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WHEN THE DESERT GETS DRIER

AARON PULTMAN

Abstract
This paper traces the origins of and evidence for climate change and then analyzes the security ramifications of that process for Middle East and North African countries.

Introduction
For the past few decades, the world has been dealing with the consequences of climate change. This phenomenon has resulted in strange and dangerous weather effects all across the globe, which have been particularly intense in regions with previously severe climates, namely the Middle East and North Africa. This region has seen its most perilous features intensify with higher temperatures and less water. It has also witnessed new challenges such as rising sea levels. These changes directly threaten current US forces and operations in the region. They also, however, threaten to destabilize region and create additional conflict in an already war-torn area. This would further stress American security with more armed conflict and an even greater refugee crisis.

I. Is Climate Change Real?
Since the late 19th century, scientists have been observing irregularities in the weather, atmosphere and environment of our planet. In 1896, Svante Arrhenius first published a paper linking increases in global temperatures to rising levels of CO2 (carbon dioxide) in the Earth’s atmosphere. In the 1950s, more researchers began to study warming patterns, and, like Arrhenius, they connected this fact to rising levels of CO2. Scientists theorized that a process known as the “greenhouse effect” explained the linkage between the two. With the rise of human production, beginning with the industrial revolution, the amount of CO2 has increased dramatically. This excess carbon dioxide becomes trapped inside the earth’s atmosphere. Scientists at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) noted that for the last four hundred thousand years, the level of CO2 in the atmosphere had never risen above 300 (parts per million); today, the level is 420 (parts per million). Once in the air, CO2 and other greenhouse gasses trap energy in the atmosphere. This, in turn, causes the planet to heat, affecting weather and climate all around the world. One of the earliest scientists to write about the issue was Columbia University Professor Wallace Broecker. In 1975, Professor Broecker publish an article entitled, “Climatic Change: Are We on the Brink of a Pronounced Global Warming?” In the piece, he states that, “a strong case can be made that the present cooling trend will, within a decade or so, give way to a pronounced warming induced by carbon dioxide.” He was the first to accurately predict the trend currently underway, even before more accurate data became available. Scientists today have since confirmed Broecker’s thesis, though today the process is known as climate change. This is because the effects of the CO2 are much farther-reaching than the warming of the planet. Not only is the average temperature on earth expected to rise, but the ice caps are diminishing, heatwaves will become more prevalent and severe, sea levels will rise and extreme weather events such as hurricanes will become more frequent. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change stated that, “scientific evidence for warming of the climate system is unequivocal” and that “[t]aken as a whole,
the range of published evidence indicates that the net damage costs of climate change are likely to be significant and to increase over time.”

Not everyone is convinced of the existence of human induced climate change. The climate change deniers believe that the evidence is insufficient, and that climate change is a hoax. This view, however, is primarily prevalent in the lay community; scientists almost unanimously agree on the existence of climate change. Large scientific institutions have all discovered similar evidence pointing to climate change. NASA, the Hadley Center, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Japanese Meteorological Agency have all observed a similar rise in global temperatures. Major scientific societies have also expressed their belief in the existence of climate change. Almost two hundred societies worldwide have released statements endorsing climate change including the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Chemical Society, the American Physical Society, the American Meteorological Society, and the US National Academy of Sciences, to name a few. Finally, independent scientists have also demonstrated overwhelming support of the theory. Numerous studies have concluded that over 90% of scientists believe in climate change. Consequently, while there are some who deny the existence of climate change, this paper will treat the issue consistent with the overwhelming majority of the scientific community: as a fact.

II. Effects of Climate Change
The effects of climate change are most apparent in regions which already suffered from severe weather patterns. This applies in particular to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). This region has always been one of the hottest and driest places on earth. Throughout history, people in that region have had to contend with extreme weather. Climate change, however, has drastically exacerbated the problem. Its effects pose numerous threats to the future of MENA countries and their citizens.

A. Water Scarcity
The first major threat to the region is the lack of water. Water has always been an extremely precious resource in the region. Possession of water has created conflicts between groups for millennia. This was all true before climate change began to take effect. Currently, water stress has grown tremendously and will only continue to get worse. MENA countries represent 6% of the world population but have less than 1% of global water supplies. The Water Project describes the Middle East as being in a “water crisis”. This is a situation which is not going to get better in the near future. The World Resources Institute listed the top 33 countries it projected to be the most water stressed by the year 2040. Of the list, 22 are MENA nations. Furthermore, two NASA satellites were able to observe major freshwater losses across the Middle East. This, coupled with diminishing rainfall, indicates that MENA nations are headed for water disaster.

This threat is made worse by population trends in the region. According to the Population Reference Bureau, the population of MENA increased from 100 million in 1950 to 380 million in 2000 -- a 3.8 times increase. This trend is expected to continue, potentially doubling the population of MENA by 2050. This poses serious challenges to the region, most notably with regard to water. There is already not enough water for the current population let alone an increased one. Overall water demand is expected to rise 50% by 2025 in 13 Arab countries. It has been proposed that urbanization will slow the birthrate. While this may be true,
urbanites consume considerably more water than their rural counterparts and thus the problem would remain unchanged.

Compounding these problems is the issue of water mismanagement. Many MENA countries use water extremely inefficiently. Irrigation systems in the region often waste a tremendous amount of water which they cannot afford. 87% of water in the region goes to irrigation. [18] Jordan, for example, is the same size as Portugal but it only has less than 10% of the water withdrawal. Yet it expends a tremendous amount of freshwater on agriculture. The United Arab Emirates boasts one of the highest per capita rates of water consumption in the world despite the fact that it is under severe water stress. If its practices are not changed, the UAE is projected to run out of freshwater completely in approximately fifty years. Continuing mismanagement of water would ensure disaster for the region.

There have been numerous proposed solutions to the problem of water stress. Most countries immediately turn to their groundwater supply in times of need. Groundwater is, “the water found underground in the cracks and spaces in soil, sand and rock. It is stored in and moves slowly through geologic formations of soil, sand and rocks”. [19] It is extremely useful for times of drought or increasing agriculture. Tapping into groundwater too often, however, is a very dangerous practice. “Groundwater is like your savings account,” says Dr. Matthew Rodell of NASA, “It’s okay to draw it down when you need it, but if it’s not replenished, eventually it will be gone.” [20] For example, during a drought in 2007, thousands of wells were dug in Iraq which has resulted in major depletion of its groundwater reserves. This is the case all across the region. Saudi Arabia has used close to two thirds of its groundwater, the UAE’s groundwater reserves are falling by about a meter per year and Yemen’s are falling by six meters per year. According to the World Bank, between 1998 and 2002, MENA used close to 80% of available groundwater -- more than double the next closest region. [21]

Groundwater usage poses additional hazards as it is also extremely vulnerable to contamination. Fertilizers, chemicals, pollution and sewage all threaten the viability and safety of groundwater which can affect existing sources of water. The Jordan River is currently being depleted by contamination farther upstream by Israel and Syria. Unless governments in the region take better care of their groundwater reserves, they are likely to disappear. Some states, such as Saudi Arabia, have attempted to improve in this area, [22] but so far these efforts have not led to any serious, lasting reforms. Furthermore, rising sea levels could endanger groundwater reserves. [23] As the sea rises, salt content will enter the country. This contaminates groundwater reserves, further depleting an already vanishing asset.

Another solution which has been suggested is employing desalination. Desalination is the process of removing salt content from sea water to make previously undrinkable water viable for use in agriculture as well as drinking water. Currently, up to half of the municipal water in MENA countries is supplied by desalination. Approximately 76% of worldwide desalination takes place in MENA. [24] The main centers are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Libya and Algeria. Desalination, however, is a highly-resource intensive process and is extremely expensive. Many MENA nations are underdeveloped and do not have the means to operate desalination plants on a massive scale. Thus, desalination cannot even be considered by nations such as Yemen, Iraq and Syria. Furthermore, even in countries with large desalination
infrastructure, the process can only produce a small percentage of the water required. Even wealthier nations like Saudi Arabia and Israel are incapable of producing enough water to replace what is being used. Consequently, while desalination is an attractive sounding option, it is not a substantial solution to the water crisis in MENA.

**B. Heat**

The second major threat from climate change is extreme rises in heat. This is one of the primary effects of climate change which can be felt all over the globe. From 2015 to 2016, the planet experienced 11 record hot months in a row.\[25\] While this alone is significant, what scientists paid attention to was how high above average each month was. The months were 1.2 degrees Celsius above the average temperature. Additionally, 2015 marked the biggest year-to-year jump in CO2 in the atmosphere and was a record low year for the Arctic sea ice peak. These warming trends particularly affect MENA countries. The summer of 2016 brought record temperatures throughout the region. Mitribah, Kuwait and Basra, Iraq both reached a temperature of 129 degrees Fahrenheit.\[26\] Soon after, Fujairah in the United Arab Emirates had a heat index of over 140 degrees Fahrenheit. These readings are indicative of the rising temperatures that MENA nations will have to contend with.

Rising heat will pose a serious threat to the safety of the people in MENA countries. In particular, the temperature in summer in the region is expected to rise dramatically. While predicting temperature changes is inexact, most project that by the end of the century there will be an average temperature rise of approximately five degrees Celsius.\[27\] Heatwaves are also expected to last much longer than in the past. By the end of the century, heatwaves which typically average 16 days will extend to between 80 and 120 days. During these heatwaves, the days will average over 120 degrees Fahrenheit and the nights will never drop below 85 degrees. Heatwaves will also occur much more frequently: up to ten times as often. This means that for large portions of the year people will not be able to spend extended periods of time outdoors. Those who do go outdoors or do not have the money to afford cool conditions will risk rapid dehydration, illness and even death.

Another consequence of the rise in temperature is that the region will become even drier than it already is. As the heat increases, precipitation in the region will fall. By the middle of the century rainfall in the region is predicted to drop between 30% and 70%. This will have devastating effects on life in MENA nations. Furthermore, this problem only compounds. The less rainfall there is each year, the less water will evaporate and fall the falling year. In the last few decades, the precipitation levels of Jordan and Syria have rapidly diminished partially due to less evaporation.

The result of all of this is the possibility that heat will make the region uninhabitable in the not-so-distant future. Multiple studies have concluded that the temperature in MENA will exceed human adaptability.\[28\] They conclude that humans will be unable to survive in such an extreme climate. A study from the German Max Planck Society for the Advancement of Science brought up the possibility of a “climate exodus” from the region.\[29\] This would create a tremendous refugee crisis dwarfing the current one.

**C. Sea Level Rise**

The third major threat facing MENA is rising sea levels. In recent years, sea levels on earth have risen by several meters. This is in large part due to melting of the polar ice caps and glaciers.\[30\] By the end of the century, sea levels are projected to rise between one and five meters. This will pose several massive threats to Middle East and
North Africa. These nations have coastlines on the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, the Arabian Gulf and the Atlantic Ocean. It is projected that even a single meter rise in sea levels would impact 41,500 Km² of Arab nations, an area comprised of approximately 37 million people.[31] That is the most conservative estimate of what is to come. Other climate scientists project that the devastation will be much larger in scale. According to the extreme projections, coastal nations such as Bahrain, Qatar, and the UAE could each have half of their populations affected.

The effects of sea level rise go beyond simple inundation with water. It also threatens biodiversity in the region. The coral reefs off the coast of Egypt, for example, are home to numerous aquatic species that would be threatened by rising sea levels. Furthermore, it would also threaten numerous economic hubs near the coasts. Sea level rise would also have the secondary effects relating to the costs inherent in relocating and employing people forced out of their homes by rising sea levels.

Several MENA nations provide effective case studies for the possible damage caused by the prospect of rising sea levels. The first is Egypt. Egypt is host to approximately 3,500 Km of coastline along the Mediterranean and Red Seas. A tremendous amount of economic activity and tourism takes place near the coast. Several highly populated cities -- Alexandria, Rosetta, Damietta, Port Said, Suez and Hurghada -- are all located close to the coastline. A good deal of commerce takes place on the coast in the form of profitable harbors and fishing. Egypt’s coasts, however, are considered especially vulnerable to sea level rise. In particular, the Nile Delta is identified as the most at-risk area. The Delta is a relatively low-lying area uniquely exposed to this threat. It also happens to be a critical region for the country. One third of the Egyptian population lives there, half of all of the country’s crops are produced there and it is home to numerous commercial and industrial centers. A 2004 study concluded that, “the Nile Delta coastal zone is highly vulnerable to the impacts of sea level rise through direct inundation and salt water intrusion.” Furthermore, the soft soil of the Delta area makes it susceptible to erosion from the tide. Every year, more and more of its coast washes away. It is also clear that the salt content of the seas has begun to seep into the groundwater and contaminate it. This will lead to diminishing amount and quality of crops and a deterioration of health and tourism. Additionally, according to a study, due to sea level rise, “[t]he increase of intensity and frequency of extreme events is also expected to affect the coastal zones of Egypt and extend over the whole country.” These events include dust storms, heat waves and other major storms.

Another useful case to consider is the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia has coastlines on two of its borders. To the west, it has a coast with the Red Sea which stretches for 1,760 Kilometers; to the east, its coast with the Arabian Gulf covers 650 Kilometers. Along these coastlines are large coral reefs and mangrove patches which make up the ecosystem. Recently, more cities have begun to emerge near the coasts, putting them in danger from sea level rise. Four cities, Jeddah, Rabigh, Yanbu and Gizan, have been identified as especially vulnerable while four more, El Khafji, Al Jobail, Al Dhahran and El Khobar, are in dangerous areas as well. A study conducted in 2005 concluded that, “[a]n increase in sea level rise will increase intrusion of saline water from both the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea into coastal aquifers, which will potentially affect the freshwater supply” and that “[i]n cases of flooding in coastal areas, salt water will further intrude into
Furthermore, sea level rise would seriously threaten what little groundwater remains in Saudi Arabia. Rising sea levels would also threaten the agricultural production near the coasts. Two coastal, agricultural cities, Sehat and Qateef, have already discovered elevated salt content in their soil which has affected their production abilities. Saudi Arabia is also in danger of losing many of its coastal beaches from erosion. While this may not sound like a serious issue, without the beaches for protection, buildings near the coast will be exposed to damage from the sea and will deteriorate without expensive and resource intensive defenses. “A sizable proportion of the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea will be affected to a combination of inundation and erosion, with consequent loss of developed properties including industrial, recreational and residential areas.”[33]

III. Climate Change and Agriculture
A theme that emerges from the study of climate change is the threat it will pose to agriculture in the region. Agriculture is a staple of life in the MENA region. As is, local agriculture is not quite sufficient to meet the needs of MENA countries and a tremendous amount of food already has to be imported. This causes a good deal of strain on the economies of the region. To minimize this issue, local agriculture is considered a critical element of society in MENA nations. To protect itself from exploitation from exporters of produce, domestic agriculture needs to remain strong.[34] Not only does local agriculture provide a significant amount of food to the citizens of these nations, it is also a major source of employment in MENA countries. The agrarian sector represents 28% of employment in Egypt, 44% in Morocco, 50% in Yemen, and 40% for the entire region.[35] “The agricultural sector is generally viewed as the driving force for the development of the MENA region, especially in non-oil producing countries.” Agriculture is especially important for rural residents of these countries. It is the source of livelihood for approximately 70% of rural people. Yet agriculture in MENA nations still does not provide adequate food security. “In many countries, average per capita caloric intake is below minimal nutrition standards. Several countries are currently experiencing severe food shortages, and the food shortage problem is expected to increase during the next decade.” Local growers cannot supply their countries’ needs and leave the nations at the mercy of imported goods. These problems are currently being exacerbated by the rapidly expanding populations of these countries. Food supply has either declined or remained stagnant while the number of people to feed is constantly growing.

