independence. This reduction in dependency would occur as a higher price, reflecting actual costs, would lessen the quantity of petroleum demanded from the Persian Gulf. Imports of oil would then tend to come from other, more politically stable areas of the world.

We have recently seen evidence of this phenomenon. As oil prices breached $100 per barrel, oil from tar sands in Canada and from domestic US shale became feasible, lessening American dependence on Middle East oil. Tacking on an additional charge to the price of gasoline at the pump to reflect the cost of US military presence in the Middle East would likely lead to a lessened engagement of the US military there.

It is often forgotten that one of the main stimuli to Osama bin Laden's radicalism was the presence of US forces on the holy ground of Islam (i.e., the Saudi Peninsula up to, during, and after the 1991 Gulf War). That presence resulted from US concern about the possible invasion of Saudi Arabia by Saddam Hussein's Iraq. The United States had an interest in assuring the safety of the Saudi regime, maintaining world access to Saudi oil reserves, and preserving Saudi oil-producing capabilities. Because of Muslim antipathy toward the US military presence in Saudi Arabia, the United States has significantly reduced its military presence on Saudi soil. Discouraging the use of Middle East oil would lessen the need for deployment of US troops in the Middle East and thus lower the ire of Islamic militants.

Resource benefits. The days of low-priced petroleum are over. Although proven world oil reserves are more plentiful than they have ever been, international consumption of oil is also at an all-time high. China and India, the world's two most populated countries, are adding significantly to world demand for petroleum as their economies (gross domestic products) continue to grow rapidly—India in excess of 5 percent annually and China around 7.5 percent. Improved oil exploration and extraction technology have continued to keep the amount of proven world oil reserves ahead of world consumption.

According to the latest British Petroleum *Statistical Review of World Energy*, the world's established reserves of petroleum grew from 117.6 trillion cubic meters in 1992 to 187.3 in 2012.[54]

Even with improved exploration and extraction technology, world production of petroleum will soon reach a peak—a cause for concern. Some individuals have suggested that this apex may occur as soon as the next decade. Several recent books in the popular press have touted this message.[55]

A common reference in these books is to the Hubbert Curve. In 1956 M. King Hubbert developed a forecasting curve in the shape of a normal curve that traced the trajectory of US oil production. Hubbert published forecasts in the 1960s based on this curve, showing that US production of petroleum would peak in the 1970s. His prediction seemed correct as late as 2008, but with continued high petroleum prices worldwide and ongoing improvements in oil- and gas-extraction technology, more reserves are now available. As mentioned above, they are approaching their highest levels ever. Alarmists have made similar predictions about international oil production peaking within the next decade.[56]

Others, such as Vaclav Smil, take a less alarmist view.[57] Like the alarmists, Smil points to Hubbert's Curve. However, he notes that even if the alarmists accept that analysis, Hubbert's curve still suggests that over half of the international petroleum production will take place after the peak is reached:

> Categorical declarations of an early end of the oil era—ushered by an imminent and fairly precipitous decline of global oil extraction—are just the latest additions to a long list of failed predictions concerning the future of oil. . . . Their authors have continued to overlook the fundamental fact that the timing of oil's demise depends not only on the unknown quantity of ultimately recoverable crude oil resources (which has been, so far, repeatedly underestimated) but also on the future demand whose growth they have usually exaggerated and that is determined by complex interplay of energy substitutes, technical advances, government policies, and environmental considerations.[58]

In other words, uncertainty exists about the future of recoverable petroleum deposits. However, we are certain that when a price for an item is below its actual costs, the resource will be overconsumed and undersaved. A higher price, reflecting the external cost of the US presence in the Persian Gulf, would encourage less petroleum consumption. Since no one knows the amount of ultimately recoverable petroleum remaining in the earth, caution brought about by a more realistic price seems only prudent.

In any case, a higher price for petroleum would also induce the use of alternate sources of energy, such as hydrogen or electricity, or a hybridization of the two. It would induce substitute forms of transportation such as more carpooling, the use of jitneys (if local taxicab monopolies would allow them), bicycling, and other forms not yet conceived that the spontaneous dynamics of the market economy would create.

Conclusion and Policy Implications

Clearly, US taxpayers foot the bill for the projection of US military power in the Middle East—particularly in the Gulf. However, consumers worldwide, Middle East oil-producing nations, and international oil companies all enjoy the benefits of this US taxpayer expenditure. Placing a tax on gasoline would more accurately reflect the true costs of the resource of US military presence. We would then expect to see several of the following results:

1. Improved rates of resource use
2. Quickened development of alternative energy resources
3. Less dependency on Middle East oil
4. More substitution for petroleum and energy conservation
5. Less need for the US government to subsidize alternative sources of energy
6. Relief for US taxpayers
7. Less Islamic militancy due to a smaller US military footprint in the region
8. Environmental benefits (not discussed in this article)

US taxpayers carry the burden of the cost of US military presence in the Middle East that seeks to insure stable and secure access to the oil there. Petroleum-exporting nations, petroleum-importing nations, international oil companies, refining companies, oil distributors, oil retailers, and petroleum consumers all enjoy this implicit subsidy. The US taxpayer gives them this external benefit. The benefit principle implies that those who benefit more from the provision of a public good or externality should also pay more for the benefit they receive. A tax on gasoline that better reflects the cost of US military presence in the Middle East would help move us closer to this objective.

Notes

1. "According to [the benefit principle] dating back to Adam Smith and earlier writers, an equitable tax system is one under which each tax payer contributes in line with the benefits which he receives from public services." Richard A. Musgrave and Peggy B. Musgrave, *Public Finance in Theory and Practice*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1976), 211.

2. Since this article focuses on petroleum, it uses the term *Middle East* interchangeably with *Persian Gulf*. We feel justified in doing so since other "Middle East" countries export inconsequential quantities of oil while this article addresses US military expenditure to protect access to oil in the Persian Gulf. See Thomas W. Lippman, *Inside the Mirage: America's Fragile Partnership with Saudi Arabia* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2004), 7–38.

3. The price is distorted not only for the United States but also for the rest of the oil-consuming countries. The United States is essentially subsidizing the rest of the world since it incurs the bulk of the cost.

4. Throughout our discussion, we refer to imports from the Middle East but include the whole Gulf region as well as North Africa.

5. "The Energy Information Administration (EIA) in its September Short-Term Energy Outlook expects U.S. crude oil production to increase from an average of 6.5 million barrels per day in 2012 and 7.5 million barrels per day in 2013 to 8.4 million barrels per day in 2014, which is an average growth rate of almost 14 percent per year." Institute for Energy Research, "U.S. Oil and Natural Gas to Reach Levels Not Seen in Decades . . . Again," Canada Free Press, 5 October 2013, http://canadafreepress.com/index.php/article/58365.

6. Brian Spegele and Matt Bradley, "The Middle East Oil Fuels Fresh China-U.S. Tensions," *Wall Street Journal*, 11 October 2013, A1.

7. See "U.S. Imports by Country of Origin," US Energy Information Administration, 30 March 2015, http://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/pet_move_impcus_a2_nus_ep00_im0_mbblpd_m .htm.

8. Spegele and Bradley, "Middle East Oil," A1.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. This price—$103.33 per barrel on 4 March 2014—was reported by the US Energy Information Administration, based on the price at Cushing, Oklahoma, West Texas Intermediate (WTI) spot price free on board (FOB). See "Cushing, OK Crude Oil Future Contract 1," US Energy Information Administration, accessed 8 March 2014, http://www.eia.gov /dnav/pet/hist/LeafHandler.ashx?n=PET&s=RCLC1&f=D.

12. All prices are adjusted for inflation to current prices using the gross domestic product deflator provided by the St. Louis Federal Reserve. See "Gross Domestic Product: Implicit Price Deflator," US Bureau of Economic Analysis, accessed October 2013, http://research .stlouisfed.org/fred2/data/GDPDEF.txt.

13. Joe Carroll and Edward Klump, "Low Prices Could Pop a Bubble in Texas," *Bloomberg Business Week*, 4–10 November 2013, 49–50.

14. Jeremy Van Loon and John Lippert, "Oil Abundance in Canada Provokes Anxiety over Fossil Fuel Lust," *Bloomberg Business*, 21 November 2011, http://www.bloomberg.com /news/2011-11-22/oil-abundance-in-canada-sands-provoking-anxiety-over-lust-for-fossil-fuels.html.

15. "Table 1.1, Primary Energy Overview," Monthly Energy Review, US Energy Information Administration, March 2015, http://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/monthly/pdf/sec1 _3.pdf.

16. The consensus is that although the three previous shocks (1973, 1979, 2000) were all supplied-induced, the 2005 shock is the first demand-driven shock, China being the principal driver behind it.

17. Since the estimates vary, we are leaving out the cost of the engagement in Iraq for the moment.

18. Ironically, the presence of US troops in Iraq has led to more unrest and has added to more—not less—uncertainty and security; thus, it has added a risk premium to the current oil price. Normally, the presence of the US military in the Gulf should tend to reassure markets, not make them nervous. This principle is true when these forces are there to insure safe passage of oil.

19. Our estimates in this section do not take into account the past cost of the US engagement in Iraq.

20. Lippman, *Inside the Mirage*, 27.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid., 274.

23. Ibid., 273.

24. Ibid., 276.

25. Ibid., 280.

26. In James Mann, "Enter the Persian Gulf," *Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet* (New York: Viking Press, 2004), 79–94.

27. Ibid.

28. Amory B. Lovins and Joseph J. Romm, "Fueling a Competitive Economy," *Foreign Affairs* 71, no. 5 (Winter 1992/1993): 49.

29. The cost per barrel was derived by dividing the $84 billion by 650 million barrels—the average annual number of barrels of oil imported from the Persian Gulf from 1988 to 1998. This calculation is not the same as adjusting the $100 per barrel to 2013 dollars. See US Energy Information Administration, "Annual Energy Review," tables 5.1 and 5.4, accessed June 2013, http://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/annual/index.cfm#petroleum.

30. This figure is derived from dividing the annual military cost of $84 billion by the average annual US consumption of oil of about 6.4 billion barrels during 1988–98 and by 42 gallons per barrel. See US Energy Information Administration, "Annual Energy Review," tables 5.1 and 5.4 (see note 29).

31. Darwin C. Hall, professor of economics at California State University, cited in Laura Cohn et al., "Taming the Oil Beast," *Business Week*, 23 February 2003, 106, http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/stories/2003-02-23/taming-the-oil-beast.

32. Ibid.

33. Milton R. Copulos, *America's Achilles [sic] Heel: The Hidden Costs of Imported Oil; a Strategy for Energy Independence* (Alexandria, VA: National Defense Council Foundation, 2003), 31. The NDCF released a report of the findings of its yearlong investigation of the economic and security costs of oil imports as well as a strategy to reduce our dependence.

34. Ibid., 31, 32, 36.

35. For earlier estimates, see William W. Kaufmann and John D. Steinbruner, *Decisions for Defense: Prospects for a New Order* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 27 April 1991); and Earl C. Ravenal, *Designing Defense for a New World Order: The Military Budget in 1992 and Beyond* (Washington, DC: Cato Institute, 1991). See also Mark A. Delucchi and James J. Murphy, "US Military Expenditures to Protect the Use of Persian Gulf Oil for Motor Vehicles," *Energy Policy* 36, no. 6 (2008): 2253–64.

36. Delucchi and Murphy, "US Military Expenditures."

37. Ibid.

38. "US Cost of Conflict in the Middle East since 1956 Totals $3 Trillion, Says Stauffer," *Middle East Economic Survey* 46, no. 9 (3 March 2003), http://markt-daten.de/download/kriegskosten_stauffer.htm.

39. Ibid.

40. See US Energy Information Administration, "Annual Energy Review," 2011, http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/aer/petro.html. For the years 1956 to 1960, we assumed that the years 1956–59 were similar to 1960 since data for those years are not available.

41. This is a rough estimate, given the nature of the data, but the fact that the current price currently does not reflect the true cost of oil is important. The actual price adjustment will be much higher were we to include the cost of our engagement in Iraq and any cost associated with the rebuilding. Not only are we subsidizing US domestic consumption but also we are subsidizing world consumption of oil—China in particular at this very moment when that country is partly responsible for the sudden surge in demand, which pushed oil prices up. Allowing the true costs of oil to be reflected at the gas pump would go a long way toward reducing US gas consumption and would be a start in developing a sensible energy policy that would lessen dependence on foreign oil in these uncertain times.

42. Once again, without the cost of the current Iraq war.

43. Spegele and Bradley, "Middle East Oil," A1.

44. Roger J. Stern, "United States Cost of Military Force Projection in the Persian Gulf, 1976–2007," 7, article in press, doi:10.1016/j.enpol.2010.01.013, accessed 13 April 2015, http://www.princeton.edu/oeme/articles/US-miiltary-cost-of-Persian-Gulf-force-projection.pdf.

45. Copulos, *America's Achilles* [*sic*] *Heel*, 31.

46. This assumption is consistent with Delucchi and Murphy's article "US Military Expenditures" (see note 35), which estimates that up to 75 percent of Persian Gulf military expenditures is for interests related to oil. The National Defense Council Foundation (NDCF) assumed that 70 percent of USCENTCOM's expenditures were for the Persian Gulf (70% × 75% = 53%).

47. In response to an anonymous referee's comments, we wish to stress that our estimates are for an increase in the prices of oil and thus gasoline. These are inputs, not outputs. Personal computers and cars, as noted by the comments of the referee, are outputs, not inputs in the production chain. Some people would argue that it would be politically impossible to raise gasoline taxes by as little as a few cents. Our argument, however, is that it does not change the fact that the US energy policy is affected by not internalizing the full cost of imported oil, thus making for a flawed policy that serves only to further increase our dependence on foreign oil. The National Defense Council Foundation's (NDCF) estimate (see note 33) was 19 cents, and the Delucchi and Murphy estimate (see note 35) ranged only from 11 to 30 cents.

48. Most of the estimates occurred before the second Iraq war; the Delucchi and Murphy estimate (see note 35) added an average $20 billion per year for military conflict, assuming that a $1 trillion war would happen only every 50 years.

49. Cited in Peter Maass, "The Ministry of Oil Defense," *Foreign Policy*, 5 August 2010, http://foreignpolicy.com/2010/08/05/the-ministry-of-oil-defense/.

50. Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science* 162, no. 3859 (13 December 1968): 1243–48, http://www.sciencemag.org/content/162/3859/1243.full.

51. Furthermore, the United States carries the largest share of funding of the United Nations, roughly 22 percent of that organization's budget. See United Nations Secretariat, "Assessment of Member States' Advances to the Working Capital Fund for the Biennium 2014–2015 and Contributions to the United Nations Regular Budget for 2014," 27 December 2013, 6, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=ST/ADM/SER.B/889. Thus, a significant burden of protecting access to oil in the Middle East lands on the backs of US

taxpayers even though it is a smaller share through the United Nations than they incur when America carries the burden as it does now.

52. For example, in the 1992 presidential election, a commercial accused Senator John Kerry of suggesting a tax of 50 cents on gasoline to help the deficit in 1991. Kerry did propose such a tax, but because of its unpopularity, he abandoned the idea.

53. We are fully aware that this proposal is difficult to advance politically, but it does not change the fact that either we allow the price of oil to fully reflect all costs or we find other ways to correct for the "wrong" price signal that the present arrangement produces.

54. British Petroleum, *BP Statistical Review of World Energy, June 2013* (London: British Petroleum, 2013), 21, http://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/pdf/statistical-review/statistical _review_of_world_energy_2013.pdf.

55. For example, see David Goodstein, *Out of Gas: The End of the Age of Oil* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004); Kenneth S. Deffeyes, *Hubbert's Peak: The Impending World Oil Shortage* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003); Richard Heinberg, *The Party's Over: Oil, War, and the Fate of Industrial Societies* (Gabriola, BC: New Society Publishers, 2003); and Stephen Leeb and Donna Leeb, *The Oil Factor: Protect Yourself and Profit from the Coming Energy Crisis* (New York: Warner Business Books, 2004).

56. See especially Deffeyes, *Hubbert's Peak*. Deffeyes, a colleague of Hubbert, applied the latter's technique on a worldwide basis. This information came from Leeb and Leeb, *Oil Factor*, 36.

57. Vaclav Smil, *Energy at the Crossroads: Global Perspectives and Uncertainties* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 196.

58. Ibid.

The Postsecular Republic

Turkey's Experiments with Islamism

Hayat Alvi, PhD[*]

> *I have no religion, and at times I wish all religions at the bottom of the sea. He is a weak ruler who needs religion to uphold his government; it is as if he would catch his people in a trap.*
> —Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

> *I do not subscribe to the view that Islamic culture and democracy cannot be reconciled.*
> —Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

What has happened in Turkey during the last couple of decades resembles a real-life laboratory test involving chemistry between a zealous secular legacy inscribed into the republic since the formal proclamation of its birth in October 1923 and a neo-Islamism that challenges the status quo. Although the political-ideological pendulum has yet to swing fully in either extreme direction, it undulates with the volatility and uncertainty of an earthquake and its aftershocks.

The recent political turmoil, protests, and demonstrations—together with a host of scandals plaguing the government and at times affecting the police, judiciary, and military—are seemingly unrelated to the issue of mixing religion and politics. However, in reality, the struggle for the survival and preservation of Turkish secularism is the pervasive, underlying constitutional prescription that always reverberates overtly as well as subtly in Turkish politics. The rise and empowerment of the Justice and Development Party (AK Parti or AKP) threw a wrench into that reality.

An "Islamist" party, the AKP strives to fit into the descriptions of "Turkish democracy," "conservative democracy," "Muslim democracy," or "democratic Islamism." It has proven resilient while countless other recent experiments in Islamism in the region have failed miserably. The AKP has enjoyed significant shares of parliamentary seats and constitutes the largest political party in the country. During the August 2014 elections, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan became president, polling 52 percent of the votes.[1] Now

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The views that she expresses in this article are personal.

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that the AKP has demonstrated its survivability, can we speak of a "postsecular republic" in Turkey? Are Turkey's ambitions for an Ottoman revival in the Middle East linked to the AKP/Erdoğan-led Islamism? What does this mean for the regional actors, and how have they reacted to Turkey? What are the implications of these factors for US-Turkey relations and those between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Turkey? These are some of the questions addressed by this analysis.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

This analysis is a result of the author's research trips to Turkey in March 2011 and December 2013 during which she interviewed a number of Turkish civilians and military personnel and one US Embassy official, all of whom wish to remain anonymous. The author also spent a month in Turkey in August 1993, and observations from the time spent there are considered in the analysis. She includes her own professional, analytical observations in this study, as well as content analyses of various statistical and qualitative data.

Furthermore, this article analyzes the theories and concepts pertaining to Islamism (or political Islam) and secularism; indeed, this study focuses on how they apply to the case of the Republic of Turkey. The conclusion encapsulates the broader implications of the push and pull between Islamism and secularism in the republic during the twenty-first century.

Kemalism: The Roots of the Secular Republic

I will lead my people by the hand along the road until their feet are sure and they know the way. Then they may choose for themselves and rule themselves. Then my work will be done.
—Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

Upon the demise of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey underwent a crucial transition, completely reassessing its national ideology and sociocultural identity in the newly defined parameters of the Republic of Turkey (*Turkiye Cumhuriyeti*). Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881–1938) spearheaded Turkey's social, political, and economic transformation, forming a movement and ideology that created the groundbreaking undercurrents of secular nationalism in the region. As "a practitioner of nation building," Atatürk envisioned a society based on "solidarism"—that is, "the building of an integrated, conflict-free society."[2] In this context, former subjects of the Ottoman Empire became citizens of the Turkish republic, and religion—having no state involvement or affiliation—was rendered a strictly personal matter of individuals. Politics and government turned wholly secular, as did all of the state-run institutions and sectors, including education.

