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THE NEXT FRONTLINE OF THE BATTLE AGAINST THE ISLAMIC STATE? SOUTHEAST ASIA

ELANI OWEN¹

The global network of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), also known as Daesh,² is expanding rapidly. Southeast Asia is especially vulnerable because of its large Muslim population and its history of extremist groups. In fact, some experts predict that Daesh could establish a strong satellite presence in Southeast Asia within the next year, with dire consequences for the region.³ As the leader in the global fight against terror and in the Global Coalition to Counter Daesh, the United States (U.S.) needs to increase its counter terrorism cooperation with the governments in Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia and Malaysia, where Daesh has made the farthest inroads. The aim of this paper is to highlight United States-Southeast Asian cooperation in fighting the spread of Daesh in Southeast Asia.

To understand the state of terrorism and U.S.-Southeast Asian collaboration in the region, the scope of this paper begins in 2008, though background information will predate this timeframe to explain how Daesh evolved from other extremist movements, such as al Qaeda. The paper will primarily focus on the current terrorist threat of Daesh and U.S.-Southeast Asian efforts to combat its threat thus far. Two countries facing the most severe threats from

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² The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, known by several acronyms, such as ISIL and ISIS, is also known as Daesh, which stands for the Arabic phrase *al-Dawla al-Islamiya al-Iraq wa al-Sham* (*Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant*). For clarity, this paper will use the term Daesh because of its Arabic origin and its increasing usage by the international community.

³ Prashanth Parameswaran. "Islamic State Eyes Asia Base in 2016 in Philippines, Indonesia." *The Diplomat*. January 14, 2016.

Daesh will be analyzed as case studies: Indonesia and Malaysia. Understanding why, how, and to what extent Daesh networks within Southeast Asia exist can offer insight into how to best counter this threat, including how the U.S. can effectively collaborate with Southeast Asian governments towards this goal.

Accordingly, this paper is organized into four parts. The first part provides critical background information: a short history of Islamic extremism in Southeast Asia, a brief summary of U.S.-Southeast Asian Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, the origins of Daesh in the Middle East, and Daesh's growing influence in Southeast Asia since 2008. The second part explores the extent of Daesh's penetration into Indonesia. The third part delves into the second case study, Malaysia. The conclusion considers the prospects for future cooperation between the U.S. and Indonesia and Malaysia and offers a number of historically informed policy recommendations.

INTRODUCTION

A Short History of Islamic Extremism in Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia has a significant and diverse Muslim population. Indonesia, home to over 200 million Muslims, is the world's largest Islamic nation-state. There are also significant Muslim populations in Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Burma, and Singapore. Together, they make up 40 percent of the world's Muslims.⁴ Generally speaking, the nature of Islam in Southeast Asia is considered more moderate in character than in the Middle East due to the animist, mystic, Hindu, and Buddhist influences in the region.⁵ Nonetheless, Islamic extremism does exist, in part as an extension of terrorist networks from the Middle East and South Asia.⁶ These links can be traced historically and ideologically. For example, during the Cold War, some Southeast Asians fought the Soviets in Afghanistan, traveled to South Asia for religious schooling, and returned home with a new interpretation

⁴ Bruce Vaughn, Emma Chanlett-Avery, Richard Cronin, Mark Manyin, and Larry Niksch. "Terrorism in Southeast Asia," *Congressional Research Service*, February 7, 2005. 3. <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/RL31672.pdf>.

⁵ Vincent J. H. Houben. "Southeast Asia and Islam." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 588 (2003): 149-70. <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.georgetown.edu/stable/1049859>.

⁶ Zachary Abuza. "Tentacles of Terror: Al Qaeda's Southeast Asian Network." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 24, no. 3 (2002): 427-65. <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.georgetown.edu/stable/25798610>. 428.

of Islam inspired by their experiences, including fighting outsiders, or “infidels.”⁷ In the post-Cold War world, the lure of Islamic extremist revivalism in Southeast Asia is similar to that in other countries. Poverty and feelings of humiliation and alienation, frustration with oppressive governments, a desire for a pan-Islamic Southeast Asia, disapproval of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, anger with U.S. foreign policy towards Muslim countries, and links with terrorist groups elsewhere have also contributed to the surge of extremist ideology.⁸ As a result, security threats from Islamic militant organizations that arise from this ideology have become a modern day security problem.⁹

To understand the rise of Daesh in Southeast Asia, it is important to understand its global terrorism predecessor, al Qaeda, which operates on the platform of establishing an Islamic Caliphate and condones violence as means of jihad against perceived enemies of Islam. Though al Qaeda began in Afghanistan, its ultimate aim is to spread its anti-Western international campaign of terror and establish a global Islamic Caliphate. In the 1990s, al Qaeda expanded its efforts and began making inroads into Southeast Asia, attracted by the region’s Muslim populations. For the most part, it was relatively easy for al Qaeda to expand its networks into Southeast Asia because of loose borders, lax travel entrance requirements, widespread networks of Islamic charities, minimal financial controls, especially in Indonesia, and the presence of veterans of the Mujahidin from Afghanistan.¹⁰ Once al Qaeda operatives arrived in Southeast Asian countries, they established local cells for regional operations as part of their global network. These cells operated as centers for planning and carrying out attacks as well as sheltering operatives fleeing the U.S. and other countries.¹¹

Al Qaeda cells within Southeast Asia have been active in the region and

⁷ Ibid., 429.

⁸ Ibid. 429.

⁹ Peter Chalk, Angel Rabasa, William Rosenau, and Leanne Piggot. “The Evolving Terrorist Threat in Southeast Asia,” *RAND Corporation*. 2009. Xiii. http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2009/RAND_MG846.pdf.

¹⁰ Vaughn, Bruce, Emma Chantlett-Avery, Ben Dolven, Mark Manyin, Michael Martin, and Larry

Niksch. “Terrorism in Southeast Asia,” *Congressional Research Service*. October 16, 2009. 1. <https://www.fas.org/sfp/crs/terror/RL34194.pdf>.

¹¹ Ibid.

the international community. The Manila branch of al Qaeda was particularly active during the early-1990s with several failed attacks, including plotting to blow up 11 airliners; planning to crash a hijacked airplane into the Central Intelligence Agency; providing a safe haven for leader Ramzi Yousef after the 1993 World Trade Center bombings; and trying to assassinate the Pope during his most recent visit to the Philippines. Subsequently, al Qaeda pivoted its focus away from the Philippines to Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. By 2002, about “one-fifth of al Qaeda’s organizational strength was centered in Southeast Asia.”¹² This recent history clearly demonstrates the region’s susceptibility to the growth of extremist organizations.

Al Qaeda operatives influenced the creation of other terrorist networks, most notably the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) in Indonesia where it gave extensive support to al Qaeda and sought to establish an Islamic Caliphate in Indonesia.¹³ Most famously, JI carried out bombings in Bali in 2002 and 2005 and attacked a Marriott hotel in Jakarta in August 2003.¹⁴ Al Qaeda also still has ties to other regional extremist groups such as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the *Abu Sayyaf Group* (ASG), both in the Philippines.¹⁵ In Malaysia, al Qaeda has connections to the *Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia* (KMM), which was formed in 2002 as a direct consequence of Malaysians returning home from fighting the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.¹⁶

Ultimately, the continued presence of al Qaeda in the region demonstrates that there is a long history of terrorist activity in Southeast Asia and of established networks between these militant groups and those in the Middle East. Understanding the terrorist networks of the past is important to grasp the mechanics of Daesh’s growing presence in Southeast Asia today, as will be discussed later.

A Brief Summary of U.S.-Southeast Asian Counter-Terrorism Cooperation

Islamic extremism has long been a facet of the security milieu in Southeast Asia and, naturally, these terrorist organizations are of great concern to the U.S.

¹² Bruce Vaughn, 2009. 3.

¹³ Bruce Vaughn, 2005.

¹⁴ Anton Chan, “The Call of ISIS: The Medium and the Message Attractive Southeast Asians,” *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis* 7, no. 5 (2015). 4. <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/CTTA-May-2015.pdf>.

¹⁵ Bruce Vaughn, 2009. 17.

¹⁶ Ibid.

and its counter-terrorism agenda abroad. After 9/11, terrorist organizations in Southeast Asia, including Al Qaeda and JI, came to the forefront of American national security interests in the region, as some scholars and policy makers soon considered Southeast Asia a “second front” (with the Middle East as the first) in the “war against terror.” In response, U.S. cooperation with Southeast Asian governments on counter-terrorism varied by country, with the Philippines, Singapore, and Malaysia, most eager to work with the United States to combat their respective terrorist threats.

For example, in the Philippines, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo agreed on the deployment of U.S. military personnel to train the Philippine military against the ASG.¹⁷ Thailand and the U.S. also cooperated closely on matters of counter-terrorism, including the establishment of both a joint Counter Terrorism Intelligence Center in 2001 and a black site for CIA operations against terrorists.¹⁸ In the case of Singapore, authorities worked with the U.S. to crack down on suspected Islamic militants after the 9/11 attacks and succeeded in preventing some planned attacks. This bilateral relationship also included increased intelligence cooperation and the Container Security Initiative, a series of bilateral agreements that allow U.S. Customs and Border Patrol officials to screen U.S. bound containers.¹⁹ Malaysia also worked closely with the U.S., but its approach to counter terrorism was somewhat different, focusing on “combatting what it sees as the root causes of terrorism, such as poverty and the denial of human rights.”²⁰ Nonetheless, Malaysia was very supportive of U.S. counter-terrorism efforts in the region and became America’s main Muslim Southeast Asian partner in 2001.

In Indonesia, the U.S. helped fund and equip Detachment 88, also known as Densus 88, in 2003 after the first Bali bombings in 2002. Densus 88 is a Special Forces counter-terrorism squad that has been widely heralded as a success in its efforts to clamp down JI activity. Because of political turmoil in Indonesia in the early 2000s, cooperation between the U.S. and Indonesia on

¹⁷ Bruce Vaughn, 2009. 16.

¹⁸ Emma Chanlett-Avery, “Thailand: Background and U.S. Relations”, *CRS Report for Congress*, updated October 2, 2006 (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 2005), pp. 1-19.

¹⁹ Bruce Vaughn, 2009., 29.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 25.

matters of counter-terrorism did not increase until after President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's election in 2004.²¹ This history of U.S. cooperation with Southeast Asian governments on matters of counter-terrorism is important for analyzing potential areas of expansion for collaboration. Furthermore, these relationships reflect the extent to which the U.S. regarded Southeast Asia as a cornerstone of its counter-terrorism agenda after 9/11. This history of cooperation should be used as a foundation on which to build new policies in order to address the new growing threat of Daesh in the region.

The Origins of Daesh

The global security landscape and nature of terrorist organizations changed dramatically with the emergence of Daesh. The organization first garnered international attention in 2014, but its origins can be traced back to the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, when a Jordanian militant, Abu Musab al Zarqawi, established al Qaeda in Iraq. Al Zarqawi became disillusioned with the movement for its fixation on the U.S. rather than on tangible efforts towards a global caliphate. Advocating his new interpretation of jihad, the creation of a caliphate through any means, al Zarqawi was soon criticized by Osama Bin Laden for his unrestricted use of violence against the Shias and their holy sites. As a result, al Zarqawi and his followers broke ties with al Qaeda in 2006. Later that year, several organizations, inspired by al Zarqawi after his death in June 2006, came together under the umbrella of the Islamic State in Iraq (ISI).²² In 2011, the organization rebranded itself as the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham after it capitalized on the power vacuum created by the Syrian Civil War by expanding into the country.²³ In 2014, Daesh made massive advances in North Syria and Iraq, formally announcing the creation of a Caliphate with Raqqa, Syria as its capital.²⁴

The objective of Daesh is to maintain its caliphate, with parts of Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon merging into a unified state entity under its control. Though Daesh builds off the ideology of al Qaeda, it is distinct from its predecessor in several key facets. It condones more extreme uses of violence, maintains that it alone is

²¹ Ibid.

²² Peter Chalk, "Black Flag Rising: ISIL in Southeast Asia and Australia," *Australian Strategic Policy Institute*, December 2015. 8. https://www.aspi.org.au/publications/black-flag-rising-isil-in-southeast-asia-and-australia/Black-flag-rising_ISIL.pdf.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., 9.

the only true caliphate, calls on all Muslims to pledge allegiance to its current Emir, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and actively encourages migration to its territory.²⁵ Daesh also supports “governates” in other parts of the world, accepting pledges of allegiance from jihadist groups.²⁶ The influence of Daesh extends beyond the Middle East and North Africa, reaching Muslims in all countries, as evident by the growing number of Muslims traveling to Daesh territory.

In 2017, Daesh is now the greatest terrorist threat the world faces. Although al Qaeda was, and is, a global concern, Daesh has surpassed al Qaeda capabilities with its unprecedented territorial advances, which includes the establishment infrastructure and social services in the area it controls. By 2014, Daesh maintained control over parts of Iraq and Syria, adding to the organization’s legitimacy in the eyes of its recruits and increasing its ability to wage attacks around the world. Since 2015, however, Daesh’s territorial holdings have begun to decrease. Daesh may soon lose territory in Iraq as it continues to battle Iraqi and Kurdish forces in the battle for Mosul, which began in October 2016. Likewise, it continues to battle Syrian forces in Raqqa, its self-proclaimed capital, which it has been fighting since 2011. Although Daesh may be losing territory in the Middle East, the group is still a threat because of its ideological presence around the world, which continues to inspire terrorist attacks and the creation of localized terrorist cells. In fact, in 2016 alone, Daesh conducted or inspired 28 terrorist attacks in countries other than Syria and Iraq.²⁷ This should demonstrate the extent to which it holds ambitions beyond its territory in the Middle East. Furthermore, the frequency and severity of attacks underscores that Daesh’s threat does not end with its territory in the Middle East, rather it stretches as far as its ideology can reach. Consequently, though Daesh as a territorial entity may not pose a direct existential threat to the U.S. because of the distance between the two entities, it nonetheless threatens U.S. citizens, allies, and the stability of vital countries worldwide.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Tim Lister, Ray Sanchez, Mark Bixler, Sean O’Key, Michael Hogenmiller and Mohammed Tawfeeq, “ISIS Goes Global: 143 attacks in 29 countries have killed 2,043,” *CNN*. February 13, 2017. <http://www.cnn.com/2015/12/17/world/mapping-isis-attacks-around-the-world/>

Daesh's Growing Influence in Southeast Asia since 2008

Due to its large Muslim population, Southeast Asia has been a central target of Daesh's expansionist agenda.²⁸ Over two-dozen Southeast Asian extremist groups have pledged support for Daesh and are actively recruiting militants.²⁹ Daesh utilizes a variety of general recruitment tactics in all its operations, including those in Southeast Asia. A major method is using the large Islamist publication industry in the region to distribute pamphlets, newsletters, magazines, and periodicals advocating for Daesh's ideology, which is to establish a global caliphate rooted in the early years of Islam.³⁰ These materials are available for less than one US dollar, making them easily accessible to the general public. Another important recruitment tactic comes in the form of social media, which has been formative in connecting militants across borders. Facebook in particular has been found to connect Indonesian and Malaysian militants to Daesh recruiters. Elsewhere on the internet, other Daesh members have mastered Twitter and hashtags to spread their message.³¹ Additionally, Islamic extremists that have been part of the security environment in Southeast Asia for decades amplify the message of Daesh by contributing to Daesh's social media campaign and assisting Daesh with translation and other media-related recruitment methods.³²

Another popular source of Daesh propaganda is the online magazine *Dabiq* (which is the name of a northern town in Syria). This magazine, which was launched in July 2014, has been an effective recruitment tool because of its use of alluring imagery depicting life under the caliphate. It also publishes in a diverse array of languages, including English, which makes the magazine accessible to people around the world.³³ Another Daesh propaganda magazine, *al Fatihin* (the Conquerors), contains articles written in Indonesian about life in Syria and

²⁸ Peter Chalk. "Black Flag Rising: ISIL in Southeast Asia and Australia."