This was all true before being complicated by climate change. Currently, the effects of global climate change have had and will have extremely negative effects on agriculture in the MENA region. The climate is incredibly impactful when it comes to agriculture. As the Environmental Protection Agency has stated: “Overall, climate change could make it more difficult to grow crops, raise animals, and catch fish in the same ways and same places as we have done in the past.”[36] Effects to temperature, salinity, biodiversity and water will all play a role going forward in the future of agriculture. All of these changes are likely to have adverse impacts on agriculture. Water, in particular, is going to pose numerous problems with agriculture. Currently, agriculture consumes 89% of MENA’s scarce and diminishing water resources. “Fresh water supplies are already fully used, 80% of which are currently used in agriculture, and escalating demands for industrial, urban, and environmental uses will reduce the water available to
This is an unsupportable model and major changes will need to be made as climate change takes an even heavier toll on water supplies. Additionally, since much of the food in the MENA region is imported, it will be heavily impacted by climate change in other parts of the world. As MENA nations struggle with the effects of climate change, other countries will be doing the same. Countries like the United States, which supplies a quarter of the world’s produce, will also be affected. In the US, “[p]roduction of all commodities will be vulnerable to direct impacts (from changes in crop and livestock development and yield due to changing climate conditions and extreme weather events) and indirect impacts (through increasing pressures from pests and pathogens that will benefit from a changing climate).”[38] Thus, this global issue will have a direct and devastating impact on the MENA region. “It will alter the stability of food supplies and create new food security challenges for the United States as the world seeks to feed nine billion people by 2050.”[39]

While the issues presented already pose numerous direct threats to MENA nations, there are also numerous secondary effects caused by climate change. As mentioned above, agriculture represents 40% of employment in the region. If the industry suffers, rampant unemployment is sure to follow. Unemployment is already a major problem in the region. Per the World Bank, unemployment, and in particular youth unemployment, is extremely high in MENA nations.[40] The unemployment rate for young men is 22% and 39% for young women. Yemen has an overall 40% youth unemployment and some estimates put Iran’s as high as 50%. This is made even worse by the fact that populations in the region are rapidly expanding. As the population rises, employment needs to rise with it to develop strong economic activity. Unfortunately, however, the opposite is occurring. Not only are employment opportunities not being created, but agriculture-related job opportunities will likely be lost as a result of climate change.

IV. Security Implications of Climate Change

A. Climate Change, Ineffective Governments and Civil Unrest

Exacerbating all of these issues is the lack of effective governance in the region. The governments in the MENA region are almost entirely autocracies rife with corruption and inefficiency or failed states with little to no government whatsoever. This makes dealing with climate change incredibly challenging. Effective climate policy often involves making tough decisions that may anger special interests and people close to the ruling government. This is often true when it comes to managing resources such as groundwater. Lack of water availability means that the government must choose who will get access to those resources, often a tradeoff between urban and rural communities. Urban citizens use more water per capita but rural residents need water to cultivate their farms. Typically, friends of the ruling family and other members of the upper class live in large cities and use their connections to divert resources away from rural areas. This creates tremendous friction between citizens.

A good example of this dynamic is demonstrated by the Azraq Oasis in Jordan. For all of recorded history, the Azraq Oasis has been a major congregating point for travelers and a hub of animal life. In the early 1980s, however, the government of Jordan began to pump out water from the Oasis and funneled most of it to Amman.[41] Less than two decades later, the Oasis was almost entirely empty. The birds who flocked to it left for the Sea of Galilee and

[37][38][39][40][41]
the water buffalos died. This action greatly angered the local rural populations. Hundreds of farms had been sustained with water from Azraq and their production suffered enormously from the lack of a stable water source. Additionally, tapping the Oasis lowered the area’s water table leading to an increase in salinity in the soil. This too had a negative impact on rural farmers. The lack of springs has also allowed numerous wildfires to spring up in the now-dry environment. The decisions about the Azraq Oasis have sparked intense feelings of resentment among the rural communities towards the urban population, and especially towards the government.

The resentment and anger caused by problems with governments in the MENA countries can have serious consequences for the stability of the region. Angry citizens packed into cities can overthrow governments under the right circumstances. While the effects of climate change are never the entire cause for coups, they are often contributing factors. This is evident in the origins of the current Syrian crisis. Most people think of the Syrian Civil War as beginning with protests against the government in 2011. This analysis overlooks the impact of a major drought that Syria underwent between 2007 and 2010. A study in the National Academy of Sciences concluded, “that human influences on the climate system are implicated in the current Syrian conflict.” The drought lasted longer and was more intense than would have happened without the effects of climate change. This drought destroyed agriculture in Syria and displaced thousands. These people then flocked to major cities looking for shelter and employment. The Assad government, however, was incapable of properly addressing the needs of its people. Consequently, they took to the streets in protest. While uprisings are never caused by a single factor, in this case, climate change absolutely played a significant role. A displaced Syrian farmer said in an interview: “Of course. The drought and unemployment were important in pushing people toward revolution. When the drought happened, we could handle it for two years, and then we said, ‘It’s enough.’”

It is also possible to observe the political implications of climate change in Egypt. Like Syria, Egypt underwent political turmoil in 2011. Unlike Syria, however, the precipitating climate event did not take place in the Middle East but rather a drought in Eastern China. The United States Department of Agriculture released a Commodity Intelligence Report on the 2010 drought in China. The report identified climate change as the cause of the drought and its impact on that year’s wheat crop. While wheat in China may not seem relevant to MENA, Egypt is the world’s number one importer of bread and a large source of its wheat is China. Without the necessary wheat, the price of bread in Egypt tripled. Studies have linked this to the unrest which led to the 2011 coup in Egypt. They establish “direct and indirect links between natural hazards, food security and political stability at local and global scales” and that the, “influence of climate events and disasters have a global reach.”

The 2011 coup in Egypt starkly illustrates one of the most dangerous elements of climate change: that events in one country can severely impact another region entirely. The MENA region is particularly susceptible to this dynamic as it is not self-sufficient when it comes to food and water supplies. There is not enough data to definitively say which governments will be destabilized by the effects of climate change and when. But it is clear that without major systemic changes, MENA countries will continue to be vulnerable to this threat.

B. Increased Risks of War
Climate change in the MENA regions brings a different threat as well: interstate conflict. The Middle East and North Africa are areas well versed in conflict between nations. Now, however, with the advance of climate change, there are more reasons to fight. Water, in particular, has caused and will cause more tensions and hostilities between states. According to Foreign Policy Journal: “Increasing scarcity and dire projections have made states view water both as a national security priority and as a political and economic lever. In this region, water, like oil, cannot be separated from politics.” [47]

The main conflicts based on water are centered on downstream versus upstream nations. Upstream nations have a disproportionate control over water supplies from rivers which are a major source of water in the region. Turkey, for example, is an upstream state on both the Tigris and the Euphrates, vesting in it the control of major regional water sources. Turkey has used its upstream position to build dams and preserve more water for itself. Turkey has two new dams, the Ilisu and the Cizre, on the Tigris River and the Ataturk Dam on the Euphrates. This limits water access to downriver states such as Syria and Iraq. While Turkey has a treaty with Syria over water, it has no such deal with Iraq. Instead, the government of Turkey decided to act unilaterally, escalating tensions with Iraq. Indeed, other downstream states, like Egypt, have threatened war to protect their scarce water resources.

The Islamic State (IS), on the other hand, has made seizing water sources a major part of its strategy in establishing its caliphate. It views the capture and control of dams on the Tigris and Euphrates as critical strategic aims in its effort to control the territories of Iraq and Syria. IS captured the Tabqa Dam in Syria in 2014 and has tried repeatedly to seize the Mosul and Haditha Dams, the largest ones in Iraq. Water also plays a large role in existing conflicts such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict where water sources in the West Bank are hotly contested. All in all, the effects of climate change on resources like water will continue to ratchet up tensions in the MENA region.

C. Defense of Threatened Allies

Heightened tensions are not purely restricted to the region; they also affect the United States and its security. As discussed, climate change is likely to create additional conflict and instability in the MENA region. More war will continue to break out threatening US allies, interests, and security. The United States has numerous allies in the region who may become involved in these conflicts.

The first ally in potential danger is Israel. While Israel has been threatened since its creation, climate change only heightens that danger. Israel is a regional leader in water conservation and renewable energy sources. As climate change further affects the region, Israel will either be a target for cooperation or for attack.

Turkey is another ally of the US susceptible to conflict due to climate change. The Turkish government has been a critical actor when it comes to climate conflict in the Middle East. As mentioned above, Turkey has been very active in dam construction at the expense of other downstream nations. If this continues, Turkey may find itself under attack by its neighbors. This is significant because Turkey is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) along with the US. The NATO charter demands that an attack on one member be treated like an attack on all members. Consequently, if Turkey were to be attacked, the United States would be obligated to respond with force.

Other US interests are also at stake. Additional conflict would threaten current
United States forces and citizens located in the region. As heat increases, US military operations will be drastically restricted. Troop movements and activities will have to be cut down dramatically during the summer months. In recognition of this, the US Department of Defense (DOD) has begun to develop strategies to maintain its effectiveness despite the challenges presented by climate change. Even with this preparation, the DOD acknowledges that “A changing climate will have real impacts on our military and the way it executes its missions.”

Furthermore, the United States remains a favorite target for extremists from the region and further instability would only exacerbate that problem. In the last few years, instability in countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan has led to entities like Al Qaeda, the Taliban and the Islamic State seizing power. Yemen, a MENA country beset by numerous climate-related problems and without a functioning government, is a hotbed of civil unrest and an incubator for multiple jihadist groups. As more and more countries in the region become failed states due to political instability, local extremist groups will have more freedom to operate against the United States and its allies.

United States economic interests would also be threatened by climate change related instability. The US does a good deal of trade with MENA countries. In 2008, the US had $215 billion worth of trade with MENA nations. If the political situation in the region deteriorates these US investments could be lost.

Finally, perhaps the biggest threat to the US would be a climate exodus from the MENA region. Hundreds of millions of people currently reside in the Middle East and North Africa. As discussed above, some scientists predict that the region will become uninhabitable by the middle of the century. This would create a refugee crisis that would dwarf the one currently underway.

Desperate refugees would inundate wealthier nations in Europe and North America. Already, countries are balking at the idea of providing a safe haven for refugees purely from Syria; eventually, there would be too many refugees to deny. The influx of millions of MENA refugees would overwhelm Western nations, putting tremendous strain on their services, economies and security. This would be a tremendous risk to the United States and is a scenario which it will have to work to avoid.

Conclusion
The threats posed by global climate are far reaching and potentially devastating. Threats such as increased temperatures, sea level rise, and water scarcity will endanger the people of the MENA region. Unless drastic action is taken, the security of MENA nations and the United States will be at stake. If climate change goes unchecked, political instability and violence are sure to beset the region. This will threaten US allies, citizens and interests in the region as well as at home. It would also create a refugee crisis the likes of which the world has never seen. This situation demands action from the nations of the region. If they do not act to mitigate the threats, any attempted solutions will fall short. The primary impediment to this, however, is the nature of governance in the region. The governments of MENA countries are, for the most part, either autocracies or failed states. Each of these comes with different challenges to climate policy. Autocracies are prone to corruption and mismanagement. They are not likely to make tough and smart choices for energy consumption and water usage. Failed states, on the other hand, have no ability to regulate resources and enact any sort of climate initiatives. Consequently, major governmental reforms will be necessary to address the threats. Autocratic leaders will need to make smarter decisions.
and factions in failed states need to begin cooperating. This will require outside help as well. Foreign governments, especially the United States, will need to assist with the situation. Non-governmental entities such as corporations and non-profits will also be

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GENDERED PEACEKEEPING IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

MARIAH KASPAREK

Abstract
Despite an attempt to integrate more women into the peacekeeping mission in 2000 with the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, the peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo stands at about 4 per cent women out of the total military personnel. The Security Council’s thematic work on Women, Peace and Security has led to resolutions that call on the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission to integrate more women into the peacekeeping mission and use a gender-specific framework to define the peacekeeping mission. Although MONUSCO has taken these concerns over the years and included them in their mandates, progress of integrating women into the peacekeeping mission still needs to be made by making gender perspective the priority. In order for gender equality to be meaningful to the peacekeeping mission, the mission needs to first acknowledge and incorporate the effectiveness of gender perspective.

Literature Review


2 Kronsell, Annica, and Erika Svedberg. Making Gender, Making War: Violence, Military and

The integration of women into the United Nations peacekeeping missions has caused a divide in those who believe gendered integration is absolutely necessary and those who are not so sure of its impact. In her research “Are Women ‘Really’ Making a Unique Contribution to Peacekeeping?”, Heinecken examines the stark difference in the rhetoric and reality of the integration of women into the peacekeeping mission. Factors, such as authority, coercion, and violence, which stem from the military and operational context of the peacekeeping mission in the DRC affect the proper performance of women.

In fact, feminist scholars see masculinity as an inherent part of militarism that not only serves militarism but also “seeks and needs militarization and war for its fulfillment.” Therefore, in these militaristic positions where peacekeepers are referred to as “troops”, “military”, and “police”, women must adhere to masculine values of authority and coercion in order to be “good” soldiers. This undermines the most important factor for greater integration of women into the mission, which is a more gendered approach to peacekeeping. If the women are forced into the “masculine” dynamics of gendered peacekeeping, the gendered perspective of peacekeeping remains the same, regardless of how many women are integrated into the mission.