Albert Hourani best describes the legacy of Atatürkism (or Kemalism), observing that under Atatürk, Turkey made concerted efforts towards departing from its past, and

from the Arab countries with which its past had been so closely connected: that of re-creating society on the basis of national solidarity, a rigid separation of state and religion, and a deliberate attempt to turn away from the Middle Eastern world and become part of Europe. The ancient tie between Turks and Arabs was dissolved, in circumstances which left some bitterness on both sides, exacerbated for a time by disputes about frontiers with Iraq and Syria. Nevertheless, the example of Atatürk, who had defied Europe with success and set his nation on a new path, was to have a profound effect upon national movements throughout the Arab world.[3]

Regarding the new republic's vision for secularism specifically, Andrew Finkel writes that

> Turkish secularism . . . is *the state's right to assert its primacy over religion*. The [Turkish] government still funds a huge religious establishment, the Presidency of Religious Affairs (DIB), which licenses after-school Koranic courses, administers Turkey's allotted pilgrimage quota for the Hadj, publishes books, and makes moral pronouncements. While it does not build and maintain mosques, it does provide stipends for the nation's clerics, who, in turn, are expected to preach a prepared message from the Friday pulpit.[4] (emphasis added)

Turkey's citizenry remains divided about the concept and practice of secularism despite the deeply engrained and forced secularization of Turkish society and politics. Interpretations of Atatürk's secularism vary, even today.

Understanding the Concepts of Secularism and Islamism

Upon coming to power, the AKP successfully cut off the legs of the powerful military, which serves as the ultimate protector of Turkish secularism. That very moment when the Turkish military leadership found itself in peril, ensnared in a coup-plot scandal and severely weakened, may signify the birth of the "postsecular" Republic of Turkey. It was then that the AKP, a political party with an Islamist platform, did the unthinkable: first, it disempowered the powerful protectors of Kemalism and then it cautiously and gradually loosened some of the reins that traditionally restricted religious practices in the public sphere, such as wearing a *hijab* (head scarf) in public-sector employment.

The importance of understanding the concepts of secularism and Islamism cannot be overemphasized; however, even their definitions are cause for contention. A standard English dictionary defines *secularism* as "the belief that religion should not play a role in government, education, or other public parts of society." Defining Islamism is far more complicated. The backdrop to answering the question "What is political Islam or Islamism?" is the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, which directly relates to the current dilemma of the Turkish republic. According to Prof. Muqtedar Khan, "The key moment when the decline of Muslim power was crystallized in the Muslim psyche was when the Ottoman Empire disappeared and the Islamic Caliphate as an institution was abolished in 1924. Many Islamic movements have since emerged with the explicit goal to revive the Muslim *Ummah*, reform Muslim societies and restore them to their past glory." Professor Khan goes on to explain that the general belief among many Muslims (globally) is that

the Islamic imperial decline is due to abandoning the path to and practice of "true *Sharia*" and that reimplementing this "true *Sharia*" will, supposedly, lead to the reemergence of Islamic "glory."[5] In the view of some Muslims, the mechanisms for this reemergence involve the politicization of Islam:

> Clearly there are many groups that are seeking to establish some kind of Islamic polity, which then can become an instrument for global Islamic resurgence and even political unification. Islamic polities, states or caliphates are not the endgame. They are to become means and instruments of global Islamic resurgence. Political Islamic movements can also be divided according to the means that they wish to employ in order to realize their first goal—the Islamic polity. I submit that there are two types, those who seek the Islamic polity through force and violence, even terrorism, and those who seek it through peaceful means including democratic processes. Those who use force are now widely referred to as *Jihadis*, and those who don't use force are identified by academia and media as *Islamists*.[6]

Despite Atatürk's legacy and deeply entrenched and enforced secularization of the Turkish republic, elements of Islamism—or Islamist ambitions—have persisted since the post-Ottoman era. Stephen Dale describes this seemingly paradoxical reality in Turkey:

> Yet in spite of the juggernaut of Kemalist secularism, not only did Islam survive but some Turkish Muslims dedicated themselves to its revitalization. One of the most influential of those who sought to revivify Turkish Islam was Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, a precocious Muslim autodidact from Turkish Kurdistan. Nursi established an organization known as the *Risale-I Nur* (The Prophecy of Light), dedicated to renewing Islamic piety and individual spiritual perfection at the grassroots level, avoiding religious political activism in an era of state secularism.
>
> Nursi's program had a certain general resemblance to the Deoband Madrasa in late nineteenth-century India, to the extent that both movements operated within secular environments, emphasized individual spiritual revival, and abstained from political activism. In the early twenty-first century the democratic election of a religious political party demonstrates that in Turkey, as well as in Pakistan, the question of the relationship between religion and the state is still unresolved, and in fact may never be definitively settled, even to the limited degree it has been in the world's two largest secular democracies, India and the United States.[7]

Turkish secularists—especially the protectors of Turkish secularism in the military—viewed Said Nursi as an "anti-Kemalist" threat. Nursi's popularity grew throughout Turkey, and he became increasingly revered as an Islamic scholar and mullah. In fact, many people cite Nursi as the "most influential theologian of the Turkish Republic."[8]

The Turkish military became so alarmed at Nursi's magnetism, even after his death as mourners in the thousands paid homage to his shrine in Urfa, that on 12 July 1960, "soldiers forced their way into the shrine, smashed open a marble tomb with sledgehammers and removed a shrouded body. The body was lifted onto an army truck, driven along heavily guarded streets to an airfield outside town, loaded onto a military plane and never seen again."[9] It is believed that the military reburied him in a secret grave. This military

maneuver marked the first coup d'état in the republic's modern history, exemplifying the military rulers' fears that "Nursi would become a symbol of dissent, his grave a shrine to anti-Kemalism."[10] Demolishing Nursi's shrine proved ineffective. Even today, Nursi is revered and respected, and recently the Turkish parliament set up a special commission for investigating military coups in Turkey and for revealing the location of Nursi's secret tomb.[11] His following is alive and vibrant, and with the military subjugated at the hands of the AKP and Erdoğan, his followers are emboldened.

Those followers still visit the empty tomb in Urfa and his house in Isparta; they "even [flock] to the Urfa hotel room he died in, piously preserved in its original state by the hotel owner right down to the light bulb."[12] Nursi followers are called "Nurcu" or "followers of the light," and some people estimate their numbers in the millions. This fact is important because the threads of the religious fabric of Turkish public, political, and religious leaders increasingly strengthen. Consider what Mustafa Akyol, an expert on Turkish Islam, says about the Nurcu: "About half the Islamic movement in Turkey, meaning the pious, conservative segment of society, are literally direct followers of Nursi, while the other half also respects him."[13] Additionally,

> the Nurcu community includes the sizable Gulen movement, named after the currently U.S.-based preacher Fethullah Gulen, as well as several other movements and a separate Kurdish following, all of them distinct, but united in their allegiance to Mr. Nursi's teachings.
>
> Modernity, science and rationalism play key roles in his teachings, as does the individual, distinguishing the Nurcu movement from other currents of Islam.[14]

While the concept of "Islamic democracy" is endlessly debated since the puzzle of the compatibility between Islam and (liberal) democracy has never been completely solved, Islam in Turkey has not only survived over the decades but also thrived. The Fethullah Gülen movement offers yet another snapshot of the power and influence of "Islamism" although this is a more subtle, grassroots-based brand of Turkish Islam. The movement's power is growing, some say to the extent of establishing "a state within a state" although Turkish people, analysts, pundits, and scholars repeatedly point out that such growth is extremely hard to prove. The certainty lies in the fact that it is a lucrative and popular global movement, with Gülenist schools proliferating in numerous countries, and it has an eccentric, elderly spiritual leader at its helm.

Fethullah Gülen: The "'State within the State' Run by Someone Outside the State"

Criticizing and objecting to everything means an attempt to destruction. If you do not like something, try to make something better than it. Being destructive causes ruins, while being constructive brings about prosperity.

—Fethullah Gülen

An article by Rachel Sharon-Krespin in the *Middle East Quarterly* describes the Gülen movement as "a shadowy Islamist sect led by the mysterious *hocaefendi* (master lord) Fethullah Gülen; the sect often bills itself as a proponent of tolerance and dialogue but works toward purposes quite the opposite. Today, Gülen and his backers (*Fethullahcilar*, Fethullahists) not only seek to influence government but also to become the government."[15] Gülen currently lives in voluntary exile in eastern Pennsylvania, from where he has launched a multi-billion-dollar transnational empire.[16]

The Gülen movement in Turkey controls vast media empires, businesses, banks, "an international network of thousands of schools, universities, student residences, . . . and many associations and foundations."[17] Gülen membership covers a wide spectrum in Turkey, including members of the AKP, the police, the community at large, and allegedly even the military. Gülen was a disciple of Sheikh Said-I Nursi (1878–1960), who founded the Nur movement. Following independence, Nursi demanded that "the new republic be based on Islamic principles. He turned against Ataturk and his reforms and against the new modern, secular, Western republic."[18]

The recent rift between Erdoğan and Gülen is also highly public; further, it is not only ideological but also personal. This entire episode is intertwined with political intrigue, scandals, and some of Erdoğan's own domestic policies that have angered countless Turkish citizens. To repel the criticism, Erdoğan and his constituents have concocted and perpetuated Hollywood-worthy conspiracy theories, as the passages below describe:

> At the heart of the conspiracy, it is claimed, is a "parallel state" led by Fethullah Gulen, a reclusive cleric who sought refuge in the United States in 1999 when he was persecuted by the then-dominant Turkish military establishment. Gulen and Erdogan had earlier formed an alliance against this common enemy. But now, with the military forced back into its barracks, they have turned on each other. For Erdogan and his supporters this vast conspiracy, instigated by Gulen and his presumed followers in the judiciary and the police force, is aided and abetted by a slew of villains. These include, Americans, Jews, Israel, Germans, neocons, CNN, *Financial Times*, a variety of international and domestic banks, the Council on Foreign Relations. Even the Queen of England, if you can believe it, has nothing better to do with her time than plot the downfall of the Turkish Prime Minister and his supporters. Why, exactly, would all these people have it in for Erdogan? It's a mystery, of course.[19]

For his part, Gülen has denied allegations of meddling in Turkish politics and stirring up scandals, problems, and crises for Erdoğan and the AKP. Normally quiet and reclusive, Gülen actually has publicly sounded alarm bells about the future of Turkey under Erdoğan. In March 2014, he penned an op-ed in the *Financial Times*, calling for

> a new constitution to rein in rights [Gülen] says are under siege.
>
> In some of his most explicit comments since the December eruption of the feud between the Turkish prime minister and his own movement, Mr. Gülen wrote in the *Financial Times* that "a small group within the government's executive branch is holding to ransom the entire country's progress."

He highlights recent laws passed by Mr. Erdogan's Islamist-rooted AK party that increase government controls over judicial appointments and internet access, while warning that a pending legislative proposal by the party "would give Turkey's intelligence agency powers akin to those claimed by dictatorial regimes." . . .

Mr. Gülen said in his article that his movement has "no interest in the privileges of power" and notes what he called his followers' "purposeful absence from political office." Despite calls from Mr. Erdogan for the preacher to return to Turkey from the US, Mr. Gulen adds that he would remain in "spiritual retreat" and would refrain from endorsing any political party.[20]

Erdoğan retorted that the Gülen movement is not a religious one at all but "a completely political organization that does everything, including espionage," he alleges.[21] Moreover, "Mr. Erdogan recently revealed he was discussing the closure of Gulenist schools—which are present in about 140 countries around the world—with the government of Pakistan, and suggested other jurisdictions could also move against the schools."[22]

Northeastern University sociology professor Berna Turam has deconstructed the Gülen-Erdoğan relationship, contending that

these two pious Muslim groups have not cooperated with each other with the exception of a five-year period during the first term of the AKP (2002–2007). Historically, they come from two different branches of Islam in Turkey. The leader, Fethullah Gulen, and his followers have never approved of—or stood close to—Necmettin Erbakan's more radical Islamism, embodied by *Milli Gorus* (National Outlook).

Although the GM [Gülen Movement] at large shifted their votes from centre-right parties to the AKP in the 2002 election, Gulen never truly trusted Erbakan's tradition and his protege Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has served as the prime minister since 2002.

Professor Turam describes the two Muslim groups as being locked in a vicious power struggle, especially since the summer of 2013.[23]

The conspiracy mill churns out speculation about the extent to which the Gülen movement has penetrated the Turkish police, security forces, and even the armed forces. Everyone to whom the author asked this question during her field research in Istanbul described it as the Gülen-led "state within a state" in Turkey, but no one could say for sure. Many went out of their way to say that "no one can prove it."

Secularism versus Islamism in the Modern Era: The Dilemma of Turkish Muslims

Turkey has a population of about 81.6 million; the main ethnic groups in Turkey include 70–75 percent Turkish, 18 percent Kurdish, and 7–12 percent other minorities. Turkey is 99.8 percent Muslim (majority Sunni), and minority communities of mainly Christians and Jews account for about 0.2 percent. Turkey's total literacy rate is 94.1 percent—97.9 percent among males and 90.3 percent among females.[24]

Ceren, a madrassa teacher in Istanbul, originally from the more conservative and religious city of Konya, wears hijab in modern-day Turkey.[25] Describing herself as a Sufi (practitioner of Islamic mysticism), she says that she could not wear hijab and work two years ago, but now the laws are more relaxed: "Some interpreted Atatürk's secularism as hating religion, but he didn't hate religion; he hated religion mixing with politics."[26]

A professor at Istanbul University remarks that "since Atatürk's secularism, some interpret secularism as hating religion. Some people actually hate religion. Some in the religious establishment hate the idea of mixing religion and politics. Turks love freedom."[27]

Parts of Istanbul are ardently pro-AKP and pro-Erdoğan, but other parts are fiercely anti-AKP/anti-Erdoğan. The Eyup Sultan suburb of Istanbul is visibly more conservative and religious, with many more women wearing head scarves and large congregations praying at the Eyup Sultan Mosque. The surrounding streets are lined with small shops selling religious merchandise (e.g., rosaries, headdresses, prayer rugs, Qurans, and other religious literature); the upbeat Taksim area, however, features trendy shops and cafés lining the famous Istiqlal Street, the site of recent violent protests and clashes between young activists and the police. Young college-age men and women wear Western clothes and sip coffee; occasionally, young couples even steal kisses. This is Turkey today—a collage of liberal and conservative, secular and religious, pro- and anti-AKP/Erdoğan people.

More pious Muslims seem to like the AKP and Erdoğan. Such is the case within Turkey. See figure 1 for the results a mid-2013 Pew poll that shows Erdoğan's popularity in Turkey.

Erdogan More Popular among Devout Muslims

■ Favorable   □ Unfavorable

Pray rarely	Pray once a week up to everyday	Pray 5 times a day
36 / 61	66 / 30	75 / 24

Based on Turkish Muslims only.
PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q40c.
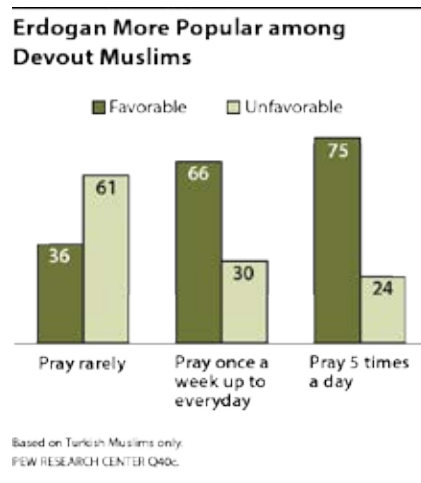
Figure 1. Erdogan more popular among devout Muslims (percent). (Jacob Poushter, "Prime Minister Erdogan Popular in Turkey Broadly, but Less So in Istanbul," Pew Research Center, Washington, DC, 5 June 2013, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/06/05/prime-minister-erdogan-popular-in-turkey-but-less-so-in-istanbul/. Reprinted with permission of the Pew Research Center.)

These perspectives clearly illustrate a diversity of opinions, identities, affinities, and approaches to defining the concepts of secularism and Islamism. This diversity also illustrates a general lack of consensus among Muslims, particularly in Turkey, about the

extent to which Islam should be involved, if at all, in politics and in the public sphere. Although this situation is not exclusive to Turkey, it nonetheless renders a unique problem in terms of defining or redefining the national identity of the Turkish republic in the twenty-first century. If we examine the constitution of Turkey, we see emphasis not only on the principles that Atatürk established at the founding of the republic but also on secularism:

> The recognition that no protection shall be accorded to an activity contrary to Turkish national interests, the principle of the indivisibility of the existence of Turkey with its state and territory, Turkish historical and moral values or the nationalism, principles, reforms and modernism of Atatürk and that, as required by the *principle of secularism*, there shall be no interference whatsoever by sacred religious feelings in state affairs and politics; the acknowledgment that it is the birthright of every Turkish citizen to lead an honorable life and to develop his or her material and spiritual assets under the aegis of national culture, civilization and the rule of law, through the exercise of the fundamental rights and freedoms set forth in this Constitution in conformity with the requirements of equality and social justice.[28] (emphasis added)

What has kept the AKP and Erdoğan popular among significant segments of society? Part of the answer lies in the desire and ambitions of some individuals—perhaps many—to see Turkey rise again, as in its glorious past, as a prominent regional and perhaps even global power. These desires and ambitions marry Turkish nationalism with numerous other factors and present-day political, economic, security, and ideological realities in the country and the region. Among them are the nearly constant rejection by the European Union (EU) of Turkey's propositions for membership; the 2011 Arab Awakening uprisings and revolutions (related to this, of course, is the vicious civil war in neighboring Syria); Turkish-Iranian relations and Iran's nuclear program; Turkish-Israeli relations, which have been rocky for the last few years; Turkey's NATO membership and relations with the United States; and Turkey's strong economy, especially during the 2008 financial crisis. In light of these realities, Erdoğan's popularity skyrocketed throughout the Middle East but then plummeted after the 2013 coup in Egypt. What are the prospects for an "Ottoman resurgence"?

Turkey in the Post–Cold War Era: Ottoman Resurgence?

Turkey's longtime membership in NATO, its aspirations for EU membership, and its unique geopolitical importance and geographically strategic location as the gateway between Europe and Asia all account for the nation's significance throughout the Cold War—and now in the post–Cold War era. Specifically, in the aftermath of the US invasion of Iraq (2003), the United States' influence and reputation in the Middle East have been in decline, especially during the George W. Bush administration. Even under the Obama administration, public opinion in the region is proving very critical and suspicious of US intentions. Turkey has acted on opportunities to step in and attempt to fill that regional influence gap. To some extent, President Erdoğan has been very successful.

The chain of events leading to a significant increase in his popularity is articulated below. First, though, a closer look at Turkey's political and socioeconomic indicators is necessary.

Turkey's growth in gross domestic product for 2013 was 3.8 percent; the 2010 statistic has 16.9 percent of the population reportedly below the poverty line.[29] The Turkish government has boasted vocally about how its economy is stronger than many others in Western Europe, and Turkey did not have to bail out its banks. Turkey initiated painful economic and financial reforms in 2001, but the economy has proven resilient and thriving in the 2008 recession and afterward, especially compared to the many Western economies that have suffered financial meltdowns.

Turkey's export partners include France, Germany, Iraq, Italy, and the United Kingdom. Turkey exports textiles, apparel, foodstuffs, manufactures, and transport equipment.[30] Its import partners include Russia, Germany, the United States, China, France, Italy, and—despite economic sanctions—Iran, from which Turkey receives substantial petroleum, keeping Iran's oil industry alive and functioning. Turkey's main import commodities include chemicals, fuels, machinery, goods (unfinished), and transport equipment.[31]

The nation's principal domestic/regional security concern is the status of Kurds in northern Iraq, from which many Kurdish militant operatives—especially the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)—carry out attacks in southeastern Turkey and retreat to safe havens in northern Iraq. Since 2011 the Syrian civil war has triggered a huge influx of Syrian refugees into Turkey, the number of which the United Nations estimates has reached nearly 635,000 as of March 2014, and tensions remain high between Ankara and Damascus.[32] Furthermore, the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (ISIS) has further complicated Turkey's situation, politically and otherwise, since the terrorists operate on the Syrian-Turkish border. The ISIS threat has inadvertently led Turkey—albeit through tremendous pressures from the United States and regional actors—to allow support and weapons to flow into the hands of Kurdish fighters inside Syria. Clearly, Turkey's main worry is empowerment of the PKK, a terrorist organization that has conducted a violent insurgency inside Turkey for many years.