²⁹ Rohan Gunaratna, "The Rise of the Islamic State: Terrorism's New Face in Asia." In *From the Desert to World Cities: The New Terrorism*, edited by Dr. Wilhelm Hofmeister, 9. Singapore: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Ltd, 2015. http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_42032-1522-2-30.pdf.

³⁰ Peter Chalk., "Black Flag Rising: ISIL in Southeast Asia and Australia," 18.

³¹ "The Evolution of ISIS in Indonesia." *Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict*, no. 13. September 24, 2014. http://file.understandingconflict.org/file/2014/09/IPAC_13_Evolution_of_ISIS.pdf.

³² Eliza King. "The ISIS Threat in Southeast Asia." *International Policy Digest*. October 30, 2015. <http://intpolicydigest.org/2015/10/30/the-isis-threat-in-southeast-asia/>.

³³ "Overview of Daesh's Online Recruitment Propaganda Magazine, Dabiq." *The Carter Center*. December, 2015. https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/countering-isis/dabiq-report-12-17-15.pdf.

Iraq.³⁴ Furthermore, on June 20, 2016, Daesh launched a new online magazine targeting Southeast Asians.

The creation of a Southeast Asian magazine marks a dangerous development in Daesh's recruitment techniques in the region because it demonstrates that Daesh is streamlining its approach to Southeast Asia. The magazine emphasizes regional unity through common logos and experiences rather than focusing on each country individually.³⁵ Simultaneously, Daesh translates their united global ideology through this platform to Southeast Asia coherently and powerfully. The expansive network of Daesh supporters assisting recruitment in the region and the scale of Daesh's resources ensures that its message is not lost in translation.

Blogs are another popular source of propaganda for recruiters to romanticize life in Daesh-controlled territory. One blog called 'Shams' (The Levant) documents the life of a 26-year old Singaporean female who left her home to marry a Malaysian Daesh militant in Syria, providing a compelling but dangerous how-to-guide for other women unhappy with their lives who might be tempted to follow her example.³⁶

Besides magazines and blogs, Daesh has also become infamous for its video productions. It has recently begun targeting Muslims in Southeast Asian countries with videos in their native languages. For instance, in July 2014, Daesh released a video specifically targeting Indonesia's Muslims. The video, called *Join the Ranks*, features a speech from an Indonesian man imploring Indonesians to join the fight in the Middle East.³⁷ Another video targeting the Southeast Asian population is entitled *Education in the Caliphate*, which features Malay-speaking children studying in a Daesh school and handling weapons.³⁸ The message translated via these tactics is a source of inspiration for potential recruits, as it promises a more meaningful life under the Islamic State. Most recently, in June 2016, Daesh released a video featuring Malaysian, Indonesian, and Filipino

³⁴ Yenni Kwok, "ISIS has launched a newspaper to recruit Southeast Asian fighters," *Times Magazine*. July 11, 2016. <http://time.com/4400505/isis-newspaper-malay-southeast-asia-al-fatihin/>

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Anton Chan., 7.

³⁷ Peter Lloyd and Suzanne Dredge, "ISIS recruitment video Join the Ranks urges Indonesian Muslims to migrate to the Islamic State." *ABC News*. July 28, 2014. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-07-28/isis-releases-recruitment-video-target-indonesian-muslims/5629960>.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

fighters in which the militants acknowledge the leader of the ASG, Isnilon Hapilon, as Emir of Daesh in Southeast Asia. Furthermore, the video instructs possible recruits to train with the ASG in the Philippines if they cannot travel to Syria and Iraq. This most recent video clearly demonstrates the growing network among Southeast Asian militants as well as that between those in the region and Daesh in the Middle East.³⁹

Despite the diverse array of recruitment techniques, however, there is no single type of Daesh recruit. People of all ages, educational backgrounds, and vocations have pledged support to Daesh. Notwithstanding this diversity, there are two clear trends in the pathways through which nearly all would-be Daesh recruits become affiliated with the group. One path is that most Daesh supporters become connected with the organization following previous involvement in other jihadist groups, or through personal relationships with militants. Another trend is that the Internet and social media continue to play a formative role in attracting vulnerable persons not already associated with an extremist group. The Internet has played an especially large role in Malaysia, where there are fewer established jihadi organizations.⁴⁰

Another major development that has contributed to the increase of Daesh fighters from Southeast Asia is the establishment of a Malay-speaking unit in Syria in 2014. The unit, called the *Majmubah al Arkhabiliy or Katibah Nusantara*, is mostly comprised of militants from Indonesia and Malaysia, though some are from the Philippines and Singapore. The unit operates in northern Syria but has a known training center in Poso, Indonesia.⁴¹ The formation of *Katibah Nusantara* reinforces the narrative that Daesh comprises not just Arab-speaking fighters, but rather Muslims from around the world who share the same ideology. In turn, Daesh's reputation as an all-inclusive organization enhances its global Caliphate image.

Daesh successfully makes its appeal to Muslims in Southeast Asia through several tactics. First, Daesh recruiters exploit sentiments surrounding the end-of-

³⁹ "Malaysia on alert for lone-wolf attacks by ISIS supporters," *The Straits Times*. June 24, 2016. <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/malaysia-on-alert-for-lone-wolf-attacks-by-isis-supporters>

⁴⁰ Greg Fealy and John Funston. "Indonesian and Malaysian Support for the Islamic State." *Management Systems International*. January 6, 2016. 2. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2016/PBAAD863.pdf>.

⁴¹ Anton Chan., 7.

time prophecy *Khilafah Minhaj Nebuwwah* (“end-of-times caliphate”),⁴² which states that the greatest battle of time will be fought in *Sham* (Greater Syria) between Islam and the ‘infidels’.⁴³ Daesh holds territory in the region mentioned in the prophecy and claims to be waging war against ‘infidels.’ These factors strengthen its legitimacy as the pro-Islam force that will fight during the end of time battle and makes martyrdom for Daesh appealing to the segment of Southeast Asian Muslims who believe this.⁴⁴ Furthermore, Daesh has created a living space for non-combatants as well as militants by providing social services. Thus, it has more or less successfully upheld its narrative as a legitimized “State.” Daesh’s success in fighting Western-backed forces also adds to the symbolic power for Daesh’s cause. Lastly, in both Indonesia and Malaysia, fighters are motivated by the notion that Daesh’s fight is a “Just War” to protect Muslims in the Middle East.⁴⁵ These factors are unique to Daesh, making it a greater threat than other extremist groups both ideologically and logistically. Hence, the U.S. has to cooperate with other countries to combat these unprecedented challenges in the fight against terrorism.

Currently, Daesh does not have an official organizational structure in any Southeast Asian country and must rely on existing networks and sources of funding. Most of Daesh’s central funding comes from localized sources in the Middle East tied to its existing governing structures. The most identifiable sources of its income come from its oil reserves, private donations, taxes within its territory, petty crime, and sales of plundered antiquities from its conquered land. Daesh is “the best-funded terrorist organization the U.S. has ever confronted.”⁴⁶ Yet, because Daesh does not appear to move cash in and out of its borders, the sources of Daesh funding in Southeast Asia are unclear. However, it is presumed that Daesh operatives in Southeast Asia use similar tactics as those used by jihadi organizations already established in the region.⁴⁷ Traditionally, Southeast Asian

⁴² Joseph Chinyong Liow. “ISIS Goes to Asia.” *The Brookings Institute*. September 21, 2014. <http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2014/09/21-isis-goes-to-asia-liow>.

⁴³ Rohan Gunaratna., 10.

⁴⁴ Greg Fealy and John Funston.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 2.

⁴⁶ Janine Di Giovanni, Leah McGrath Goodman, and Damien Sharkov. “How Does ISIS Fund its Reign of Terror?” *Newsweek*. November 6, 2014. <http://www.newsweek.com/2014/11/14/how-does-isis-fund-its-reign-terror-282607.html>.

⁴⁷ Greg Fealy and John Funston., 19.

terrorist organizations have received funding through several means including cash exchanged by individuals, funds from Islamic charities, proceeds from *hawala* shops, donations from members or outsiders, and money from petty crime.⁴⁸ As Daesh's endowment has enhanced its capability to attract recruits to the Middle East as well as fund highly sophisticated recruitment campaigns, this will also be a key factor in its ability to establish a strong foothold in Southeast Asia.

Southeast Asian governments' greatest concern regarding Daesh is the prospect of vigilante attacks from militants within their countries. The U.S. shares similar concerns domestically, as well as concerns over instability in the Middle East and in other parts of the world. Not only is the stability of Southeast Asia in U.S.'s national security interest, but also the protection of American nationals abroad. Daesh implores its followers around the world to target Westerners and to carry out terrorist attacks. For example, in September 2014, in response to the U.S.-led coalition in Syria, Daesh spokesman Al-Adnani called on supporters to kill foreigners everywhere. This resulted in several deadly attacks in Europe, the United States, the Middle East and North Africa, in addition to Malaysia and Indonesia.⁴⁹ Hence, the U.S. sees Daesh as a threat to the safety of Americans in Southeast Asia and not just to the integrity of the countries themselves. As such, the U.S. government has assisted Southeast Asian governments in varying degrees with their counterterrorism efforts.

INDONESIA

The Daesh Threat in Indonesia and the Indonesian Government's Response

Indonesia is a major link in the global terrorist network. Historically vulnerable to terrorist groups in the past, it has become a key target of Daesh's recruitment strategies and is experiencing the greatest influence of Daesh's global network thus far in the region. Several Indonesians have been instrumental in the spread of Daesh throughout the country. This includes Muhammad Fachry, who began participating in online religious forums led by Omar Bakri, the famous leader of the former al Muhajiroun terrorist organization based in Britain. Al

⁴⁸ Zachary Abuza, "Funding Terrorism in Southeast Asia: The Financial Network of Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiya", *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 25:2 (2003), pp.169-199. 172.

⁴⁹ "US and allies strike ISIL targets in Syria," *AlJazeera*. September 23, 2014. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/09/us-begins-bombing-isil-positions-syria-201492313622252650.html>

Mahajiroun is a Salafi jihadist organization that supports the creation of an Islamic caliphate. Unlike al Qaeda, al Muhajiroun stressed the necessity to carve out territory for the creation of an Islamic state.⁵⁰ In 2005, Omar Bakri permitted Fachry to start his own Indonesian-based al Muhajiroun group. When the Arab Spring began in 2011, Fachry and his supporters saw the changes occurring in the Middle East as an opening to establish an Islamic caliphate. The group *Sharia4Indonesia*, which he had created years prior, campaigned for Daesh. He also started a website called *Al Mustaqbal*, meaning “The Future,” with links to various local militant networks in Indonesia, and supports many ceremonies of groups pledging allegiance to Daesh. Some of these fighters have gone on to fight in Syria, including Bahrum Syah, who formed the Indonesian-Malaysian unit of Daesh, which “reportedly aims at eventually establishing an archipelagic Islamic State in Southeast Asia, to be called *Daulah Islamiyah Nusantara* in Malaysia.”⁵¹

In 2013, Fachry and his followers created the *Forum of Islamic Law Activists* (FAKSI). Another individual, Aman Abdurrahman, a vocal jihadi ideologue who plays a key role in the propagation of pro-Daesh information, acted as a mentor for the group.⁵² With support from Aman, the FAKSI group believes and advocates that Daesh possesses the capabilities to create an enduring Islamic state. In order to recruit more members, FAKSI held public declarations of support for Daesh and arranged pro-Daesh speaker events and demonstrations. These acts were then shared via social media sites. One tweet read: “The Islamic State will soon come to Indonesia, *insha'allah* (God Willing), and change the name of Indonesia to ‘Islamic State of Southeast Asia!’”⁵³ Furthermore, in April 2014, Abdurrahman released an online pledge of loyalty to Daesh, after which several FAKSI members left Indonesia to fight in Syria.⁵⁴

In Indonesia, Islamic entities that sympathize with Daesh also play a role in Daesh’s campaign in the country and promote their message through a variety of tools, including social media, online discussion forums, and the magazine *Al Muhajirn*. Another organization, the *Forum Pendukung Daulah* (FPDI), founded

⁵⁰ “The Evolution of ISIS in Indonesia.” 2.

⁵¹ “The Evolution of ISIS in Indonesia.” 1.

⁵² Navhat Nuraniyah, “How ISIS Charmed the New Generation of Indonesian Militants.” *The Middle East Institute*. January 9, 2015.

⁵³ “The Evolution of ISIS in Indonesia”, 12.