However, the argument that gender frameworks matter in peacekeeping gained traction and continues to be acknowledged widely over recent years. The RAND Corporation’s study on ‘women and nation


building’ found that including women in the peace process improved state stability.\(^5\) This is not to say that women make “better” peacekeepers, but that women have unique qualities, such as a ‘calming’ quality, that run counter to militarism which leads to improving relations with the local community.\(^6\) The importance of integrating women into the peacekeeping mission is further supported by evidence that even the presence of a few women has a “calming impact in hostile situations”.\(^7\)

Another argument is the claim that women are also able to identify more closely with the problems that the host society faces.\(^8\) Women are able to better understand the challenges that other women in the host society may face, such as gender-based violence.\(^9\) The connection between the presence of an all-male peacekeeping force and sexual exploitation in post-conflict situations further molds the argument that the presence of women is vital to their operations in order to ultimately eradicate sexual exploitation.\(^10\) The presence of more women in the peacekeeping mission may also send a message to the local communities about gender equality and inspire the local women and girls.\(^11\) It was found that where peace missions have a large number of female peacekeepers, the local women appear to be more willing to join peace committees.\(^12\)

Although the argument that integrating women into the peacekeeping mission has gained much attention over the years, the effort to integrate women into the peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has fallen short. The United Nations Organization Mission in the DRC, originally MONUC and now MONUSCO, as of February 2018 has only 4.4% women in the overall peacekeeping operation.\(^13\) Out of 16,392 military and police personnel, only 747 are females.\(^14\) This is only a small improvement in the integration of women since the 2000 Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. In a country so plagued by gender-based sexual violence, where rape is used as a weapon of war, it is even more imperative that women can be placed into positions where they have a voice.

Not only is the local society plagued by sexual violence, the peacekeeping mission in

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9 Heinecken, Lindy (2013). “Building Capacity from Above and Below…”


11 Heinecken, Lindy (2013). “Building Capacity from Above and Below…”

12 Heinecken, Lindy (2013). “Building Capacity from Above and Below…”


the DRC itself has been the center for scandal in regard to sexual exploitation. In 2004, an article released titled ‘Sex and Death in the Heart of Africa’ unveiled the sexual violence and exploitation of peacekeepers serving in the DRC. More than thirty girls in a camp for internally displaced persons in Bunia were interviewed and half of them admitted to having sexual relations with peacekeepers in exchange for food. An article released shortly after also unveiled other abuses within the peacekeeping mission in the DRC, such as the operation of a child prostitution ring, the rape of minors, and child pornography and sex shows organized by Moroccan soldiers in Kinsangani. Even with these released scandals and the Security Council Resolutions on the importance of gendered frameworks, little progress has been made on the integration front in the DRC.

This paper will first examine four key resolutions on Women, Peace and Security that address gender and the integration of women into the peacekeeping mission. It will then go through key resolutions that mark the progress that MONUSCO has made in incorporating gender and gender-perspective into the mandates of their mission. Third, the paper will focus on two progress reviews of MONUSCO’s implementation of Women, Peace and Security’s recommendations. These progress reviews were reported by The Latin American Security and Defence Network (RESDAL) and UN Women. The reports highlight the successes and shortcomings of the progression that MONUSCO has made in implementing gender recommendations. To conclude, the paper will compare MONUSCO’s progress to the progress of all peacekeeping missions and provide recommendations for future action in relation to the framework of the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission.

Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security
The first effort to integrate women into the peacekeeping mission through Women, Peace and Security came with Resolution 1325 in 2000. This Resolution “reaffirmed the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building”. It also recognized the need to create a framework that included a gender perspective into the peacekeeping mission. It called for the Secretary-General to include more leadership and inclusionary roles for women as special representatives and envoys. In relation to dealing with gender on the ground, it requests that the Secretary-General provides Member States with appropriate training guidelines for protecting women. With this comes an invitation to the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the “impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the

16 Kronsell, Annica, and Erika Svedberg. Making Gender, Making War.

gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution”. The key thematic issues that thus became prominent in this Resolution to the overarching peacekeeping mission were the important role of women in prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, adapting a gender perspective into the peacekeeping mission, increasing participation of women at all levels, and providing training guidelines on the protection of women while the integration of more women into the processes occurs.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1888 on Women, Peace and Security, adopted September 30th, 2009, details the importance of the integration of women into the peacekeeping mission. It states that the Security Council welcomes, the inclusion of women in peacekeeping missions in civil, military, and police functions, and [recognizes] that women and children affected by armed conflict may feel more secure working with and reporting abuse to women in peacekeeping missions, and that the presence of women peacekeepers may encourage local women to participate in the national armed and security forces, thereby helping to build a security sector that is accessible and responsive to all, especially women.

Although there had been many resolutions since resolution 1325 that called on greater attention to gender perspectives such as resolutions 1327 (2000) and 1366 (2001), this resolution 1888 (2009) was the first to detail why the integration of women into the peacekeeping mission is vital. The two main reasons it highlights are comfortability of women in conflict reporting their abuses to women officers and local women being encouraged to participate in the security forces themselves. Therefore, the peacekeeping mission is called upon to create gendered perspectives and integrate women with these goals in mind for the local communities they serve.

Resolutions 1960 (2010) and 2242 (2015) reiterate the important role that women can play in the peacekeeping mission while also welcoming the appointment of more women protection advisers (WPAs) to facilitate the implementation of the resolutions on Women, Peace and Security. Resolution 2242 (2015) also calls upon the Secretary-General to initiate “a revised strategy [...] to double the numbers of women in military and police contingents of UN peacekeeping operations over the next five years.” This means that the peacekeeping missions need to double the number of women in military and police contingents by 2020. In examining the timeline of Security Council Resolutions on the peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, it does not seem likely, as of right now, that

this call from Women, Peace and Security will be met.

**Security Council Resolutions on the UN Organization Mission in the DRC**

The United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, first established as “MONUC” was created after the signing of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement in July 1999.29 The establishment of MONUC in Resolution 1279 which was adopted by the Security Council on November 30th, 1999, does not include any gendered language that is specific to women in the peacekeeping mission or women in conflict.30 The first mention of women was in Resolution 1291 adopted on February 24th, 2000. It referred to women as a vulnerable group along with children and demobilized child soldiers, recommending a facilitation of humanitarian assistance particularly attending to these groups.31 It is not until July 28th, 2003 that the Security Council adopted resolution 1493 which reaffirmed the statements made through Women, Peace, and Security in resolution 1325 (2000).32 This resolution “reaffirms the importance of a gender perspective in peacekeeping operations in accordance with resolution 1325 [...] and calls on MONUC to increase the deployment of women as military observers as well as in other capacities.”33 The next acknowledgement of women’s role in MONUC was in resolution 1820 (2008) which reaffirmed the important role of women in peacebuilding and stressed the “importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.”34

The Security Council resolution 1925 renamed the peacekeeping mission in the DRC from “MONUC” to “MONUSCO”, or the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission, to reflect the new phase reached in the country.35 The next two resolutions that make significant progress in acknowledging women’s role after the mission’s shift to MONUSCO are resolutions 2147 (2014) and 2348 (2017). Resolution 2147 refers to the establishment of the Women’s Platform for the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) framework and requests that MONUSCO takes gender considerations into account as a fluid issue throughout its mandate, as opposed to letting gender considerations just act as a side issue to the rest of the framework.36 The Women’s Platform for the PSC framework was signed in February 2013 in an attempt to “stop cycles of conflict by resolving their

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root causes”. The platform brings together women’s groups in the DRC to discuss and work on issues such as peace-building, awareness of the peace process, and justice for rape survivors. Resolution 2348 (2017) also requests the same as resolution 2147 from MONUSCO in relation to gender considerations. However, it goes further to acknowledge the crucial role of United Nations Women Protection Advisers in their commitment to address sexual violence in conflict. Women’s Protection Advisers are deployed in peacekeeping operations in order to “collect timely, objective, accurate and reliable information as a basis for prevention and response programming [to] preserve the safety and dignity of sexual violence survivors”.

Progress Reviews on the Integration of Women in MONUSCO

In the Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, as well as the resolutions on MONUSCO, it is evident that there has been progress made on acknowledging the importance of gendered perspectives and integrating women into the framework of the peacekeeping mission. The Latin American Security and Defence Network (RESDAL)’s review of integrating resolution 1325 into three peacekeeping missions including MONUSCO acknowledges the progress and shortcomings of the integration of women. The report says, “the low contribution of female personnel by [...] MONUSCO is striking: bearing in mind the significance of the sexual violence problem [...] , one would expect a higher presence of women among the troops.” The report details how there is training on the ideas presented in resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, but there is difficulty implementing this training with the local population because of language barriers. Also, there is a predominant culture of patriarchal tradition within the DRC that makes it difficult for the full implementation of the establishments set out by the Women, Peace and Security resolutions. Integrating women into the peacekeeping mission in hopes of inspiring local women to become involved with the peace mission is difficult with a culture used to traditional patriarchy.

With this being said, there are many women’s groups within the DRC that have been formed in response to sexual violence. An example of this is the Police Special Protection of Children and Women Unit which was established by UNDP in order to receive, investigate and transfer cases of sexual and gender-based violence in the judicial system. Groups like this one seek


43 Donadio, Marcela, and Juan Rial. (2015).

44 Donadio, Marcela, and Juan Rial. (2015).


46 “Fighting Sexual Violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo.” UNDP.
to tackle impunity by providing better access to justice, security and information for the victims.\(^\text{47}\) This is important for women and girls who have been victims of sexual and gender-based violence and are unaware of how to document and receive justice for the crimes.

Another review of MONUSCO’s framework in relation to gender, reported by UN Women, recognizes the progress that MONUSCO has made in implementing the recommendations set out in resolution 1325. Two units exist within the DRC peacekeeping mission that are gender-based. The first is the Gender Unit that was created in 2002 after the release of resolution 1325.\(^\text{48}\) The goal of this unit is to “guarantee the incorporation of a gender perspective into the Mission rules and operations” and “to work with the civil society and Government in ensuring the active participation of women in the peace process and post conflict reconstruction.”\(^\text{49}\) This unit supports women’s career development, the mobilization of women in missions and the nomination of women to management development programs.\(^\text{50}\) There are introductory trainings on gender capacity building for civilians and the military staff, however, these trainings were found to be insufficient in having long-term effects.\(^\text{51}\) The UN Women report’s survey on the effectiveness of the introductory trainings found that 75% of the 125 Mission staff said that training around gender issues had been “somewhat effective”.\(^\text{52}\) This is because the gender work is considered as supplementary to the overall mission work.\(^\text{53}\) Also, there is a lack of accountability in implementing the gender targets effectively.\(^\text{54}\) With this being said, the gendered perspective of the framework is helpful but not vital to the mission.

The second unit that is a part of the DRC peacekeeping mission is the Sexual Violence Unit that was created in 2009, when the mission was still MONUC, after sexual violence became a top priority and political issue in the DRC.\(^\text{55}\) In fact, MONUC was the first peacekeeping mission to put a unit in place that addressed the issue of sexual and gender-based violence.\(^\text{56}\) In the mandate on the Sexual Violence Unit, the mission faces capacity constraints.\(^\text{57}\) The roles of the unit have been filtered through other UN agencies and MONUSCO sections that complicate the responsibilities of the unit in relation to sexual and gender-based violence response.\(^\text{58}\) While the creation of this unit was a success in the direction of gender mainstreaming, the framework of the unit itself again treats gender as a side-note rather than an integral piece of the overall structure of the mission.

The UN Women report acknowledges the slow progress that has been made in improving the gender balance in the staff. However, since 2004, the percentage of

\(^{47}\) “Fighting Sexual Violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo.” UNDP.


\(^{49}\) UN Women. UN Women Evaluation Office. 2012.

\(^{50}\) UN Women. UN Women Evaluation Office. 2012.

\(^{51}\) UN Women. UN Women Evaluation Office. 2012.

\(^{52}\) UN Women. UN Women Evaluation Office. 2012.

\(^{53}\) UN Women. UN Women Evaluation Office. 2012.

\(^{54}\) UN Women. UN Women Evaluation Office. 2012.

\(^{55}\) UN Women. UN Women Evaluation Office. 2012.

\(^{56}\) UN Women. UN Women Evaluation Office. 2012.

\(^{57}\) UN Women. UN Women Evaluation Office. 2012.

\(^{58}\) UN Women. UN Women Evaluation Office. 2012.
women in military positions has remained at 2% and 3%.\textsuperscript{59} Noting that, as recently as 28 February 2018, the number of women in the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission has risen to about 4.4% out of the total military and police troops.\textsuperscript{60} This progress is still slow considering that SCR 1325 was adopted eighteen years ago.

Figure 1 below shows the total number of female and male troop contributions to all peacekeeping missions and MONUSCO. While it is evident that little progress has been made in the integration of women in MONUSCO, it is also clear that this lack of progress extends to all peacekeeping missions. Female troops make up 4.7% of the total contributions to all UN peacekeeping operations.\textsuperscript{61} It is also important to note that the MONUSCO mission is the largest of the UN peacekeeping missions with a total of 17,139 military and police troops.\textsuperscript{62} In order for the peacekeeping missions to work toward gender equality, the largest peacekeeping mission needs to take the recommendations of WPS as the priority.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{troop_contributions.png}
\caption{Pie Charts of Troop Contributions to UN Peacekeeping Operations by Gender As of 28 February 2018}
\end{figure}

\textbf{Conclusion}

This paper aimed to study the “top-down” patterns of the integration of women into the UN peacekeeping mission’s work in the DRC. While the paper assessed the institutional perspective of this topic, there are methodological limits in the assessment of the fieldwork perspective. Overall, the integration of women into the peacekeeping mission is an issue that has become increasingly relevant as countries struggle with prevention of sexual and gender-based violence. The arguments for women in the peacekeeping mission have largely been divided into two categories, “rhetoric versus reality” and women as an integral part to the peacekeeping mission. The “rhetoric versus reality” argument sees the difference between gender equality and gender perspective. It recognizes that gender perspective must come first in order for gender equality to really influence the overall effectiveness of the peacekeeping mission. The other argument, that women must be integrated into the peacekeeping mission at a faster rate because they are integral to the operations of the mission, sees that women have unique qualities, such as a ‘calming’ quality that runs counter to the military context of the peacekeeping mission.