The 2011 Arab Awakening was a pivotal reverberation of uprisings and revolutions in the region, of which the Syrian civil war is a by-product. Further, the counterrevolution in Egypt that ousted the Muslim Brotherhood and installed Gen Abdel Fattah al-Sisi served as a huge setback for the pro-democracy movement. At the height of the 2011 Arab Awakening, the phrase *Turkish model* circulated especially in Egypt when the role and impact of the Muslim Brotherhood in the revolution that ousted the Hosni Mubarak regime came into question. With Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, we see evidence that it embraced the AKP as a viable model of a democratic Islamic political system. "AKP-style democracy is exactly what the [pro-democracy] movement has long been pursuing," said Ashraf Abdel Ghaffar, a Turkey-based leader of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. "Everyone in the region respects AKP policies," he said.[33]

Later, however, Turkey and Qatar faced political retaliation from Arab regimes for the former's support for the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt:

> Trying to become a nonpermanent member of the Security Council, Turkey lost out to Spain and New Zealand in a contest for two available seats reserved for a voting bloc called the Western European and Others Group, which includes the United States.
>
>   . . . According to several diplomatic sources, there was an intense campaign, led by Egypt and Saudi Arabia, against Turkey's membership in the council. The two countries are angered by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's support for the Muslim Brotherhood, which both are fighting at home.[34]

The argument for the Turkish model was based on the logic that if Turkey, a die-hard secular political system, can sustain an Islamic party (the AKP) and at the same time it can preserve its pro-West policies as well as NATO membership and participation, then so can anyone else in the region. Emre Caliskan wrote an opinion piece on exactly this topic in the 5–6 March 2011 edition of the *Hurriyet Daily*, in which he pointed out that a recent poll "held in seven Arab nations and Iran, published by the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation, or TESEV, shows 66 percent of more than 2,200 respondents believing that Turkey is a 'successful blend of Islam and democracy.'"[35] He added that

> after the Turkish Constitutional Court banned the Islamist Welfare Party in January 1998, and its successor, the Virtue Party, in 2001, because of their Islamic agendas, the traditional Islamic "National View" movement had to review its ideas of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Young Islamist leaders, including current Turkish [president] Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, cleared their political agenda of radical Islamist elements and established the Justice and Development Party, or AKP, as a new force capable of combining traditional Islamic values with Western-style democratic policies.[36]

Until the military coup in Egypt in June 2013, which unseated the Muslim Brotherhood from power, Turkey's attempts to emerge as a dominant regional power in the Middle East were proving relatively successful. President Erdoğan is credited with a series of incidents and policies that have heightened his and Turkey's respect and popularity in the region. In addition to successes in establishing and maintaining the AKP in power, the AKP's leadership has reached out to other Muslim countries in the region, and relations between them have "warmed considerably."[37] In fact, "many argue that Turkey has set the ambitious goal of becoming the leader of the Muslim world, with its foreign policies frequently referred to as neo-Ottomanism."[38]

Upon coming to power, the AKP tackled pragmatic issues such as the economy. In its second term, the "AKP addressed head scarves," according to a reliable source in Ankara. The same source added that President Erdoğan "maintains ties to the West and at the same time increases ties to the East, including China."[39]

The chain of events regarding Erdoğan and Turkey's actions, particularly involving Israel, that have led to their increased popularity among the Arab and Muslim populations in the region includes the following: (1) Israel initiated Operation Cast Lead (i.e., the "Gaza War") in December 2008 while Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert was visiting Turkey, an action that insulted the Turks; (2) Israel carried out Operation Orchard, destroying a supposed nuclear facility in the Syrian Desert in September 2007, and in the

process Israel allegedly violated Turkish airspace, angering Turkey; (3) when Prime Minister Erdoğan stood up to Israel's president Shimon Peres during the Davos Summit in January 2009 and when he walked off the stage after a heated exchange with Peres over the Gaza offensive, Erdoğan's popularity shot up in the Arab Middle East; and (4) Turkey became enraged with Israel's May 2010 raid of the "Gaza Flotilla" (humanitarian-aid ships bound for Gaza) that killed eight Turks and one Turkish-American. Turkey demanded a public apology from Israel for this incident, the "Mavi Marmara," but Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu refused to apologize.[40] In March 2013, though, "Netanyahu placed a call to his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan while closeted with Obama in a trailer on the tarmac at Ben Gurion airport in the last minutes before the president's departure for Jordan. Obama joined the call at one point. The Israeli prime minister's office said Netanyahu 'apologised to the Turkish people for any errors that could have led to the loss of life.' Erdogan accepted the apology."[41]

Turkish-Israeli relations are still injured, but not completely obsolete. Turkey and Israel have continued limited military-to-military relations, primarily in the form of defense-industry contracts, but since the breakdown in political relations and the Gaza flotilla incident, joint military exercises—formerly routine between the two—are no longer taking place to date.[42]

Apparently, Turkey has adopted the Palestinian issue and assumed the mantle for supporting the Palestinian cause. In a public lecture at the Harvard University Kennedy School in October 2010, Ahmet Davutoğlu, Turkish minister of foreign affairs at the time, emphasized that "the Palestinian question is affecting everything in the world. There must be a solution. If the peace is achieved then one Israeli can go from Tel Aviv to Damascus to Turkey and Europe and similarly a Syrian can go to Jerusalem and pray. Our vision is to achieve this peace." He also emphasized a global need for the spirit of cooperation and inclusiveness in "the world political arena."[43]

It is very likely that Turkey will continue to remain quite active in regional politics, including in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the AKP will promote itself as a source of inspiration for compatibility between Islam and democracy. Whether or not other regional Islamic political entities will simulate the AKP remains to be seen. The 2013 coup in Egypt was a significant setback for promoting the "AKP model." As one Turkish military officer remarked, "Turkey wants to assert itself, especially to show Muslim solidarity—such as with the plight of the Rohingyas in Burma—but [Turkey] has no power to back it up."[44]

In addition, since the rise of ISIS and its declaration of a "new Caliphate" or Islamic State (*al-Dawla al-Islamiyya*), the ambitions of many regional actors—both state and nonstate—to emerge as the dominant power and/or establish a new "empire" in the modern era have become extremely problematic. If Turkey, for example, seeks to revive a second version of the Ottoman Empire, then ISIS has definitely intensified the competition and set up many roadblocks. Furthermore, the complexities of the Sunni-Shia rivalry and conflicts occurring in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon, and spreading elsewhere, are creating security and political dilemmas for Turkey. Given that Turkey continues to purchase oil

from Iran, the increasingly violent sectarian fault lines in the region might come back to haunt this Turkish-Iranian relationship. Consider that "the largest buyers of Iranian crude and condensate are China, India, Japan, South Korea, and Turkey. . . . In 2012 . . . roughly 90% of Iran's [natural gas] exports went to Turkey."[45] Figure 2 paints a complicated picture of Turkey's regional dilemmas and relationships.
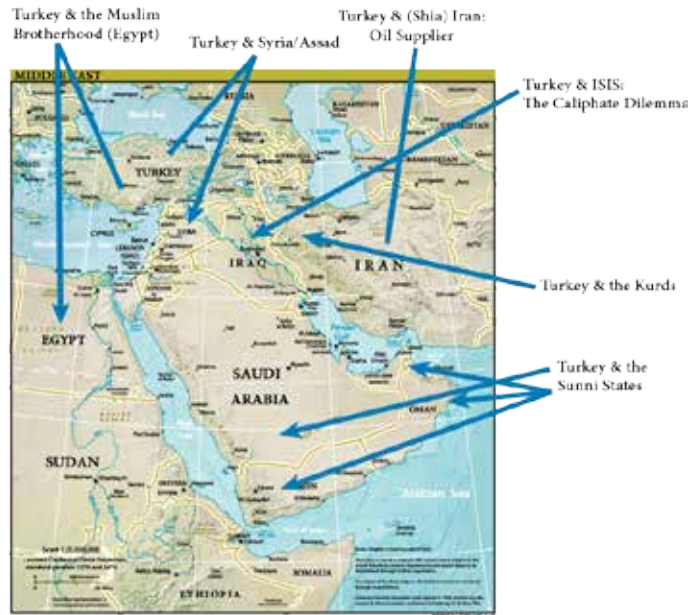

Figure 2. Turkey and the Middle East. (Reprinted from University of Texas Libraries, University of Texas at Austin, accessed 9 April 2015, http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/middle_east_ref_2012.pdf. Used by permission of the University of Texas Libraries, the University of Texas at Austin.)

All of these developments have further complicated the situation involving the Iraqi and Syrian Kurds, which constitutes a sensitive security concern for Turkey and her borders. The October 2014 ISIS siege of Kobani, Syria, on the Turkish border actually triggered violent protests within Turkey by Kurds demanding that the Turkish government allow Kurdish fighters and supplies to flow through the border. By late October, the death toll of protesters reached nearly 40. As a result of this domestic crisis related to a regional one, Turkey eventually decided to allow some Kurdish fighters through the border crossing. Clearly, this decision proved difficult for President Erdoğan, but international (especially Western) pressures—combined with internal pro-Kurdish protests—compelled Turkey to open the border. Meanwhile, the Erdoğan government insists that Western powers focus on removing Syrian president Bashar al-Assad from power rather than targeting ISIS and al-Qaeda-affiliated groups. This message has resonated with the Free Syrian Army and anti-Assad activists, who, like Erdoğan, criticize the US-led air strikes against ISIS as inadvertently assisting Assad.

In general, Erdoğan's popularity is dropping in the Middle East, especially compared to his position reflected in 2013 statistics. Figure 3 illustrates the favorability rat-

ings by country of Erdoğan according to a Pew poll, showing a steady drop from 2013—except for Israel, oddly enough, which shows a very slight increase.
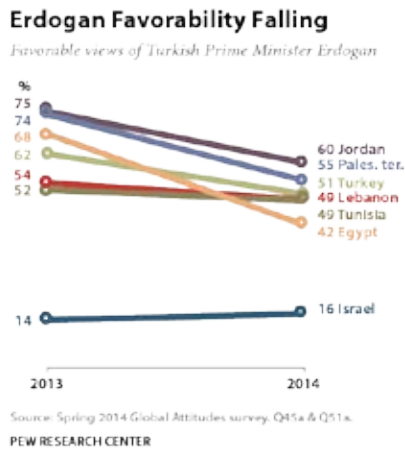

Figure 3. Erdogan favorability falling. (Jacob Poushter, "Support for Turkey's Erdogan Drops Sharply in Middle East," Pew Research Center, Washington, DC, 30 July 2014, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/07/30/support-for-turkeys-erdogan-drops-sharply-in-middle-east/. Reprinted with permission of the Pew Research Center.)

Internationally, Turkey's decision to join NATO has been the country's most strategic in modern history and its saving grace over the years although it has not served as a ticket to EU membership. The Obama administration has continued to voice its support for Turkey's EU membership but without success. Turkey's neo-Ottoman aspirations have major implications for its NATO membership as well as its prospects for EU entrance.

This author asked the following question of Dr. Tom Fedyszyn, professor of national security affairs at the US Naval War College and the academic lead for the NATO Defense Education Enhancement Program in Azerbaijan: "How does NATO see Turkey today in terms of its geopolitical and strategic value as a NATO member?" Expressing his personal views, Dr. Fedyszyn responded that

> the relationship between Turkey and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization . . . has evolved considerably since Turkey's entry in 1952. Then, its size, shared interest, and location made Turkey the bulwark of NATO's policy of Soviet containment and collective defense. The common threat from Moscow enabled Ankara to align closely with security policy developed in both Brussels and Washington. Subsequent to the fall of the Berlin Wall, Turkey continued to play a major role in the alliance's policy of collective security and crisis management. Notable among its contributions is the vast allied military infrastructure located on Turkish soil.
>
> Turkey has recently been evolving toward a more independent foreign policy marked by increased interest in regional affairs and decidedly less European-oriented. Its domestic politics have been characterized as moving from "Kemalist" to "neo-Ottoman," suggesting a stronger emphasis on grandeur, authoritarianism, and religious influence. Always a staunch NATO ally, she is now faced with issues on which Turkish and NATO

policies may diverge, such as the creation of a ballistic missile defense system and attitudes toward both Russia and Iran. Immediate regional issues, including the Middle East peace process, Syrian instability, Palestinian statehood, and the future of Libya are now at the top of Turkey's security agenda.

Thus, NATO continues to recognize Turkey's crucial strategic importance but is now dealing with a member who is making more independent foreign policy decisions and is focused on its regional issues, many of which are of lesser import to the alliance. As the United States found out in its execution of the war in Iraq, Turkey's active cooperation cannot be taken for granted if such a move could hurt its posture or stature in the Middle East.[46]

Still, the West views Erdoğan's personality and policies as dangerously too Islamist leaning and suggesting an agenda supporting the revival of a neo-Ottoman era in the Middle East region. Many Middle Eastern state and nonstate actors also share this view since there is no love lost in the Arab states in particular between them and Turkey, given the Ottoman Empire's rule over them. The AKP and Erdoğan's greatest moments in terms of regional popularity occurred from 2002 until about 2013. Apparently, the die-hard Sunni Arab states, with the exception of Qatar, are not willing to forgive the Erdoğan government for expressing support for Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood. That bad blood between them continues to play out in regional and even international politics, as seen with the United Nations Security Council nonpermanent seat selection that excluded Turkey. At the same time, the AKP and Erdoğan remain important players in the region, and, in the eyes of the pious, they are admired and viewed as the mantle for a palatable Islamic democracy worthy of replicating. That said, the prospects for an "Ottoman resurgence" are now much lower than they were few years ago.

Conclusion

Despite the scandals and serious challenges to Erdoğan's power and authority, he and the AKP undoubtedly still have a power base and resources at their disposal. In December 2013, one Turkish citizen expressed his feelings about the president: "Look around, see the construction and infrastructure; this is what Erdoğan has done for us."[47] With the 2014 elections taking place in summer 2014, Istanbul traffic occasionally displayed an "AKP" license plate or bumper sticker on some cars. A Turkish military officer remarked that much rural support for Erdoğan still existed while the upscale areas favor secularism and the military.[48] In particular, he said that the poor admire Erdoğan because he has provided crucial government subsidies for all universities and for a revamped health care system. The president has initiated many municipal projects, but he warned that these subsidies are not sustainable in the long term and that Turkey has a significantly young demographic that will demand future jobs. The economy is already seeing signs of strains.

Another young man indicated that the Turkish economy was stronger five years ago but is now slowing down. He, along with everyone else interviewed, stressed that Erdoğan

will win because no one is running against him in the 2014 elections. And he was right—Erdoğan won rather easily.

Something else has happened in Turkey during the Erdoğan years. It is visibly noticeable that more and more women in Turkey are wearing head scarves. Women also face high rates of domestic violence and abuse, as reported in the *Hurriyet Daily*. The cause for women's rights and freedoms still has a long way to go in Turkey despite higher rates of urban women's education and employment. According to the source in Ankara, trends toward "Islamization" in Turkey stem from the AKP. He also claimed that the wives of businessmen and politicians who wear the head scarf provide the "legitimacy" and advantage for the men to secure business deals or even get elected. These rising trends in Islamism put Turkey's secular character and institutions at stake.[49]

Indeed, Turkey has much at stake domestically, regionally, and globally. At the same time, it possesses powerful potential for maintaining democratic political authority, hard and soft power influence, and the ability to affect regional affairs in dynamic ways in the twenty-first century. If the opportunities are lost to extremism, terrorism, political scandals and incompetence, ideological competition, and authoritarianism, then one question will have to be addressed. As Rachel Sharon-Krespin put it, "Who lost Turkey?"[50]

In late December 2013, a young Istanbul University professor emphatically declared that "the Turkish people won't allow the death of democracy."[51] She did not specify whether that would be a secular or Islamic democracy.

Notes

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Ethiopia and the Blue Nile

Development Plans and Their Implications Downstream

Jack Kalpakian, PhD[*]

The Blue Nile, located in East and North Africa is a river about which much has been written since the publication of Alan Moorehead's *The Blue Nile* in 1962. Like its companion volume, *The White Nile* (1960), the book has been accused of presenting a biased, orientalist account of the river, its peoples, and its history; as this article argues, however, some of its themes persist and have become stronger today. Moorehead discusses the themes of war, invasion, and the encounter between Europeans (the French, British, and Ottoman Turks) and Africans (the Egyptians, Sudanese, and Ethiopians). He also addresses the question of the deep latency of Ethiopian power in the Nile basin, a theme not taken seriously in past writings. Yet, the present contains its own challenges because of the effects of humans on the Nile basin generally. The population of the basin at the time of Ethiopian emperor Tewodros was significantly smaller than the present number. In that very different world, Egypt could not only feed itself but also occasionally export food. African megafauna still roamed wild in areas of today's Sudan and northern Ethiopia. The levels of precipitation were also higher. Concerns like global warming, climate change, and catastrophic environmental change were the stuff of either science fiction, then already past its infancy, or biblical myth. In my father's lifetime, our hometown of Gedarif, Sudan, had elephants nearby and ostriches as well. Today, those animals are a fading memory at best.

Despite challenges posed by population growth, resource depletion, and climate alteration, the states of the Nile basin are not close to cooperating with regard to their common resource, regardless of the false dawn offered by the Nile Basin Initiative, Technical Cooperation Committee for the Promotion of the Development and Environmental Protection of the Nile Basin (TECCONILE), and myriad other attempts at feigned cooperation. This article seeks to explain the reasons behind that failure, arguing that the

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governments of the Nile basin rely on prejudice to boost legitimacy and that this behavior manifested itself in Egyptian policy discourse and actions towards both Ethiopia and Sudan. It begins with a discussion of methodology; expounds on the issues of climate change and population growth; offers a literature review that examines the primary discourses about the Blue Nile; explains the status quo of the use of the river; discusses the Ethiopian dam project and the responses of Egypt, Sudan, South Sudan, and the Central African states; and examines the shift of the material balance of power in the basin. Prior to the conclusion, the article addresses the implications of the Blue Nile in terms of constructivist international relations theory. The central theme maintains that people's images of their neighbors have been just as determinative regarding the natural environment for the course of riparian international relations as the physical environment and resources themselves. The limitations imposed by nature and their policy implications have not been relevant to policy until threats reached critical levels. Even then, the need to cooperate was not universally accepted. Egypt continues its policy of self-help while Sudan, with the apparently coincidental presence of Ethiopian peacekeepers on its soil, has had to cooperate with its eastern neighbor despite Egyptian protests.

Theoretical Foundation and Methodology

Transboundary river basins offer us a wonderful test base for constructivist theory in international relations. They contain diverse populations, many states at the same time bound by a very material and real artery of life. They offer us the ability to see whether or not outcomes in terms of conflict and cooperation are based on physical considerations of maximizing water utility, environmental quality, and agricultural yields. Should these states show no desire to cooperate in light of urgent material pressures, then we can posit the existence of nonmaterial reasons for such a lack of cooperation, and these can be located in the roots of unilateral self-help. Should policy and ideational discourse have clear links between them, then ideas must have at least some influence over outcome.

This work is broadly embedded in the constructivist tradition of international relations and will include both constitutive and causative aspects. The former involve both the material attributes of the Blue Nile basin and the treaties governing their use; the latter relate to policy, seen here as problematic and contrary to the general well-being of both the river system and its populations. The causative aspects are located in the ideational perspectives of both Egypt and, to a lesser extent, Ethiopia. The perspective of Sudan towards its two neighbors is also important and will be addressed in its own terms.