⁵⁴ Tia M. Kibtiah, “Mobilizations and Movements of Foreign Fighters from Southeast Asia to Syria and Iraq,” *Journal of ASEAN Studies*, Vol 4, No. 1 (2016), pp 79-86.

on July 15, 2014, has held a series of public gatherings in support of Daesh. The same year at a FPDI meeting, more than 500 men met at the Baitu Makmur Mosque where they collectively supported the creation of an Islamic State in the Middle East. Indonesian authorities have identified two other local networks that have pledged allegiance to Daesh: *Anshar ul Khalifah*, which was established in Sempu, Malang in August 2014, and the *Tasikmalaya Group*, whose exact creation date and location are not known. Authorities believe that Ustaz Dani and Amin Mude established the *Tasikmalaya Group* cell to train Indonesians and to arrange travel for them to fight for Daesh in the Middle East. Other pro-Daesh groups include the *Jamaah Anshorut Touhid (JAT)*, the *Mujahidin Indonesia Timur*, *Ring Banten*, *Gema Salam*, and *Mujahidin Indonesia Barat*.⁵⁵ Extremist groups that favor Daesh over al Qaeda often perceive Daesh as closer to victory because it holds territory.⁵⁶

It is important to note, however, that some prominent groups in Southeast Asia, including JI, do not endorse Daesh. This is because of both ideological and personality differences within the Southeast Asian groups, such as disagreements over the concept of *takfir* (Muslims judging other Muslims for being un-Islamic), interpretations of Islamic law, and the use of violence.⁵⁷ In JI's case, the group began to criticize Daesh's overly violent methods and focused its efforts on supporting al Qaeda instead.

Indonesia officially banned Daesh in 2014 and designated groups that support its operations, directly or indirectly, as criminal.⁵⁸ In order to combat the return of nationals to Indonesia after fighting for Daesh in the Middle East, the Indonesian Minister of Political, Legal, and Security Affairs announced in January 2015 that those leaving to fight in the Middle East would have their passports revoked.⁵⁹ That year, Indonesian authorities also created a new special force called *Koopsugab* within the *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (the armed forces). The Indonesian government claims that this task force will enhance its ability to respond to Daesh threats and will work with local police to accomplish its goals. Furthermore, the government has made a greater effort to track Islamic websites and social media chat rooms that might act as a medium for recruitment. Accordingly, on March

⁵⁵ Greg Fealy and John Funston.

⁵⁶ Navhat Nuraniyah.

⁵⁷ Joseph Chinyong Liow.

⁵⁸ Peter Chalk. "Black Flag Rising: ISIL in Southeast Asia and Australia."

⁵⁹ Greg Fealy and John Funston.

30, 2015, the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology blocked over 22 media outlets deemed to threaten national security.⁶⁰ Indonesia has also taken soft power approaches to counter Daesh's growing influence. For instance, the government has consistently assured its citizens that Daesh's ideology is fundamentally contradictory to the unitary state ideology of *Pancasila*. Moreover, the government has looked to local and prominent religious leaders to speak out against Daesh.⁶¹

Though Indonesia has made significant process in the fight against Daesh, a major weakness in Indonesia's strategy is its approach to prisons. Indonesia's prisons have been effective grounds for recruitment of terrorists via propaganda, because jihadist solidarity and affinity easily grows between inmates, especially as the prison system is rife with problems such as "corruption, overcrowding, organized violence, protection rackets, and also poorly managed and trained staff."⁶² The penal system is thus a hot bed for terrorist indoctrination. Overcrowding allows inmates convicted of terrorist offenses to propagate their violent ideology and exploit the grievances of their fellow inmates. In some prisons, convicted militants have been known to give extremist sermons to fellow inmates. These extremist sermons are also often transmitted to other inmates and prisons through smuggled audio recordings and cell phones.⁶³ In one famous instance, a militant prisoner was able to inspire a prison guard who went on to become one of the 2002 Bali bombers.⁶⁴ Despite these instances, Indonesian authorities have made little effort to target sources of propaganda and recruitment that infiltrate jails or address the ideological roots that lead to inmates engaging in terrorist recidivism. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on monitoring the communications and reading materials of inmates as well as the activities during religious meetings. More importantly, the government needs to identify a better strategy for targeting Daesh's electronic and written recruitment methods.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Peter Chalk. "Black Flag Rising: ISIL in Southeast Asia and Australia," 17.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*, 12.

⁶³ Susan Sim and Noor Huda Ismail, "Indonesian prisons as breeding grounds for terror," *The Strait Times*, January 26, 2016.

⁶⁴ Hannah Beech, "Indonesia's overcrowded prisons are a breeding ground for Islamic extremism," *Time Magazine*, February 5, 2016.

⁶⁵ Peter Chalk. "Black Flag Rising: ISIL in Southeast Asia and Australia," 18.

Additionally, inmates convicted for terrorist offenses are often released without proper rehabilitation, leading to recidivism.⁶⁶ For instance, two of the four militants involved in the January 2016 terrorist attacks in Jakarta had previously served jail time for offenses related to terrorism. Recidivism rates are hard to calculate because there is no national tracking database for arrests, however experts estimate that the recidivism rate is at least 15 per cent based on 47 cases in Indonesia thus far.⁶⁷ Corrections officers need to target the extremist ideology among inmates convicted of terrorist-related offenses as released convicted terrorists could spread the information further or become more actively involved in the Daesh network. In order to do so, prisons would need to implement a comprehensive de-radicalization program. Another step to address this problem is to improve tracking and supervision of convicted terrorists who have been released from prison.⁶⁸ All in all, Indonesia's approach to countering Daesh cannot be complete without the integration of a prison strategy.

In total, 2,000 Indonesians are estimated to have pledged support for Daesh.⁶⁹ While not all of these individuals may end up traveling to Syria or Iraq or joining terrorist networks within the region, the large and growing number of supporters is indicative of the appeal that the Islamic caliphate can have on the Indonesian public. By 2015, the BNPT estimated that roughly 500 nationals had left Indonesia to wage jihad in the Middle East and that around 43 had died while fighting.⁷⁰ Currently, Indonesian authorities are tracking around 40 people who have returned from Syria, 10 of whom have been held for questioning.⁷¹

While the actual numbers of Indonesians leaving to fight for Daesh in the Middle East seem minimal, there are several important security implications for both Indonesia and the U.S. First, there is great concern over nationals fighting for Daesh in the Middle East and then returning home to carry out attacks in-country

⁶⁶ Susan Sim and Noor Huda Ismail, "Predicting terrorist recidivism in Indonesia's prisons," *The Brookings Institution*, January 28, 2016.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Sidney Jones. "Battling ISIS in Indonesia." *The New York Times*. January 18, 2016. http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/19/opinion/battling-isis-in-indonesia.html?_r=0.

⁶⁹ Peter Chalk. "Black Flag Rising: ISIL in Southeast Asia and Australia," 13.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ "Indonesia tracks dozens of militants who have returned from Syria," *Asbarq al-Awsat*, October 18, 2016. <http://english.aawsat.com/2016/10/article55360407/indonesia-tracks-dozens-militants-returned-syria>

or to recruit supporters.⁷² One such attack occurred in Jakarta on January 14, 2016, the first successful Daesh inspired attack in the region, killing seven people, including the five attackers, and injuring 23.⁷³ More recently, Daesh committed a suicide attack against a police station in Central Java on July 4, 2016, injuring one officer and killing the attacker.⁷⁴ These attacks threaten Indonesian citizens as well as U.S. citizens who travel there. The attacks also indicate Daesh's desire to spread to other parts of the world and not remain confined to the Middle East. The longer the presence of Daesh in Southeast Asia remains unchecked, the stronger Daesh's recruitment efforts will grow and the more fighters it will employ, both domestically within Indonesia and in the Middle East.

U.S.-Indonesian Cooperation and Policy Recommendations

Until now, cooperation between the U.S. and Indonesia has mostly centered on the U.S. providing funding for Densus 88.⁷⁵ The U.S. continues to provide training and equipment to support this task force through the Office of Antiterrorism Assistance in the Department of State.⁷⁶ This force has been active in combatting the threat of Daesh and has made numerous arrests. After 9/11, Densus 88 was cited by many as a successful collaborative effort in the fight against terrorism and al Qaeda affiliates like the JI. Densus 88 was able to arrest many top operatives of terrorist organizations, leading to its success. Hence, the U.S. should continue to support Densus 88 efforts. Considering that individuals play a large role in promulgating Daesh's message and recruiting Indonesians, Densus 88 should target specific high-ranking operatives within Daesh's Indonesia network. The U.S. should also focus trainings on countering bomb threats, which can aid the Indonesian police in preventing terrorist attacks like the ones in January 2016 and in July 2016 in Java and Jakarta.

In Indonesia, the U.S. also provides several million dollars a year for

⁷² Peter Chalk., "Black Flag Rising: ISIL in Southeast Asia and Australia," 14.

⁷³ Joe Cochrane and Thomas Fuller. "Jakarta Attacks Raises Fears of ISIS' Spread to Southeast Asia," *The New York Times*. January 13, 2016. http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/15/world/asia/jakarta-explosion.html?_r=0.

⁷⁴ Yenni Kwok, "Suicide Bomber attacks police station in Indonesia," *Times Magazine*, July 5, 2016. <http://time.com/4392782/indonesia-suicide-bomber-solo-surakarta-terrorism/>

⁷⁵ Greg Fealy and John Funston.

⁷⁶ "Fiscal Year 2010 Year In Review." *Bureau of Diplomatic Security, U.S. Department of State*. 2010.

law enforcement development programs aimed at bolstering the counter terrorism capabilities of the military and police. For example, Indonesia receives funding from the International Narcotics Law Enforcement Program, (INL), the Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program, and the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP), all of which include a counter-terrorism component.⁷⁷ Moreover, the U.S. provides assistance for strengthening democratic institutions, fostering transparent governance, and boosting economic growth.⁷⁸ The U.S. should continue these programs and emphasize counter-messaging in the counter-terrorism components of all-related programs. Counter messaging is a critical component of any effort to weaken the ideological appeal of Daesh, and should be employed in conjunction with any police or security related efforts. Furthermore, the U.S. should include funding to train Indonesian corrections officers on implementing de-radicalization programs in prisons through its programs like ICITAP, as prisons have been identified as hotbeds of terrorist propagation.

Despite bilateral cooperation between Indonesia and the U.S., Indonesia is unlikely to join the 65-nation, U.S.-led Global Coalition against Daesh. According to Arto Suryodipuro, the deputy chief of mission at the Indonesian Embassy in the U.S., Indonesia sees its primary role in the fight against Daesh as ideological and, hence, prefers to pursue a “soft approach” in combatting Daesh.⁷⁹ Nonetheless, Indonesia is looking to increase cooperation with the U.S. in areas of soft power, especially through bilateral exchanges. For instance, the establishment of a Council on Religion and Pluralism in August 2011 is cited as a successful collaboration between Washington and Jakarta, as this council promotes tolerance, moderation, and pluralism amongst Indonesians. Arto Suryodipuro has also emphasized that the U.S. and Indonesia should cooperate through other means, like intelligence sharing and political cooperation.⁸⁰ In addition to collaborating on the Council on Religion and Pluralism, the U.S. can also encourage Indonesian support of moderate Muslim groups. For example, two of the largest Muslim movements in

⁷⁷ Peter Chalk, Angel Rabasa, William Rosenau, and Leanne Piggot. “The Evolving Terrorist

Threat in Southeast Asia,” *RAND Corporation*. 2009. XVI. http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2009/RAND_MG846.pdf

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Prashanth Parameswaran. “Indonesia will not join US anti-ISIS coalition.” *The Diplomat*. March 5, 2016.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

the world, *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) and *Muhammadiyah*, with around 40 and 30 million members respectively, are located in Indonesia. Both groups, which are led by internationally respected clerics, have launched anti-ISIS platforms. Elevating the moderate messages of groups such of these is a possible area for Indonesian and U.S. cooperation in fighting the narrative of Daesh.⁸¹

Though the U.S. and Indonesia cooperate on other fronts that indirectly target Daesh, such as economic development and socio-cultural exchanges, the partnership lacks a comprehensive strategy against Daesh. Currently, Indonesia and the U.S. are implementing policies on an ad-hoc basis without a comprehensive and long term plan. The U.S. should continue funding programs to provide counter-terrorism training and equipment that will naturally aid the country in fighting the Daesh threat. At the same time, the two countries will need to develop a multi-faceted plan specifically aimed at Daesh if they hope to curb its growing influence in the country. In the future, the U.S. and Indonesia should not only continue to cooperate via a multi-pronged approach, which includes diplomacy, cooperation between intelligence and Densus 88, and economic development, but also add elements that focus on tracking suspected and known Daesh supporters and targeting social and traditional media sources. This cooperation should be paired with greater emphasis on populations vulnerable to Daesh recruitment, as well as tracking individuals promulgating Daesh propaganda.

MALAYSIA

The Daesh Threat in Malaysia and the Malaysian Government's Response

Like Indonesia, Malaysia has been a prime target for Daesh recruitment because of its Muslim population. The political climate of Malaysia in particular creates conditions that could potentially be conducive to growing ideologies like Daesh. For instance, the dominant political party, the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), is a Malay-Muslim party that infuses Muslims ideals through its institutions and policies, maintaining that Malay-Muslim people deserve their special privileges mandated under the 1957 constitution. Moreover,

⁸¹ Joseph Chinyong Liow, "ISIS in the Pacific: Assessing Terrorism in Southeast Asia and the Threat to the Homeland," *The Brookings Institute*. April 27, 2016. <https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/isis-in-the-pacific-assessing-terrorism-in-southeast-asia-and-the-threat-to-the-homeland/>

to compete with other Muslim parties, the UMNO uses religious credentials for political legitimacy, blurring the line between religious and political aspects of society. Furthermore, religious efforts on behalf of the UMNO have led to right-wing groups preaching messages against non-Muslims, creating an atmosphere of intolerance that has contributed to Daesh's popularity. This phenomenon is evident in the proliferation of Malay websites with a pro-Daesh orientation, showing that Daesh sentiments have found an audience.⁸²

The estimated number of Malaysians who have traveled to join Daesh ranges from 30 to 150, and the number of nationals killed while fighting ranges from 10 to 15.⁸³ Other estimates suggest that 30 Malaysians have died fighting for Daesh in Syria and Iraq.⁸⁴ Most nationals who have left for Daesh are believed to still be fighting in the Middle East. However, a few have returned to the country to encourage Islamist militant action in Malaysia and to join Daesh's cause.⁸⁵

Malaysian militants who return from fighting in the Middle East so far appear to be most interested in carrying out attacks in Malaysia itself and recruiting in the country.⁸⁶ In 2016 alone, it is reported that at least 119 suspected militants were arrested for their association with Daesh.⁸⁷ According to the Malaysian Transport Minister, police intelligence estimates that there are 50,000 Daesh sympathizers in Malaysia. Hence, even if a small fraction of the estimated number becomes further radicalized and decides to take action, it is nevertheless a huge threat to Malaysia.⁸⁸ Most recently, Daesh militants were able to carry out their first successful terrorist attack in the country on June 28, 2016. The attack, which occurred outside of Kuala Lumpur in Puchong, injured eight people. Prior to that, Malaysian police had successfully thwarted nine other Daesh plots since 2014, including several planned attacks in Kuala Lumpur.⁸⁹

⁸² Joseph Chinyong Liow.