MONUSCO’s progress in implementing the recommendations first made by Resolution 1325 has been slow and used as a “side priority” to conflict resolution. If the peacekeeping mission wants to be most effective in combating sexual violence through the peacekeeping mission, it should assess the relationships between local women and women in the mission. A wider-range study should be taken over a longer period of time with more participants than have previously been used. The study should assess whether or not women in the

\textsuperscript{59} UN Women. UN Women Evaluation Office. 2012.

\textsuperscript{60} “Gender Peacekeeping.” United Nations, United Nations, peacekeeping.un.org/gender.

\textsuperscript{61} “Gender Peacekeeping.” United Nations, United Nations, peacekeeping.un.org/gender.

peacekeeping mission have an impact on more sexual violence and gender-based violence victims seeking help and justice. It should also seek to examine the successes of those cases. Not only that, it should aim to assess the relationship between women’s presence in the peacekeeping mission and the impact of women becoming involved in leadership positions in peace processes. If the connection between a wide range of participants shows a successful relationship between women in the mission and local women then MONUSCO should make gender and, most importantly, gender-perspective, the main priority in peace processes in order to more quickly integrate women. Since MONUSCO is the largest peacekeeping mission, it is imperative that it also assures the mission to prioritize gender equality and gender-perspective to inspire other peacekeeping missions to follow suit.

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AN ASSESSMENT OF DEMOCRATIC AND NON-DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS’ EFFECTIVENESS IN IMPLEMENTING ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF THE U.S. AND CHINA

GREGORY COPPOLA

Abstract
The United States of America led the world in environmental policy throughout the 20th century but recently has relinquished its position as a global leader in international environmental policy, while China, the world’s leader in air pollution, is swiftly becoming the global leader in installing wind, water, and solar energy. Consequently, this raises the question, do democratic nations lack the willingness and/or ability to enact swift and effective domestic and international environmental policy? First, the paper examines the United States of America as a proxy for both a democratic nation that at times has acted as a global leader in environmental protection and in other times has been unable to agree on an appropriate course of action due to complicated democratic procedures and bipartisanship. Second, this paper examines the foundational aspects that encompass U.S. democracy to understand what allowed the U.S. to lead in international environmental policy throughout late 20th century while also noting that the U.S. government is a unique democratic system.

Third, this paper examines the ability and willingness of China’s authoritarian regime to formulate and implement swift environmental policies in recent years, while also noting that China’s governing system is also unique and not representative of all non-democratic nations. Finally, this paper assesses the potential advantages and disadvantages of democratic and authoritarian governments in addressing domestic and global environmental issues. Specifically, this paper will focus on environmental public policy geared towards climate change, greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions, and renewable energy. Furthermore, this paper contends that China’s shift towards sustainable development will act as an avenue for increased international dominance and stability, while the U.S.’s recent environmental policies, or lack thereof, damages the perception of the U.S. as a cooperative, progressive leader on the global stage.

Introduction
Climate Change, resource depletion, pollution, and sustainability are all increasingly growing environmental concerns that are shifting to the forefront of many political actions and negotiations. Immediate action domestically by individual nations as well as the international community as a collective unit are essential to the preservation, protection, and enhancement of the environmental and human health. The world’s leading nations must continue to and, in many cases, begin to, acknowledge the seriousness of these environmental issues, commit to effective and rapid improvements, and most importantly uphold these commitments. All nations are called upon to act on these environment commitments despite size,
Consequently, this raises several questions: what are the strengths and weaknesses of both systems in adopting public policy? What has changed overtime within the U.S. and China? Is China rapidly becoming the vanguard of implementing environmental policy and if so, does this make an authoritarian system more productive and efficient at forming such polices? But most importantly, for what specific reasons is the global leadership of environmental sustainability shifting from the U.S. to China and what are the implications for the future?

This paper will examine the past actions by the U.S. and China in implementing environmental policy to address these guiding questions. Through analysis of scholarly articles and data on the environmental degradation and legislation historically within these two cases, this paper will detail the strengths and weaknesses of both democratic and non-democratic nations in addressing environmental concerns and adopting effective environmental practices. First, this study will assess the foundational aspects of democracy within the U.S. that directly influences the policy making process. Second, this paper will examine the United States’ leadership garnering support for global environmental policies, like the Montreal Protocol. Additionally, this paper will also discuss the United States’ recent shift away from environmental policy, such as the Paris Agreement. Then, this paper will analyze non-democratic government’s ability to implement environmental policy by analyzing China’s authoritarian regime. Most significantly, this paper will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of both systems in creating and adopting domestic and international environmental policy. Finally, this analysis hopes to provide insight into how China is swiftly becoming the international leader in environmental sustainability.
legislation and the implications of such a shift in the international arena.

Literature Review
While the pursuit of sustainability is a relatively new focus for many countries, literature does offer some insight into the advantages and disadvantages of different types of governments in adopting environmental policy. Several studies examine the ability of both democratic and autocratic nations to effectively formulate and implement environmental policy.

Scholars contend that “democratic institutions have opposite effects on environment quality; a positive direct effect on environment quality and a negative indirect effect through investments and income inequality.”

Democracies have a positive effect on environmental quality because their citizens are free not only to express their opinions, but also to pressure government officials to shift the agenda, while elected officials are equally pressured to vote on legislation that reflects the views of their constituents to gain reelection. Furthermore, citizens of a democracy are more inclined to create lobbying groups due to their freedom of speech and alternative sources of information not influenced by the government that can influence political agenda and help create effective environmental policy. When individuals living in a democratic nation are well informed about important issues that could potentially impact the health and safety of their well-being, they often positively improve the status of major social problems.

In economic terms, political and social freedoms favor environmental protection because non-democratic regimes tend to not consider the environment a public good as much as democracies. Autocratic regimes are often governed by political elites who monopolize and own large percentages of national incomes and revenues. “The implementation of rigorous environmental policies can lower the levels of production, income and consumption, which, in turn impose a higher cost on the elite in an autocracy than on the population whereas the marginal benefit is uniform for both elite and population.”

In opposition, there are many other theorists and academics who propose that democracy damages environmental quality. Many of these theorists argue that democratic freedoms are jointly connected to economic growth and expansion. Desai contends, “the management and overexploitation of environmental and natural resources... This overexploitation is accelerated in democracies in which individuals have business and economic freedom.” Additionally, “Democracies are...

also economic markets wherein lobbying groups are very important... Democracies are not considered as protecting environment quality as they are supposed to satisfy the preferences of markets and lobbying groups which aim at maximizing their economic profit that is not in favour of a better environment quality.”

Democracies are directly connected with capitalism and the pursuit of individual progression. The ideology of the American dream stimulates an individualist mentality, not a collective mindset. “Democratic institutions have direct effect on environment quality, indirectly through income inequality and investments... The larger the scale of economic activity, the higher the level of environmental degradation... since increased economic activity results in increased levels of resource use and waste generation.”

The research conducted by these scholars and theorists inspired the work for this study; this paper looks to take a step further to answer the guiding questions mentioned previously.

In doing so, this paper will assess the ability and willingness for democratic and non-democratic nations to address environmental concerns by analyzing the specific instances when the U.S. and China succeeded in creating environmental policy and when they failed to do so. In addition, this paper will offer implications for the United States and China, specifically relating to the possibility of future commitment to environmental policy. Overall, based on the current agenda and trajectory of both nations, this paper hopes to offer insight into the strengths and weaknesses of both nations in addressing environmental policy as well as the global status in terms of the environment quality and leadership in the international community.

What Constitutes a Democracy and an Authorization Regime?
It is crucial to understand the fundamental characteristics of both democratic and non-democratic nations to comprehend the advantages and disadvantages of implementing environmental policy for both systems. Understanding the complicated processes involved in forming policy within a democratic government, such as the U.S. versus an authoritarian regime, such as China, is vital to analyzing the benefits and difficulties of both government types.

It is important to understand that the unique version of democracy that is demonstrated within the U.S. is not a perfect example of all democracies. Many democracies in Europe and other parts of the world define democracy differently and therefore, exhibit different democratic characteristics. Generally, democracy can be defined as “any governing body that makes decisions by combining the votes of more than half of those eligible and present is said to be democratic, whether that majority emerges within an electorate, a parliament, a committee, a city council, or a party caucus.”

Commonly between most true democracies is the establishment of separate branches of government which results in a division of power to avoid one individual or one council from gaining absolute power. As opposed to dictators, the legitimacy of

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authority is in the governmental offices that is bestowed upon politicians through elections. In a democracy, the government and the citizens agree to a social contract with each other. “Democracy is a system of governance in which rulers are held accountable for their actions in the public realm by citizens… citizens are expected to obey the decisions provided its outcome remains contingent upon their collective preferences as expressed through fair and regular elections.”

The governance also has the responsibility of promoting and maintaining rule of law; no individual despite position or economic status is higher than the laws that govern a democratic society. Additionally, in democracies, often at times, there is cooperation and competition among several different political parties that represent the views and beliefs of citizens with whom they align politically. The capacity to disagree and challenge ideas, cultural norms, and policies is a key fundamental aspect of democracy.

Robert A. Dahl, author of “What Political Institutions Does Large-Scale Democracy Require?”, lists several criteria that define a fully functional democracy. Democracies must have elected officials who represent the people, host free, fair, and frequent elections, promote freedom of expression for all citizens without the threat of being punished, and allow access to alternative sources of information not influenced or controlled by the government.

Moreover, the right for citizens to form organizations and political parties otherwise known as associational autonomy, as well as an inclusive citizenship where every adult shares the same rights as every other citizen living within that country are six indispensable principles for a fully-functioning democracy.

It is also important to acknowledge that democracies must be self-governing and in no way, be influenced or controlled by a separate governing entity outside of boundaries of that nation or its own leaders. Government officials cannot be directly coerced or forced into different political decisions by outside governments or the hierarchy of their own institution. Furthermore, “Unlike authoritarian regimes, democracies have the capacity to modify their rules and institutions consensually in response to changing circumstances.”

In fundamental contrast to democracy, authoritarian regimes differ on many central issues like, the importance of basic freedoms, the necessity and legitimacy of elections, the role of society in government decisions, leadership, and the relationship between the leaders and the governed. Authoritarian regimes involve one individual or a small group of leaders, who often have absolute power over government and military functions. If elections are held in authoritarian nations, they are susceptible to corruption by the governing body. Basic freedoms, like free speech, press, and assembly are often disallowed, or controlled by the government. Often, authoritarian regimes, censor the information and stories that the media and internet present to their audiences. Additionally, in many authoritarian regimes, citizens and businesses must obey the laws and regulations assigned by the leaders of the nation.  

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10 Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy is . . . and is Not," (82).

13 Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy is . . . and is Not," 87.
nation, even though they may not reflect the views or best interest of the people.

Again, not every authoritarian regime fits into one definition; there are many different versions and interpretations of authoritarian leadership that have been realized in different regions. There are monarchical, military regimes, electoral regimes, one-party regimes, and limited multi-party regimes that all follow under the authoritarian regime category. Similarly to the purpose of the U.S. for democracy for this analysis, China’s is simply a case study used to better understand the advantages and disadvantages of an authoritarian government in formulating and implementing environmental policy, but in no way does this paper propose that China’s government is representative of every authoritarian regime.

The two case studies for this report, the United States and China, are large-scale, contradictory governmental systems that together have emitted in recent years over 35% of the global CO₂ emission annually. Figure 1 represents these numbers in a graph, while also noting the total emissions of the 10 biggest contributors to global GHG emissions. The U.S. and China lead the globe as the two largest contributors of global greenhouse gas emissions, while entire regions, such as Europe, do not equal the same level of air and atmospheric pollution as either of these countries individually.

Nevertheless, even though they are not representative of all other systems, they offer significant insight into the ability and inability for such systems to protect environmental standards through legislation. Examining their positions on historical events such as the Montreal Protocol, the Implementation of the Clean Water Act, and the Paris Agreement as well as the current agendas and direction of their governments in terms of environmental protection and enhancement provides a means to understand the strengths and weaknesses of enacting environmental policy in each system. Knowing landmark political-economic decisions that impacts the environment as well as fully comprehending how each system was able to act in such manner is extremely useful. Additionally, examining the history as well as the current trends for both the U.S. and China can give

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some vision into the future for both nations as it pertains to climate change and other environmental legislation.

The U.S. A Case Study for Democracies
In the past, the U.S. lead the world towards environmental improvement by enacting global environmental policy and pushing for cooperation among the international community; however, more recently U.S. political commitment both domestically and international has been plagued by environmental political paralysis. The United States has been a global leader in international delegations but also ironically an enormous contributor to many current and perhaps future global environmental challenges. As a regional hegemon and one of the largest polluters, the U.S. commitment to environmental legislation will continue to influence the success or failure of the international community to address such concerns.

A perfect example of the U.S. commitment to international environmental protection was prevalent in 1998 when the U.S was the first nation to ratify the international agreed upon Montreal Protocol. This international treaty was signed by 31 countries to phase out ozone depleting chemicals called chlorofluorocarbons, or CFC's, that were used in everyday goods like refrigerators. In 1998, significant scientific data revealed that the constant use of CFCs and other ozone depleting chemicals were destroying the ozone layer, specifically the layer over Antarctica and South America. The depletion of this atmosphere coating was predicted to increase the frequency and

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countries to implement. The Clean Water Act “establishes the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States and regulating quality standards for surface waters.” The Clean Water Act has not only led to the heightened awareness of water pollution, but also laid the foundation for other organizations and legislation devoted to protecting and enhancing U.S. waters from harmful chemicals and discharges, such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA). The influence of innovative environmental legislations such as the Clean Water Act has also expanded past U.S. borders into other countries.

For example, in Iraq, the “Iraq Upper Tigris Waterkeepers” is an organization whose mission is to “advocate and work to protect the rivers, streams and waterways of Iraq and support local communities in the sustainable use of these natural resources.” Their purpose, much similarly to the Clean Water Act, is to protect and improve water quality through the regulation of pollutants and water quality. Virginia Tice of EcoWatch explains, “Like other major American environmental laws, the CWA serves as a model legislation for countries looking to regulate the discharge of pollutants into their surface waters.”

Virginia Tice explains that with the guidance of the Clean Water Act, the Iraq Upper Tigris Waterkeepers has been able to organize educate and community outreach as well as somewhat regulate the amount of chemical discharge in the parts of Tigris river. She emphasizes, “No matter how much further American environmental advocacy feel they still need to go in the fight for clean water, clean air, biodiversity and habitat preservation, America nevertheless serves as an inspiring example for countless advocates worldwide.”