Material Aspects of the Blue Nile

Several physical qualities of river systems have been said to influence the politics of a transboundary river system. Thomas Naff emphasizes the location and military power of the state in determining outcomes. He also lists the river's usable discharge and sourcing as important and determinative of outcomes.[1] More recent work by social scientists such

as Ariel Dinar, Getachew S. Nigatu, Marit Brochmann, and Nils Petter Gleditsch points to use pattern, environmental degradation and climate change.[2] These factors correspond directly to the distribution of material capabilities described by both neorealists and realists. Indeed, the default approach in water studies by specialists outside the field of international relations and international studies can best be characterized by an acceptance that the material realities of the basins impose a certain mandate for peace. As David Brooks maintains, this is a field about peace—not conflict.[3]

This article contends that the material aspects of the Blue Nile enjoin cooperative behavior but that these facets, themselves given additional urgency through population growth and climate change, are not sufficient to explain policies that have frequently proven anticooperative and not peaceful at all. These physical factors include the geography of the Blue Nile, its levels of discharge, and the effects of climate change. More directly androgenic effects, such as the levels of water consumption and deforestation, would also fall under the category of physical factors. From a constructivist perspective, the material reality matters in the sense that it frames ideas and choices. In the words of Alexander Wendt, it is "ideas almost all the way down."[4]

Ideational Factors in the Blue Nile Basin

Rather than duplicate the whole structure of constructionist international relations theory in this article, it strives to focus on several key factors. The first concerns the ideas that the two key states with stakes in the Blue Nile—Egypt and Ethiopia—had about each other at the point of first contact and how these views evolved and persisted. Second, the article uses official Egyptian discourse towards both Ethiopia and Sudan to show how prejudice prevents the implementation of cooperative policies regardless of powerful environmental and economic incentives. Additionally, it examines the role played by Ethiopia's response to Egyptian views and its own construction of its neighbor as a threat—and an existential one at that. The Sudanese perspective, historically determinative in the Nile basin, is undergoing a dramatic transformation. Shorn of its south, the Sudan no longer feels that the relationship with its former colonial master, Egypt, has worked in its best interests. Consequently, rather than viewing Egypt as the font of its civilization and of Islam, Sudan treats Egypt as a problematic neighbor, best balanced by an alliance with Ethiopia.

Why the Blue Nile—and So What?

The Blue Nile, the primary contributor of water in the Nile basin, directly influences life in Sudan, Egypt, and Ethiopia, having a combined population of more than 210 million people. This number does not include the people inhabiting the White Nile areas of South Sudan and the Central and East African Great Lakes states. Any disruptions and armed conflict in the basin are likely to lead to catastrophic consequences not only in the region but also in neighboring states of East and Central Africa as well as the Middle East. The Blue Nile's health matters to more than just its inhabitants; it also provides us

a useful case study to evaluate the utility of constructivist theory using Wendt as an example of such an approach. Implicit within this tack is an evaluation of neorealist and theory-independent approaches that focus on material factors.

Climate Change and Population Growth

Compounding the problem is the lack of effective tools to measure the effects of climate change in the Nile basin generally and the Blue Nile subbasin specifically. Global circulation models used to study the effects of climate change at the local level are simply not helpful in terms of resolution, predicting vastly different outcomes. The Blue Nile's source subbasin is extremely large, quite variable in terms of composition, and at the same time very sensitive. Slight changes in global temperature can influence it in both directions, and the consensus in the literature on the impact of climate change on the Blue Nile appears to be that better models are needed to understand its full effects.[5] Adding the planned dams into the analysis raises the level of uncertainty. Yet, with respect to one crucial factor, the dams seem to reduce uncertainty by regulating the extreme variation in water supply. Indeed, the two planned Ethiopian dams are likely to have little effect on water available downstream:

> The Ethiopian government's proposed construction of two dams (Karadobi and Border) adds to the uncertainty of changes in precipitation, temperature, potential evapotranspiration, and runoff across the sub-basin. The lessons from the scenarios reviewed indicate that both hydropower generation and water-storage goals can be regulated in ways that do not affect downstream flow.[6]

Yet, on at a global level, changes in temperature are bound to have an effect on Lake Tana and its surroundings; these in turn will influence the Blue Nile and, with it, Sudan and Egypt.

> Future changes in climate will certainly affect the lake ecosystems since they are considered hot spots for environmental change. Key climate parameters, including average monthly temperature, evapotranspiration, average monthly precipitation, average monthly cloudiness, and average monthly (vapor) pressure, will change. [Emma] Tate and others . . . used the HadCM3 A2a and B2 emission scenarios to analyze the sensitivity of Lake Victoria's water balance to climate change, finding that changes in annual rainfall and evaporation could lead to declining water levels over the 2021–50 period. Climate change will affect Nile basin flows through fluctuations of lake levels, such as those in Lake Tana and Lake Victoria, both of which control water flows in the Blue Nile and White Nile, respectively, directly affecting rainfall and runoff—the main contributors to lake inflows.[7]

Consequently, clear risks are associated with climate change, and governments presumably should pursue strategies to reduce them. Many such reductions can be conducted internally through water conservation methods such as drip irrigation, water metering, and crop shift, but in the case of transnational river systems, one could gain a premium

through cooperation with neighboring states. In light of the total dependence of Egypt on the Nile, any payoff in terms of cooperation should be seized immediately, but that has not actually taken place historically and it is not likely to do so again. Attempting to use a rational-actor model through game theory in the study of the Nile misses the central point of Egyptian Nile policy—it is a national policy, not a water policy. Indeed, Egypt leaves Ethiopia no cooperative venue, and, eventually, this policy resulted in Sudan's recent defection from Egypt's side, leaving the country isolated. This article visits such a cooperative premium later in the discussion of the background of the current Ethiopian dam plans.

Although the risks of climate change are unclear regarding direction, in terms of whether they are likely to cause floods or droughts in the Blue Nile subbasin, the trends in population, unfortunately, are clearer and far more threatening. Table 1 includes population projections for Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan (the northern rump).

Table 1. Latest and projected populations for Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan (in millions)

Country	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Ethiopia	87	112	138	164	188
Egypt	78	91	102	113	122
Sudan	35	44	55	66	82

Source: United Nations, *World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision* (New York: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, Population Estimates and Projections Section, 2013), http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/unpp /panel_population.htm.

When the often-quoted rule that an industrial society needs about 1,000 cubic meters per citizen per year is taken into account, the projected increase in population acquires a very frightening image. Many Ethiopians will live on other basins, but the Blue Nile basin includes the population-rich Amhara, Tigray, Oromia (western districts), and Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State. Furthermore, the total annual discharge of the combined River Nile, estimated at 90 cubic kilometers of water, is already insufficient for the creation of industrial society in Egypt and Sudan—Egypt's current population is about 84 million. At least 70 percent of the water reaching Aswan originates in the Blue Nile. Of course, other factors such as civil war and secession of regions such as Sinai or Darfur, as well as famine and mass migration, may influence the population figures and reduce water demand. Nevertheless, the projections are fairly clear and will influence not only water demand but also the relative distribution of power among the three states, as understood by realists of all sorts. Sudan remains in the grips of a civil war and in a contest over wealth as power between its capital and its regions. The diagnosis of the problem of the inequalities between its Arab core and African periphery is found in the pro-rebel *Black Book of Sudan*, which is generally considered accurate.[8] Egypt is experiencing a prolonged confrontation between its military and the Muslim Brotherhood that is inevitably weakening the country. Although not a bastion of stability and prosperity on a global level, Ethiopia's position versus Egypt's and Sudan's has steadily improved, and its economy has come to life.

Literature Review

There is a "standard" approach, at least in the social sciences, to the study of the social and political implications of international or transboundary river systems. That approach is supplemented by studies from a regimes perspective (covering international law, treaties, and governance systems like international organizations) and studies of the effects of human activities on river systems. These three approaches to the Blue Nile—the social science approach, the legal approach, and the hydrological/climate approach—are epistemologically distinct and share few if any tools, but they are complementary. Cross referencing is lacking, and at times authors writing in the third tradition treated the 1959 Nile Waters Agreement as if it were binding on Ethiopia and therefore in need of "renegotiation." Obviously, in terms of interaction, mutual quotation, or even basic information, little is exchanged among the three areas. The basic scientific approach discussed in the section dealing with climate change, above, needs no repetition here; at least it has reached a consensus of sorts concerning the need to get more information and run the models again in the Blue Nile basin. The report provided by the United Nations Environment Programme details the climate change literature and its stance very well, and it is discussed in terms of its role above. Regarding the social science approach, there is some treatment of the legal aspects as well as use of the natural environment as a framing context. Of course, this treatment considers nature a fixed system and lacks the dynamic aspects of the hydrological and climate approaches. Further, it does not address changes in legal regimes, taking them as a given.

The Social Science Approach

Until the appearance of recent and highly innovative work by Ariel Dinar and Getachew S. Nigatu, the social science approach relied heavily on comparative case studies, participant observation, and action research.[9] These tended to address several key variables, including the natural context of the river system, patterns of abstraction, legal regimes present, disputes over use, and historical factors. The author has written articles as part of this tradition, and to some extent, this piece falls broadly within that tradition. The actual data gathering and structure of these studies vary, and they could include chronological narratives, comparative case studies, and reports of direct-participant observation. Classical works under this approach include those of Arun Elhance, Thomas Naff, Meriam Lowi, Peter Gleick, Peter Chesworth, John Waterbury, and Mark Zeitoun.[10] This basic model has seen additions and improvements, including the application of social statistics by Hans Toset, Petter Wollebaek, and Nils Petter Gleditsch, as well as by Marit Bronchmann and Gleditsch; the use of game theory by Dinar and Nigatu; and an in-depth case study combined with participant observation by Jan Selby.[11] In all of this literature, the issue of how the participants see each other has been studied only rarely. Indeed, social science literature on the role played by identity in transboundary rivers remains the domain of a few. Lowi's work touches upon this issue through its analysis of the links between water and foundational political discourse in Israel;[12] otherwise, the literature

simply does not deal with how people see each other and the political implications of what that means. Indeed, Selby casts Palestinian-Israeli water relations into a Marxian mold, thereby losing many hard-earned observations of the field, including some very creative approaches to bureaucratic policies. One exception is the standpoint-like literature emerging from the Middle East that explicitly includes identity through the open association of the social scientist / author with his or her group. Examples include Nurit Kliot, Hamad Bu-rahmah, and Walid Radwan.[13] Using the well-established social science methodologies discussed above, these authors indicate their belonging to a community and take on a direct or an indirect interest in promoting its water interests. This is not to say that the scholarship is bad or substandard. In fact, it may be a more honest form of scholarship because no one "is an island." In the case of the Blue Nile, the scholarship has often placed it as a part of studies of the Nile basin in general rather than treated it as a river on its own.

The Legal Approach

Plenty of studies taking the legal approach discuss the Blue Nile alone. These tend to argue along standpoint lines, the authors clearly preferring the positions of their respective countries—specifically, Egypt or Ethiopia. The legal approach shares some features with the social sciences approach, including framing within the natural context as well as discussions of use. These tend to be rather limited, though, when compared to the body of treaties governing the Blue Nile in whole or in part. The primary object of the legal approach is to argue about the norms and regimes embedded in the treaties, agreements, and organizations that operate or fail to operate in the Blue Nile. The field has matured greatly since Mamdouh Shahin argued that Egypt has absolute rights to the waters in the Nile basin because they are Egyptian due to prior use.[14] Current discourse is a great deal more sophisticated but remains deeply committed to the cause of one country or another. The papers resemble legal briefs, and indeed in some ways, they are.

The three camps within this school deal with reactions, within the context of the Blue Nile, to the current Ethiopian dam project, the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA), and the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI). The NBI was established in 1999 as a forum for dialogue and communication concerning the Nile. Of the three legal approaches, the first is pessimistic towards cooperation and views the Ethiopian Renaissance Dam as a logical consequence of Egypt's refusal to negotiate concerning the waters of the Blue Nile. In its efforts, Ethiopia has recruited nearly all the Nile basin states, save for Sudan, and has effectively isolated Egypt. Even Sudan has abandoned Egypt, a subject that will be discussed later. In terms of law, representing this first school, Habtamu Alebachew asserts that Egypt is not a prisoner of its own rhetoric because it has declined to negotiate in the past. His article reads like an Ethiopian legal brief at the International Court of Justice, and the relationship is clearly seen as adversarial:

> Ethiopians now stand as a legal challenger not only to the timely relevance of the traditional Egyptian policy that founded itself on the perceptions of Ethiopia's capacity limi-

tations to make use of the Nile waters but also to the adequacy of international law to preempt interstate misunderstandings. Obviously, the Renaissance Dam has showed that Egyptians have created a formidable duty more on themselves than on Ethiopia by their insistence on pursuing "No Negotiation" Nile Policy. At present, it means that Egyptians, in demonstrating their loyalty to their policy, have to wait patiently until practice proves whether the Dam would actually harm or does not harm their advantages. Legally speaking, Egypt finally finds itself prisoner of its own policy.[15]

Implicitly, Alebachew appears to suggest that initiatives like the NBI are failures and that the future will really be determined through power and the systematic isolation of Egypt. This perspective is neither the sole nor even harshest one on cooperation. Egypt is seen as a bully and a hegemon, and Ethiopia is cast nearly in the role of the underdog—a sort of David versus the Egyptian Goliath. As already pointed out, however, at least in the discussion of the population, this perception may no longer hold true. Using the harshest possible language, Dereje Zeleke Mekonnen rejects the NBI and the CFA as an Egyptian ruse:

> The Egyptian proposal at Sharm El-Sheikh to further continue the negotiation under the auspices of the Nile Basin River Commission proves that the non-hegemonic riparians are allowed only to endlessly negotiate with and never to win any concessions from the basin bully. To accept this, however, would be a volitional forfeiture by the non-hegemonic riparians of their right to any consumptive use of the Nile waters; hence, the Sharm El-Sheikh fiasco. It should thus be no surprise that what had been said of the Pharaohs millennia ago may validly be said of Egypt's rulers of today: "Pharaoh king of Egypt, . . . you say, 'The Nile is Mine; I made it for myself.'"[16]

Wondwosen B. Teshome offers a more moderate critique of the NBI, arguing that water sharing is a conflict-laden concept that should be replaced by "benefits-sharing."[17] Given the history of the region, it is very difficult to see how the concept of benefit sharing can be accepted without clear water allocation, and the concept itself invites serious questions. Specifically, had the Nile basin been unified in a single state, many projects like the Aswan High Dam, the Egyptian reclamations project, and perhaps some aspects of the Gezira scheme in Sudan probably would have been redundant if not outright harmful. Wondwosen's approach towards water is similar to the perspective of Salman M. A. Salman: although the Nile basin CFA was well intentioned, it nevertheless led to further conflict and division not only between the upper and lower riparians but also between Egypt and Sudan in a more direct way.[18] Sharing in this optimistic outlook, Nadia Sanchez and Joyeeta Gupta declare that the breakup of Sudan, the ongoing conflict in Egypt, and the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (in Ethiopia) offer all stakeholders a chance to develop a "more equitable" distribution of water in the basin.[19] This assumes, however, that current arrangements are inequitable and need changing. The middle ground represented by Salman, Wondwosen, Sanchez, and Gupta contrasts sharply with perspectives from Egypt, which have undergone significant evolution nevertheless. Representing this viewpoint, Abdel Fattah Metawie argues that the NBI is the latest in cooperative agreements in the Nile basin that reflect the desires of all riparians.[20]

His article stands in sharp contrast to the arguments raised by Alebachew and Mekonnen. Nowhere does Metawie discuss allocations although he examines all of the agreements in the basin in great detail. Indeed, the worlds of Metawie and Mekonnen are far apart. Unfortunately, little had changed between the founding of the NBI and the Ethiopian announcement of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project. That fact leads the author to note that a primary complaint by Mekonnen and Alebachew was Egypt's use of cooperative forums to delay and prevent allocation of water to upper riparians, a position that finds more than sufficient support, as shown below, in terms of Egyptian policy debates that were inadvertently made public.

This Work and the Literature

As stated earlier, very few works address how identity issues influence water policy. This article attempts to fill a bit of gap by bringing the issue into international studies as one involving identity in a primary and elemental way. Indeed, the Egyptian policy debate showed that the matter has not been approached "rationally" by any stretch of the imagination and that some variables operating on the dispute over the waters of the Nile have little to do with water sharing, water allocation, benefit sharing, or international cooperation in whatever guise cooperation has assumed. Consequently, it is vital to approach the problems of the Nile riparian states as primarily problems of relating to the other, with the implications these problems have in terms of socialization, schooling, and public policy concerning acceptance of difference in terms not only of international relations but also domestic issues. Given past evidence, the Aswan High Dam was built for political and ideational reasons that have little to do with either water security or benefit maximization. Some individuals attributed the decision, made during the heady Nasser era, to Egyptian nationalism. Although correct, such a view misses the larger picture of how this nationalism saw the Sudanese, Ethiopians, and Central Africans. With the current Ethiopian dam project, we can also perceive the long-term consequences of such a view. Using a Wendtian analysis, this article adds the dimension of identity to the discussion of the dispute over the Blue Nile. Towards that end, it seeks to reveal the complexities that a real solution would entail in the long run.

Current Water-Consumption Patterns

In this article, allocation and actual use are accorded a higher priority than discussions of cooperation and forums for as-of-yet unrealized cooperation. Before the current dam project, the waters of the Blue Nile were being used almost exclusively by Egypt and Sudan under a bilateral treaty under which the two states simply helped themselves to the water of the whole Nile basin. It is best to leave discussions of the normative implications of the 1959 Nile Waters to ethicists and other specialists in values. Nevertheless, the imbalance inherent in the agreement, which built upon the 1929 British-Egyptian Nile Waters Agreement, certainly contains much of the causality for Ethiopia's decision to

dam the Blue Nile without the consent of Egypt. More often than not, Sudan has not used its allocation under the 1959 agreement, and the waters passed on to Egyptian use without prior or subsequent consideration. The lack of any Egyptian water contribution and the excessive losses at Lake Nasser render Egypt's positions concerning the Nile unacceptable to Ethiopia—and perhaps even Sudan—were it able to choose its policies freely. Table 2 shows the differences between contributions and abstractions of water.

Table 2. Contributions and consumption of Nile waters by states and regions (in cubic kilometers)

Country or Region	Water Contribution	Water Use
Egypt	0	55.5
Sudan and South Sudan	minimal	18.5
Ethiopia	72.0	1.0
Central African Great Lakes	12.0	1.7

Source: Adapted from Dale Whittington and Elizabeth McClelland, "Opportunities for Regional and International Cooperation in the Nile Basin," *Water International* 17, no. 3 (September 1992): 146.

Were the benefits of Egyptian water use shared with Ethiopia, this picture may have been acceptable, but Egypt not only refuses to share benefits but also utilizes the Nile abusively. Seepage and evaporation at the Aswan High Dam between 1970 and 1988 ranged between 5.7 in 1986 and nearly 15 cubic kilometers in 1976.[21] These numbers were further corroborated by Mosalam Ahmed Mosalam Shaltout and T. El Housry.[22] These numbers show a pattern of use that is not considerate of other users' needs. To further aggravate the situation, Egyptian irrigation systems remain "primitive," according to Abdrabbo Abou Kheira:

> About 2.52, ha (6 million feddans) are old lands irrigated by surface irrigation methods with low on-farm water application efficiency (40–60%). Waterlogging, salinization, and low application efficiency are the main problems inherent with surface irrigation. Replacing the surface irrigation method with precise irrigation systems became the main interest of the decision makers and policy planners in Egypt.[23]

It is indeed wonderful that water planners in Egypt are concerned about implementing more efficient methods of irrigation, but the larger question is, after what? Egypt has squandered hundreds of cubic kilometers of water at the Aswan High Dam in the decades since it was built, oblivious to Ethiopian protest over both the 1959 agreement and the dam itself. As long as the water wasted both at the dam and in the inefficient Egyptian irrigation system was seen as a cost-free loss for Egypt, the country had no real incentive to change its water-consumption habits. At various points, Egypt was wasting between 20 and 50 percent of the water that flowed in its irrigation system.[24] This fact suggests that it is too late for ideas like "benefit sharing" and "cooperation" in the Nile basin. Egypt chose self-help at the implicit expense of others in terms of externalities, and now Ethiopia is doing the same.

Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam
and Other Ethiopian Blue Nile Projects

At present, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam is the main object of contention between Egypt and Ethiopia. Its reservoir will be able to hold 63 cubic kilometers of water—or about a year's worth of the Ethiopian Blue Nile water contribution. The dam will be located about 40 kilometers from the Sudanese border in the Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State. It is expected to have a generating capacity of about 5,250 megawatts. Ethiopia would like to use the dam primarily for power generation to rid itself of butane imports and as a catalyst for industrialization. It will also be used for irrigation.[25] The costs of the dam are being borne by the Ethiopian people through both taxes and bond-subscription drives both in Ethiopia and in the overseas communities of Ethiopian origin. The overall cost is estimated to be about $5 billion (US), and the power-generation capacity of the dam—about $2 billion (US) out of the $5 billion (US) overall cost of the dam—is being financed by China.[26] In short, Ethiopia has set up the financing in such a way that Egypt's patrons cannot influence events as they had in the past, particularly during the British era. China is the sole external supplier of capital, and it is hard to see how Egypt can make demands of that country.

This built-in resiliency can be understood in other ways as well. Were Egypt to resort to a violent attack on the dam, in violation of Sudanese sovereignty as well as Ethiopian territory, Ethiopia could use an alternative means of withholding the water through construction of a large number of small dams to use irrigation in its share of the Blue Nile basin. By building 5,000 small dams, Ethiopia would irrigate about 1.8 million hectares and reduce the flow of the Blue Nile by about 7.2 cubic kilometers.[27] The results for Egypt might be even less positive than the current situation, which, ironically, could prove beneficial to Egypt in some unexpected ways. Indeed, calmer voices in Egypt, such as Mahmoud Salem's, have indicated that the dam would increase the amount of water available to Egypt because of the lower rates of evaporation in the cooler, rockier highlands of Ethiopia:

> Let's start with the fact that Ethiopia is a sovereign nation and is well within its right to build any dam it pleases on its land, as long as it doesn't violate the international agreements governing the water share of downstream nations, and it likely will not. Then let's talk about water loss: from the share of water we receive, we lose about 12% of it due to evaporation while the water is stored in Lake Nasser for 10 months between the flood time and irrigation needs. Ethiopia has a lesser evaporation rate (almost half of Egypt), and the electrical dam will slow down the rate of water we receive, thus making sure that the water that gets stored in Lake Nasser arrives in stages and thus decrease [*sic*] our evaporation rate considerably. This will lead to an actual reduction in lost water and an increase in actual water by 5%. Believe it or not, storing the water in Ethiopia before it reaches Egypt will actually lead to an increase in our water supply. So why the hysteria?[28]

At no time did Egypt or Sudan consult with Ethiopia concerning projects on water use within their borders. Moreover, the Aswan High Dam as well as the 1929 and 1959

Nile Waters agreements took place without Ethiopian consent, so it is rather strange for Egypt to protest a project that is remarkably similar to its own previous efforts. The Egyptian response, as pointed out below, is not conditioned by hydrology but by exclusionary nationalism—and a particularly "unreconstructed" (in the American sense of the word) one at that.

Identity in the Nile Basin

Egypt's response to the construction of the dam cannot be described as anything other than hysterical, as Salem notes. The Egyptian government held a National Security Council meeting on 3 June 2013 to discuss the Ethiopian dam. Chaired by President Mohamed Morsi, the meeting involved representatives of all the political and social forces in the country, including representatives of the Coptic Church and other minority religions in the country. The churchmen offered to mediate the dispute through their links with the Ethiopian Church, but the mood in the room was particularly warlike, and a leading Egyptian liberal, Ayman Nour, proposed a program of political violence against and destabilization of Ethiopia using economic and political means. Nour's proposals called for using Ethiopia's ethnic and religious diversity against it as well as military actions and diplomatic and geopolitical encirclement. His discourse and arguments turned the meeting into something akin to a nineteenth-century imperial war council.[29] In response, Ethiopia called the Egyptian ambassador for consultations and dismissed Nour's suggestions as "daydreaming."[30]

To those unfamiliar with the tone and tenor of nationalism and the use of identity politics in the region, the ideas expressed by the otherwise relatively liberal Nour would come as a shock. But a quick glance at modern Ethiopia's first encounter with modern Egypt would rapidly dispel any remaining questions as to the location of the problem. Alexander Wendt explained this method by using the encounter between Cortes and Montezuma abstracted to "ego and alters."[31] The two states encountered each other as modern entities during the nineteenth century when Egypt was expanding its Red Sea littoral (now called Eritrea)—an action that led it to friction with Ethiopia at a time when both countries faced European incursions. The Ethiopian emperor, Yohannes IV, wrote to Khedive Isma'il of Egypt indicating that the two states, which shared religions, should not be at odds. Isma'il did not take the Ethiopian emperor seriously because he was "like an Egyptian bishop." At the time, the head of the Ethiopian Church was appointed by the Coptic Pope in Egypt, so Khedive Isma'il simply saw Ethiopians as an extension of Egypt's own Christians, then living under Ottoman laws, which reduced them to second-class status. In 1875 Isma'il's arrogant dismissal of Ethiopia led him to launch a catastrophic war against Ethiopia that ended in a complete Egyptian defeat.[32]

In Egypt's eyes, Sudan is a backyard—a former colony that, due to historical accidents, somehow managed to become independent. Upon Sudan's gaining independence in the 1950s, its attempts to foster an integrated water-management regime were met with an Egyptian destabilization program, economic sanctions, and threats of war that

prompted the Sudanese army to seize power and appease Egypt in 1958. The 1959 Nile Waters Agreement was signed by that particular military government, led by Lt Gen Ibrahim Abboud. Sudan, which tends to centralize Islam in its identity matrix, had historically viewed Egypt as its source and Ethiopia as its enemy. During the country's stint with independence between 1886 and 1899, the Mahdist Sudan waged a war of religion against Ethiopia. Consequently, Ethiopia has seen both Sudan and Egypt as enemies or at least potential adversaries in the past. With Egypt, this stance appears to be ongoing. Such a viewpoint proved a great deal harsher during the time when Coptic Christianity was an established religion in Ethiopia, but it persists even with the secular state in place today. Unfortunately, identity issues—brutally exploited by leaders—rather than disputes over water have killed and continue to kill millions of people in the Nile basin:

> Without belaboring the point, we note that all governments in the basin are either outright dictatorships or quasi-authoritarian. In the interest of political survival and personal wealth accumulation, virtually all leaders in the Nile basin are habituated to exploiting the external markers of identity, be it kinship or ethnicity, religion or region. In the last quarter century, for example, more than eight million people have perished in Sudan, Rwanda, and the DRC [Democratic Republic of the Congo] alone, not because of interstate wars over Nile waters, but as a result of internal politics.[33]

Some of the more radical theorists of international relations see identity as a violation of human rights because it is an imposition. Although this work does not go that far, it is not without sympathy for that perspective. Egypt's insistence on not paying heed to the views and needs of others on the river stems from perceiving itself as somehow better than others in the basin, as somehow superior, and as entitled to water and to sole decision making over Nile waters, regardless of the needs of anyone else. Egypt is not alone in having a sense of nationalism, but it has acted as a hegemon in the nineteenth century in a manner that led to significant loss of lives, and if Ayman Nour had his way, it would do so again, regardless of the lessons of 1875 and 1886. A cooperative scheme of integrated water management in the Blue Nile basin or the Nile basin in general is not possible under current conditions of Egyptian nationalism. People who believe that it is simply a question of structuring payoffs or instating a trading system miss the point completely. Egypt already imports most of its food and could not achieve water and food security were every single drop of the Nile allocated to its use alone. Yet it insists on denying others the right to develop their stretches of the Nile even if such developments lead to an increase in its own water supply. To argue that Egyptian policy is driven by some cost-benefit calculus misses the point; identity is not something in the realm of the rational.

To compound difficulties, ample evidence indicates that Egypt is actually carrying out some of Nour's policy suggestions, including attempts at isolating Ethiopia and bringing Arab and Islamic world pressure on the country.[34] Such actions should come as no surprise. The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam was first proposed as part of a series of projects suggested by the United States Bureau of Reclamation in 1964.[35] Although

the proposed dam was somewhat smaller, Egypt reacted in the same manner as it has in response to the current plans. In short, Egypt has not stopped viewing the Nile as a carrier of "its" water. Egypt is too attached to its fears:

> That both the Sudanese and Egyptian allocations could still be higher is simply due to the Aswan reservoir being operated at relatively low levels, thus reducing evaporation losses below the estimates of the treaty. . . . Egypt, however, would not be the beneficiary of additional water in years of high flood, which would then be stored and regulated in the Blue Nile reservoirs, not at Aswan. Moreover lowering the level of Lake Nasser in order to limit the evaporable loss would concomitantly reduce the hydroelectric power, but in return, Egypt would receive additional water for irrigation. Ethiopia could, of course, malevolently withhold water it did not need in a year of low rainfall to threaten disaster in the Nile Valley. The Egyptians have historically deeply feared this threat to their survival, and such an action would be tantamount to an act of war. It was just such a fear, in the jungle of predatory nation states, which determined the construction of the High Dam at Aswan.[36]

Reflections and Conclusion

Despite the continuity in Egyptian foreign policy over the last 50 years, some remarkable changes have occurred during that time. Sudan desperately signed any document Egypt placed in front of it in 1959 and sought to avoid conflict with Egypt not only in terms of water but also even in terms of the history with which it socialized its youth. Sudanese children were raised to think that the colonial Sudan was a British artifact rather than an Anglo-Egyptian creation. So subservient was the country to Egypt that Nurit Kliot, perhaps one of the most insightful scholars in this field, remarked that "Sudan has subjected her will to Egypt before, and may do so again."[37] Ironically, the shift in Sudanese behavior came under the tenure of the one Sudanese government most hostile to the country's African identity, its religious minorities—especially Christians—and the one that is chauvinistically both Arab Nationalist and Islamist to the point of having its chief of state indicted for genocide. The Sudan shifted for several reasons, including the Egyptian attempt to seize Halaib, a triangle of land on the Red Sea; the presence of Ethiopian peacekeepers separating north and south Sudan at Heglig and other oil-rich areas; and for the cardinal reason that water for the country's breadbasket in the central and eastern provinces comes from Ethiopia. The hegemon in the Nile basin is no longer Egypt, and current Sudanese realignment is the primary indicator of this shift.

In terms of theory, we see from the Sudanese move towards alignment with Ethiopia that although ideas matter a great deal and may be determinative in most cases, the physical realities concerning the distribution of resources matter as well. It is as Wendt described "ideas almost all the way down." The larger question involves when Egypt will follow Sudan in accepting that water, and therefore life, comes from Ethiopia and that religious and ethnic ideology, even when financed by the Gulf States, does not feed or water a population. In Egypt's case, that ideology includes the Fashoda complex that

denies upper riparians the right not only to develop their water resources but also to develop at all.

In their treatment of Egyptian expansion upstream, Moorehead's books, mentioned above, capture the conflict between Cairo and its subject states in Sudan and northern Uganda. Despite their shortcomings, these studies contain nearly all the major themes that the Nile basin continues to grapple with, and *The Blue Nile* brings out the power of Ethiopia as a determined and full player in the international system even in the face of immense poverty and technological backwardness. Other themes of Moorehead's work remain with us. These include religious conflict, mobilization on the basis of Islam in Sudan and Egypt during the Urabi and Mahdist revolts, and mobilization on the basis of Jacobite Christianity in Ethiopia against the Egyptians, the Sudanese, and eventually the Europeans. Ethiopia is secular today as a state, but both Egypt and Sudan have become more religious and more prone to define the self and other in terms of religious identity.

In the meantime, there have been no movements to speak of towards cooperative use of the river system, which should unite rather than divide these states and peoples. Donors and foreign partners need to consider whether or not their involvement with the three states sharing the waters of the Blue Nile induces them towards cooperation; they need to consider whether or not their respective relations with these states are entrenching ideological pathologies; and, finally, they need to consider whether or not aid and other forms of assistance are delaying the implementation of both water-saving regimes and birth-control programs. They also need to ponder the well-noted tendency of the region to mobilize along the lines of identity markers for violence.

An Egyptian attack against Ethiopia's dams will escalate to a civilizational conflict between Christians and Muslims as well as between Arabs and Africans, placing the lives of Egyptian Copts and Ethiopian Muslims at extreme risk. In the nearby and decidedly more developed Middle East, we have seen an outbreak of ultraviolence along the lines of religious and sectarian identity, so why assume that the Nile region will be different? Given current global tensions, it is incumbent upon Egypt to outgrow its Fashoda complex and consider participating in the very sort of integrated water-management regime, suggested by a liberal Sudanese government, that it rejected in 1956. Compounding the dangers is the risk of climate change, which could one day make the Nile a memory in Egypt and perhaps much of northern Sudan as well.

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Feminism and the Politics of Empowerment in International Development

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By the end of the twentieth century, the term *empowerment* had entered the mainstream of international development discourse. Yet, its origins in this arena derive in large part from feminists working in nongovernmental organizations (NGO) throughout the global South in the 1970s and 1980s, many of whom were interested in fostering alternative forms of development along with "women's liberation."[1] Considerable work has addressed the mainstreaming of empowerment, with critical commentary on how this action has brought significant shifts in its meaning and use.[2] In contrast to those who argue that international development institutions "have taken the power out of empowerment," we contend that mainstream initiatives envision and further significant forms of power—forms that enable particular types of subjectivity and agency that lead to a "depoliticization" along the lines of what Wendy Brown has addressed in her work on neoliberalism and de-democratization.[3] We also argue that, although the mainstreaming of empowerment discourse has brought a normalization and domestication along liberal lines, significant differences are at play within the mainstream that need to be acknowledged. In this article, we trace the emergence of empowerment discourse within the World Bank (WB), identifying a neoliberal orientation in which

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empowerment is connected to individual rational choice, efficiency, investment, free markets, entrepreneurship, and, more recently, a social-liberal framing that locates empowerment in relation to governance, poverty alleviation, equal opportunity, capabilities, and "effective asset-based choice."[4] We contrast these two liberal empowerment projects with the left feminist approach that developed from community-based activism in South Asia. We then conclude by considering some of the key challenges facing feminists, given the tensions inherent in a radical empowerment project, arguing that in light of the current context in which powerful liberal conceptualizations have taken center stage, it is especially important for feminists to pursue a "postcapitalist politics" that connects empowerment to alternative, noncapitalist visions of the economy.[5]

Since its inception in the midnineteenth century, the word *empowerment* has been used in two different ways. On the one hand, reflecting its early origins, it has meant that power has been "given," "invested," or "authorized" by a higher authority (such as the state or a religious institution). On the other hand, reflecting its contemporary usage dating from the mid-1970s, it may designate a process by which individuals come to develop the capacity to act and to acquire power. As such, it is seen as something that individuals develop themselves. Understood in this latter manner, the term came of age in a period when global/local synergies and tensions became prominent (i.e., the 1970s and 1980s). Its embrace across the political spectrum reflects a widely shared recognition of local and/or individual instances of power as crucial elements in the realization of any social project. It also reflects a common reaction against the authority of large-scale, hierarchical, and bureaucratic institutions, and a turn toward emancipatory projects based upon some vision of self-actualization and/or self-determination. Thus, empowerment as the embodiment of a "grassroots" or "bottom-up" vision of social change also came of age in a period when questions related to agency, subjectivity, and identity exploded onto the social and political landscape. By looking at the emergence of the left feminist, neoliberal, and social-liberal empowerment perspectives, we are able to appreciate the alternative politics at play in these different projects, along with the different conceptualizations of agency, subjectivity, and power.

From the "Grassroots": Empowerment as an Alternative Feminist Approach to Development

The term *empowerment* began to be used among feminists working in South Asian community groups and NGOs in the mid-1970s.[6] As Narayan Banerjee notes, in India "the concept of 'empowerment' of women is the product of [the] post 1975 women's movement."[7] By the mid-1980s, the Indian government had embraced "grassroot organizational empowerment" as part of its planning agenda for rural development. Concurrently, a distinctive feminist "empowerment approach" to development emerged on the international scene in the mid-1980s through the work of one of the first transnational feminist networks—the Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) project.

Throughout South Asia in the 1970s, feminists reacted against the government's top-down welfare approach to women in development and worked to break women's "shackles of the mind."[8] In India, feminists sought to transform the meaning of the word *empowerment* to that of a woman needing to be "given self-hood and self-strength" or "to be strengthened to be herself" rather than being a "beneficiary" who needed to be "dealt out cards—welfare and money—to make her feel better."[9] Similar to what was happening concurrently in the battered women's movement in the United States, as feminists in South Asia organized against domestic violence, rape, dowry, and *sati*—and for reproductive rights—they recognized that empowerment necessitates an internal, subjective dimension that addresses a woman's positioning of herself relative to the world.[10] To them, "it was a process, that of acquiring a sense of identity that is couched in terms of self-worth and equality. . . . Until women recognize themselves as worthy of rights they are not going to get empowered."[11] Thus, throughout South Asia, feminist understandings of empowerment emphasized the importance of recognizing and developing a woman's sense of identity and agency through a process of consciousness raising or "conscientization."[12]

This feminist activism contributed to the Indian government's embrace of "an induced organizational approach" to rural women's development that shifted the government's understanding of empowerment toward more of a grassroots orientation.[13] By the mid-1980s, a new meaning of empowerment had emerged within the Indian government's planning arenas—one oriented toward "grassroot empowerment" for poor, largely rural women via collective reflection, participation, and group self-organization.[14]

By the mid-1980s the term *empowerment* also had gained broader international political and economic recognition when at the NGO forum at the United Nations' 1985 second World Conference on Women in Nairobi, Kenya, the nascent DAWN project of "Third World women social scientists" circulated a platform document outlining an alternative development approach.[15] This widely discussed "manifesto" provided a critique of mainstream development programs and offered a vision of an alternative feminist "paradigm" in which women's empowerment figured prominently. It was subsequently published in 1987 as what has become a well-known book—*Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives*.[16] DAWN itself became institutionalized as "a network of activists, researchers and policymakers" from the "Third World," engaging in what Mary Hawkesworth has characterized as an "information politics."[17]

This above-mentioned book, dedicated to "a process of ongoing empowerment of women," is notable in several respects:[18]

- Written by feminist activists, academics, and policy makers from the global South, it connected the grassroots-level work that many of the women were familiar with or engaged in, to a macroeconomic analysis and critique that showed how neoliberal development practices had aggravated women's circumstances throughout the world, resulting in a food crisis in Africa, the Latin American debt crisis, a crisis of poverty in South Asia, and militarism in the Pacific Islands.

• It put forth an alternative left feminist vision of "autonomous and equitable development" oriented toward satisfying people's basic needs. As such, it criticized the "integrationist" approach of the liberal "Women in Development" perspective that implicitly assumed that "women's main problem in the Third World is insufficient participation in an otherwise benevolent process of growth and development."[19] Furthermore, it called for structural and systemic change so that "inequality based on class, gender and race is absent from every country, and from the relationships among countries."[20]

• The book argued that only by taking the standpoint of poor Third World women might one come to a proper understanding of development and be able to fashion effective alternatives.

• It posed empowerment and the self-organization of women as necessary for realizing such alternative development.[21]

Subsequently, DAWN's alternative "empowerment approach" gained substantial recognition in more mainstream development arenas with the 1989 publication of an influential article by Caroline Moser, a social anthropologist, in the highly respected journal, *World Development*.[22] By the 1990s, one could find references to empowerment in international development literature that spanned the globe.