⁸³ Peter Chalk, Angel Rabasa, William Rosenau, and Leanne Piggot., 11.

⁸⁴ "Malaysia Uncovers ISIS cell transitioning through Sabah"

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Peter Chalk, Angel Rabasa, William Rosenau, and Leanne Piggot.

⁸⁷ "Malaysia Uncovers ISIS cell transitioning through Sabah," *The Straits Times*. January 24, 2017. <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/malaysia-uncovers-isis-cell-transiting-through-sabah>

⁸⁸ "Malaysia Minister: 50,000 ISIL Sympathizers in Country." *Aljazeera*. December 12, 2015. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/12/malaysia-minister-50000-isil-sympathisers-country-151212151155422.html>.

⁸⁹ Marc Lourdes. "Islamic State launches first successful attack in Malaysia." *CNN*. July 4th, 2016. <http://www.cnn.com/2016/07/04/homepage2/islamic-state-attack-malaysia/>

Like Indonesia, Malaysian recruits come from various backgrounds, ranging from an Islamic Studies professor at a major university to small traders and military members. In December 2014, the government identified six civil servants who had joined or assisted Daesh in some capacity.⁹⁰ In April 2015, authorities detained 17 people in Kuala Lumpur and Kedah for plotting to kidnap the Prime Minister, Defense Minister, and other high profile officials. Two of those arrested were identified as members of the Royal Malaysian Air Force who had been allegedly making flight arrangements for Malaysians to travel to the Middle East. An earlier raid in 2014 also included the detainment of uniformed personnel. These instances have sparked concern among security officials about the appeal of Daesh' ideology to members of the armed forces. In fact, an estimated 71 soldiers have some connection to the group, though the degree of connection is unclear. Furthermore, many militants arrested have no criminal record, showing that Daesh is targeting operatives without suspicious backgrounds who can "move under the radar of intelligence and police agencies."⁹¹ Regardless, Daesh infiltration of the armed forces has dire consequences for the security situation by undermining the security apparatus and its ability to effectively prevent attacks.

In Malaysia, social media has been the most important component of Daesh's recruitment efforts as the nation has high internet penetration, which recruiters have taken advantage of by developing a consistent and sophisticated campaign. According to estimates by the Home Affairs Minister Zahid, 75 percent of Malaysian are recruited through social media.⁹² Furthermore, social media has played a large role in recruiting Malaysian women to Daesh. In many cases, women take on lead recruitment roles and make up a large part of Daesh's institutional base. There have been several instances where women have been arrested for activity in Daesh cells. For example, in May 2014, a 55-year-old Malaysian woman named Azizah Md Yusof was arrested for using Facebook to recruit and "support terrorist activities."⁹³ Whereas women generally have a

⁹⁰ Greg Fealy and John Funston., 12.

⁹¹ Peter Chalk." Black Flag Rising: ISIL in Southeast Asia and Australia," 11.

⁹² Greg Fealy and John Funston., 20.

⁹³ Dr. Zachary Abuza, "Joining the New Caravan: ISIS and the Regeneration of Terrorism in Southeast Asia," *Strategic Studies Institute*. June 25, 2015. <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/index.cfm/articles/joining-the-new-caravan/2015/06/25>

passive role in most jihadist movements, Daesh actively recruits women and empowers them in the arena of social media and recruitment, adding to its appeal.

Malaysians have also been targeted through other media forums including videos. The Malaysian members of *Katibah Nusantara*, the Southeast Asian unit of Daesh, released a video on January 25, 2016 entitled “*Mesej Awam Kepada Malaysia*” (Public Message for Malaysia). The video threatened to attack the Malaysian government. In the video, the militants specifically addressed the “disconnect” between Malaysia’s democratic governance and Allah’s (God’s) wishes.⁹⁴ In June 2016, Daesh released another video targeting Malaysians, Indonesians, and Filipinos, in which a Malaysian militant aimed at attacking the Malaysian Police headquarters in Bukit Aman, Kuala Lumpur.⁹⁵ These videos’ targeting of Malaysians illustrates Daesh’s increasing pivot towards the country and region as a whole. Bearing in mind the huge influence of social media on the recruitment of Malaysians, it will be important for any future collaboration between Malaysia and the U.S. to include a dynamic counter-Daesh social media campaign.

Meanwhile, Malaysia’s government has passed a series of laws to curb Daesh’s growing presence in the country. For instance, in August 2014, it formally classified Daesh as a terrorist organization. Then, in April 2015, the government passed the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), which included a variety of anti-terrorism measures, some controversial, such as granting authorities the power to hold terror suspects for 59 days without trial with the possibility of extending the detention to two years, if deemed necessary.⁹⁶ The Malaysian Parliament also approved the Special Measures against Foreign Terrorism Act in June 2015, which targets the passports and other travel documents of any person suspected of ties with overseas terrorism organizations.⁹⁷ Malaysia’s government has also taken steps to target the potential sources of Daesh’s funding in the country. For instance, in September 2015, the Parliament passed an addition to the 2001 Anti-Terrorist Financing Act, thereby increasing the government’s ability to investigate, track,

⁹⁴ Prashanth Parameswaran. “Islamic State Vows Revenge on Malaysia Amid Crackdown.” *The Diplomat*. January 25, 2016. <http://thediplomat.com/2016/01/islamic-state-vows-revenge-on-malaysia-amid-crackdown-terror-meet/>.

⁹⁵ Rachel Middleton, “New ISIS video targets Malaysia but police are not shaken by new threats,” *International Business Times*, June 24, 2016. <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/new-isis-video-targets-malaysia-police-are-not-shaken-by-new-threats-1567172>

⁹⁶ Peter Chalk. “Black Flag Rising: ISIL in Southeast Asia and Australia,” 19.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

and freeze money associated with extremist militant activity.

In order to further address the growing threat from Daesh, Malaysia launched the National Special Operations Force (NSOF) in October 2016. The force, which is comprised of officers from all branches of the armed services, the Royal Malaysian Police, and the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency, is the first integrated security force of its kind. Currently, the NSOF has 170 personnel total, all of which are prepared to mobilize by air, land, or maritime units in order to respond swiftly to terrorism threats and attacks. The NSOF will be based outside of Kuala Lumpur at the Sangai Besi military camp.⁹⁸ Though it is too soon to determine the success of the NSOF, Malaysia's effort to streamline procedures and security forces is promising. Furthermore, the creation of the NSOF shows that the Malaysian government takes the threat of Daesh seriously. If the NSOF proves successful in thwarting terrorism threats, not just from Daesh but other regional groups as well, it could act as a model for other countries to follow. Moreover, though NSOF does not receive international funding at present, there may be opportunity for U.S. assistance for the NSOF should the Malaysian government seek international partners.

Additionally, the government has engaged moderate Islamic organizations to help combat Daesh's appeal. In this connection, The Malaysian Islamic Development Authority, which supervises the majority of the country's mosques, issued a fatwa against Daesh and condemned labeling those who die on its behalf as "martyrs". The Authority has also closely monitored Friday sermons in mosque by requiring a dedicated session to educate Muslims on the peaceful nature of Islam. Moreover, Malaysia's Global Movement of Moderates, established in April 2012, holds events to gather civil society members and non-traditional stakeholders to disperse counter-narratives that discredit Daesh's ideology.⁹⁹ However, scholars have criticized the government's "war against ideas" for being too reactive to Daesh's efforts.¹⁰⁰

The need for a better counter-narrative is apparent in the opinions of Malaysians towards al-Baghdadi, Daesh's leader. According to a Pew Research Center Poll taken in March 2015, only 20 percent of respondents said that they

⁹⁸ Prashanth Parameswaran, "Malaysia's New Anti-Terror Force," *The Diplomat*. November 1, 2016. <http://thediplomat.com/2016/11/malysias-new-anti-terror-force/>

⁹⁹ Peter Chalk. "Black Flag Rising: ISIL in Southeast Asia and Australia," 19.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

were actively opposed to his movement, suggesting that most of the country is either indifferent to, or supportive of Daesh and its goals.”¹⁰¹ This percentage is troubling and is providing fertile recruiting ground for Daesh operatives. In response, Malaysia should thus focus on providing an alternative narrative. For example, the government can provide disenfranchised youth with economic incentives or those who are ideologically attracted to Daesh with peaceful narratives of Islam. By providing counter-narratives to Daesh and an alternative avenue to the Islamic community, Malaysia should be able to thwart Daesh’s reach in the country, as individuals vulnerable to Daesh recruitment will have other narratives to look up to and other avenues to express grievances. Furthermore, these counter-narratives should be dispersed via social media whenever possible, since social media is the main forum from which Daesh recruits in the country.

U.S.-Malaysian Cooperation and Policy Recommendations

Malaysia has become an important U.S. partner in the fight against Daesh. On September 29, 2015, Malaysia became a member of the 64-nation U.S.-led Global Coalition to Counter Daesh. Currently, Malaysia is participating in the anti-messaging campaign, which aims at delegitimizing Daesh’s narrative by contrasting the group’s violence and hatred with a vision of hope for a better future. The main goal of the counter-messaging group is to “defeat ISIL as an idea.”¹⁰² Hopefully, counter-messaging can help increase the percentage of Malaysians actively opposed to Daesh taking into account the percentage of Malaysians who do not feel adamantly opposed to Daesh operations. Though details of Malaysia’s future role in the coalition have not been disclosed thus far, U.S. officials are hoping that Malaysia’s government will co-lead one of the five existing working groups: counter-finance, stabilization support, public diplomacy and counter messaging, and foreign terrorist fighters.¹⁰³

As a member of the Global Coalition, Malaysia receives several benefits. First, it receives access to the Coalition Collaboration Workspace (CCW), a virtual private portal that provides Coalition members a secure workspace. Secondly, in conjunction with the U.S., Malaysia received funding for a joint messaging

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Prashanth Parameswaran. “Exclusive: US, Malaysia and the War against the Islamic State.” *The Diplomat*. November 25, 2015. <http://thediplomat.com/2015/11/exclusive-us-malaysia-and-the-war-against-the-islamic-state/>.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

center known as the Regional Digital Counter-Messaging Communications Center (RDC3) thereby making Malaysia the regional hub for coordinating and launching counter-Daesh messaging.¹⁰⁴ The RDC3 was originally expected to begin operations on May 1, 2016. The RDC3 plan includes building a unit in every state of Malaysia in order to stiffen the Daesh narrative broadcasted in the cyber world.¹⁰⁵ The U.S. helps fund the RDC3 and provide technology and other expertise. However, various issues regarding RDC3 are still being worked out within the Malaysian government, and the Center was not operational until November 2016.¹⁰⁶ In addition to the creation of RDC3, President Barack Obama signed a document in November 2015 called the Preventing and Combating Serious Crime (PCSC), outlining cooperation between Malaysia and the U.S. in exchanging information such as biometric and DNA data for law enforcement efforts. The Royal Malaysian Police will be able to use the shared information to track suspected terrorists in the country. The agreement does come with certain restrictions that Malaysia will have to comply with, such as reporting information to Interpol within an established timeframe.¹⁰⁷

Clearly, there has been concrete cooperation between Kuala Lumpur and Washington in regard to combatting Daesh. By joining the Global Coalition, Malaysia has agreed to partner with countries around the world in the global fight against Daesh, as well as take on a regional leadership role with the establishment of the RDC3. But, the U.S. will need to prove its commitment to its collaboration on RDC3 by helping to ensure continues operation, as well as provide consistent training and expertise. The U.S. could also seek opportunities to work with Malaysia's NSOF. Considering that social media is the biggest source of recruitment within the community, Malaysia is focusing its efforts on the counter-messaging component of the Coalition's agenda. Nonetheless,

¹⁰⁴ Prashanth Parameswaran. "Malaysia to Launch New Center to Counter Islamic State Messaging." *The Diplomat*. January 27, 2016. <http://thediplomat.com/2016/01/malaysia-to-launch-new-center-to-counter-isis-messaging/>.

¹⁰⁵ Melissa Goh. "Malaysia to launch counter-messaging centre to fight against Islamic State." *Channel News Asia*. March 25, 2016. <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/malaysia-to-launch/2636900.html>.

¹⁰⁶ Prashanth Parameswaran. "Malaysia to Launch New Center to Counter Islamic State Messaging."

¹⁰⁷ Prashanth Parameswaran. "Exclusive: US, Malaysia and the War against the Islamic State."

Malaysia and the U.S. should pair its soft-power approaches with a strategic plan for targeting individuals prominent in the recruitment and the operations of Daesh in the country, especially in the militant hotspots of Kedah and Perak. Despite little information being available on the individuals responsible for the spread of Daesh's influence, greater binational cooperation between the U.S. and Malaysia in areas of intelligence and local law enforcement development could help thwart further Daesh activities in the region.

CONCLUSION: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BETTER U.S. COOPERATION WITH INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA IN COMBATting THE DAESH THREAT

This section proceeds by first outlying general recommendations for US cooperation with Malaysia and Indonesia and then turns to specific recommendations for each country. Regarding the first component, the U.S. should take a variety of steps in regard to its counter-terrorism relationships with Indonesia and Malaysia in order to more effectively counter the growing Daesh threat. One step that the U.S. should take with both countries is to support localized police-driven security measures through assistance programs such as ICITAP and INL. Improved community-police relations can lead to greater trust within the community, making it easier for law enforcement to identify possible terrorist networks. This strategy is especially beneficial in Indonesia, where its archipelago topography makes it difficult for a centrally located law enforcement approach to combatting Daesh inroads in the country. Another step the U.S. should take is to develop a soft power approach. For instance, one approach can include encouraging both countries to empower moderate Muslim organizations and to incorporate civil society organizations into their strategy, like the Council of Religious Pluralism in Malaysia. Another soft power approach can include social media campaigns to counter the narrative Daesh propagates through these channels. Additionally, the U.S. can work with Indonesia and Malaysia to develop economic initiatives and aid to undercut Daesh's economic appeal.