The U.S. undoubtedly greatly influences the rest of the globe with both its actions and inactions. At times when the U.S. has acted as a global leader, U.S. citizens and individuals within other countries have benefited directly and indirectly from better environmental quality and stricter legislation; however, when the U.S. has been unable to act, it has proven to be very difficult to achieve global change.

In terms of environmental policy both domestic and abroad, the U.S. has experienced environmental political paralysis for host of reasons such as, bipartisan, intense lobbying, climate change doubters, and complicated governmental procedures. The inability of the U.S. to enact environmental policy and/or promote cooperation internationally has severely delayed progress on environmental health more recently.

Recently, the U.S. government has failed to agree on effective environmental policies during both the Obama and Trump administrations. For democratic President Barack Obama, who made climate change a top priority in his second term, intense lobbying against clean energy, and bipartisanship greatly prevented him from meeting the goals of environmental treaties, such as the Paris Agreement, an internationally agreed upon treaty that intends to gradually phase out fossil fuels around the globe to prevent the Earth’s

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23 Ibid
temperature from raising 1.5 degrees Celsius. During President Obama’s administration, the U.S. Congress never actually ratified the Paris Agreement, but instead signed into by executive order. Joel Stonedale of “The Hill” explains “the President cannot bind the country with an executive agreement; he can only bind his administration.” President Obama was unwilling to put the Paris Agreement before Senate because he was confident that he could not convince majority of the Republican members to ratify the agreement. In some instances, the separation of powers can prevent legislation, that many believe to be necessary, from achieving ratification. Joel Stonedale reiterates, “The separation of powers prevents the President from binding the country unilaterally...Our system...requires combinations of offices to work together...A bill passed only by the Senate is not the law of the United States, nor is an agreement signed solely by the President.”

Majority support from both the President and Congress is very difficult to achieve especially when Congress and the President support two opposing political parties. However, when the political party of congress and the presidency align, it can be much easier to create political change. For President Donald Trump and the current republican majority Congress, revoking former President Obama’s executive order that temporally bound the U.S. to the Paris Treaty was not as difficult as it was to join for President Obama.

When the President Obama and Chinese President Xi Jinping mutually agreed to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, many viewed this as the first step towards combatting climate change. Rebecca Harrington adds “Together, the countries [U.S. and China] accounted for 45% of the world’s carbon dioxide emissions in 2014.” However, while the U.S. struggles to even agree on the legitimacy and seriousness of climate change, China is rapidly reversing the consequences from its past environmental neglect with efficient and effective legislations.

**China: A Case Study for Non-Democratic Nation**

China is the perfect example of a non-democratic nation that has demonstrated the ability to both completely disregard environmental health as well as intensely promote environmental legislation. As stated previously, China’s government is unique and not be representative of all non-democratic regimes, but it’s drastic shift in political agenda can offer insight into the ability for a non-democratic nation to implement environmental policy.

For several decades, China’s primary objectives was economic growth at all cost. Very rapidly, China became a regional superpower through the heavy use of environmentally harmful resources, such as coal, oil, and aluminum. Currently, China leads all countries as largest user of coal and largest emitter of greenhouse gases.

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26 Joel Stonedale, “President Obama’s Signing of the Paris Agreement…” 2016.


“China… was responsible for 27 percent of global emissions in 2014… and accounts for about half of global coal consumption.”

China depends on coal for nearly 70% of its energy, which equates to more than 25% of global emissions. Per China’s Ministry of Public Security, car ownership in China has escalated from 2004 levels of 27 million to 154 million in 2016.

China’s aspiration for economic development and regional hegemony has led to unprecedented growth in such a short amount of time, but not without consequences. China wastes large sums of its GDP to simply combat environmental degradation. “The cost of environmental degradation in China was about $230 billion in 2010, or 3.5 percent of the nation’s gross domestic product — three times that in 2004.”

Elizabeth Economy writes, “Poorly regulated industrial and household emissions and waste have caused levels of water and air pollution to skyrocket. China’s development has also made the country one of the world’s leading contributors acid rain, ozone depletion, global climate change, and biodiversity loss”.

Eleanor Albert and Beina Xu of The Council on Foreign Relations explain, “China’s modernization has lifted hundreds of millions out of poverty and created a booming middle class…China’s environmental footprint is far greater than that of any other single country.”

Ironically, after decades of environmental neglect, environmental pollution impinges on China’s ability to grow economically in the future. “Concerns about a range of environmental stresses and energy security…have sparked China’s determination to improve energy efficiency, cut pollutants, and increase the use of clean energy to help its transition to a low-carbon economy.”

Across China’s major cities and rural villages, millions of individuals face severe environmental challenges largely due to the pollution brought on by decades of economic conquest and advancement. “China’s environmental crisis is one of the most pressing challenges to emerge from the country’s rapid industrialization. Its economic rise, in which GDP grew on average 10% each year for more than a decade, has come at the expense of its environment and public health.”

China has significantly reduced poverty and provides countless citizens with the tools needed to provide for themselves, but the culmination as of environmental degradation in China is growing.html.


Eleanor Albert and Beina Xu, “China’s Environmental Crisis,” 2016.


Eleanor Albert and Beina Xu, “China’s Environmental Crisis,” 2016.
of environmental concerns and political inaction has prevented millions of Chinese people from exercising fundamental rights. Elizabeth Economy argues the government constantly violates rights such as “the right to breathe clean air, to access clean water, to participate in the decision-making process on industrial development that affect their livelihood.”

Among China’s many environmental concerns, water depletion and air quality are among the most severe challenges that negatively impact the quality of human life and the environment.

Unregulated discharge of harmful chemicals has led to severe water shortages across China. “China is home to 20 percent of the world’s population but only 7 percent of its fresh water sources…approximately two-thirds of China’s roughly 660 cities suffer from water shortages.” The shortage of water has forced many of China’s people and grasslands to suffer from lack of proper hydration. Albert and Xu write, “Combined with negligent farming practices, overgrazing, and the effects of climate change, the water crisis has turned much of China’s arable land into desert. About 1.05 million square miles of China’s landmass are undergoing desertification, affecting more than 400 million people.” Additionally, “pollution has also been linked to the proliferation of acute and chronic diseases; estimates suggest that around 11 percent of digestive-system cancers in China may stem from unsafe drinking water.”

Poor air quality is the most omnipresent and prevalent environment challenges that Chinese citizens have endured for decades.

“Air pollution contributes to an estimated 1.2 million premature deaths in China annually…poor air quality causes significant health complications, including respiratory, cardiovascular, and cerebrovascular diseases.” Provinces in China and cities in neighboring countries experience an influx in air quality depending on the intensity of automobile traffic, factory usage, and cold temperature. Smog, caused by the release of particulate matter from cars and buildings, is a challenge that prevents individuals from leaving their homes. “Beijing experienced more than 200 days of air pollution categorized as “unhealthy” in 2014, including 21 days that were “hazardous” – while only about 10 days were considered ‘good.’” George Gao, of “Pew Research Center” emphasizes the severity and number of days Beijing was forced to declare a “red alert” and shut down all schools, construction, business, and significantly limit car traffic in 2014.

Figure 2: Air Quality in Beijing in 2014

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38 Eleanor Albert and Beina Xu, “China’s Environmental Crisis,” 2016.
39 Eleanor Albert and Beina Xu, “China’s Environmental Crisis,” 2016
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
According to “the Council of Foreign Relations” At least 80 percent of China’s 367 cities with real-time air quality monitoring failed to meet national small-particle pollution standards during the first three quarters of 2015. The World Bank predicted that unless aggressive action is taken, the health costs of exposure to particulates alone will triple to $98 billion by the year 2020, with the costs of other environmental threats similarly rising. As of 2008, health concerns due to poor environmental conditions drastically increased over time since the early 2000s. The World Health Organization (WHO) shows number of deaths related to and/or caused by poor air quality in China as of 2008.

Figure 3: Air Pollution Related Deaths by Country in 2008

Figure 3 shows that China largely surpasses every other nation in the number of deaths due to air pollution. Overall, environmental degradation has reached an apex in China that has forced millions to suffer from poor health; the consequences of such negligent behavior has also led to significant migration away from China, a halt in economic productivity, increased costs to national GDP for environmental cleanups, and social unrest.

In recent years, national environmental negligence has been met with social discontent in the form of protests by the Chinese population, which has played a positive role in shifting China’s prioritization of the environment. The number of abrupt environmental protests, both peaceful and violent, rose in 2013 to 712 cases, which is a 31% increase from the 2012. Farmers and villages, whose farms and produce were ruined by factory discharges and irresponsible business forced such individuals to feel that they have no other choice but to protest, and in some cases, violently.

For an authoritarian regime, social unrest, mass and frequent violent protests, as well as a common rallying issue such as poor living quality, are all motives for a government to instate political change before social instability and conflict within the nation escalates. Such social upheaval could challenge the ruling regime’s legitimacy, which could lead to armed conflict and perhaps even a revolution. For this very reason in the past decade or so, China has drastically altered its political agenda by propelling environmental protection and enhancement to the forefront of government priorities. President Xi’s proclaimed “War on Pollution” roughly ten years ago has resulted in two five-year economic plans dedicated to environmental improvement, sustainability, the implementation of an emissions trade credit system, and a reduction of heavy usage of coal and oil for renewables, which have all been immensely effective at amending the

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44 Eleanor Albert and Beina Xu, “China’s Environmental Crisis,” 2016
46 Eleanor Albert and Beina Xu, “China’s Environmental Crisis,” 2016.
negative consequences produced by China’s long pursuit of economic growth.

Recently, China enforced several five-year plans, one in 2011 and another in 2016, whose goals were simple: shift the country away from its irresponsible, environmentally harmful behaviors towards cleaner and greener China without sacrificing economic growth. A sustainable future is China’s new goal. China’s innovative stance on the environment and economic development represents a nation that now intends to promote the former to develop the latter. In fact, “In 2009, China’s investment in clean energy technology was nearly twice that of the United States ($34.6 billion vs. $18.6 billion), ranking the nation number one in investment globally.” Accordingly, China’s 12th five-year economic plan (2010-2015) focused on rebalancing an export-driven economy and inclusive growth, aiming for reliance less on trade and more on domestic consumption to drive its economic growth.49

While, China’s 13th five-year economic plan (2016-2020) calls for “a period of more moderate economic growth, continued economic rebalancing away from heavy industry and services, and a renewed commitment to environmental issues and clean energy.”50 China has embraced unfamiliar ideas during this plan, such as “devolution of power to local governments, cooperation with the international community, the development of grassroots environmentalism, and the enhancement of the legal system."51

China’s 13th, and most environmental focuses, five-year plan incorporated the implementation of a cap and trade program that would create the world’s largest emission credit trade market. Similarly, to the U.S., it involves the buying and selling of unused emission credits with a gradual reduction in the maximum number of credits allowed to incentive industries to operate more cleanly.52 A cap and trade system is one market mechanisms through which nations can limit its emissions; companies can pay to pollute so long as they stay within the maximum credits awarded to them by the government and those that pollute less can eventually sell their credits to dirtier companies.

Administratively, China’s government integrated major shifts in business, companies and everyday life with the hopes of drastically reducing emissions and preventing climate change. The government has promised to spend over $275 billion over the next five years to clean up the air and $333 billion to improve water pollution.53 Furthermore, based on the improvements and trends seen already, China is projected to hit its peak carbon emissions by 2030 and will receive 20 percent of total energy from renewables by 2030.54 More recently, to reduce emission from automobile traffic, China recalled and dismissed the buying and selling of over 500

54 Ibid.
car models that fail to meet newly passed fuel economy standards. Hiroko Tabuchi of the New York Times comments, “The Chinese government has already become the world’s biggest supporter of electric cars, offering automakers numerous incentives for producing so-called new energy vehicles. These incentives are set to decrease by 2020, to be replaced by quotas for number of clean cars automakers must sell.”

Following the shift in Chinese political agenda and the mobilization of many promises, China has experienced significant improvement in both water and air quality. Keith Johnson writes in Foreign Policy that, “China’s economic rebalancing away from dirty, heavy industries and its newfound concern for the environment are real and producing tangible results sooner than had been expected.” In Beijing, as of 2017, air pollution drastically reduced by 53 percent which resulted in a decrease in roughly 160,000 premature deaths across China.

Despite China’s numerous environmental challenges, the country is becoming a global leader in clean energy and sustainability; in fact, China led climate change negotiations at the 2015 UN Climate Conference in Paris where 195 countries followed with the signing of the landmark Paris Agreement.

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Both Systems

The U.S. and China have proven that both democratic and non-democratic nations can significantly create and implement effective domestic and international environmental policy when such nations have the ability and willingness to do so. The fundamental differences that separate democracy and authoritarianism lead to very distinct methodologies and notions of government. At times, when the government has the ability and willingness to make change, both systems have proven their capacity to improve the common good. However, the instances when each government has chosen to act in contradiction to what benefits the environment, countless number of people have directly and indirectly suffered.

As a governmental system, democracy is fundamentally defensive in nature; the basic tenets of a democracy are placed to prevent an individual(s) from gaining absolute power and enforcing their will on the majority. The separation of power and the system of checks and balances prevents a president or congress from irrationally enforcing policy decisions that would otherwise drastically harm the environment and the population. Even when there is a president and/or congress who refuses to acknowledge and/or act against environmental degradation, several different actors such as the courts, lobbying groups, international community, and population can interfere with the political decision making process. For these specific reasons, democratic institutions can have a direct

56 Keith Johnson, China’s Leaner and Greener 5-Year Plan. Foreign Policy. https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/10/30/chinas-leaner-and-greener-5-year-plan/
58 Eleanor Albert and Beina Xu, “China’s Environmental Crisis,” 2016.
First, in a democracy those elected to public offices have a direct duty and necessity to reflect the needs of their constituents to gain reelection. Payne explains, “Democratic governments are more accountable. Thus, the environmental concerns of constituents cannot be ignored.”\(^{60}\) The opinions and approval of the common people directly makes an impression on the political agenda both at the local and federal level. For democratic leaders, accountability for their actions as well as the potential for disapproval by constituents can both act as deterrents for political leaders tempted with the idea of using their status for individual gains, despite consequences for the majority. Winslow adds, “Elites tend to benefit from environmental degradation, while the costs are spread throughout the population, the sharing of power in democratic regimes can curb the degrading activities of the few.”\(^{61}\)

Second, the basic liberties and civil society associated with most democracies empower the common people to openly state their displeasure with their government while simultaneously creates avenues for political protest through rights to independent media, free speech and assembly. Public involvement in the political arena can be a powerful tool for changing the agenda, amending issues brought on and/or ignored by the government, and creating social change. “With democracy, citizens are more aware of environment problems (freedom of media). They can also express their preferences for environment (freedom of expression) and create lobbying groups (freedom of association). Political leaders are prompted (rights to vote) to implement environmental policies at national and international levels.”\(^{62}\) “In democracies, citizens are better informed about the environment, can better express their concerns about the environment, can organize amongst each other around those concerns, and finally put pressure on governments to improve environmental conditions.”\(^{63}\)

Third, in conjunction with personal freedoms and civil liberty, the judicial system collectively offer opportunities for individual opinions to unite together to become a common voice in a powerful, policy altering setting. Environmentalist organizations like the Audubon Society and the Sierra Club can play an active role in shaping local and federal policy through the means of education and outreach, demonstration, political protest, and litigation. Finally, the support as well as the peer-pressure from the international community to enact environmental legislation can act as yet another tool for enforcing environmental policy.