Given the local, grassroots nature of people working to "empower women" and the considerable diversity of regions and contexts, differences exist in how women's empowerment has been described and undertaken.[23] Yet, generally, feminist empowerment has been viewed as a *process* involving the self-organization of women in a manner that enables them to mobilize to effect transformative social changes in "structures of subordination" so as to free them from subjugation. As such, feminist empowerment necessitates work at the individual level as well as at organizational and social levels. Indeed, it involves an articulation of at least three different dimensions: (1) an internal, psychological, or subjective level of empowerment in which a person's "power within" and individual-level "power to" are developed; (2) an interpersonal and organizational level whereby a "power with" and a "power over" are cultivated; and (3) a political or social level where institutional and/or structural change is made possible via collective action.[24] As Srilatha Batliwala, an Indian social worker and feminist activist, has written,

> Radical transformations in society . . . cannot be achieved through the struggles of village or neighbourhood women's collectives. . . . In the final analysis, to transform society, women's empowerment must become a political force, that is, an organized mass movement that challenges and transforms existing power structures. Empowerment should ultimately lead to the formation of mass organizations of poor women, at the regional, national and international levels.[25]

Thus, feminist empowerment has been understood fundamentally as a multifaceted process that explicitly addresses social power and inequality and that enables social transformation on the basis of women's self-organization. Further, as a reaction against top-

down welfare and neoliberal approaches to women and development, this transnational feminist project of social change has been connected to a vision of alternative, noncapitalist development.

Empowerment Hits the Mainstream

Having emerged within the context of a grassroots project for feminist consciousness-raising, alternative development, and social change, empowerment was rapidly diffused within the international development community so that by the mid-1990s, it had become a buzzword that, in many respects, was domesticated or normalized along liberal economic and political lines.[26] Yet, the mainstreaming of empowerment discourse since the mid-1980s has not brought a monolithic or singular framing. Rather, at least two types of liberalism have been at play *within* the mainstream: a neoliberalism and a social liberalism. Here we consider the turn to empowerment at the WB to illustrate these different empowerment discourses that have taken shape within the mainstream and to contrast these two liberal, domesticated conceptualizations of empowerment relative to the left feminist approach.[27]

The Washington Consensus, Neoliberalism, and Empowerment as "Smart Economics"

It is widely accepted that a neoliberal orientation permeated WB policy and practice during the Washington Consensus period from the early 1980s to the early-to-mid-1990s. Thus, feminists who worked assiduously within the WB to integrate empowerment and attention to gender more broadly had to "present the business case" or "give the economic rationale for investing in gender" with an emphasis upon "outcomes assessments" and "results based management."[28] These efficiency-based arguments tended to define empowerment in narrow, individualistic, and static terms such as women's increased decision-making power within the household, their greater involvement in market-oriented activity, their greater mobility, or their capacity to generate more income. Indicators such as these measure aspects of "personal empowerment," in contrast to social, political, or collective empowerment.[29] This neoliberal approach to empowerment brought an instrumentalization of the term and proved most effective in generating "human capital" investments in women's health and education (literacy training and the acquisition of marketable skills), along with microcredit and small-business development, while also imposing short-term "return on investment" imperatives.[30]

The continued strength of such a neoliberal empowerment perspective within the WB is evidenced by the four-year Gender Action Plan launched in 2007 by then-president Robert Zoellick. With "gender equity" proclaimed to be "smart economics," the plan sought to "empower women" by "increasing women's access to land, labor force participation, agriculture, infrastructure, and finance."[31] It also shifted the focus of the WB's Women in Development project implementation toward private-sector development and

job training, and "away from the 'usual suspects' in Bank GAD [gender and development] action—the International Development Association, the reproductive health projects or anti-indigence projects in social sectors."[32] Further, the International Finance Corporation—the WB institution responsible for promoting private-sector operations—emerged as the key player, charged with implementing the Gender Action Plan by developing partnerships with corporations such as Nike to undertake bank-funded activities in the areas of job training and credit provision. As Zoellick explained,

> the empowerment of women is smart economics.
>
> Despite gains in health and education, progress on women's opportunities is lagging. Women trail men in labor force participation, access to credit, entrepreneurship rates, inheritance and land ownership rights, and income.
>
> This is neither fair nor smart economics, and in fact studies show that investments in women yield large social and economic returns.[33]

Clearly a neoliberal rationality has been alive and well within the WB, one in which empowerment is framed in a manner that connects it to efficiency, economic growth, productivity, investment, free markets, entrepreneurship, and individual rational choice.

The Post-Washington Consensus, Social Liberalism, and Empowerment as "Effective Agency"

Despite the ongoing presence of such a neoliberal, instrumental, and market-oriented women's empowerment perspective at the WB, in other arenas of bank policy and research, a broader perspective is evident—one that incorporates a concern with addressing social conditions necessary for economic development and growth along with the institutional context needed for enabling individual empowerment via "effective" or "purposive agency." Here empowerment in general and "women's empowerment" in particular are seen as important for intrinsic reasons along with instrumental ones.

As many people have noted, the WB's increasing attention to gender relations, empowerment, and participation at the end of the twentieth century arose within the context of widespread critiques of and mobilizations against failed structural-adjustment policies in the global South and "shock therapy" in Eastern Europe. This trend brought a growing recognition of problematic outcomes related to unregulated free markets, leading to a "post-Washington Consensus" codified in many respects by then-president James Wolfensohn's Comprehensive Development Framework and subsequently operationalized in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP). The PRSP initiative has been characterized as an "inclusive neoliberal regime of development" since it has coalesced "around a number of norms and principles of inclusion, such as poverty reduction, empowerment, and economic security" while still privileging privatization, market deregulation, and traditional macroeconomic austerity policies.[34]

Although some individuals have argued that neoliberal privatization and economic liberalization remain at the forefront of the PRSPs, there is an explicit call for empowerment within the "good governance" priority area to ensure the effective disbursement of

aid in the "right" institutional environment.[35] One can achieve citizen empowerment and good governance by educating people on their "rights as citizens" and by providing the mechanisms for formal political participation so that government institutions will be "held accountable."[36] Under Paul Wolfowitz, good governance came to mean not only that the state has an important role to play, with the government serving "as a complement to markets, undertaking those actions that make markets fulfill their functions—as well as correcting market failures," but also, more broadly, that there is a "combination of transparent and accountable institutions, strong skills and competence, and a fundamental willingness to do the right thing."[37]

Shortly after the appearance of empowerment as a key aspect of good governance in the PRSPs, the notion was taken up in a more extensive manner in WB discourse related to poverty-reduction strategies with publication of the *World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking Poverty* and of *Empowerment and Poverty Reduction: A Sourcebook*.[38] Empowerment was recognized as "one of the three pillars of poverty reduction," and the *World Development Report* dedicated a section to it.[39]

With empowerment defined as "the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives," the WB put forth a worldview in which the poor are to address their exclusion, marginalization, and dependence by negotiating "better terms for themselves with traders, financiers, governments, and civil society."[40] Indeed, the overall thrust of the WB's empowerment orientation in the economic sphere is for poor people to "rise out of poverty" by "build[ing] their assets."[41] *Empowerment in Practice: From Analysis to Implementation*, the most in-depth WB study to date on the theory, practice, and measurement of empowerment, elaborates more fully upon this perspective.[42] Here empowerment is defined as "the process of enhancing an individual's or group's capacity to make purposive choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes."[43] Overall, the perspective put forth is that of "asset-based agency" operating within an "institution-based opportunity structure."[44]

Notably, the 2006 study offers a sophisticated and extensive consideration of "agency" that diverges from the rational-choice framing that characterizes free-market neoliberal perspectives. People's agency is understood as predicated upon their "asset endowment," which includes "psychological, informational, organizational, material, social, financial, and human assets."[45] Drawing upon feminist work on empowerment, the study posits psychological assets as "particularly crucial" since "actors need a raised level of consciousness if they are to translate their assets into choices—that is, to become 'agents.'"[46]

Empowerment in Practice also gives some attention to issues related to unequal power. Recognizing that a "weak bargaining position" will limit one's capacity to make effective choices, it notes that "power relations . . . need to be taken seriously" if poor people are to make their way out of poverty.[47] Generally, this concern translates into a desire to foster more "equitable rules" of the game along with "expanded entitlements" to provide an "opportunity structure" that allows people "to translate their asset base into effective agency."[48]

Finally, the study also argues for the intrinsic as well as instrumental value of empowerment, posting empowerment "as a goal in itself and as a driver of development."[49] The intrinsic importance of gender empowerment is echoed in the *World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development*, with "gender equality" posed as a "core objective in itself" although it also is seen as providing instrumental benefits related to the efficient allocation of human resources.[50]

In many respects, the *World Development Report 2012* illustrates the widespread presence of a social-liberal capabilities perspective at the WB that draws extensively on Amartya Sen's work, defining development as "a process of expanding freedoms equally for all people."[51] Here, too, empowerment is linked to women's "agency" insofar as empowered women are understood as those able to make effective choices. The report focuses on analyzing how various "structures of opportunity" within the community either foster or diminish women's empowerment and thereby their agency or "their ability to make choices that lead to desired outcomes."[52] It mostly analyzes the "bottlenecks," "barriers," "market failures," and "institutional constraints" that create the unlevel playing fields that impede women from engaging in effective agency. Yet, there is some recognition that women's "social and political empowerment" is an important element for making institutions more representative and for fostering public policy changes by helping to build coalitions that mobilize around gender-reform initiatives.[53]

Clearly then, important discursive and theoretical shifts within the WB's empowerment discourse have coalesced around what we are calling a social-liberal approach.[54] Indeed, as Maxine Molyneux notes, "In recent years, a growing consensus in development communities associates empowerment with increased capabilities, which enlarges the realm of choice, or, as Sen expresses it, reflects a person's freedom to choose between different ways of living."[55] The extent to which this social-liberal empowerment perspective is operationalized in WB policies and programs remains to be seen, however. For instance, although the PRSPs incorporate a modest redistributive agenda to subsidize access to commodified education and health-care services for the poorest of the poor, the greatest emphasis has been placed upon projects oriented toward skill building, education, income generation, and women's paid participation in the labor force. Further, several case studies have shown that empowerment has been implemented in a rather shallow and cursory fashion.[56]

The Politics of Empowerment

What then to make of this mainstreaming of empowerment discourse over the past 20 years, and what challenges does such a normalization present for a left feminist approach to empowerment today? At the WB, in both the neoliberal and social-liberal approaches, empowerment takes shape within a liberal frame whose emancipatory vision is cast in terms of individual agency and choice, whether understood as rational, purposive, or effective. Thus, both types of liberal projects address subjective dimensions of power and, thereby, enable particular forms of agency and subjectivity.

In the neoliberal vision, empowerment is conceptualized in purely individualistic terms. Agency is construed as the ability to make rational utility-maximizing choices so as to profit from opportunities to enhance one's well-being in a competitive market economy. Just as at the microlevel, people are motivated by the promise of instrumental, extrinsic rewards of higher returns, so at the macrolevel, empowerment projects are evaluated in terms of their contribution to efficient resource allocation and economic growth. *Homo oeconomicus* is put forth as the "norm of the human," and all individual conduct is to be ordered by economic rationality.[57]

The incorporation of empowerment within neoliberal development discourse is thus evidence of and has contributed to a broader shift in development policy from what Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello have called the "modernization of production" in the postwar period to a managerial modernization at the end of the twentieth century.[58] Indeed, the neoliberal agenda is an explicitly "constructivist" project that tries to develop forms of self-governance "modeled on . . . a normative social fabric of self-interest."[59] By converting political and social problems into "market terms," neoliberalism "converts them to individual problems with market solutions" and, thereby, it contributes to a "depoliticization" of social life along with the proliferation of norms of citizenship and participation based upon individual responsibility.[60] Here empowerment's emancipatory promise of self-actualization and self-determination has been harnessed to further an agenda that heralds the actions of self-interested, responsible, self-reliant, and entrepreneurial citizen/subjects oriented toward personal gain while undermining the legitimacy of social justice claims based on entitlements or rights.[61]

Thus, while the reality of the neoliberal world order is such that most people garner income by working for wages, the ideology of the empowered entrepreneurial citizen/subject produces an understanding of economic practices and processes that holds out the promise of any individual being able to capitalize on market opportunities. It thereby fosters a consciousness and develops human capacities that serve to reproduce capitalism rather than to transform it. As Wendy Brown has noted, "the model neo-liberal citizen is one who strategizes for her/himself among various social, political and economic options, not one who strives with others to alter or organize these options."[62]

The social-liberal perspective is also focused primarily on enhancing individuals' "power to," with empowerment defined in terms of enabling the exercise of "effective" agency or one's "power to choose." In this respect, the social-liberal approach shares with neoliberalism both an individualized understanding of agency and the concomitant goal of enhancing individual-level capacities. Insofar as agency is understood as predicated upon one's "asset endowment"—whether material, social, and/or psychological—social liberalism also fosters an individualized and ownership-based mentality geared toward entrepreneurial, opportunity-seeking behavior.

However, the social-liberal perspective differs from the neoliberal one in at least three important respects. First, agency or the ability "to envisage and purposively choose options" is not assumed to be an inherent human attribute; rather, in many cases it needs to be constructed, which entails some element of "consciousness raising." Second, the

social-liberal approach provides a broader and deeper consideration of the context within which individual choice is undertaken. It recognizes the role of both formal and informal institutions in establishing the "rules of the game" and in shaping "the opportunity structures." It also considers "empowerment domains" beyond "the market"—namely, those of "the state" and "society."[63] Third, in contrast to the overriding concern with efficient resource allocation that so thoroughly marks neoliberal approaches to empowerment, social-liberal perspectives are imbued with an egalitarian orientation that aims to address social inequalities resulting from an "unlevel playing field."

In response to these liberal interpretations of empowerment, feminists have distinguished their approach in part by insisting that "real" empowerment is a "socio-political process" that connects the growth of individual awareness, self-esteem, critical consciousness, and capacity building with collective engagement, political mobilization, and transformative social action.[64] This radical vision encompasses the multiple dimensions of individual, collective, and structural forms of power; it incorporates an explicitly emancipatory or liberatory social vision; and it aims to foster radical subjectivities or "resistance identities" interested in and capable of pursuing some type of transformative social agenda.[65] Thus, the feminist approach incorporates a social dimension in relation both to the *goals* of empowerment and the *process* of empowerment in ways that are missing from the social-liberal and neoliberal versions.

With respect to the goals, feminist empowerment is explicitly defined as a transformation in social conditions so as to address structural, systemic, and/or institutionalized forms of subordination, oppression, and/or exploitation. Social problems are understood as "rooted in structures that reproduce inequalities on a systematic basis," and "change can only come about through challenges to these structures."[66] With respect to the process, becoming empowered necessarily entails the creation of new subjects and actors who have developed a "critical consciousness" and who are oriented toward organizing and mobilizing to further radical social change; it also involves the formation of groups or collectivities that have a "collective agency" and a "social or collective identity."[67]

Yet, although feminists' emphasis upon the social dimensions of empowerment distinguishes its approach in significant ways, it also raises several challenges, three of which we address here. The first relates to the empowerment process: how to foster the movement from a capacitating "power within" to a collective "power with" and "power to." Indeed, feminist empowerment is recognized as a long, difficult, and nonlinear process since it "necessitates persistent and long-term interventions in order to break old patterns of low self-worth and dependence, and to foster the construction of new personalities with a realistic understanding of how gender functions in . . . society and strategies for its modification."[68] In this quest, feminists have drawn upon various technologies of intervention such as consciousness-raising, "conscientization," popular education, and community organizing. Doing so, however, has raised many interesting and thorny debates within the feminist-activist community about whose knowledge and understanding matters. Although the feminist empowerment approach clearly argues for the importance of local knowledge from the grassroots, along with the necessity for developing "women's

self-knowledge and identity," unmediated knowledge is not usually deemed sufficient for enabling empowerment.[69] "External agents," "independent women's organizations," "external catalysts," or "intermediate institutions" are often understood as necessary to facilitate a transformation in identity and subjectivity as a means of enabling women to develop the desire and capacities to organize for social change.[70]

This raises a second set of difficult issues related to the role of professionals, experts, and intermediary institutions (such as NGOs) in the empowerment process and the manner in which consciousness-raising methods, trainings, and educational practices function as technologies of governance. In some respects, the centrality of concern about the role of intermediaries or external agents arises, in part, from feminists' understanding of the subjects to whom they are addressing themselves. Those who are seen as marginalized, oppressed, and "disempowered" are also understood as having internalized their oppression or marginalization to some extent, thereby necessitating psychological transformation to develop a critical consciousness and an internal "power within": "External catalysts are often critical . . . in situations where disempowerment is manifested as a lack of agency and organizational capacity."[71]

This brings us to a third challenge related to the goal of feminist empowerment: how is "social transformation" or "social change" defined? On the one hand, given that empowerment is understood as a process of self-determination, many people argue that what social transformation means and how it is to be pursued must develop from the empowerment process itself: "Empowerment is not something that can be done to or for women."[72] Yet, on the other hand, since feminists are expressly interested in addressing structural forms of power and systemic and institutionalized inequalities, the process of empowerment is understood as oriented necessarily toward changing oppressive and exploitative social conditions and relations.

To negotiate this tension, feminists have distinguished interventions that address women's "condition" or "practical gender interests" from more transformative ones that address women's "position" or "strategic gender interests."[73] However, the question always remains open as to what constitutes a "true" transformation in women's social position. This question or tension is inherent in any feminist empowerment project (a good thing, from our perspective), but we maintain that in the face of powerful liberal and neoliberal understandings of what constitutes "empowering" *economic* relations, it is especially imperative that left feminists not cede the terrain of the economy. Moreover, they should develop a vision and practice of empowerment that address unequal and exploitative economic relations in ways that go beyond the social-liberal promise of "equal opportunity," "women's autonomy," and "effective asset-based choice"—a "postcapitalist politics," to echo Kathy Gibson and Julie Graham (J. K. Gibson-Graham).[74]

Indeed, the power-centric focus of the feminist empowerment project has fostered more intellectual and political activity around "citizen rights" and "inclusive citizenship" than around "economic rights" and alternative economic ways of being.[75] "Deepening democracy" and "claiming citizenship" are crucial aspects of empowerment. However, unless citizenship and democracy are more fully elaborated to encompass economic rela-

tions, they are not sufficient to enable significant progressive social change—neither in a world in which "civil society" is increasingly cast as yet another arena for "exercising entrepreneurship" nor in a world in which economic practices and processes are conflated with "the market," and women's unpaid work, self-employment, petty trading, and capitalist wage-labor serve to delimit the range of economic possibilities.[76]

Feminist concerns with empowerment have contributed to articulating a multidimensional understanding of power and the modalities by which it is manifested and exercised while also developing new participatory methods and knowledges that seek to base a feminist project of radical social transformation in part on women's lived experiences and self-defined aspirations and social vision. Moreover, feminist theorizing and activism have contributed to shifting powerful mainstream development institutions such as the WB toward a more egalitarian, social-liberal capabilities approach that incorporates some attention to how institutional and social factors are at play in shaping "the effectiveness of agency."[77] Yet, unless feminists can more expansively articulate, mobilize around, and build upon economic visions that offer power and sustenance beyond microcredit, self-employment, or even "decent" waged work, we will not be able to supplant the increasingly hegemonic vision offered by various forms of mainstream empowerment, whether of a social-liberal or neoliberal bent, that serve to reproduce exploitative, capitalist class relations.

As Nancy Fraser has observed, when feminism is "unmoored from the critique of capitalism," it may be "made available for alternative articulations" that, ironically, may reinforce class exploitation by "intensifying capitalism's valorization of waged labor."[78] Thus, following Wendy Brown, we argue that feminists must "emancipate the realm of production" if we "still aim at something other than liberal democracy in a capitalist socioeconomic order."[79] The radical openness that characterizes the feminist empowerment approach and its investment in fostering a "critical consciousness" oriented toward just and equitable social relations creates propitious spaces for finding ways in which "the self-organization of women" enables "alternative development," as was so eloquently and forcefully argued in DAWN's 1987 manifesto. This calls for a feminist politics that "resocializes economic relations" by producing and cultivating new, noncapitalist economic subjectivities, practices, and social relations.[80]

Notes

1. Not until the mid-1970s did the word *empowerment* gain currency outside religious and governmental contexts. In addition to its use by feminist activists in South Asia, the term began to be used in the United States in the mid-1970s by social workers and community psychologists. See Barbara Bryant Solomon, *Black Empowerment: Social Work in Oppressed Communities* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976); Julian Rappaport, "In Praise of Paradox: A Social Policy of Empowerment over Prevention," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 9, no. 1 (1981): 1–25; Lorraine Gutierrez, "Ethnic Consciousness, Consciousness Raising and the Empowerment Process of Latinos" (PhD diss., University of Michigan–Ann

Arbor, 1989); and Marie-Hélène Bacqué and Carole Biewener, *L'empowerment, une pratique émancipatrice* (Paris: La Découverte, 2012). It also began to appear in the US public policy arena, first in 1977 with Peter Berger and Richard Neuhaus's influential essay *To Empower People: From State to Civil Society* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 1977) and later in the 1980s by Republicans and the Heritage Foundation, with Jack Kemp eventually establishing an Economic Empowerment Task Force within the Republican Bush administration in 1990, prior to the Democratic Clinton administration's 1993 Empowerment Zone legislation. See Marie-Hélène Bacqué and Carole Biewener, "Different Manifestations of the Concept of Empowerment: The Politics of Urban Renewal in the United States and the United Kingdom," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37, no. 6 (November 2013): 2198–213.