As for specific country recommendations, in the case of Indonesia, Densus 88 has been a successful counter-terrorism tool in the past, and the U.S. should continue to support its operations. In particular, the U.S. and Indonesia should target high ranking Daesh operatives in the country, as they have played a formative role in establishing Daesh networks. Another important component of a U.S.-Indonesian strategy should be soft power approaches. Accordingly, the U.S. should continue to pursue collaborative efforts like the Council on Religion and Pluralism

in order to target Daesh's ideological aims. Another area for cooperation is Indonesia's prison systems. The U.S. can use channels already in place, such as aid through ICITAP or INL, to provide assistance for corrections programs and de-radicalization measures in prisons training. Prisons are an important key in Daesh's propagation in Indonesia, so it must be addressed in any Indonesia's counter terrorism strategy.

The nature of cooperation between the U.S. and Malaysia contrasts with U.S. cooperation with Indonesia, most notably because of Malaysia's cooperation in the support of U.S.-led Coalition to Counter Daesh. Malaysia has also been more successful at thwarting the Daesh threat than Indonesia and has suffered fewer attacks. The U.S. should help ensure the success of RDC3 and continue to support its operations. Since the majority of Daesh recruits are attracted through social media and messaging efforts, targeted local counter-messaging through the RDC3 could prove to be a successful anti-terrorism measure. Furthermore, Malaysian authorities have been able to thwart most planned Daesh related terrorist attacks thus far, which is a testament to the country's strong security apparatus. Yet, the threat of Daesh is not diminishing. Thus, the U.S. and Malaysia should collaborate on targeting individuals who play a key role in Daesh's operations in the country, especially those within the armed forces. Moreover, the U.S. and Malaysia should increase cooperation on various areas within the Coalition in order to utilize Malaysia's position to counter Daesh operations in Southeast Asia to its full capacity. Finally, the U.S. should support the operations of the NSOF. If the NSOF proves successful, it could be used as a model for future counter Daesh and counter terrorism strategies in other countries.

Both Indonesia and Malaysia are at a pivotal moment in their fight against Daesh. Although the presence of Daesh is relatively limited in both countries, support for Daesh is growing amongst smaller jihadi movements, as well as people from all socio-economic backgrounds. As such, it is important for the U.S. to support efforts to curb Daesh's present influence in the region to prevent the organization from making further inroads. The Trump Administration has made clear its commitment to counter-terrorism efforts, even taking extreme and controversial measures such as the Executive Order 13780 signed on March 06, 2017, which temporarily bans immigrants from six different majority

Muslim countries.¹⁰⁸ Yet, the new Administration has not made its intentions with Southeast Asia clear. Continuing and strengthening cooperation on counter-Daesh operations in the region is of vital importance for the U.S. for several reasons. If Daesh is able to create a cell within Southeast Asia, which would most likely be in Indonesia where Daesh has had significant success so far, it would have implications for the stability of the region. The Daesh Southeast Asian branch could lure individuals from neighboring Asian countries who cannot make the trip to Syria. With such a high concentration of operatives within the region, Daesh could wage greater and more frequent attacks on Southeast Asian countries and as well as on other regions of Asia. This would likely have a snowball effect, as more attacks lead to greater media attention and to the potential for gaining more recruits.

Daesh operatives within Southeast Asia do not operate on an isolated basis in each country. Rather, they are part of the growing Daesh network, and it is vital to recognize this factor when assessing a U.S. strategy for the region as a whole. At the same time, the spread of Daesh in each country is nuanced and can be attributed to a unique set of factors specific to each country, such as their political climate, geography, and religious environment. As such, the U.S. should continue to work with countries like Indonesia and Malaysia through bilateral cooperation on an individualized basis that addresses the specific factors and circumstances present in each country.

Daesh's presence in Southeast Asia cannot be allowed to grow. While the international community was unable to prevent the territorial rise of Daesh in the Middle East, it can take steps now to prevent a similar situation in Southeast Asia. But expedient action is paramount. Daesh's recent loss of territory in the Middle East threatens a further pivot to Southeast Asia. The future of global security depends on timely and effective U.S. cooperation with Southeast Asian countries, especially Indonesia and Malaysia, to contain as well as prevent further Daesh expansion.

¹⁰⁸ Exec. Order No. 13780, 3 C.F.R. (2017). Web.

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REMOTE SENSING SATELLITES AS A SOLUTION TOWARDS ANTICIPATING FOOD AND WATER WARS

DAVID HARARY¹

INTRODUCTION

In December 1948, the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognized the universal human right to food. Most recently in July 2010, the U.N. General Assembly adopted resolution 64/292 that recognized the human right to water as well. While food and water are of vital importance to the security of individual nations, over 700 million people lack adequate access to these basic resources.² Alarmingly, anthropogenic induced climate change is expected to further undermine human security³ through a reduction of available food and water across particular geographic areas.

According to Lagi et al., decreased access to food and water helped stir social unrest and political instability across North Africa and the Middle East

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² FAO, IFAD and WFP. 2015. *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2015. Meeting the 2015 international hunger targets: taking stock of uneven progress.* Rome, FAO.

³ There is much discussion on the concept of *human security* and its definition. According to the United Nations Commission on Human Security (CHS) human security “means protecting fundamental freedoms – freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people’s strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity.” Ogata, Sadako, and Amartya Sen. “Human security now.” *Commission on Human Security, Final Report, New York* (2003)

during the Arab Spring.⁴ An abundance of literature shows that although poor access to basic natural resources is not the major cause of conflict; it is a threat multiplier that can kindle conflict within or between states.^{5,6} However, academics, military strategists, and policymakers hotly debate the linkage between resource security and conflict, and are far from achieving broad consensus.⁷ Unstable social-political factors are instead generally regarded as the dominant cause behind conflict. It can therefore be said that combined with prior political instability, vulnerable regions that experience decreased food and water availability may be especially prone to an outbreak of conflict. Anticipating further escalation of instability is becoming increasingly important to intelligence agencies as they seek to prepare policymakers to avoid and/or mitigate these threats.

Stresses from climate change will likely be non-linear, unpredictable, geographically and time variant. Fortunately, new advances in remote sensing satellite technologies offer intelligence agencies a heightened ability to predict, prepare, and alarm policymakers for both short-term and long-term meteorological events.

LINKING REMOTE SENSING SATELLITES TO FOOD AND WATER WARS

New research continues to shed light on the intersection between environmental scarcity and conflict. However, intelligence practitioners and policymakers will most likely seek out solutions to these challenges as they worsen over the coming decades with climate change.

This article highlights the advancement of remote sensing satellites as a viable tool for intelligence agencies to predict conflict and instability. It does this by comparing the traditional intelligence gathering practices to the new capabilities remote sensing satellites grant in predicting conflict induced by resource competition or scarcity. It uses two historical case studies to examine

⁴ Lagi, Marco, Karla Z. Bertrand, and Yaneer Bar-Yam. "The food crises and political instability in North Africa and the Middle East." *Available at SSRN 1910031* (2011).

⁵ Ribeiro, Wagner Costa, and Fernanda Mello Sant'Anna. "Water security and interstate conflict and cooperation." *Documents d'anàlisi geogràfica* 60, no. 3 (2014): 573-596.

⁶ Scheffran, Jürgen, Michael Brzoska, Hans Günter Brauch, P. Michael Link, and Janpeter Schilling, eds. *Climate change, human security and violent conflict: challenges for societal stability*. Vol. 8. Springer Science & Business Media, 2012.

⁷ Floyd, Rita. "The environmental security debate and its significance for climate change." *The International Spectator* 43, no. 3 (2008): 51-65.

the challenges intelligence agencies have with predicting such conflict. These challenges included the need for a fully-comprehensive intelligence collection methodology in anticipation for interstate conflict over shared water resources and unreliable climate models for predicting severe intrastate conflict-inducing drought. This article argues that inferior geospatial technologies in the past have not offered policymakers a widespread advantage in predicting resource conflicts. However, new technologies and methods offer governments the opportunity to do so in the future.

This article follows with a discussion on the strategic implications of the geospatial intelligence revolution as a solution towards anticipating such conflict in the coming era of climate change. It ends with an overview of the challenges and solutions intelligence agencies have in using this new information and ways they can productively integrate remote sensing satellites into their operations.

TRADITIONAL TACTICS

There are two modes by which scarce natural resources can exacerbate social unrest and worsen conflict. The first is through interstate disputes, often over riparian territory and boundaries.⁸ The second is domestic and is largely dependent on the availability of resources regardless of immediate actions taken by foreign entities. The former is more often resolved over a short-term basis. This is due to a greater number of actions that can be taken by policymakers to solve these issues in the short-run. For example, interstate disputes over shared water resources can easily be resolved through either diplomacy or force. Resource scarcities within countries, however, must be sustainably resolved through a more gradual shifting of economic specialization or international trade.

According to Homer-Dixon, however, interstate conflict is overall less likely to break out over scarce natural resources than intrastate conflict.⁹ Thus, intelligence agencies are more likely to predict state fragility, civil war, increased

⁸ Water resources are inextricably linked across boundaries. A country's water resources can only be sustained by inflows from upstream rills, gullies, streams, rivers, and tributaries. If any of these influxes are cut off, the total water retained by a country downstream is decreased. Tøset, Hans Petter Wollebæk, Nils Petter Gleditsch, and Håvard Hegre. "Shared rivers and interstate conflict." *Political Geography* 19, no. 8 (2000): 971-996.

⁹ Homer-Dixon, Thomas F. "Environmental scarcities and violent conflict: evidence from cases." *International security* 19, no. 1 (1994): 5-40.

authoritarianism, and migration as a result of scarce resources instead of conflicts over shared water by competing states.¹⁰ Nevertheless, this article uses case study examples of both types of conflict to provide a thorough discussion about the changing uses of geospatial intelligence as new technologies have emerged.

The following historical cases provide background to how intelligence agencies previously gained data on scarce natural resources. The first case describes a comprehensive and systematic approach to capturing this information during a time of increasing interstate tension that led to conflict. The second recounts the limitations scientists had with available technology and methods they used to anticipate intrastate fragility.

Interstate Conflict

Friction between states often arise over shared resources. Water, in particular, is a consistent source of conflict between nations for millennia.¹¹ When critical resources are deficient, disputes between states can develop rapidly. There are countless instances in which water has been a central component of conflict and nations have used forms of espionage to negate its seizure and control. Espionage acts as a vital tool for states that wish to gain a strategic advantage in the control of these resources. The lead up to the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War is one example.

Between November 1964 and May 1967, a series of confrontations emerged along Israel's northern borders with Syria and Lebanon, an area that is especially abundant in water resources when compared to the greater Levant region.¹² Called the "War over Water" these skirmishes had persisted since the ending of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. However, it was not until January 1964 when Arab states devised plans to divert waters away from Israel - that water began to play a central role in the region's increased tensions. Syria and Lebanon, in particular, convened to cut Israel's National Water Carrier supply by 35%.¹³ Numerous minor border clashes resulted. Israel reported 98 instances of encroachment by Syria between December

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ "Water Conflict Chronology." The World's Water. November 2009. Accessed November 23, 2016. <http://www2.worldwater.org/conflict/index.html>.

¹² Kolars, John. "Water resources of the Middle East." *Canadian Journal of Development Studies/Revue canadienne d'études du développement* 13, no. 4 (1992): 103-119.

¹³ Shapland, Greg. *Rivers of discord: International water disputes in the Middle East*. C. Hurst & Co. Publishers, 1997.

1962 and August 1963.¹⁴ These clashes eventually resulted in Israel's destruction of Arab heavy earth-moving machines that were used for the diversion plan.¹⁵ Despite the perception that Syria had lost interest in its plans following Israel's bombardment of bulldozers, the Syrian 1966 coup brought renewed activity to the riparian conflict. Numerous literature has since explained how these initial conflicts over water contributed to the fully-fledged Six-Day War.¹⁶

During the lead up to the war, clandestine agencies in Israel used a variety of tactics to collect key intelligence on the human geography and use of these water resources. According to Ian Black and Benny Morris in their book, *Israel's Secret Wars: The Untold History of Israeli Intelligence*, Israeli intelligence obtained a significant amount of data on the Golan Heights through photographic and imagery intelligence.¹⁷

Imagery intelligence obtained via air reconnaissance was often used to provide policymakers with the specific locations of major targets and points of interest. In the 1960s, imagery intelligence was still a new method of informing decision-makers of human geography phenomenon. Nearly all geospatial technologies could therefore only contribute to the development of *standard* products, as opposed to *specialized* products. Imagery collected at this time was always panchromatic, or black and white.¹⁸ These products could be used alone or combined with other layers of geographic information (such as vegetation or weather) to produce more accurate models of the environment.¹⁹

While the production and use of aerial photography was a major contributor towards Israel's intelligence collection, geographic information systems (GIS) were still in their pioneering age.²⁰ Thus, the development of

¹⁴ Seliktar, Ofira. "Turning water into fire: The Jordan River as the hidden factor in the Six-Day War." *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 9, no. 2 (2005): 57-71.

¹⁵ Morris, Benny. *Righteous victims: a history of the Zionist-Arab conflict, 1881-1998*. Vintage, 2011.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 12, 69.

¹⁷ Black, Ian, and Benny Morris. 1991. *Israel's secret wars: the untold history of Israeli intelligence*. London: Hamish Hamilton.

¹⁸ Standard products include maps, charts, imagery, and vector information while specialized products often combine multiple layers to create more complex and detailed products.

¹⁹ National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. Office of Geospatial-Intelligence Management. *Geospatial Intelligence (GEOINT) Basic Doctrine*. Publication 1-0. 2006.

²⁰ Coppock, J. Terry, and David W. Rhind. "The history of GIS." *Geographical information systems: Principles and applications* 1, no. 1 (1991): 21-43.

complex GIS products was often limited by available technology and resources. Israel therefore had to rely on other methods to capture further intelligence on the extraction of water resources in the Golan Heights.

Israeli use of signals intelligence²¹ also contributed significantly towards the country's understanding of Syrian infrastructure and fortification. Israeli intelligence regularly eavesdropped on radio transmissions and phone calls of military and political leaders between Syria, Jordan, and Egypt.²²

As strategists in Israel's defense forces required dependable data on the development of the water diversion project, intelligence collected from publicly available sources (open-source intelligence) was also used. This included the need to ascertain the project's engineering plans, diagrams, maps, as well as timely updates on Soviet influence on Syrian leaders.²³ The Arab Summit of September 1964 announced plans for the water diversion project, making much of this data publicly available through open-source outlets.²⁴ Because water availability is a major part of societal well-being, plans affecting its supply are often held in the public spotlight. The Arab states' water diversion project was no exception and Israel readily used this material.