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Democracies are more likely to engage in and sign environmental treaties than non-democratic nations. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) “can work to help inform the public about environmental problems, act as watchdogs on public agencies, and directly lobby members of government.”

However, democracies are imperfect systems; they fail in many ways to effectively and rapidly promote the common good for a multitude of reasons. Democratic procedures are slow-acting, often requiring vetting from several offices, chambers, subcommittees, and the public. Furthermore, political legislation often goes through review periods where any group of institution can challenge the wording or methods of a prescribed policy, which, if holds weight, will require more time and development before implementation. Schmitter and Karl explain, “Democracies are not necessarily more efficient administratively. Their capacity to make decisions may even be slower than that of the regimes they replace, if only because more actors must be consulted.” Due to its inherent defensive nature, creating policy change in a democracy is often not a swift process. Formulating policy, gaining majority approval, implementing, as well as assessing and adjusting policy is a very long process that dissimilar governments simply do not incorporate in their policy making process.

Additionally, freedoms ensured by true democracies is beneficial in that it allows citizens to develop their beliefs and promote change within the community; however, often at times these freedoms can impinge on the development of environmental legislation. Bipartisanism and party views on complicated issues, climate change and environmental standards vs. economic growth, play significant roles in the implementation of environmental policy. For this reason, President Obama was unable to ratify the Paris Agreement as a nation-wide treaty, but instead, an agreement between the international community and his administration by executive order. This bipartisan dilemma is also evident within the current U.S. administration where the President and majority of Congress promote a false ideology on environmental health and climate change due mostly to lobbying from companies whose profit margins would severely decrease by strict environmental legislation. As democracy and capitalism promote one another, democracies are essentially marketplaces where economic development and lobbying are persuasive and imperative.

Dryzek argues “Democracies are not considered as protecting environment quality as they are supposed to satisfy the preferences of markets and lobbying groups which aim at maximizing their economic profit.”

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67 Joel Stonedale, “President Obama’s signing of the Paris Agreement is only good for nine months” 2016
Finally, Economic growth and the promotion of business are essential for the advancement of a democracy. Democracies tend to cooperate with one another and often, at times, engage in international cooperation, trade, and globalization which further exhausts national resources. Basic freedoms and competitive, open markets encourage businesses and corporations to overexploit the nature for valuable resources. “As democracy is dependent on economic development, and since economic growth and prosperity generally result in environmental pollution and ecological destruction, democracy would not necessarily be protective of the environment.”

Contradictory to the basic tents of democracy, authoritarian regimes, which support less freedoms and more centralized power, can be more efficient at enacting environmental policy because of the imbalance of power. Policy implementation and amendments can occur quickly within authoritarian nations as opposed to democracies. The centralization of power in one individual or group significantly reduces the time and political jostling needed to approve and alter legislation in democracies. With the appropriate morals and/or motives, an authoritarian leader can choose to completely amend or destroy the environmental conditions of a nation within a single generation due to the imbalance of power and limited political hurdles.

Within an authoritarian regime, there is limited opposition from politicians, civilians, and industry to delay the implementation of political reforms. In China, and many other authoritarian regimes, the absence of second major political parties and oppositional lobbyist groups significantly alters the complexity of the political realm. The absence of opposing political broadcasting in the media, intense lobbying, filibusters, etc. allows a president to rule without limitations or interruptions. However, it is also important to note that often within authoritarian regimes, the leaders of these systems must constantly keep military officials, regional leaders, and other allied elites in his favor to achieve compliance and internal stability.

Additionally, the restriction of freedoms further empowers the ruling system by prohibiting individuals from gaining independent, unbiased and unaltered information that would otherwise inspire protests against the regime. Freedom to explore independent economic development are also limited in authoritarian regimes. In fact, industries often are mandated by leadership to make adjustments within the company to support the political agenda. Rather than allowing markets to find the least expensive schemes to limit pollution, improvements made in China’s air quality have greatly been attributed to engineering-style instructions given by the government. Major industries were instructed to make

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significant changes to assist with policy goals; power plant companies reduced emissions of existing plants immediately before transitioning to natural gas in the future.\textsuperscript{74}

Despite efficiency advantages, there are many dangers associated with large-scale absolute authoritarian regimes. Firstly, if the perfect ruler can drastically improve environmental quality in an authoritarian regime, the most imperfect or negligent ruler can significantly destroy environmental conditions for economic and military advancement. In previous decades when Chinese policy, innovation, and economics were fixated on rapid economic growth, despite negative environmental consequences serves as a paramount for this phenomenon. The lack of accountability paralleled with the concentration of power in an individual or small group of elites may encourage policy that benefits only the elite and ruling class but harms the environment.\textsuperscript{75} Deacon argues, “Autocratic regimes are led by political elites who monopolize and hold large share of national incomes and revenues. The implementation of rigorous environmental policies can lower the levels of production, income and consumption, which, in turn impose a higher cost on the elite in an autocracy.”\textsuperscript{76}

Secondly, for authoritarian regimes, swift policy changes can be both beneficial and problematic. Risky, experimental public policy can be very wasteful, unsafe, and lead to major setbacks. Unintended setbacks to drastic legislation enforced by authoritarian regimes can significantly endanger citizens and cost the country substantial amounts of money to correct. Huang reports, “To reduce levels of hazardous particles known as PM2.5, Chinese authorities started to convert coal-generated heating to gas or electric heating. But overzealous local officials put the changes in place, exceeding government targets, demand for the new fuels surged — creating shortages that left millions without heating in freezing temperatures.\textsuperscript{77} Aggressive programs enacted to quickly meet politically set environmental demands have escalated to extraordinary and perhaps even impulsive decisions.

Overall, there are strengths and weaknesses to both forms of government when enacting environmental policy both domestically and internationally. These advantages and disadvantages have resulted in very distinct paths for both the U.S. and China in terms of environmental quality, sustainability, as well as global perception and leadership. For the U.S., its once celebrated and encouraging role as global leader in environmental policy has halted in recent years. Due to intense lobbying, bipartisanism, and climate change doubters, the United States’ environmental agenda has little to show despite pleading from environmentalists and concerned citizens. \textit{USA Today} explains, “President Trump’s decision to pull the United States out of the Paris Climate Accord is a stunning abdication of American leadership and a grave threat to our planet’s future.”\textsuperscript{78}

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2Fs10 640-014-9870-0.pdf.
\textsuperscript{78} King Ledyard, “Democrats vent but can't stop Trump from leaving Paris climate agreement.” \textit{USA Today}, May 31, 2017.
Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi stated, "In walking away from this agreement, the President is denying scientific truths, removing safeguards that protect our health and our environment, protecting polluters and their dirty energy agenda, and threatening our global security." With the recent signings by both Nicaragua and war-torn Syria, the U.S. stands as the only UN state to holdout from the Paris Agreement.

This decision halts the United States’ ability to evolve its economy and prevents the country from becoming less reliant on foreign coal and oil. Furthermore, it “casts doubt on the ability of the international community to meet the emission goals that were set.” Finally, President Trump’s pulling out of the Paris Agreement, despite former President Barack Obama’s promises, severely damages the ability for other countries to trust the word of an American president for longer than the term of his or her presidency. Moreover, the move negates, and will continue to negate, the international perception of America as a progressive, powerful global leader that former administrations fostered for decades. If the current U.S. administration continues to holdout of the Paris Agreement, promote big business despite environmental concerns, continues to pollute, and suspends the shift to renewables, not only will the perception of U.S., but also the health and safety of its citizens will continue to deteriorate overtime.

China, on the other hand, has greatly benefited from its recent developments. After decades of relentless pursuit for economic development and regional hegemony, the international community viewed China negatively, because China’s actions demonstrated that it was more willing to damage the global common good that promote it. "Sustainable development, development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." This paper contends that achieving sustainable development would significantly free China of its reliance on foreign energy, assist with the stabilization of its economy, and most importantly propel Chinese economy to regional supremacy. Furthermore, this report holds that China’s most recent quest for sustainable development will provide healthy social welfare, reduce spending overtime, and improve environmental quality across the country. Perhaps, most significantly, this shift will earn China greater influence on the global stage, especially at international conferences, summits, and negotiations focused on improving environmental conditions and climate change.

Conclusion and Implications for the Future
In conclusion, there is no definitive answer as to whether a democratic or nondemocratic model is more effective at adopting effective environmental policy because there are too many external variables that hold weight. The past and the recent reversal of the United States and China has proven that a


79 King Ledyard, “Democrats vent but can’t stop Trump from leaving Paris agreement,” 2017.
government’s willingness to make change is equally as important as its ability to do so. A government must not only have the capacity, but also the motives to implement effective environmental policy, whether the pressure comes from the international community, civil society, poor environmental conditions, or pursuit of enhanced economy. The answer as to which system is more inclined to act varies throughout time based on beliefs and political agenda of leadership. In the past, democratic nations and the U.S. over China would be a clear answer, but today, there is an argument for China over the United States, and therefore an authoritarian regime over a democracy. In varying degrees, the executive powers in both systems have the capacity to alter the political agenda of their respective nations. For this very reason, the U.S. can regain its global leadership under a different administration and Chinese leadership can choose to continue or end the pursuit of sustainable development. However, looking forward, it appears that China will continue to implement pro-environmental legislations.

Overall, in recent years, the commitment by the U.S. to improving environmental conditions has passed on to China, which has resulted in the drastic shift for both nations. China is rapidly becoming the vanguard of implementing environment policy, while the United States is failing to keep pace with China. Most importantly, for these very reasons, the United States is relinquishing its global leadership in environmental policy to China.

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WOMAN IN THE BODY POLITIC: GENDERED CITIZENSHIP & ISLAMIC JURISPRUDENCE

ANKUSHI MITRA

Introduction

Scholars contest ‘citizenship’ as a concept on a variety of dimensions – from its conceptual meaning to political implementation. In his influential classical formulation, T. H. Marshall defines citizenship as “a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community,” equal in their rights and duties. My analytical perspective draws on the Marshallian conceptualization, taking citizenship narrowly to mean legal membership of a political community (the nation-state). In theory, citizenship ascribes the same rights and duties of membership (however defined) to all individuals. Of course, in practice, a variety of factors – including socio-economic status, ethnicity, and more – mediate the exercise of citizenship rights. Indeed, as a system of ascribing membership and defining the terms of membership in a community, this type of inclusion and exclusion “represent the two sides of citizenship’s coin.”

Drawing on this theoretical foundation, I argue that citizenship law can be a highly gendered enterprise, ascribing different rights and responsibilities and constructing women as second-class citizens. Though by no means unique to the region, discriminatory citizenship laws in the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA) are often grounded in the rhetoric of Islamic law. Therefore, this paper considers both the processes which gender citizenship law as well as how Islamic jurisprudence legitimizes (and may be used to reform) such laws.

The first two sections of the paper explore the two primary processes which gender citizenship law: one, privileging patriarchy (as male right/rule through family law), and two, privileging patrilineality (through legal processes of transmitting citizenship through paternal lineage). A qualitative analysis of Morocco and Jordan allows us to parse out these gendered dynamics of citizenship. Both

states are grounded in the power of the monarchy. The powerful Hashemite family rules Jordan through the present monarch, Abdullah II; politics in Morocco is controlled by the Alaouite dynasty, led by Mohammed VI. Islam is key to both states’ socio-political identity: not only do they recognize it as the “religion of the state” in their constitutions, in both cases, the royal families’ religio-political legitimacy revolves around their status as descendants of the Prophet Mohammad. The Moroccan monarch is the Amir al-Muminin (Commander of the Faithful). Similarly, the Hashemite dynasty has sharifian claims rooted in descent from the Prophet. As such, Islam is a key mode through which socio-political debates often take place at varying levels of state and society. On another hand, in both authoritarian states, the successes and failures of movements are contingent on the political machinations of the ruling elite. Thus, as autocratic systems hinging on similar modes of religio-political legitimacy and debate, Rabat and Amman offer fertile ground to comparativists seeking to compare reform movements in Muslim-majority contexts. While both countries share these key similarities, they diverge in their citizenship law and approach to women’s citizenship. Therefore, the last section of the paper considers the use of Islamic law in citizenship law debates in both states, tracing the varied instrumentalization of religion as both a discriminatory and reformatory force.

Privileging Patriarchy

The first process of gendering citizenship ties women’s citizenship to their status within patriarchal kinship systems. In the context of this article, I define patriarchal kinship systems as male right/rule over women in the family. Conventional conceptions of citizenship grant individuals citizenship rights which bring them into a political relationship with the state. Formally, this vision of citizenship confers the same rights and duties upon all individuals. Indeed, contemporary notions of legal citizenship explicitly seek to collapse social sub-divisions into a broader political entity that grants all citizens equal status. However, citizenship law may also institutionalize such social sub-divisions (including gender) instead of seeking to transcend them, and it is precisely this dynamic that I trace in this section.

While most constitutions in the world generally take individuals to be the basic unit of society in constructing formally equal citizens, a majority of countries in the MENA region, including Morocco and Jordan, legally define the family as the basic unit of society. Such a framework of citizenship embeds what it means to be a

citizen within a wider kinship structure. The majority of MENA countries institutionalize such patriarchal kinship practices to varying degrees, leaving women’s legal citizenship and citizenship rights heavily dependent on family law. In particular, family law may be used to gender citizenship through: one, legal notions of marriage as a sexual contract mandating men’s control over women (women’s obedience to men); two, male guardianship laws, and three, *talaq* divorce laws which allow men to unilaterally end marriages. These laws institutionalize male right/rule into family law. The link between family law and citizenship law makes such discriminatory practices an explicit and significant part of women’s citizenship and their terms of membership in the political community. In short, “women are brought into the nation-state as appendages of husbands and fathers.”