2. Jo Rowlands, "A Word of the Times, but What Does It Mean? Empowerment in the Discourse and Practice of Development," in *Women and Empowerment: Illustrations from the Third World*, ed. Helen Ashfar (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 11–34; Jo Rowlands, "Empowerment Examined," in *Development and Social Diversity*, ed. Deborah Eade (Oxford, UK: Oxfam, 1996), 86–92; Jane Parpart, "Lessons from the Field: Rethinking Empowerment; Gender and Development from a Post-(Post?) Development Perspective," in *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Post Colonialism and Representation*, ed. Kriemild Saunders (London: Zed Books, 2002), 41–56; Andrea Cornwall and Karen Brock, *Beyond Buzzwords: "Poverty Reduction", "Participation" and "Empowerment" in Development Policy*, Overarching Concerns, Programme Paper no. 10 (Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development [UNRISD], November 2005); Rosaline Eyben and Rebecca Napier-Moore, "Choosing Words with Care? Shifting Meanings of Women's Empowerment in International Development," *Third World Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (2009): 285–300; and Cecilia Sardenberg, *Liberal vs. Liberating Empowerment: Conceptualising Women's Empowerment from a Latin American Feminist Perspective*, Pathways Working Paper 7 (Brighton: Pathways of Women's Empowerment RPC, 2007).

3. Srilatha Batliwala, "Taking the Power Out of Empowerment: An Experiential Account," *Development in Practice* 17, nos. 4–5 (August 2007): 557–65; Wendy Brown, "Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy," *Theory and Event* 7, no. 1 (2003): 1–19; and Wendy Brown, "American Nightmare: Neoliberalism, Neoconservatism and De-Democratization," *Political Theory* 34, no. 6 (December 2006): 690–714.

4. Social liberalism became quite influential as a distinct form of liberalism in the post–World War II period. It differs from classic liberalism insofar as it views the good of the community as harmonious with the freedom of the individual. Rather than embracing classic liberalism's "laissez-faire" approach to economic and social relations, social liberals see a legitimate role for the state in promoting civil rights and redressing social and economic inequalities through both government regulation and social programs. See James L. Richardson, *Contending Liberalisms in World Politics: Ideology and Power* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001).

5. J. K. Gibson-Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

6. Devaki Jain, *Women's Quest for Power: Five Indian Case Studies* (Delhi: Vikas Publishing, 1980); Srilatha Batliwala, *Women's Empowerment in South Asia: Concepts and Practices* (New

Delhi: Food and Agricultural Organization, Asia South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education, 1993); Srilatha Batliwala, "The Meaning of Women's Empowerment: New Concepts from Action," in *Population Policies Reconsidered: Health, Empowerment, and Rights*, ed. Gita Sen, Adrienne Germain, and Lincoln C. Chen (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 127–38; Ela Bhatt, "Toward Empowerment," *World Development* 17, no. 7 (1989): 1059–65; and Kumud Sharma, "Grassroots Organizations and Women's Empowerment: Some Issues in the Contemporary Debate," *Samya Shakti: A Journal of Women's Studies* 6 (1991–92): 28–43.

7. N[arayan]. K. Banerjee, *Grassroot Empowerment (1975–1990): A Discussion Paper*, vol. 22 (New Delhi: Centre for Women's Development Studies, 1995), [2], http://www.cwds.ac.in/OCPaper/GrassrootEmpowerment.pdf.

8. Naila Kabeer, interview with the authors, Boston, MA, 25 June 2009.

9. Devaki Jain, interview with the authors, Boston, MA, 29 June 2009.

10. Bacqué and Biewener, *L'empowerment, une pratique émancipatrice*. *Sati* refers to a former Hindu practice whereby a widow immolated herself on the funeral pyre of her husband.

11. Kabeer interview.

12. While feminists in the United States engaged in what came to be called "consciousness raising," those working in the international development arena were more directly influenced by Paulo Freire's popular education methods known as "conscientization" or "education for a critical consciousness" and elaborated in his influential work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Seabury Press, 1970).

13. Banerjee, "Grassroot Empowerment," 9. Since India's independence in 1947, its government had "empowered committees" to draft legislation or to take action as part of the five-year national planning process. In these instances, the word was used in a manner consistent with its early origins, with empowerment defined in terms of the state or church delegating authority or power, or giving legal rights.

14. Notably, several middle-class professional women working with community organizations were especially important in shifting the government's understanding of empowerment toward a grassroots orientation. For instance, Vina Mazumdar, a political scientist, helped found and then directed the important Centre for Women's Development Studies in New Delhi in 1980. Earlier she authored the influential 1974 government report *Towards Equality*, which provided the first major evaluation of women's circumstances in India. This report showed the extent of women's poverty and marginalized status, triggering a series of research initiatives by the Indian Social Science Research Council (ISSRC) from 1975 to 1977 that "contributed largely to the conceptualization/formulation/clarification of the concept of empowerment among grassroot women." Banerjee, "Grassroot Empowerment," 9. Also, in 1972 Ela Bhatt, a lawyer, founded the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), one of the first organizations to employ a grassroots empowerment approach focused on organizing women workers within India's enormous informal sector. Bhatt later chaired the commission responsible for the influential *Shramshakti* [Power of labor]: *Report of the National Commission on Self-Employed Women and Women in the Informal Sector* (New Delhi: National Commission on Self Employed Women, 1988). Reflecting on SEWA's Ghandian orientation, the "basic thrust" of the report was on "grassroot empowerment through women's own organization." Banerjee, "Grassroot Empowerment," 9; see also Bhatt, "Toward Empowerment." Further, economist Devaki Jain used the term *empowerment* in her study of five community-based

women's organizations. Jain, *Women's Quest for Power*. Jain carried out her research in the late 1970s while working as director of the ISSRC. She went on to serve on the National Preparatory Committees for the 1985 and 1995 UN World Conferences on Women.

15. Devaki Jain, *Women, Development, and the UN: A Sixty-Year Quest for Equality and Justice* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 95.

16. Gita Sen and Caren Grown, *Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1987).

17. Ibid., 9; and Mary E. Hawkesworth, *Globalization and Feminist Activism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 72.

18. Sen and Grown, *Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions*, 22.

19. Ibid., 15.

20. Ibid., 80.

21. Ibid., 82.

22. Caroline O. N. Moser, "Gender Planning in the Third World: Meeting Practical and Strategic Gender Needs," *World Development* 17, no. 11 (1989): 1799–1825.

23. The work of Srilatha Batliwala, an Indian social worker, has been particularly influential. In 1991 she prepared a background document on "innovative programmes for women's development, education, [and] empowerment in South Asia" for a South Asian Workshop on "Education for Women's Empowerment" organized by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization's Freedom from Hunger Campaign-Action for Development. Published in 1993, her study *Women's Empowerment in South Asia* became a global touchstone for the feminist-empowerment approach and provided some of the most extensive discussion and characterization of what such an approach entails. See also Naila Kabeer, *Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought* (London: Verso, 1994); Vina Mazumdar, *Peasant Women Organise for Empowerment: The Bankura Experiment* (New Delhi: Centre for Women's Development Studies, 1989); Shimwaayi Muntemba, ed., *Rural Development and Women: Lessons from the Field* (Geneva: International Labour Office, 1985); and Sharma, "Grassroots Organizations and Women's Empowerment."

24. Socialist feminist critiques of liberal feminism and, more broadly, feminist debates about power in the 1970s contributed to the emergence of the feminist empowerment approach in development. Influenced by the work of Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality* (Victoria: Penguin Books, 1976) and Nancy Hartsock's *Money, Sex, and Power: Toward a Feminist Historical Materialism* (New York: Longman, 1983), these discussions were often cast in terms of the need to foster "feminist" forms of power—most often articulated as a "power within," "a power to," and "a power with"—in addition to the more traditional and "masculinist" type of power, that of "a power over." See Kabeer, *Reversed Realities*; and Rowlands, "Word of the Times."

25. Batliwala, "Meaning of Women's Empowerment," 134.

26. Rowlands, "Word of the Times," 11.

27. The language of empowerment also began to appear within the UN in the mid-1990s. In this context, it was, for the most part, located within a social-liberal perspective that combines a deep and abiding concern with antipoverty measures and redistribution via development assistance and aid, along with the promotion of self-determination and the self-reliance of member nations. Thus, at the UN, feminists were able to argue for "women's empower-

ment" on equity grounds—more so than on the basis of efficiency, to the extent that "gender equality" and "empowerment" have come to be used in tandem at the UN, as illustrated, for instance, by the 2011 reorganization that centralized all UN initiatives oriented toward women in a new agency called UN Women: The UN Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. See Carole Biewener and Marie-Hélène Bacqué, "Empowerment, développement et féminisme: Entre projet de transformation sociale et néolibéralisme," in *La démocratie participative: histoire et généalogie*, ed. Marie-Hélène and Yves Sintomer (Paris: La Découverte, 2011), 82–101; and Bacqué and Biewener, *L'empowerment, une pratique émancipatrice*.

28. Robert O'Brien et al., eds., *Contesting Global Governance: Multilateral Economic Institutions and Global Social Movements* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 47–48. Requirements for "outcomes assessments" by multilateral and bilateral aid agencies have given birth to a considerable amount of work among gender advocates for ways to measure and quantify empowerment achievements. See, for instance, Naila Kabeer, "Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment," *Development and Change* 30, no. 3 (July 1999): 435–64, for an analysis of various measurements of "women's empowerment."

29. Naila Kabeer, "Conflicts over Credit: Re-evaluating the Empowerment Potential of Loans to Women in Rural Bangladesh," *World Development* 29, no. 1 (January 2001): 63–84.

30. Sophie Bessis, "The World Bank and Women: Instrumental Feminism," in *Eye to Eye: Women Practicing Development across Cultures*, ed. Susan Perry and Celeste Schenck (London: Zed Books, 2002), 10–24.

31. Kate Bedford, "Doing Business with the Ladies," *Labour, Capital and Society* 42, nos. 1 and 2 (2009): 172.

32. Ibid., 173.

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BRICS Approaches to Security Multilateralism

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Despite the onset of pessimism about the economic prospects of the Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) association, the grouping continues to attract significant attention as a potential source of concerted counterbalancing policies vis-à-vis the developed world. BRICS members have positioned themselves as aspiring nations capable of sustaining high levels of economic growth without excessive dependence on developed countries. They also claim to embody the promise of independent foreign policy and security strategies based on their distinct understanding of national interest and seek to rally around BRICS a group of developing countries supposedly in the process of choosing between alliance with the West and largely self-reliant economic and diplomatic strategies. In the wake of a major bout of confrontation with the West over Ukraine, Russia may push for raising the profile of BRICS as a vehicle for the coordination of international strategy. It is therefore important to establish the extent to which BRICS as a multilateral institution can be beefed up with substance in the field of security policy. This article seeks to contribute to such analysis by examining the prospects of a concerted BRICS approach to multilateral diplomacy and collective action in the international arena.

The foreign policy aspirations of BRICS countries are heavily focused on their respective neighborhoods. As a result, key foreign and security policy goals of BRICS are either specific to each member country or—as in the case of China and India—mutually opposed. On the eve of the April 2013 BRICS summit in South Africa, the *Hindustan Times* editorialized that "foreign policy relations among these countries remain shaky—and at times seriously lacking in trust. The most obvious divide is between India and China. The flip side is that relations between, say, India and Brazil or South Africa and

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The author emphasizes that the views expressed here are solely his and not those of either the MacArthur Foundation or the Moscow State Institute of International Relations.

Russia are so thin as to be invisible. Other than China, . . . members are regional to the point they have little contact with each other."[1] In addition, resources available to BRICS nations for engagement in the geographic and functional areas not considered of critical importance for their security or economic development are limited. Overall, one has good reason not to expect BRICS nations to pool resources and political will in pursuit of ingenious global initiatives.

Yet, despite the lack of taste for concerted global activism, BRICS may still find it worthwhile to join efforts in balancing the influence of developed nations. Indeed, each BRICS country is concerned with Western preponderance in a certain area—from the quality of diplomacy to the ability to project force to the cutting-edge military technology. In other words, if anything can spur security multilateralism among BRICS members, it would be their positioning in relation to economically and technologically advanced states.

More specifically, security relationships—including cooperation and competition—among BRICS nations are largely defined by their approach to the economic, military, technological, and other advantages of the United States and its allies. For example, Russia and China routinely declare that they coordinate security policies primarily in order to "promote a multipolar world" and "oppose hegemony"—a euphemism for counterbalancing the United States in the international arena (see their Friendship, Cooperation, and Good Neighborliness Treaty of 2001). Brazil has a record of resisting the United States' push for Pan-American economic integration, and India has consistently balked at US demands to forfeit nuclear weapons. One possible exception to this rule is the India-China dyad in which both sides have been driven mostly by the motives specific to their regional rivalry, dating back at least several decades.

Sometimes one or more BRICS members develop a particularly strong interest in harnessing the group to their anti-Western cause. As of mid-2015, Russia is seeking closer coordination with its BRICS counterparts, especially China, given the inflaming conflict with the West over Ukraine, Russia's expulsion from the G8, and—potentially—other multilateral fora.[2]

This article proceeds in three steps. First, it classifies typical BRICS responses to the West's security policies and the West's bid for a technological and diplomatic edge over BRICS. They are represented in this analysis by the three largest nations with the most ambitious foreign policy agendas: China, Russia, and India. To compare Chinese, Russian, and Indian response options, the article uses a two-dimensional chart. Second, it introduces a parameter allowing the detection of trends in the evolution of these postures. This parameter is the perceived direction of the evolution of US influence in the world. The article seeks to establish how the onset of pessimism with regards to US (and, more generally, Western) power has affected strategic choices of BRICS countries as they hammer out responses to Western preponderance in diplomacy and military technology. Finally, it assesses the prospects for BRICS security multilateralism on the basis of an understanding of how the "Western decline" has affected the strategic calculus of BRICS nations.

BRICS Responses to Western Security Policies

Several types of Western capabilities and policies have generated concerns among BRICS countries since the beginning of the twenty-first century. This article considers three such types: (1) advanced weapon technology and related military strategy, (2) conflict-management strategies, and (3) innovation in foreign policy doctrine. Contentious issues in *military technology* include US and allied attempts at deploying missile defense capabilities; advances in the field of high-precision conventional arms, including those potentially deployable in space; and the bid by the United States and allies to tighten the nuclear nonproliferation regime while pushing for significant cuts in the world's largest nuclear arsenals. The dimensions of *international conflict-management strategies* championed by the West and raising concerns among BRICS include armed intervention to end violent conflict (e.g., a civil war); threats to politically isolate, economically sanction, or punish by force one of the sides in an internal conflict (with the balance usually tipping in favor of other sides as a result); loose interpretations of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) mandate to intervene in conflicts (from a perspective popular in Moscow and Beijing, during the civil war in Libya in 2011, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] took the liberty to extend its mandate from protecting civilians to chasing down and defeating the Libyan government forces); and official recognition of a secessionist regime, as happened with Kosovo in 2008. Finally, Western *doctrinal shifts* occurring over the last two decades and troubling most of the BRICS members include the reinvented notions of solidarity with people suffering from government abuse in foreign countries; activist interpretations of the responsibility to protect (R2P) principle; assertions about the universal character of human rights; and engagement between Western governments and opposition movements and political activists in developing nations.

Overall, the three areas—technological, strategic, and doctrinal—in which Western-led innovations irritate Russia, China, and, to an extent, India are closely interconnected. BRICS concerns involve the potential use of cutting-edge, high-precision weapons against government forces "under the pretext" of ending internal armed conflicts or punishing a targeted government for a massive violation of human rights. Mainstream international affairs analysts in Moscow, Beijing, and New Delhi consider humanitarian concerns a smokescreen for actions aimed at achieving "geopolitical advantages," securing access to "strategic resources," or installing "puppet governments" in "strategically important" countries. BRICS reactions to the worrisome developments in Western technology, strategy, and doctrine have so far fallen into four major categories.

Asymmetric Measures

First, the "big three" members of BRICS have tried to offset the advantage of the West by undertaking asymmetric measures. For example, concerned with potential implications of US missile defense deployments for the viability of Russia's strategic deterrent, Moscow began upgrading its mobile strategic nuclear missiles—a capability least susceptible to a surprise first disarming strike. It also commissioned a new heavy, liquid-fuel

ballistic missile considered very effective in penetrating missile defenses. Russian leadership also promised to deploy short-range missiles in the country's westernmost exclave of Kaliningrad, one purpose of such missiles being to target potential missile defense sites in Poland. According to Washington, over the last several years, Russia has also been testing—allegedly in violation of the US-Russian Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty of 1987—a medium-range ground-launched cruise missile. If deployed, such missiles could raise the stakes for European NATO members in a confrontation with Russia and possibly discourage them from allowing deployment of elements of the US missile defense architecture on their territory. China has equally excelled in hammering out asymmetric responses to the United States' technological preponderance in a number of areas of significance to China. Beijing has developed effective means of countering domination by the US Navy of ocean waters adjacent to China (e.g., with high-precision antiship ballistic missiles). In 2007 China also demonstrated that it is capable of destroying US satellites in orbit by hitting a decommissioned satellite with a missile.

It is equally easy to find examples of asymmetric responses to armed interventionism. These have included diplomatic support and supplies by Russia to the Bashar Assad government in Syria and Russian and Chinese attempts to shield Iran from the toughening of extra-UN sanctions proposed by the United States and its allies. Since the overthrow of Col Mu'ammar Gadhafi in Libya in 2011, Russia and—to a smaller extent—China have wasted no opportunity in multilateral fora to assign blame for the less-than-perfect security situation in Libya on NATO countries that arguably stretched the limits of their mandate (based on UNSC Resolution 1973) and bombed the Gadhafi forces into complete annihilation.