Lastly, Israel utilized on-the-ground human intelligence to collect information on water resources in the Golan Heights. Perhaps most notably was the role Eli Cohen had in relaying a significant amount of data to Israel.²⁵ His findings on Syrian military posts adjacent to critical resources in the Golan Heights proved to be highly influential in Israel's bombing strategy in November 1964.²⁶ Israel utilized Cohen's human intelligence in combination with available geospatial, signals, and open-source intelligence to deploy strong responses against Syria's water diversion construction and military fortification.

It's clear that Israel's comprehensive intelligence strategy provided its military with an overwhelming advantage when war finally broke out in 1967. Had Israel not gathered information on the development and protection of new

²¹ Signals intelligence, on the other hand, is information gathered by the interception of communications between people.

²² Ibid. 16, 230.

²³ Shlaim, Avi. *The iron wall: Israel and the Arab world*. Penguin UK, 2015.

²⁴ U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. Office of Current Intelligence. *Special Report: The Jordan Waters Issue*. 1964.

²⁵ Britton, Wesley. "The Eli Cohen Files." (2009).

²⁶ Ibid.

infrastructure used to divert waters, the state may not have been able to gain a strategic edge in defeating Arab militaries on the Golan Heights front. As evidenced by the Israeli example, a combination of robust geospatial, signals, open-source, and human intelligence gathering techniques contributed to Israel's strategic advantage in the control of basic resources.

Intrastate Conflict

Tension over dwindling resources within a nation's borders can also induce social unrest and even conflict in extreme cases. The responsibility of capturing data on food and water security often rests on agencies that deal with the management of such resources, instead of intelligence agencies directly. Agencies that specialize in agricultural, oceanic, atmospheric, and other environmental domains may be called upon to capture such data. Additionally, emergency management agencies may be needed in times of short-term environmental crisis.

Declining abundance of food and water resources over time can pose security risks to nations. Adverse weather patterns, such as sustained drought or flooding, can significantly influence social unrest and even political instability. An example of this is the 1980 coup d'état in the Republic of Upper Volta (today Burkina Faso).

After gaining independence from France in 1960, Upper Volta was ruled by Maurice Yaméogo. However, in 1966, a successful coup started a long era of military rule under Lieutenant Colonel Sangoulé Lamizana. Throughout his regime, Lamizana faced increasing pressure from trade unions, political opposition groups, and perhaps most especially—drought.

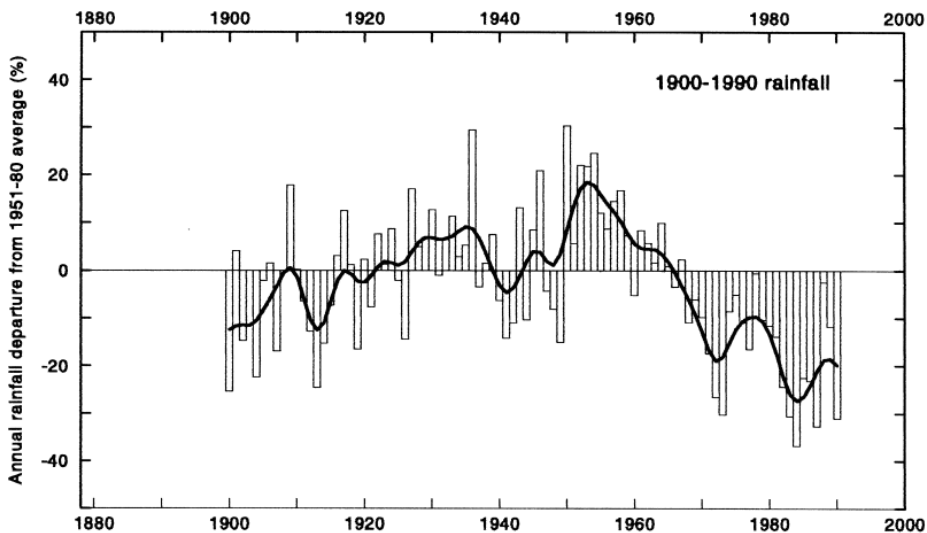
Situated on the border of the Sahara Desert and the Sudanian Savanna in Africa, the Sahel has long experienced periods of severe drought and flooding.²⁷ Between 1968–1974 and in the early 1980s, a particularly strong Sahel drought occurred. Sahelian rainfall in the late 20th century dropped by 20–30%.²⁸ It's

²⁷ Street-Perrott, F. Alayne, J. A. Holmes, M. P. Waller, M. J. Allen, N. G. H. Barber, P. A. Fothergill, D. D. Harkness, M. Ivanovich, D. Kroon, and R. A. Perrott. "Drought and dust deposition in the West African Sahel: a 5500-year record from Kajamarum Oasis, northeastern Nigeria." *The Holocene* 10, no. 3 (2000): 293-302.

²⁸ Hulme, Mike. "Climatic perspectives on Sahelian desiccation: 1973–1998." *Global Environmental Change* 11, no. 1 (2001): 19-29.

estimated that between 1960-1980, famine in the region killed over 100,000 people.²⁹ The drought prompted extensive action by outside countries and by 1979, 70% of the government's budget had come from foreign aid.³⁰ Additionally, the drought provoked far-reaching economic and political reforms.³¹ Numerous strikes broke out, which placed heavy pressure on Lamizana's government in November 1980. Finally, on November 25th 1980, Colonel Saye Zerbo led a bloodless military coup that overthrew President Lamizana.

Figure 1: Observed annual rainfall in the Sahel



(source: Hulme, 2001)³²

²⁹ Copans, Jean. "The Sahelian drought: social sciences and the political economy of underdevelopment." *Interpretations of calamity* (1983): 83-97.

³⁰ Rupley, Lawrence, Lamissa Bangali, and Boureima Diamitani. *Historical Dictionary of Burkina Faso*. Scarecrow Press, 2013.

³¹ Batterbury, Simon, and Andrew Warren. "The African Sahel 25 years after the great drought: assessing progress and moving towards new agendas and approaches." *Global Environmental Change* 11, no. 1 (2001): 1-8.

³² Ibid. 27.

During this period, policymakers primarily used meteorological and climate models to predict and prepare for disastrous climate events. In the 1960s, scientists at the Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory in Princeton, N.J. introduced a new way of understanding earth's global climate.³³ Using third generation computers, climatologists witnessed the relationships between the atmosphere, ocean, and climate. However, models between the 1960s and 1980s were still relatively primitive compared to today. Computers and satellites were not sophisticated enough to include the many variables needed to create robust and accurate projections of the earth's climate due to limitations of technology.

Hulme suggests that scientists were at fault for the region's unpreparedness for drought due to their fundamental misunderstanding of the Sahelian climate.³⁴ Additionally, some studies conducted poor analysis of the causes and conditions of the Sahelian drought, leading to incorrect conclusions. This is exemplified by Bunting et al., whose study at the time found no evidence to expect below average rainfall in the future.³⁵ Importantly, these false projections had significant consequences on policy makers' decision-making capabilities.³⁶ For example, the delayed arrival of critical aid was inadequate in preventing thousands of famine-related deaths.³⁷ Additionally, excessive overgrazing by livestock as well as construction of deep wells to tap water worsened the situation considerably.³⁸ Policymakers may have avoided these mistakes had they been more certain of continued drought in the future.

The lack of careful planning for instances of drought or flooding can have disastrous effects on a nation's domestic stability. The 1980 Upper Volta coup is an important lesson for climatologists, meteorologists, and government

³³ Schmidt, Laurie. "Satellite Observations One Key to Climate Models." *Global Climate Change*. April 11, 2013. Accessed November 21, 2016. <http://climate.nasa.gov/news/908/satellite-observations-one-key-to-climate-models/>.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 27.

³⁵ Bunting, ArHo, M. D. Dennett, J. Elston, and J. R. Milford. "Rainfall trends in the west African Sahel." *Quarterly Journal of the Royal Meteorological Society* 102, no. 431 (1976): 59-64.

³⁶ Hulme, M., and P. M. Kelly. "Exploring the linkages between climate change and desertification." *Environment* 35, no. 4 (1993): 39-45.

³⁷ Esseks, John D. "The Food Outlook for the Sahel: Regaining Self-Sufficiency or Continuing Dependence on International Aid?" *Africa Today* 22, no. 2 (1975): 45-56.

³⁸ Motha, Ray. "Recommendations on Drought Monitoring by the US National Drought Policy Commission." *Early Warning Systems for Drought Preparedness and Drought Management* (2000): 45.

agencies seeking to deliver the best available projections on water scarcity or excess precipitation. Fortunately, extensive technological shifts now enable scientists to better predict periods of resource insecurity. The development of satellite technology, in particular, is the cornerstone of the geospatial revolution. The next section examines these new advancements.

GEOSPATIAL REVOLUTION

Since NASA launched its first low-Earth orbital weather satellite in 1960, there has been a technological revolution in the geospatial intelligence arena.³⁹ The success of NASA's early weather satellites, such as TIROS-1, helped spark the advancement of more sophisticated earth observation satellites.⁴⁰ Most recently, innovations in satellite technology allow intelligence agencies to manage forecasting uncertainty and at times, uncover the causes behind the scarcity of natural resources.⁴¹ These innovations make it easier for scientists to develop early warning systems that more accurately predict severe weather events, such as drought.⁴² Additionally, these innovative technologies are allowing decision-makers to predict instances of instability based on available food and water.

New Markets

Following George H.W. Bush's signing of the Land Remote Sensing Policy Act of 1992, private companies were allowed to use high-resolution satellite technology for the first time.⁴³ This marked a new era for geospatial imagery as it fostered competition for newer technologies. In conjunction with emerging global positioning system (GPS) technologies; commercially available satellite imagery democratized the production, consumption, and exploitation of remote sensing and location-based data.⁴⁴ The passing of this legislation was the foundation of

³⁹ Downs, Roger M. "Coming of age in the geospatial revolution: The geographic self re-defined." *Human Development* 57, no. 1 (2014): 35-57.

⁴⁰ "TIROS." *NASA Science Beta*. NASA, 22 May 2016. Web. 21 Nov. 2016.

⁴¹ Foody, Giles M., and Peter M. Atkinson, eds. *Uncertainty in remote sensing and GIS*. John Wiley & Sons, 2003.

⁴² Kogan, Felix N. "Contribution of remote sensing to drought early warning." *Early warning systems for drought preparedness and drought management* (2000): 75-87.

⁴³ *Land Remote Sensing Policy Act*, U.S. Code 15 (1992), §§ 82

⁴⁴ Alderton, Matt. "The Defining Decade of GEOINT." *Trajectory Magazine*, 2014. Accessed November 21, 2016. <http://trajectorymagazine.com/trajectory-mag/item/1683-the-defining-decade-of-geoint.html>.

development for newer data gathering techniques that would subsequently be used by GEOINT practitioners.

New Data

New remote sensing satellites offer users the ability to predict and ascertain levels of precipitation, evapotranspiration, groundwater, and runoff for a given area, which were previously unmeasurable at such a large scale.⁴⁵ Additionally, as these technologies have matured, their accuracy and resolution has increased substantially.

Remote sensing satellites have been in use since the 1960s and 1970s to record the Earth's surface in different portions of the electro-magnetic spectrum. As the longest-running enterprise for acquisition of satellite imagery of Earth, the Landsat program in particular revolutionized the kind of data that is used for agriculture, cartography, geology, forestry, hydrology, and surveillance. Many consecutive satellite programs have broadened the variety of data that can be used for resource security needs. These programs are more often operated by agencies focused on the environment, as opposed to intelligence agencies directly. In the U.S., these include NASA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). However, intelligence agencies often find these data more useful as the linkages between resource security and conflict become better understood.⁴⁶ The primary U.S. GEOINT agency, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), has thus partnered with these agencies to develop more comprehensive products for intelligence personnel and decision-makers.

New Products

Newer data has sparked the creation of more interactive and intelligible GEOINT products. Specialized GEOINT products use standard products as a

⁴⁵ Remote sensing acquires information about objects or phenomenon of the earth from a distance, often via aircraft or satellites. Sensors measure the amount of electromagnetic radiation (EMR) emitted from objects or a geographic area. Data is then extracted using mathematically and statistically-based algorithms.

⁴⁶ Fingar, Thomas. *National intelligence assessment on the national security implications of global climate change to 2030: Statement for the record of Dr. Thomas Fingar*. US House of Representatives, 2008.

foundation but have added capabilities.⁴⁷ These products are recently developed by combining data from multiple sources and utilize a variety of intelligence gathering methods. The development of new remote sensing technologies has allowed these products' potential to grow, particularly through increasing satellite capabilities. A key component of this process has been the utilization of a fourth dimension – time. This has provided intelligence agencies with the ability to ascertain context and changes over multiple dates, as well as tracking functionality to create dynamic, interactive products. Better products that describe the earth's environment can allow policymakers to more easily understand and predict instances of resource insecurity.

New Methods

In order to ensure that GEOINT products are comprehensive, agencies typically incorporate a rigorous method of intelligence analysis. Over the last decade, the NGA modified a commonly used analytic methodology (Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace or JIPB) so that products can be used for non-military intelligence problems.¹⁰ The new Geospatial Intelligence Preparation of the Environment process enables both military as well as non-battlefield decision-makers to predict or respond to national security special events, disaster relief, noncombatant evacuations, and to specific national security requirements.¹⁰ The NGA's revision of JIPB is especially important given predicted increasing civilian and non-traditional threats as a result of climate change.⁴⁸

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Innovations in satellite technologies and their use have a wide array of strategic implications for both GEOINT practitioners as well as decision-makers. However, there are specific implications for the purposes of gathering intelligence on food and water resources and their relation to the political stability of nations. This section provides a brief synopsis of the meaning behind the GEOINT

⁴⁷ United States. Joint Force Command. *Geospatial Intelligence in Joint Operations*. N.p., 14 July 2014. Web. 22 Nov. 2016.

⁴⁸ Femia, Francesco, and Caitlin Werrell. *UPDATE: Climate and Security 101: Why the U.S. National Security Establishment Takes Climate Change Seriously*. Report no. 23. The Center for Climate and Security. February 26, 2014. Accessed November 21, 2016. https://climateandsecurity.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/update_climate-and-security-101_why-the-u-s-national-security-establishment-takes-climate-change-seriously_briefer-232.pdf.

revolution for the security of food and water.