A comparison between Morocco and Jordan demonstrates how family law systems may create discriminatory understandings of female citizenship and citizenship rights. Family law in colonial Morocco was modelled mainly on the secular French framework. But, after independence in 1956, the Personal Status Code (*Moudawana*) institutionalized patriarchal “religiously and tribally inspired law.” Subsequently, a long process of debating family law reform culminated in 2004 in a series of wide-ranging changes to the *Moudawana* addressing the key issues identified above: women’s rights in marriage, male guardianship, and unilateral divorce (*talaq*). Men and women are now positioned as joint partners and heads-of-household within the marriage tie, and women are no longer legally mandated to be “obedient” to their husbands. The role of a guardian is optional, and women may enter marriages of their own volition.


Ibid., 25-29.


Articles 24-25, Sherifyan Dahir (Royal Edict) No. 104.22 (February 3, 2004) to implement Law No. 70.03 as the Family Code. Translated by the Global Human Rights
divorce (talaq) falls under the strict oversight of civil judges. Not only are talaq practices restricted, men and women can also jointly seek divorce, and most significantly, women may initiate divorce proceedings.24

In Jordan, the British mandate (est. 1921) continued the family law system established under the Ottoman Law of Family Rights (1917), which provided for separate shari‘ah courts to adjudicate family law. After independence in 1946, this parallel legal system was further entrenched (indeed, the post-independence law was clearly modelled on the 1917 Ottoman law).25 In contrast to Morocco’s reform process, however, Jordanian family law continues to position men as legal heads-of-household, obligating women to be “obedient” to their husbands.26 Male guardianship laws persist – as the Personal Status Code states: “the wali [guardian] of a ward is the father” (article 223) and “the wali in marriage is according to the order of al-asaba [male blood relatives]” (article 14).27 Unilateral repudiation divorce practices also continue, and though recent reforms have allowed women to initiate divorce as well, the laws are still restrictive28 and crucially, not overseen by civil courts.29

This brief analysis demonstrates the contrasting approaches to family law in Morocco and Jordan today. Since both countries explicitly connect family law and citizenship law, it is apparent that the degree and way in which they situate women as part of patriarchal kin structures influences women’s citizenship and citizenship rights. Moroccan law positions women more as autonomous individual citizens, while Jordanian law embeds women’s citizenship within patriarchal kinship practices to a much broader extent. It is important to note that many scholars have discussed the enforcement gaps that persist in Morocco,30 particularly since reforms are fairly recent. However, the primary focus of this paper lies in the narrow legal formulations of citizenship. While there is a gap between such formalistic granting of citizenship and the meaningful exercise of citizenship rights, I focus on the “explicit constitutional recognition of women’s claims to equal citizenship” (or lack thereof), which is an essential stepping stone to any substantive exercise of citizenship rights.31 Keeping in mind this focus, Moroccan family law reform, though not as wide-ranging and effective as one would hope, does “[rebalance] rights in favour of the individual over the collective,”32 thus significantly equalizing women’s formal citizenship with men’s in a way that Jordanian law does not.

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24 Ibid., Articles 94-114.
33 Lister, Citizenship: Feminist Perspectives, p. 5.

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Privileging Patrilineality
The second process that genders citizenship involves institutionalizing citizenship as descent through the father’s lineage – patrilineality or paternal descent.33

Laws on right-of-blood descent (jus sanguinis) play a critical role in transmitting membership in any political community from one generation to the next.34 However, such descent laws can be highly gendered, ascribing men and women different rights for transmitting their citizenship through right-of-blood. Since the “ties of blood descent are broader than merely parentage, for they suggest a broader…people to whom one belongs in a fictive relationship,”35 descent laws that exclude women from transmitting their citizenship by blood delineate women in the body politic as second-class citizens compared to the rest of the “broader people” to which they belong on a supposedly equal basis. A comparison of laws governing right-of-blood citizenship in Morocco and Jordan helps illuminate this legal differentiation between men and women which privileges patrilineal descent.

Under the colonial French and Spanish administrations, legal citizenship in Morocco primarily sought to differentiate settler colonials from “natives,” making national origin a significant part of citizenship law in the colonial era.36 After independence in 1956, however, the new citizenship code introduced and institutionalized paternal right-of-blood descent. This notion of citizenship was “inspired by the principle of family national unity on a paternal basis,” which both denied women citizenship rights and the automatically ascribed a man’s citizenship to his wife and children.37 However, in recent years, Morocco has moved to equalize its previously discriminatory citizenship laws. Since 2007, women (including those married to non-Moroccan spouses) are able to transmit their Moroccan citizenship to their children.38 As of 2018, the government is working on legislation allowing Moroccan women to pass on their citizenship to their foreign spouses as well.39 The Women’s Refugee Commission finds that even with the lack of conclusive empirical data from Morocco pre and post-reform due to the relative recency of these changes, qualitative reports indicate “highly positive” effects on family lives as well as reduced vulnerability to statelessness for children of Moroccan women married to foreign spouses.40

In Transjordan, the British mandate established a nationality law explicitly modelled on British domestic law, which institutionalized descent through paternal blood in the 1928 Jordanian Nationality Law. Post-independence (1946), the 1954 Nationality Law retained this notion of paternal descent.41 Unlike Morocco, in Jordan, women still cannot pass on Jordanian citizenship to their children (except in situations where the father is unknown or stateless) or non-Jordanian spouses.42 In terms of demographic impact,

35 Ibid., 110.
37 Ibid., p. 7.
41 Massad, Colonial Effects, pp. 35-38.
approximately 89,000 Jordanian women are married to non-citizens, leaving 360,000 children stateless \(^43\) – a trend that will be severely compounded in the next few years considering Jordan is currently the seventh-largest refugee-hosting country in the world with a growing refugee population. \(^44\)

It is apparent how the idea that citizenship flows through *paternal* blood institutionalizes a discriminatory view of women’s citizenship rights in Jordan – women are legally constructed not as equal citizens, but rather as actors deeply embedded within a patrilineal social structure. In contrast, the Moroccan view of right-of-blood citizenship clearly demonstrates an “individualization of rights” \(^45\) which conceives of men and women as equal and autonomous citizens.

**Islamic Jurisprudence: The Language of Religious Authenticity**

There are various modes of discourse and debate within the Islamic framework. Broadly, this paper adopts the precepts put forward in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1980) as minimum *legal* standards in upholding gender parity and mainstreaming gender issues. \(^46\)

Though scholars have offered critiques of CEDAW – from the intersectional \(^47\) to postmodernist \(^48\) – many have acknowledged its legal-normative transformative potential \(^49\) as an “international bill of rights for women.” \(^50\) As Brooks writes, “at a moment when feminism [is]... floundering...the discourse of international human rights offers...an opportunity we cannot afford to pass up.” \(^51\)

Within this minimum-standards framework, it is fair to claim that Islam “has[s] to contend with a number of statements in the *Qur’an* and the *sunna* that appear to” \(^52\) (emphasis added) run contrary to CEDAW’s legislative standards of gender parity. Such religio-legal statements have been instrumentalized by what I label the ‘conservative’ religio-political establishment to circumvent the kinds of standards of equality issued in CEDAW, including those on parity in citizenship law (see my more detailed discussion below). Here, such interpretations are contrasted against “liberal Islam” – a relatively loose heuristic label borrowed from Kurzman, which many proponents of so-called “liberal Islamic positions” would undoubtedly reject because of its associations with colonial domination \(^53\) – but which nonetheless functions as a useful analytical tool when talking about transformative, equalizing readings of the *Qur’an*. Though with diverse colonial and post-colonial origins, this section argues that politico-legal systems that gender citizenship are primarily *grounded in and legitimized through* Islamic law in the contemporary era. Below, I briefly explore how the language of Islamic authenticity and religious jurisprudence, both in the domestic and international causes, can be used to underpin gendered family and descent

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laws, as well as its reform potential in Moroccan and Jordanian politics.

In the marriage tie, conservative jurists argue that when husbands pay dower to their wives, they are paying for a “type of [sexual] control.” Indeed, in Verse 2:236 of the Qur'an, the idea that men have not sinned if they “divorce women [they] have not touched” suggests that dower is constructed as a form of payment for sexual control – if such sexual control is not exercised within the marriage tie, men may divorce women without blame. It is this conception of marriage as contract that jurists have further argued gives the husband the unilateral right to dissolve the marriage.

Unilateral repudiation (talaq) laws institutionalize the basic idea that “divorce is a man’s prerogative, while women may only obtain divorce for cause.” This fundamental conceptualization of marriage where “the husband acquire[s] a limited [control] over his wife at the time of contract through payment of a dower and [can] unilaterally relinquish it whenever he [chooses]” has guided marriage and divorce laws in several Muslim-majority countries.

Furthermore, verse 4:34 of the Qur’an dictates that “men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth.” This verse informs laws in Muslim-majority countries which mandate men’s guardianship over women and women’s obedience to men within the framework of family law. Finally, verse 33:5 holds that one ought to “call [children] by [the names of] their fathers; it is more just in the sight of Allah.” In citizenship law, some have extrapolated this verse to mean that citizenship from one generation to another ought to pass through paternal blood (that is, through the “names of...fathers”). Together, these prominent verses on marriage, divorce, guardianship, and descent constitute the core of conservative Islamic jurisprudence which gives rise to gendered citizenship laws. Comparing Morocco and Jordan once again allows us to see how the rhetoric of Islamic law is deployed, as well as the potential for reform within the Islamic jurisprudential framework.

To begin with, on the domestic level, certain aspects and understandings of Islamic law are widely used in lawmaking contexts. The Jordanian political establishment presents itself as governing by Islamic law, with the ruling Hashemite family drawing legitimacy from its status as descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. Family law falls under the exclusive jurisdiction of shari’ah courts, and any reform in the Personal Status Code must emerge from the Office of the Chief Justice of the Shari’ah Courts based on Islamic jurisprudence. For example, during the controversial reform process to grant Jordanian women the right to divorce in 2003, Judge Wasif al-Bakri (a then-member of the Shari’ah Court of Appeals), argued that “Islamic reference for any change in personal status law was essential because the Constitution states that shari’ah courts are responsible for implementing shari’ah law and Jordanian society will accept only Islamic law.” More recently, the former Chief Justice of the Jordanian shari’ah courts, Dr. Ahmad Hleil, emphasized that any legal developments in Jordan must draw from “different schools of shari’ah...consistent with the principles of Islam in letter and spirit.”

54 Ali, Sexual Ethics and Islam, p. 5.
56 Ali, Sexual Ethics and Islam, p. 5.
57 Ibid., 34.
58 Ibid., 36.
60 Ali, Sexual Ethics and Islam, pp. 117-121.
Jordan has also used the rhetoric of Islamic law on the international level. Particularly, in 1980, before signing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) – the principal international legal instrument decreeing equal citizenship laws for men and women – the government opted out of provisions mandating family and citizenship law reform. Conservative groups and speakers used religious justifications to invalidate CEDAW's "controversial" articles, such as those on citizenship law and equality in the marriage tie. For instance, in a memorandum from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs discussing Jordan's formal reservations regarding CEDAW, Sheikh Khayyat argues that "if this means that the children should follow the nationality of their mother…this is rejected by Islam. Almighty God says: 'Call them by the names of their fathers: that is [more just] in the sight of God' (Sura 33, Verse 5)."

The Jordanian case shows how the language of religious authenticity may work to constrain women's citizenship rights. In comparison, Morocco's legal trajectory allows us to trace the reform potential of Islamic jurisprudence. In Morocco, many criticized early women's movements that sought family law reform in the early 1990s through the rhetoric of Islamic law. In 1992, Muhammad al-Habib al-Tujkani, an expert on Islamic jurisprudence, issued a fatwa arguing that the women's movement was "conspiring against Islam to eliminate it, to remove what is left of Islamic law in Muslim world, and to achieve a complete westernization of the world." The Ministry of Religious Endowments and Islamic Affairs also condemned the movement, going so far as to circulate a counter-petition against family law reform. It was with the King's explicit intervention in 1993 (mainly due to self-regarding political concerns) that the gradual process of family law reform took off.

After 1993, the women's movement sought to realign the narrative of Islamic law. Advocacy groups argued against distortions of Islamic sources and emphasized the compatibility of Islam with a human rights agenda. Activists took up, for example, verse 4:34, - dictating that "men are in charge of women by [right of] …what they spend [for maintenance]" – which informs obedience and guardianship laws. They argued that this refers narrowly to men's financial support to women, and that the socio-economic realities of the modern family unit demanded rethinking the legal implications of this verse. This allowed Moroccan advocacy groups to push for reconceptualizing the marriage tie as one between equals, eventually leading to legal reforms positioning men and women as equal heads-of-household, and further progress in guardianship, obedience, and divorce law. Such "reformed reading of Islamic legal sources" fostered a broad consensus in Moroccan domestic constituencies that allowed the politicization of the issue led King Hassan II to intervene in the process, since the survival of the royal family's authoritarian rule depended (and continues to depend) on limiting any sort of political debate and opposition in the public forum (Elliot, p. 216).

The campaign for family law reform in the early 1990s incited heated debate in both secular and Islamist camps.
for progress in family and descent law. In the international arena, Morocco signed CEDAW with formal reservations on the issue of family and citizenship laws (like Jordan) in 1993. However, the domestic reform process discussed above allowed the government to withdraw these reservations from its CEDAW commitments by 2011, acceding to the full convention.

These reform processes illustrate the varied discursive uses of Islamic law. Today, however, Morocco’s family law is a more egalitarian piece of legislation grounded explicitly in Islamic law, demonstrating the tremendous potential of reformist jurisprudence. Indeed, the Preamble to the 2004 Personal Status Code elaborates on how the family law reform agenda is grounded in Islam, stating that “its provisions [were] drafted...in conformity with Islam’s tolerant rules and exemplary purposes while [using] enlightened open ijithad (juridical reasoning). This code further stipulates that human and citizenship rights are accorded to all Moroccans, women and men equally, in respect of the holy divine religious references” (emphasis added).