Western doctrine innovation—the concepts of solidarism, universal human rights, and R2P even in the absence of UNSC approval—has also elicited a distinct asymmetric response. At different times, Chinese, Indian, and Russian authorities took care to limit the freedom of maneuver for both local and transnational nongovernmental organizations (NGO) commonly viewed in these countries as agents of hostile Western influence disguised as promotion of universal rights or values. Beijing enforces restrictions on the registration of both national and foreign NGOs pursuing goals considered politically sensitive. For example, in China it is impossible to incorporate an NGO that has not secured initial funding for its programs from the Chinese government.[3] Beijing also requires notarization by Chinese embassies of all grant agreements between donors in the respective country and a Chinese recipient NGO.[4] Furthermore, the Chinese government seeks to divert foreign charitable funding from relatively independent NGOs to those largely loyal to or acting on behalf of the authorities.[5]

In a similar vein, Moscow has toughened regulations for foreign-funded NGOs in 2012, ended the presence in Russia of the US Agency for International Development, and discontinued the US-financed Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Initiative aimed at deactivating and destroying decommissioned nuclear warheads in Russia.[6] The general climate for NGO activities in Russia has deteriorated, with multiple voices calling for a further crackdown on the recipients of foreign financial support—even in the

field of education and research. Even in India—a country with a solid record of conducting free and fair elections and maintaining a decent level of government transparency—the authorities undertook restrictive measures against foreign-funded NGOs. This action occurred in 2013 in the aftermath of a wave of environmentalist activism to impede the construction of an atomic power station at Kudankulam. However, the blanket suspension of the right to receive funds from abroad affected more than 700 Indian NGOs, most of which never engaged in antinuclear advocacy.[7]

Legal or Ethical Constraints

The second Russian and Chinese strategy to neutralize the West's perceived technological preponderance as well as unwelcome strategic and doctrinal innovation is to impose legal or ethical constraints on Western behavior through multilateral or bilateral conventions or diplomacy. For example, Russia countered US advances in high-precision conventional strategic weapons by insisting, during negotiations on the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty in 2009–10, that intercontinental ballistic missiles armed with conventional warheads be counted towards the general limits on these missiles along with nuclear-tipped carriers. Together with China, Russia introduced to the Conference on Disarmament in 2008 a draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space. So far the draft has received only a lukewarm reaction from the United States while Russia has tried to up the ante by committing itself unilaterally to the principle of "'no first placement' of weapons in outer space."[8] Moscow also continues to insist on a binding agreement with the United States that would impose constraints on the development of high-precision conventional arms and missile defense systems. Alternatively, Russia tried in 2010–11 to convince the US Congress to issue a declaration to the effect that US missile defenses would never be directed against Russia. Neither initiative got traction in the United States because Washington did not want to constrain its own progress in the promising areas of military technology or limit its freedom of hands in potential uses of that technology.

In its turn, India seeks to legitimize its possession of nuclear weapons outside the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) framework by calling for abolishing nuclear weapons that would be the condition for New Delhi to forfeit its own nuclear arsenal. Otherwise, India insists on being accepted into the NPT on a "nondiscriminatory" basis—that is, as a nuclear-weapon state.

China and Russia have a long-time record of resisting Western interventionism through multilateral diplomacy. Both sides have vetoed or threatened to veto resolutions opening up avenues for intervention in the former Yugoslavia, Iraq, and Syria. Moscow and Beijing have relentlessly asserted the indispensability of a UNSC mandate for intervening into sovereign states, even in situations when a veto by a permanent UNSC member state could prevent the international community from immediately halting an armed conflict in order to save thousands of lives. In a bid to stall the expansion of NATO in Europe, Russia proposed in 2008—and subsequently promoted through diplomatic

channels—a draft European security treaty that would require consultations among stakeholders in case of conflict escalation in Europe and that would prohibit expansion of military alliances in the absence of consensus among the treaty's signatories. Russia, China, and India have also refused to recognize Kosovo as an independent state. In that decision, China and India were driven mostly by unwillingness to set a precedent of a successful secession while Russia was motivated mostly by sympathies towards Serbia and the inclination to counterbalance the United States and its allies. (Moscow subsequently used Kosovo independence as an argument to justify its own recognition of Georgia's breakaway republics as well as the secession of Crimea from Ukraine and its acceptance into the Russian Federation.)

Russia, China, and—at times—India have countered Western doctrinal innovation by developing and promoting their own concepts. They have argued that sovereignty is one of the few powerful stabilizers in world politics along with the balance of forces—that is, prevention of "hegemony" by any single state. Since 2004—the year of the first wave of "colored" revolutions in post-Soviet Eurasia—Moscow has also actively promoted the narrative of the inevitable involvement of hostile external forces into any mass antigovernment protests or other activity by radical opposition. Russia has maintained that there is no way for a radical mass protest to muster human and material support other than to receive it from a foreign nation that seeks deviously to undermine the government in the country where the protest is taking place. Both narratives proved robust responses to the West's transnational solidarism rhetoric and gained traction among a number of developing nations with vulnerable regimes concerned about potential interference by the West.

Indeed, to practice the legal-constraints strategy, a stakeholder needs to maintain a degree of global participation. A state cannot work any constraints through the UN or even a narrower group of its allies if this state is not engaged with the world. Although an internationally isolated (or self-isolated) actor will usually be capable of delivering an asymmetric response to its rivals, the legal-constraints strategy is impossible or ineffective for such an actor. If a country is shifting towards (self-)isolation, it forfeits the legal-constraints option.

Symmetrical or Matching Strategies

As the three key BRICS countries grew stronger economically and militarily over the last decade, they attempted a number of symmetrical or matching strategies whereby they tried to deploy against the West the mirror images of the West's own policies. For example, as one of the ways to offset the potential impact of nascent US missile defenses on strategic nuclear stability between the United States and Russia, Moscow announced (in 2011) the formation of Airspace Defense Forces (*Sily Voenno-kosmicheskoi oborony* [VKO]) and earmarked tens of billions of dollars in funding over the next decade. The United States did not raise and Moscow did not comment on the question of whether these forces were about to affect the vaunted strategic stability in a negative way. In its turn,

India continues to develop nuclear weapons while remaining outside the NPT framework and claiming that membership and nonmembership in the NPT are indeed two equally accepted choices, neither of which is more ethical than the other.

Russia mirrored Western interventionism by engaging with Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Crimea, recognizing them after conflicts to which Moscow was party. Moscow also used the solidarism doctrine to project force onto Crimea and threaten its use against Ukraine in the wake of the February 2014 revolution in Kiev. China indeed continues to lay claims to Taiwan and extend its own peculiar interpretation of international maritime law to the adjacent seas—its own zones of possible intervention under certain circumstances.

Russia reciprocated Western doctrinal innovation by deploying R2P to justify its claims to Crimea and—potentially—parts of eastern Ukraine. According to Moscow, Russian "compatriots" in Crimea and eastern Ukraine were put at risk by the policies of new Ukrainian authorities that allegedly sought to discriminate against ethnic Russians and the Russian language in Ukraine. The Kremlin also justified its actions in relation to Ukraine by citing the Kosovo case, in which the United States supported the principle of self-determination by Kosovo Albanians—both in the run-up to and after the declaration of independence by Priština in 2008.[9]

Cooperation with the West

The final option for the BRICS "big three" to respond to the West's preponderance is to cooperate with the West. Such cooperation has never come in the form of bandwagoning but occurred on an ad hoc basis. Upon entering the "nuclear club," India chose to cooperate—to an extent—with the United States by signing a Civil Nuclear Agreement in 2005. As a result of the deal, New Delhi secured engagement by Washington in developing India's civilian nuclear energy sector—a lucrative opportunity for the United States. While remaining outside the NPT framework, India has traditionally supported the nuclear disarmament agenda of the Obama administration.[10]

Russia, in its turn, cooperated with the United States and US allies on Syria's chemical disarmament that helped to partly defuse the conflict in and around Syria. China, along with a few other developing nations, took part in antipiracy patrolling around the Horn of Africa, a mission that turned out to be an indisputable success of multilateral cooperation. Finally, in March 2011, Moscow resolved not to veto UNSC Resolution 1973, which recognized the need to protect civilians in the Libyan city of Benghazi after it came under threat of cleansing by the forces of Colonel Gadhafi. The table below summarizes three challenges and examples of four response options to them by the BRICS "big three."

Table. Responses by BRICS to the West's technological, strategic, and doctrinal innovation

Response Challenge	Asymmetric	Legal Constraints	Matching Strategies	Cooperation
Advanced military technology: missile defense / high-precision weapons / "space weapons," nuclear weapons; non-proliferation regime for India	Mobile missiles, antisatellite weapons, new cruise missiles, China's antisatellite test (2007), high-precision antiship missiles	Inclusion of conventional weapons into strategic arms limits, a treaty proposal on non-weaponization of outer space, Indian calls for abolishing nuclear weapons or integration into NPT on a nondiscriminatory basis (as a nuclear-weapon state)	Establishment of airspace defense forces in Russia, Russian upgrade of its own conventional weapons, Indian development of nuclear weapons while being NPT non-signatory	Indian signing of the 2005 nuclear agreement with the United States, support for global nuclear disarmament initiatives
Conflict management: Syria, Libya, Georgia, Kosovo	Arming the incumbent regime in Syria, resistance to the toughening of sanctions against Iran, assigning blame for the postintervention chaos in Libya to NATO	Vetoing UNSC resolutions on intervention or helping opposition to the government in internal conflicts, asserting the indispensability of UNSC mandate for intervention, proposals for multilateral binding treaties prohibiting the expansion of rival blocs (European Security Charter), attempting to prevent the recognition of Kosovo and enforce strict rules of peacemaking	Russian intervention into conflict in Georgia and Ukraine, Chinese claims to Taiwan	Russian brokering of Syria's chemical disarmament, Chinese participation in the antipiracy mission in the Gulf of Aden
Doctrine innovation: notions of solidarism, transnational approaches to human rights and R2P, engagement with opposition movements and activists	Constraining NGO activity (Russia), restricting foreign funding of NGOs (China, India)	Promoting rival narratives of unconditional respect for sovereignty as the only stabilizer in the international system and of external involvement into any antigovernment protest	Russian display of solidarity with "compatriots" in Ukraine and upholding the principle of self-determination	Russian support of UNSCR 1973 in March 2011 to protect civilians in Libya

Detecting Trends in Chinese, Russian, and Indian Approaches

Systematization of the West's challenges and BRICS responses helps one understand the range of options available to China, Russia, and India for multilateral coordination vis-à-vis the United States and its allies. However, the table above does not provide insight into the evolution of Chinese, Russian, and Indian approaches to such coordination. To track that evolution and determine how much the three BRICS countries are inclined to coordinate their policies regarding the West, we can consider how the concept of an imminent decline of the West as an economic and diplomatic powerhouse influences them. Doing so will give us an understanding of the direction in which the preferred posture of each of the three BRICS countries is evolving and how far apart the three postures are likely to be in the foreseeable future. Such analysis will also highlight the dramatic choice that emerges between balancing and cooperating with the West amid expectations of the West's approaching and irreversible decline.

In the West itself, this pessimism has largely abated since it peaked in 2009–10. However, many decision makers in Russia, China, and India seem to act on the assumption that the decline of the West will continue. For example, it is difficult to imagine how Russian policy makers would have agreed to incorporate Crimea into Russia—a move with slim prospects of being recognized as legitimate by Western nations—if such a decision were not premised on the expectation of the deterioration of Western power in the foreseeable future. One can only plan to dismiss the opinion of the United States and its allies if one is convinced that the material consequences of such disagreement will quickly diminish with time.

An analysis of trends in the evolution of responses by China, Russia, and India to the West's policies since the onset of global economic crisis in 2009 shows that each of the three players has chosen its distinct path in relationship with the West. India's concern with challenges emanating from the United States and its policies is limited. New Delhi does not regard Washington as a "strategic rival" and prefers to respond to regional threats by developing India's own symmetrical capabilities. However, these capabilities are not directed against the United States or its allies in Europe or Asia; rather, they are designed to deter two different rivals—China and Pakistan. Such capabilities are increasingly prized by Indian policy makers in a world where the United States is perceived as decreasingly capable of guaranteeing stability in key regions and the security of its allies. India is definitely not ready to exercise power and pick a fight not only with the United States but also with its regional rival China. As indicated by the authors of a seminal volume on international worldviews of "aspiring powers,"

> India's post-Independence foreign policy was overwhelmingly dominated by Nehru in conceptual development and practice. The hallmark of Nehru's thinking was its eclectic and expansive nature, understanding that power matters in international relations, but unwilling to let India become entangled in outside conflicts that would lead to Indian loss of blood and treasure, and perhaps even more important, erode India's autonomy and

> close off India's options. . . . India still seems to place a good deal of stock on its "power by example" as a way of gaining the global status.[11]

This "power by example" is not so much balancing power but a show of willingness to engage with the international community (including the West) and contribute—moderately—to certain common causes that have not been fully defined by India and, as many policy makers in Russia or China would say, were "imposed" by the West.

India is disinclined to engage in multilateral efforts aimed at constraining the developed countries' progress in technology—for example, in missile defense and strategy/doctrine innovation such as humanitarian intervention based on the R2P principle. Overall, "on global policy, India is likely to keep moving toward multilateral approaches, but given that alliances and use of force are perceived as near taboos across the board, Indian activism on the global stage is going to be much less than what other major powers, especially the United States, might expect from India."[12] Moreover, Indian thinking has an influential pessimistic streak about the viability of BRICS as a vehicle for multilateral action. Ruchir Sharma, a senior executive of Indian origin at Morgan Stanley, noted in 2013 that "India's economic interests are more closely aligned with the US than with the other Brics [*sic*]. A major importer of oil and other commodities, India stands to benefit like the US from falling commodity prices, which are hurting major commodity exporters like Russia, Brazil and South Africa."[13]

Indeed, Indian observers praised Russia and President Vladimir Putin for the ability to find an ingenious and constructive solution to the Syrian chemical weapons impasse. As the deal involving Syrian president Bashar Assad, Putin, and US president Barack Obama was being sealed, the Hindu editors opined that "[Putin's] attempt marks one of the most politically savvy gestures by a head of state to reach across the aisle to a foreign audience in recent years." At the same time, the commentators providentially noted that "the power struggle between the U.S. and Russia on this issue will continue unabated."[14] As the Crimea crisis was unfolding in March 2014, Indian commentators were worrying that, if Russia were allowed by the West to play hardball in the Ukraine crisis, China might become emboldened to "unilaterally extend its sphere of influence."[15] India's concern was of a conspicuously regional nature—not with the possibility of a bout of confrontation between the world's major powers but with the opportunity that the crisis might present to India's regional security rival, China, that already annexed parts of the Indian Territory as a result of the 1962 war. During and immediately after the Crimea crisis, New Delhi kept reiterating the principle of territorial integrity to be applied on a global scale.

Since the onset of the world financial crisis in 2008–9, China has been shifting to a more proactive policy, looking for ways to balance US power in the Western Pacific, outer space, and cyberspace. In the domain of Chinese foreign policy discourse, this stance has been reflected by the growing influence of the realist school of thought that emphasizes great-power bargaining and pragmatism in foreign relations.[16] Realists are

suspicious of US and EU [European Union] calls for cooperation as ruses for entrapment. They reject concepts and policies of globalization, transnational challenges, and global governance. They argue that American and European attempts to enlist greater Chinese involvement in global management and governance is [*sic*] a dangerous trap aimed at tying China down, burning up its resources, and retarding its growth.[17]

For China, multilateralism is a cover for imposing someone else's will on China. Beijing prefers bilateralism or uses multilateralism to promote its own bilateral goals (legitimizes bilateral decisions through a multilateral framework). The flip side of this approach is that China is left with only limited ability to pursue the legal-constraint strategy by using the power of international institutions to forestall unwanted policy or technological advances by the developed countries. Yet, Beijing sometimes enjoys multilateral diplomacy in the UN and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization—mostly in a nonbinding form and when support from like-minded countries is guaranteed—while avoiding multilateral frameworks in which decisions can be enforced despite China's will or in which Beijing can be held accountable for some of its actions.[18]

As the above record of China's moves vis-à-vis the United States and its Asian allies shows, in recent years Beijing has been inclined to pursue asymmetrical-response strategies. This approach occurred as Chinese policy makers' conviction about the decline of American power was on a steady rise. China has been preoccupied with ensuring incremental shifts in the regional status quo in Beijing's favor and was careful enough not to advance beyond certain "red lines." China also refrained from a frontal assault on the United States, preferring to test the boundaries of international maritime law in the South China Sea or to deploy defensive weapons such as ballistic antiship missiles or cruise missiles, intended to deny the US Navy access to China's littoral seas. Unlike Russia, Beijing has not attempted dangerous foreign policy gambits by faking irrational behavior in order to raise the credibility of its commitment to defeating the enemy. Indeed, China's asymmetrical responses have so far implied readiness to escalate up to only a certain—usually predictable—level.

In its turn, Russia has been torn since 2009 between sporadic cooperation with the West (e.g., on Syria's chemical disarmament in 2013) and taking on the West directly (first and foremost, in Ukraine in 2014–15). Since 2010 Moscow has also been bragging about the loss of interest in further dialogue on security issues with the "weakened EU" and about its conviction regarding the imminent loss of US global influence. As official rhetoric during the Crimea crisis has demonstrated, Russia aspires for nothing less than a rewrite of the modus operandi of the post–Cold War international order. Making an unusually high bet, Russia now demands recognition of its own "sphere of influence" demarcated by the presence of "compatriots"—people who use Russian as one of the main languages in everyday communication and feel affinity towards the Russian culture. President Putin equated refusal to grant such "sphere" to Russia with unrelenting pressure on Russia and Western attempts at cornering Moscow.[19] Russia's direct assault on US positions in post-Soviet Eurasia has so far not been fully acceptable to China and India, even if Beijing and New Delhi have exercised caution and acknowledged that the

issues at stake are much more important for Moscow than for Washington and that the Kremlin has a few valid (albeit insufficient) arguments to justify its actions.

Conclusion

The prospects for ambitious multilateral security cooperation among the three largest BRICS members aimed at counterbalancing Western power look limited. India has appeared unwilling and unable to challenge consistently the developed nations while China and Russia have occasionally come together to oppose US policy on Iran, Syria, missile defense, or humanitarian intervention. At the same time, for China each of these instances has not been as much a "matter of principle" as it has been for Russia. Over the last several years, China has been prepared to escalate only up to a point at which its overall dynamic of relations with the United States would not be threatened. In its turn, Russia has increasingly braced itself for a direct confrontation with the United States and its allies and has been trying to test Washington's resolve on matters of principle— apparently in the belief that the White House will eventually blink. Crises around Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014–15 are clear examples of that trend. At the same time, Russia has made several attempts at cooperation with the United States—both ad hoc and across the board (the US-Russian "reset" in general as well as the transit to and from Afghanistan and sanctions against Iran as stand-alone issues). At the moments of cooperation, Moscow perceived strengthening ties with the weakening Washington as a good hedge against China's potential expansionism. Yet, as of mid-2015, any such strengthening seems a foregone option. China and Russia will likely continue to cooperate on promoting legal constraints on Western power and leadership in multilateral fora—first and foremost, the United Nations and its agencies. However, doing so will not imply a united front to oppose the United States and its allies across the board.

Notes

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4. Peter Ford, "Law Chokes Chinese NGOs' Foreign Funding," *Christian Science Monitor*, 20 May 2010, http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-Pacific/2010/0520/Law-chokes-Chinese-NGOs-foreign-funding.

5. Anthony J. Spires, "US Foundations Boost Chinese Government, Not NGOs," *Yale-Global*, 28 March 2012, http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/us-foundations-boost-chinese-government-not-ngos.

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7. See, for example, Rama Lakshmi, "Activists Bristle As India Cracks Down on Foreign Funding of NGOs," *Washington Post*, 19 May 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world /asia_pacific/activists-bristle-as-india-cracks-down-on-foreign-funding-of-ngos/2013/05/19 /a647ff80-bcaf-11e2-b537-ab47f0325f7c_story.html.

8. "Statement by H. E. Mr. Vitaly Churkin, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, at the 2013 Substantive Session of the Disarmament Commission," Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, 1 April 2013, 3, http://www.un.org/disarmament/content/news/disarmament_commission_2013/st atements/20130401/10Russia.pdf.

9. See "Address by the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin to the Federal Assembly," 18 March 2014, http://eng.kremlin.ru/news/6889.

10. Deepa M. Ollapally and Rajesh Rajagopalan, "India: Foreign Policy Perspectives of an Ambiguous Power," in *Worldviews of Aspiring Powers: Domestic Foreign Policy Debates in China, India, Iran, Japan, and Russia*, ed. Henry R. Nau and Deepa M. Ollapally (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 85.

11. Ibid., 79.

12. Ibid., 108.

13. Ruchir Sharma, "BRICS Summits Are So Last Decade: All Members Are Slowing Down, with Conflicting Interests Leaving Them Less Willing to Cut Deals," *Times of India*, 1 April 2013, http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/opinion/edit-page/BRICS-summits-are-so-last-decade-All-members-are-slowing-down-with-conflicting-interests-leaving-them-less-willing-to-cut-deals/articleshow/19310863.cms?referral=PM.

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17. Ibid.

18. Ibid., 44–45.

19. "Address by the President of the Russian Federation."