Food Security

New remote sensing satellite technologies have the ability to provide greater insight on agricultural productivity. A wide range of data can be obtained via remote sensing applications in site specific crop management (SSCM). These data can allow users to ascertain climate, soil, weed, and disease conditions for a given area of agricultural land.⁴⁹ This information can then be used for either management or prediction purposes. In the context of GEOINT, practitioners can use this information to produce maps that predict overall crop yield. Thus, food availability for communities reliant on these resources can be estimated. Decision-makers can also make use of these estimations by creating reactive policies that mitigate food shortages in these areas.

NASA's January 2015 launch of the Soil Moisture Active Passive (SMAP) mission satellite is an example of these new capabilities. In addition to offering better predictions of weather, climate, drought, and flooding; SMAP will improve crop yield forecasts throughout the world.⁵⁰ These improved seasonal soil moisture forecasts will also make famine early warning systems more robust, thereby providing critical information for intelligence agencies focused on political instability as a result of food insecurity.

Perhaps most important is the use of these satellites in regions where SSCM capabilities are poor. SSCM via satellites alleviates the need for travel, equipment hauling, and considerable logistics planning. Thus, compared to conventional sources; satellite data is often very timely, reliable, and inexpensive to acquire globally.⁵¹ Satellite imagery in areas with few technological resources are critical because they provide visual data in places otherwise limited to such information.

⁴⁹ Atherton, B. C., M_T Morgan, S. A. Shearer, T. S. Stombaugh, and A. D. Ward. "Site-specific farming: A perspective on information needs, benefits and limitations." *Journal of soil and water conservation* 54, no. 2 (1999): 455-461.

⁵⁰ Entekhabi, Dara, Eni G. Njoku, Peggy E. O'Neill, Kent H. Kellogg, Wade T. Crow, Wendy N. Edelstein, Jared K. Entin et al. "The soil moisture active passive (SMAP) mission." *Proceedings of the IEEE* 98, no. 5 (2010): 704-716.

⁵¹ Lindsey, Rebecca, and Curt Reynolds. "Just Add Water: A Modern Agricultural Revolution in the Fertile Crescent." Earth Observatory. September 15, 2003. Accessed November 25, 2016. <http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Features/HarranPlains/>.

Water Security

The ability to determine levels of water security can also be bolstered by the use of new remote sensing satellites. Earth observation satellites can be used to monitor and predict groundwater supplies, evapotranspiration, precipitation, flooding, drought, and atmospheric changes in a given region. Similar to the application of SSCM, water availability for communities can be estimated based on this data.

Nations prone to increased water scarcity in the coming decades are investing in these technologies to better manage and prepare for drought and instability. Egypt, for example, launched its EgyptSat 2 satellite in April 2014 to monitor the country's water security and the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, among other mission objectives.⁵² This occurred amid disputes with Ethiopia over construction of the dam.⁵³ Since its launch, the satellite has captured intelligence on Ethiopia's intentions for the dam.⁵⁴ It's likely for more remote sensing satellites to be launched in regions already sensitive to water scarcity.

Utilization for Predicting Conflict

Unlike agricultural systems, the water boundaries are often difficult to define. Agricultural land can be divided more easily than bodies of water; as such boundaries over water are often highly contested between states.⁵⁵ Interstate disputes are therefore more likely to breakout over scarce water than food. This implies that in order to predict conflict between nation states, intelligence agencies should observe riparian boundaries more closely than agricultural productivity as a source for tension. Thus, new remote sensing satellites can be best utilized by intelligence agencies to predict *intrastate* conflict resulting from food and water insecurity.

The geospatial revolution has enabled intelligence agencies to easily capture data on scarce natural resources. Compared to prior methods, remote sensing

⁵² Aman, Ayah, and Kamal Fayad. "Egyptian Satellite Will Monitor Water Security, Renaissance Dam." *Al-Monitor*, May 8, 2014. Accessed November 26, 2016. <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/05/egypt-satellite-launch-space-program-renaissance-dam.html>.

⁵³ Hussein, Walaa, and Joelle El-Khoury. "Water Wars Intensify between Egypt, Ethiopia." *Al-Monitor*, March 3, 2016. Accessed November 26, 2016. <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/03/egypt-ethiopia-renaissance-dam-water-storage-nile-dispute.html>.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Cole, George M. *Water boundaries*. Vol. 4. John Wiley & Sons, 1997.

satellites offer both added capability and accuracy towards predicting resource insecurity. This has also alleviated the need for comprehensive operations, such as the systematic use of multiple forms of intelligence gathering in order to ascertain whether scarce resources pose risk towards nations. The next section reviews the application of new remote sensing satellites in modern-day conflict situations. It includes an overview of the remaining challenges intelligence agencies face and the solutions they need in order to alleviate them.

APPLICATIONS

The greater use of newer GEOINT methods and technologies has been matched by increased threats on food and water resources. The 2014 Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) found a wide-range of consequences for human societies as a result of increasing vulnerabilities to the world's freshwater resources from climate change.⁵⁶ The AR5 found that climate change will likely increase the frequency of both meteorological droughts (less rainfall) and agricultural droughts (less soil moisture) in regions that are already dry. Additionally, the AR5 found the likelihood for increased competition over water among agriculture, ecosystems, settlements, industry, and energy production in most dry regions throughout the globe.⁵⁷ This will likely negatively affect regional food and water security.

Homer-Dixon's 1994 study suggests that internal conflict resulting from environmental scarcity can lead to either the fragmentation of states, which could drive large out-migrations, or it could lead to increased authoritarianism, which could ignite international conflict.⁵⁸ The former was seen in the case of the Arab Spring that started in December 2010.

⁵⁶ Barros, V. R., C. B. Field, D. J. Dokke, M. D. Mastrandrea, K. J. Mach, T. E. Bilir, M. Chatterjee et al. "Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Part B: Regional Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change." (2014).

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 8.

Case Study: Climate Change and the Arab Spring

Over the last several years, evidence has mounted that climate change was a major threat multiplier in the breakout of revolts across the Arab world.⁵⁹ A 2012 report by Lieutenant Colonel El Hassane Aissa of the Moroccan Army found many of the primary causes of the Arab Spring to be within the socio-political arena.⁶⁰ Potential causes included the lack of economic sovereignty, political disaffection, provocation of social media, and poor education. However, Aissa also noted the significant role resource insecurity had with the sparking of mass protests and revolts.

While numerous studies have determined the causes behind the Arab Spring, President Barack Obama was disappointed with the intelligence community's (IC) failure to anticipate instability before it occurred.⁶¹ This may have been partially due to numerous issues with the IC's access and use of information related to resource security and its relationship with climate change. Major tools that estimate state fragility and climate vulnerability detected an improving overall trend in the five years prior to the uprisings in Syria and Egypt.⁶² This is despite measurable climate events that induced greater food and water insecurity, which created the conditions that contributed to instability in the region.⁶³ There are clear issues with available tools that predict state fragility as a consequence of resource insecurity. Several of these challenges can be identified with respect to the use of remote sensing satellites by intelligence agencies.

⁵⁹ Werrell, Caitlin E., Francesco Femia, and Anne-Marie Slaughter. "A Climate and Security Correlations Series." Center for American Progress. February 28, 2013. Accessed November 24, 2016. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/reports/2013/02/28/54579/the-arab-spring-and-climate-change/>.

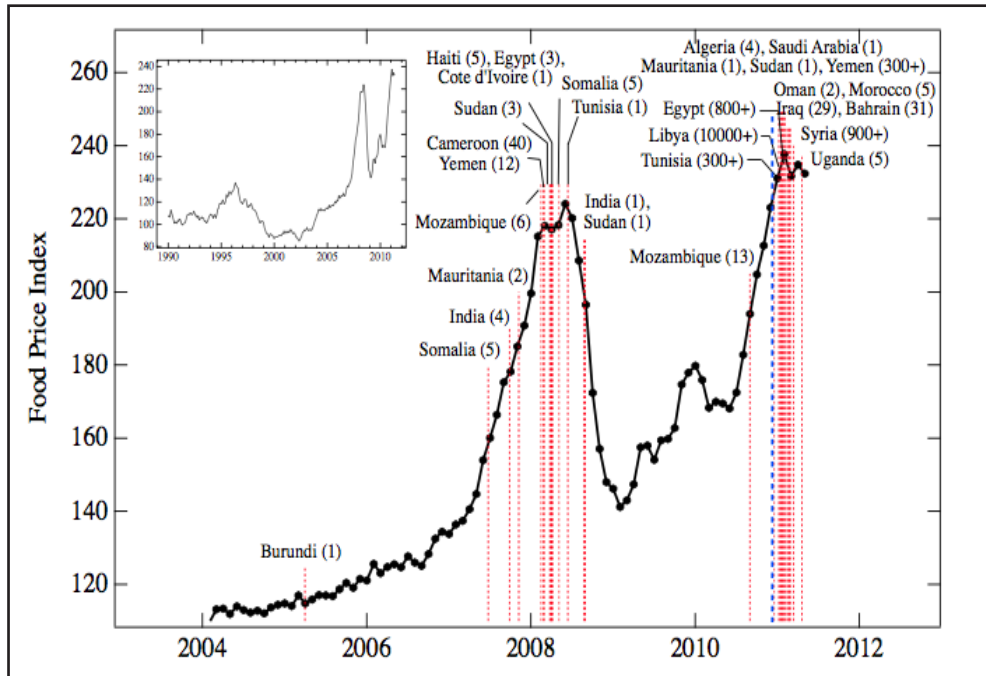
⁶⁰ Aissa, El Hassane. *The Arab Spring: causes, consequences, and implications*. U.S. Army War College. Carlisle, PA. March 2012.

⁶¹ Morell, Michael. *The Great War of Our Time: The CIA's Fight Against Terrorism--from Al Qa'ida to ISIS*. Hachette UK, 2015.

⁶² Werrell, Caitlin E., Francesco Femia, and Troy Sternberg. "Did we see it coming?: State fragility, climate vulnerability, and the uprisings in Syria and Egypt." *SAIS review of international affairs* 35, no. 1 (2015): 29-46.

⁶³ Ibid.

Figure 2: FAO Food Price Index and ‘food riots’ in North Africa and the Middle East. The overall death toll is reported in parentheses



(source: Lagi et al.)⁶⁴

Challenges

According to Kaplan, a lack of information sharing as well as an absence of a central authority on the intersection between resource security, climate, and political instability has hindered the IC’s analytic capabilities.⁶⁵ While the USGS Civil Applications Committee (CAC) forms a bridge between the IC and U.S. scientific agencies, Kaplan called for greater coordination between these

⁶⁴ Ibid. 3.

⁶⁵ Kaplan, Melanie. “A Signal from the Noise.” *Trajectory Magazine*, 2015. Accessed November 24, 2016. <http://trajectorymagazine.com/trajectory-mag/item/2029-a-signal-from-the-noise.html>.

organizations. This is exemplified by the CIA's shut down of its Center on Climate Change and National Security in 2012 as well as its most recent shut down of its core climate research program, Measurements of Earth Data for Environmental Analysis (MEDEA) in 2015.⁶⁶

In addition to the bureaucratic challenges facing GEOINT practitioners, there are also issues with scientists' ability to predict exactly when and where periods of severe climatic events occur. Research reports, such as the AR5, instead give insight on the overall trends the earth's climate and weather may bring to particular regions. Additionally, understanding how specific communities would adapt to such environmental shifts is perhaps just as important, yet difficult to ascertain. From an applications perspective, these challenges may partially explain the IC's failure to predict food and water insecurity in Arab states, and therefore the Arab Spring at-large.

Solutions

As the GEOINT revolution has brought new organizations, data, products, and methods to the table; intelligence agencies are more able to predict periods of instability as a result of scarce resources. While their capabilities increase, it is yet to be seen whether these new tools have been effectively put to use in predicting and quelling social unrest from climate change. It's therefore critical for state civilian agencies, intelligence practitioners, and militaries to work more collaboratively by utilizing the full potential of remote sensing satellite technologies and techniques.

In recognition of these needs, the NGA has launched a variety of initiatives to work more closely with civilian scientists focused on the security of natural resources. This included a \$20 million multi-year research grant to Arizona State University for the purposes of studying climate change and anticipatory analytics.⁶⁷ However, empirical research on the use of remote sensing satellites by intelligence agencies is needed. Additionally, examining what the best practices are for intelligence agencies can help improve anticipatory strategies for dealing with outbreaks of political instability, state fragility, and conflict.

⁶⁶ Plautz, Jason. "CIA Shuts Down Climate Research Program." *The Atlantic*, May 21, 2015. Accessed November 24, 2016. <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/05/cia-shuts-down-climate-research-program/452502/>.

⁶⁷ National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. "NGA, Arizona State University to Study Climate Change, Anticipatory Analytics with \$20 Million Research Grant." News release, 2014. NGA. Accessed November 24, 2016. <https://www.nga.mil/MediaRoom/News/Pages/ASUGrant.aspx>.

CONCLUSION

This article highlights remote sensing satellite technologies as a new method in gathering intelligence on critical food and water resources. As conflicts over these resources continue to breakout, the use of these technologies will become more recognized and important for intelligence agencies. Climate change will further limit the availability of these resources and will therefore place greater stress on communities. Anticipating these effects will be necessary as food and water insecurity are significant threat multipliers to the stability of nations. Innovations in remote sensing satellites offers GEOINT practitioners an enhanced capability to fulfill these needs.

While remote sensing satellites offer intelligence agencies enhanced capabilities than before, it has yet to be seen whether they have been successful in predicting instability as a result of scarce food or water resources. Empirical research on the efficacy of remote sensing satellites to anticipate state fragility and conflict is desired. Additionally, further investigation on the connections and gaps between the IC and civilian agencies is needed in order to determine best practices and offer further recommendations. Policymakers would find such research especially useful as it would allow them to determine what programs are worthy of further investments in order to bolster national security and global stability.

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ALIENATING ETHNIC KIN: ASSESSING IMMIGRATION INTEGRATION POLICIES FOR THE BRAZILIAN *NIKKEIJIN* IN JAPAN AND *JOSEONJOK* MARRIAGE MIGRANTS IN SOUTH KOREA

KENNETH LEE¹

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, Japan and South Korea have become hosts to ethnic return migrants who have returned to their ancestral homeland after once emigrating overseas. Since the 1980s, the Brazilian *nikkeijin*, or members of the Japanese diaspora, have returned to Japan as labor migrants. From 1992, *joseonjok*, or ethnic Korean Chinese, migrant women traveled to South Korea to marry Korean men. Japan and South Korea have targeted these groups for their ethnic affinities—the attraction and kinship between the homeland population and returning migrants—on the presumption that they would integrate well into these two societies, where a “virtual equation between the state, nation, and ethnicity”² exists. However, these ethnic affinities between the diaspora and the homeland population did not materialize.