In sum, this section illustrates the role of Islamic jurisprudence in the processes of gendered citizenship; on both the domestic and international level, Islamic law may be used to legitimate discriminatory citizenship law. However, Morocco’s reform process in particular, highlights the reform potential within Islamic jurisprudence when advocacy groups engage substantively with Islamic sources to build broad-based consensus around a gender justice agenda.

Concluding Remarks
Citizenship in theory ascribes the same rights and duties of membership upon constituents of a political community. However, in practice, a variety of factors, including gender, mediate citizenship and citizenship rights.

Firstly, in a framework which embeds citizenship law within a wider patriarchal kinship structure by defining family as the basic unit of society, citizenship is mediated by family law (particularly those regarding marriage rights, male guardianship, and divorce). This makes discriminatory family law practices an explicit part of women’s citizenship and their terms of membership in the political community. A comparative analysis of Morocco and Jordan demonstrates that Moroccan law positions women more as autonomous citizens, while Jordanian law embeds women’s citizenship within patriarchal kinship practices to a much wider extent. Laws on right-of-blood descent (jus sanguinis) may also delineate women as second-class citizens. In the Jordanian context, the idea that citizenship flows through paternal blood has institutionalized a discriminatory view of women’s citizenship rights, while the Moroccan view of right-of-blood citizenship clearly conceives of men and women as equal autonomous citizens.

Discriminatory laws governing family and right-of-blood citizenship derive their legitimacy from the rhetoric of Islamic law both in domestic and international politics. The debates around family law reform, as well as CEDAW in both Morocco and Jordan, involve competing interpretations of Islamic law. I have tried to highlight the processes of gendered citizenship as well as the language of religious authenticity used to underpin it. Morocco’s reform process in

particular, demonstrates the reform potential within the framework of Islamic law. Though tempered by critical enforcement gaps and lack of further legal progress in gender justice reform in the country, the Moroccan case is cause for cautious optimism in trying to reform discriminatory legal practices in the MENA region and beyond.\textsuperscript{83}

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DOES AFRICAN CULTURE IMPEDE DEVELOPMENT?

CHANG-DAE DAVID HYUN

Introduction

Many scholars hastily claim that African culture impedes development; however, this is an invalid claim. First of all, culture is continuously evolving according to circumstantial factors internal and external to the country, and it is unclear how much culture affects development. For example, external influences such as geography, colonization, and the global system contribute to underdevelopment far more than culture. In this paper, I will begin by defining culture and development. Then, I will explain how third (circumstantial) factors could impede development and culture. The following sections will show two of the common mistakes made by scholars who attempt to argue that African culture harms development, and I will address flaws in those arguments. First, scholars argue that Africans’ communalism hinders an individual capacity to innovate and therefore restrains developmental capacity. However, similar cultural traits are found in many advanced countries around the world. Second, critics of African culture try to prove that the economic difference between Asian and African countries emerged from their cultural differences. However, these scholars who romanticize Confucianism was once considered backward in the 19th century and the Asian Miracle of the 20th century was possible mostly because of the Cold War interest that fueled the Asia’s economic growth.

Definition

In order to understand the relationship between culture and development, we must begin with their definitions. Although the definition of culture varies among scholars, renowned anthropologist George Murdock correctly captures the fundamental idea of culture. Murdock argues that “the cultures of the world are systems of collective habits. The differences observable among them are the cumulative product of mass learning under diverse geographic and social conditions.”1 As Murdock argues, culture is the collective habits that are formulated based on people’s surroundings such as geography and society. Since the surroundings can change, it is important to understand that culture is constantly evolving to adapt to a new environment. Such fluidity of culture makes it difficult to analyze its implications on development.

Similar to culture, development can be described in various ways. However, Gunnar Myrdal, who is a Nobel Laureate in economics, gives an accurate definition. Myrdal argues that development is the “movement upward of the entire social system. This social system encloses, besides the economic factors, all noneconomic factors.”2 He considers that education, health care, distribution of power, institutions, and attitudes are all part of development that societies need to improve on.3 His interpretation is unique in the way that he emphasizes development as a means to improve society as a whole. He is


3 Ibid.
different from many modernization theorists who often prioritize economic growth over other factors of development. It would be a mistake to solely look at development from economic factors; rather, we have to consider it from a holistic perspective. In summary, it is difficult for us to establish a causal relationship between culture and development because the former is fluid and the latter takes multi-dimensional forms. Therefore, it would be inconclusive to argue that African culture impedes development.

**Common Mistake 1: African Culture impedes development**

In this section and the section following, I will provide two common arguments made by scholars who associate African culture as the impediment for development, and explain their flaws. First, some scholars focus on proving that certain aspects of African culture impede development, even though these values are also prevalent in other advanced countries. Daniel Etounga-Manguelle, who is a Cameroonian economist, writes a list of things that undermine Africa’s developmental capacity in his article *Does Africa Need a Cultural Adjustment Program?* He argues that Africa’s hierarchical and vertical society naturally makes subordinates conform with authority without validating orders. Also, he argues that “the African…is so convinced that the past can only repeat itself that he worries only superficially about the future.” Therefore, he contends that Africans do not plan their future. Furthermore, he writes that since the community dominates the individual, there is less room for individual innovation. Moreover, he argues that since Africans believe in sorcery and witchcraft, they have difficulty in rationalizing. The problems with his analysis are that he generalizes his claim to all Africans and some of these observations are also found in many developed countries.

Daniel Etounga-Manguelle makes a very generalized claim about all of the cultural attributes of Africans. Even if some African cultures practice sorcery, and sorcery is used to manage conflict and preserve the status quo, it is most likely that not every society in Africa practices sorcery according to the author’s description. Furthermore, although communalism could be prevalent, there are many successful individual entrepreneurs including the Yoruba women. Moreover, the author’s generalization also applies to social hierarchy, and social relationship between community and individual, and perception about the future.

Even if we assume that these generalizations are true for all Africans, these does not explain why these qualities impede development, because we see these cultural attributes in advanced countries as well. I consider that religion is not much different from sorcery because both are imaginaries created by social groups. Renowned Israeli professor Yuval Hirari argues that religions “exist only in people’s collective imaginations.” As Hirari argues, religion is an imagination created by people who try to explain supernatural powers in a

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6 Ibid, 69.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid, 71.

9 Ibid, 73.

10 Ibid.


way that is similar to sorcery. Often times, both beliefs do not require proofs in their logic. Furthermore, similar to sorcery, religion is often misused by a small group of elites to preserve their status quo while exploiting its followers. But scholars rarely argue that religion impedes development in Western countries. Also, rigid social hierarchy and prioritization of community over individual is not just limited to Africa, but is also prevalent in Asian countries. The Confucian societies of Asia including China, Korea and Japan, all have strict hierarchical societies where many individuals accept authority without questioning. Furthermore, many of these countries prioritize community over individuals. For instance, in South Korea, the country’s economy grew remarkably in the 1970s under the Saemaul Undong which was based on Korean traditional communalism that provided rules for local autonomy and collective cooperation. It is quite ironic that communalism and respect for community is attributed to economic success in Asia while its considered as the impediment to development in Africa. This double standard extends to comparison between sorcery in Africa and religion in the West. Regardless, scholars often focus on scrutinizing Africa.

**Common Mistake 2: Asian Culture is better than African Culture**

Another common mistake is that many critics of African culture compare Asian culture and African culture in order to argue that the former is superior to the latter in promoting economic growth. However, scholars tend to romanticize Confucian values although they were once considered backward. Samuel Huntington, who is an influential American political scientist, begins his book *Culture Matters* by comparing South Korea and Ghana in the 1960s. He argues that both countries had comparable levels of per capita GNP, similar divisions of economy among primary products, and comparable levels of economic aid. However, he contends that thirty years later, Ghana’s per capita GNP was one-fifteenth that of South Korea’s GNP. Then, he uses culture to explain the differences in economic growth. He writes that “South Koreans valued thrift, investment, hard work, education, organization, and discipline. Ghanaians had different values. In short, cultures count.”

Here, Huntington tries to prove that Ghana failed to grow economically because Ghanaian culture was not as disciplined as Korean culture. However, I consider that Huntington hastily came to a conclusion without looking at the history. In the 19th century, Asians’ hard-working Confucian values were considered as an impediment to development because Asian countries failed to develop as much as Western countries. Consequently, China was defeated by the British during the Opium War and Japan was forced into unequal treaties with America. Many Asians at the time doubted their Confucian tradition and Japan even denounced the old tradition to be backward and underwent the Meiji Restoration. However, many scholars romanticize and overemphasize Asians’ cultural influence on economic success by referring to the 20th century. Consequently, many would argue that the Asians’ hardworking culture brought remarkable

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15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
economic growth during the East Asian Miracle of 1965 to 1990. I do agree that the hard-working culture partly attributed to the East Asian Miracle; however, Cold War interest was more important than culture in terms of developing Asia.

East Asian Miracle would not have happened if there had been no antagonism between global superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. East Asian Miracle coincided with the Cold War era. It was a period when the United States feared Communist expansions into Asia including the People Republic of China. Consequently, the United States exerted greater influence in the Asia-Pacific region to ensure that other countries continue to remain under the control of the United States. For example, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan were particularly important for the United States, considering their proximity to the communist countries of China and North Korea. Therefore, the United States invested massively both economically and militarily. Between 1946 to 1976, the United States provided 12.6 Billion dollars in economic and military assistance to South Korea. This amount was similar “to the amount of aid received by the whole of Africa.” Furthermore, from 1953 to 1967 Taiwan received 3.64 Billion USD in economic and military assistance mainly in the form of grants. Moreover, the United States government pumped massive amounts of money into the Japanese economy since the post-World War II. Therefore, it would be a mistake to compare Ghana and South Korea’s economic success solely through the cultural narrative because South Korea benefitted from massive amounts of foreign aid, whereas Ghana received few loans.

What other possible explanation for Africa’s under-development?

Many academics hastily criticize Africa’s individual cultures, however, there are other consequent factors to explain Africa’s under development. I will argue that circumstantial (third) factors such as geography, colonization, and global system impede Africa’s development. First, Africa’s geography could be a disadvantage to the development because its tropical climate is more vulnerable to natural disasters. Renowned American economist Jeffrey Sachs argues that tropical climates are vastly more underdeveloped than temperate zones. In fact, twenty eight out of the thirty richest countries in the world are located in temperate climates. A possible explanation for this outcome is that tropical climates are less productive (due to high soil erosion and high incidence of pests, and exhaustion under rain forest conditions) and infectious diseases are more prevalent; therefore, life expectancy is lower, labor productivity is lower, and education levels are low. Moreover, Sociologist S. Colum Gilfillan supports the claim that geography is critical to development. In his article “The Coldward Course of Progress,” he argues that “an essential consideration determining the scene of world leadership in civilization...is mean temperature.” Gilfillan even considers that temperature is a deterministic factor for development. He shows the history of human progress from the fertile valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates, to the

19 Ibid.
20 Ibid, 96.
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
Nile Valley, to Athens, China, London, Paris and New York where civilization progressed to colder locations.\textsuperscript{25} These findings suggest that geography and climate affected Africa’s underdevelopment more than culture.

Furthermore, colonialization has contributed to Africa’s underdevelopment. The entire African continent was colonized by Europeans during the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. During this period, countries’ natural resources were looted, human capital was exploited while leaving scars to African cultures. In short, the colonial past has significantly undermined the developmental capacity for the continent. Furthermore, the de-colonization process was carried out under the interests of Western countries. In \textit{The White Men’s Burden}, William Easterly argues that the West imposed boundaries that encouraged ethnic conflict which further divided the continent. He writes:

“First, the West gave territory to one group that a different group already believed it possessed. Second, the West drew boundary lines splitting an ethnic group into two or more parts across nations, frustrating nationalist ambitions of that group and creating ethnic minority problems in two or more resulting nations. Third, the West combined into a single nation two or more groups that were historical enemies.” For example, the Rwanda Genocide is an outcome of ethnic division by the West that led to mass killing between the Hutus and Tutsis.\textsuperscript{26} I will argue that the colonial period and de-colonization process not only damaged the African cultures, but also, significantly undermined the future developmental capacity of the continent.

Moreover, neo-liberal policies and globalization have contributed to Africa’s underdevelopment. In the 1980s, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank presented the Economic Recovery Program to relieve Africa from debt; however, their neo-liberal policies further accumulated debt in Africa.\textsuperscript{27} Part of the economic recovery plan includes removal of government subsidies and price controls, privatization, removal of protectionist measures, and cuts in public expenditure.\textsuperscript{28} Consequently, local companies have been wiped out by foreign companies because subsidies were reduced for local products while tariffs were alleviated for foreign products. For example, China was one of the beneficiaries of neo-liberal policies in Africa. Shortly after the policies by the Bretton Wood Institutions, cheap Chinese products dominated the African market, which forced local industries to shut down. From northern Namibia to central Kenya, traditional products and retailers have been edged out by Chinese businesses.\textsuperscript{29} Moreover, David Shinn argues the Chinese are accountable for the loss of 250,000 jobs and 37\% of Africa’s textile capacity in recent years.\textsuperscript{30} Neo-liberal policies and globalization perpetuate Africa’s underdevelopment because they encourage rich countries to prosper while poor countries are further marginalized. Therefore, in a world where the global system creates dependency for Africa, cultures have less role to play.


\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.


Conclusion
Many scholars hastily claim that African culture impedes development; however, it is an invalid claim. First of all, culture is continuously evolving according to circumstantial factors surrounding the country. Also, it is unclear how much culture affects development, because there are other third factors such as geography, colonialization, and politics that affect both culture and development. As history and other research suggests, third factors contributed to Africa’s underdevelopment far more than cultures. Regardless, many academics hastily criticize Africa’s culture as an impediment to development. They try to prove how certain aspects of African culture impedes development, even though these values are also prevalent in other advanced countries. Furthermore, scholars attempt to refer to Asian Confucius culture as ideal for promoting growth. However, they fail to include failures of Asian Confucianism in the 19th century and Cold War interests of 20th century that were far more consequential than Confucianism itself.

We should not make a generalized claim that African culture impedes development. Because if we put too much emphasis on scrutinizing individual cultures, it might end up justifying exploitative nature of the global system. Instead, it is important for us to understand circumstantial factors that play a significant role in shaping individual cultures. It is not to say that we should ignore cultural aspect completely and avoid making any judgements, because there are critical cultural issues to be resolved such as gender inequality and abuse of women in Africa. What is more important, however, is to continue trying to resolve atrocities done to human dignity while looking at the problem of Africa’s underdevelopment within the context of the international system, and offer solutions accordingly.

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