Academics such as Takeyuki Tsuda and Keiko Yamanaka, who focus on the Brazilian *nikkeijin* case, and Dong-Hoon Seol and Caren Freeman, who

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² John Lie, “The Discourse of Japaneseness,” in *Japan and Global Migration: Foreign Workers and the Advent of a Multicultural Society*, ed. Mike Douglass and Glenda Susan Roberts (New York: Routledge, 2000), 81. Lie’s monograph, *Multiethnic Japan*, offers a discussion on the ‘Japaneseness’ equation and *nihonjinron*, a popular genre of texts that synonymously explores nationality, ethnicity, and culture. For an examination of the parallels between *nihonjinron* and Korean nation identity, see Kyung-koo Han, “The Anthropology of the Discourse on the Koreanness of Koreans,” *Korea Journal* 43, no. 1 (2003): 5–31.

focus on the *joseonjok* case, have provided much anthropological scholarship on the difficulties these ethnic return migrants face upon returning “home.” Unfortunately, English-language scholarship has not followed up on the pivot of both the Japanese and Korean national governments to finally address immigration integration issues that the return migrants face.

In Japan, following the 2008 economic crisis, Cabinet Office issued the *Nikkei Teiju Gaikokujin Shisaku Ni Kansuru Koudou Keigaku* (henceforth the Action Plan for *Nikkeijin* Foreign Resident Policy), in August 2010. In South Korea, the *Damunhwa Gajok Jjiwonbeop* (henceforth the Support for Multicultural Families Act), enacted in 2008, is a broad set of regulations to improve the quality of life of foreign spouses and integrate them into Korean social life. As both countries nominally recognize the importance of multiculturalism in a globalizing world, the narrative of ethnic return migrants and their relationship with the social myths of homogeneity in their ethnic-based understandings of citizenship become lost in a generalized discourse about Japan and South Korea’s embrace towards *all* its foreign-born residents. This is unfortunate, as the shared ethnicity between the diaspora and the homeland population challenges existing conceptions of what is foreign in ethnic societies.

Considering the parallel social histories of both the Brazilian *nikkeijin* and the *joseonjok*, and the broadly similar experiences—powerful visions of ethnic homogeneity, long-term demographic challenges, and a nascent recognition of multiculturalism by the respective national governments—in both country cases, I attempt to assess the national government level initiatives to support their social integration. It also hopes to continue the ethnic return migrants’ narratives that Tsuda, Seol, and others began.

I argue that these national-level policy initiatives to integrate ethnic return migrants are incomplete. As token commitments to multiculturalism, the policies focus on rebuilding ethnic affinities that the homeland nation-state expects them to reproduce as descendants of the same ethnic group. However, the assimilationist ideology behind the policies perpetuate the marginalization of these individuals in a hierarchical nationhood by virtue of their shared ancestry but different cultural behaviors, because the migrants are unwilling to reproduce these expectations to earn their inclusion in their ancestral homelands. The policies also fail to reconcile the challenge to the presumed equation of ethnic identity and cultural behavior that the return migrants create for the homeland

population. Since the policies are skewed in the homeland population's interests, the interests of the return migrants become invisible.

RETURN MIGRANTS AND IMMIGRATION IN ETHNIC NATIONS

Weber defines an ethnic group as one that “on the basis of similarities of exterior habitus, of customs, or of both... [shares] a subjective belief in communality of descent, whether an objective consanguinity exists or not.”³ In the context of ethnic return migration, since both the homeland population and returning diaspora are descendants from the same antecedent ethnic group, the homeland population would believe that the return migrants share ethnic-based similarities. Thus, in countries with an ethnic-based understanding of citizenship, a returning member of the diaspora would be less disruptive to the ethnic organization of their societies than another immigrant with no relationship to that ethnic group. Diasporas respond to the homeland nation's call, because they originate from “massive emigration and dispersal—forced or at least propelled by considerable distress,” and thus innately long to return ‘home.’⁴

In theory, inviolable ethnic affinities would create large return migrant communities under preferential immigration policies. But that is not the case in either Japan or South Korea. Once the third largest group of foreign residents behind the *Zainichi* Koreans, the population of all Brazilian *nikkeijin* resident in Japan peaked at 313,771 in 2007, and fell by over 40 percent from 2007 and 2014.⁵ It fell over 40 percent from 2007 to 2014 (Figure 1). Japan's Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, even announced in a program 2009 to pay unemployed *nikkeijin* JPY 300,000 each to return to their home countries.⁶ According to the

³ Christian Joppke, *Selecting by Origin: Ethnic Migration in the Liberal State* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005), 4.

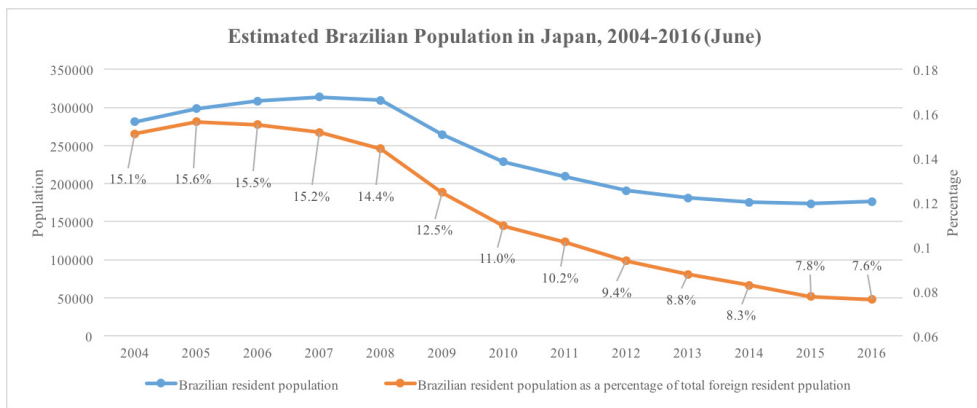
⁴ Rudd Koopmans and Paul Statham, “How National Citizenship Shapes Transnationalism: Migrant and Minority Claims-Making in Germany, Great Britain and the Netherlands,” in *Toward Assimilation and Citizenship: Immigrants in Liberal Nation-States*, ed. Christian Joppke and Ewa Morawska (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 201.

⁵ Because Japanese census data is based on nationality (*kokuseki*), not ethnicity or race, the numbers cited here technically refer to the number of residents with Brazilian *nationality* in Japan without regard to their ethnicity, *nikkeijin* or otherwise. The Japanese-language literature, however, makes the assumption that *Zainichi* Brazilians refer to *nikkeijin* Brazilians who entered Japan on preferential immigration policies, so I do the same.

⁶ Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan, “Nikkeijin Rishokusha Ni Taisuru Kikoku Shien Jigyō No Jisshi Ni Tsuite (日系人離職者に対する帰国支援事業の実施について),” March 31, 2009, <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/houdou/2009/03/h0331-10.html>.

Migration Policy Institute, 12,356 Brazilian *nikkeijin*, representing 93.7 percent of the total applications, applied to leave Japan.⁷ On the other hand, the number of *joseonjok* brides entering South Korea has seen negative growth in recent years, leading some scholars to conclude that studies of the population “captures a moment in time that is now passing.”⁸ Figure 2 shows that in recent years, international marriages have increasingly involved migrant spouses outside of China, especially from Southeast Asia, although *joseonjok* spouses remain in the plurality at 32.1 percent.⁹

Figure 1:



(Source: Ministry of Justice, Japan)¹⁰

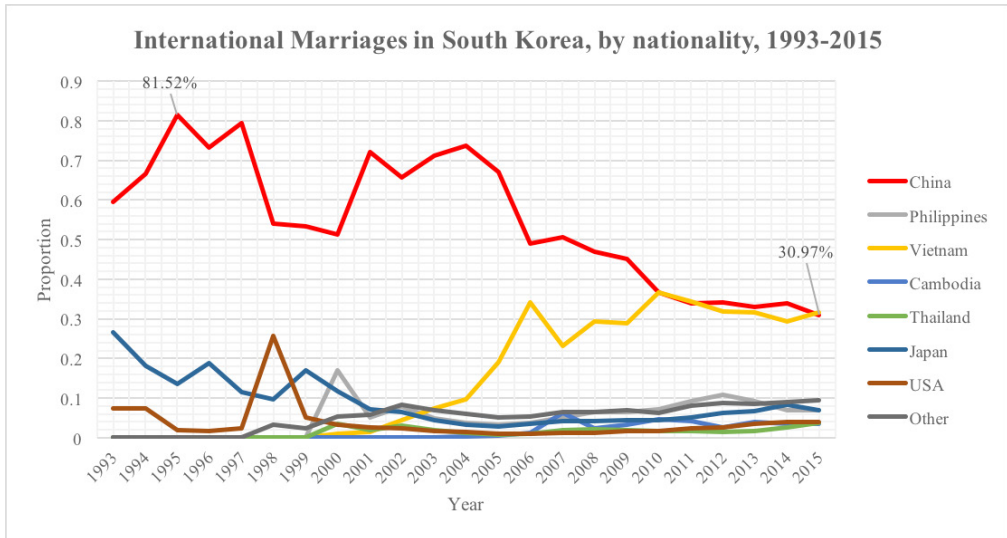
⁷ Kristen McCabe et al., “Pay to Go: Countries Offer Cash to Immigrants Willing to Pack Their Bags,” *Migration Policy Institute*, November 5, 2009, <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/pay-go-countries-offer-cash-immigrants-willing-pack-their-bags>.

⁸ Yihua Hong, Changzoo Song, and Julie Park, “Korean, Chinese, or What? Identity Transformations of Chosŏnjok (Korean Chinese) Migrant Brides in South Korea,” *Asian Ethnicity* 14, no. 1 (2013): 30, doi:10.1080/14631369.2012.703074.

⁹ Korean Institute for Healthy Family, “Multicultural Information: Multicultural Families Statistic,” *Danuri*, accessed November 29, 2016, <http://www.liveinkorea.kr/homepage/en/multidata/statisticsFamily.asp?language=EN&mc=M0031>.

¹⁰ Ministry of Justice, Japan, “Heisei 28-Nen 6-Gatsumatsu Genzai Ni Okeru Zairyuu Gaikokujin Nitsuite (Kakuteichi) (平成28年6月末現在における在留外国人数について (確定値)),” September 27, 2016, http://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyuukokukanri04_00060.html.

Figure 2:¹¹



(Source: Korean Statistical Information Service)¹²

The above data shows in practice the artificiality and elasticity of ethnicity critical to Weber’s definition. A return migrant lacks absolute control over their ethnic identity, regardless of how much kinship they believe they have with the ancestral homeland. Who they are and how they can exist is “externally imposed by dominant society.”¹³ The homeland state, as the collective entity with hegemonic ownership of “distinct ancestry and destiny definitions” over the ethnic group that occupies its territory, has the agency to define the expectations of who a legitimate ethnic group member is, and hence whether to embrace or reject its returning

¹¹ Similar to the Brazilian *nikkeijin* case, the statistics in Figure 2 includes Chinese, non-ethnic Korean spouses in international marriage, since discrete statistics about *joseonjok* are not available in the English language. Since the Support for Multicultural Families Act is not a policy that only targets *joseonjok*, the statistics may reflect how the policy neglects the specific interests of *joseonjok* brides.

¹² Korean Statistical Information Service, “Marriages by Foreign Bride’s Nationality for Provinces,” Statistical Database, April 7, 2016, http://kosis.kr/eng/statisticsList/statisticsList_01List.jsp?vwcd=MT_ETITLE&parmTabId=M_01_01#SubCont.

¹³ Tsuda, *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland*, 131.

diaspora.¹⁴ Germany stopped its preferential immigration policy for ethnic Germans in 1992, because the Russian and Eastern European ethnic Germans who were “notionally co-ethnic but sociologically [not]” were experiencing “adjustment and integration problems similar to those of ‘normal’ immigrants.”¹⁵ As the German ethnic group’s dominant center, Germany unilaterally denied these ethnic Germans from legitimately staking ownership of their ancestry; they were a “conceptual anomaly.”¹⁶ Return migrants who cannot reproduce the behaviors they should naturally know and should correctly perform, by virtue of their ancestry, face the “exasperation and disbelief” from the homeland population. Their existence challenges the binary classification that either one is part of the ethnic group or not: here is a group of migrants whose shared ancestry does not translate into shared cultural behaviors. Recalling how her Japanese informants judged how well she reproduced the behaviors they expected of a young Japanese woman, Kondo, a Japanese-American anthropologist, succinctly summarizes the homeland population’s ethnically-conditioned puzzle: “How could someone who *looked* Japanese not *be* Japanese?”¹⁷

Seol and Skrentny define this dichotomy of being neither a complete outsider to or a pure member of the ethnic nation as “hierarchical nationhood.” Traditionally, discourse on citizenship, such as Anderson’s “imagined community,” conceptualized citizens sharing “a deep, horizontal comradeship” to the nation.¹⁸ In “hierarchical nationhood,” return migrants “do not share in the rights and opportunities of full members of the nation” because of their association with the second country that they emigrated to, rendering them “generations removed from the kin state.”¹⁹

A nation-state can create hierarchical nationhood through legal and social means. Visas and work permits create structures to block return migrants from receiving the same economic opportunities as ‘pure’ members of the ethnic

¹⁴ Joppke, *Selecting by Origin*, ix.

¹⁵ Joppke, *Contesting Ethnic Immigration*, 95.

¹⁶ Dorinne K. Kondo, “Dissolution and Reconstitution of Self: Implications for Anthropological Epistemology,” *Cultural Anthropology* 1, no. 1 (1986): 76.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 76.

¹⁸ Dong-Hoon Seol and John D. Skrentny, “Ethnic Return Migration and Hierarchical Nationhood: Korean Chinese Foreign Workers in South Korea,” *Ethnicities* 9, no. 2 (2009): 150–51, doi:10.1177/1468796808099901.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 151.

group. Social expectations for legitimate ethnic behavior render the returning diaspora in the eyes of the homeland population as cultural disappointments who have become “culturally contaminated abroad.”²⁰ The question then is whether an assimilationist integration policy can address the marginalization of return migrants by dismantling the social structures of ethnic hierarchical nationhood.

THE BRAZILIAN *NIKKEIJIN*: ALIENATION AND DEGREES OF “JAPANESENESS”

Background

The Brazilian *nikkeijin* return migrants are descendants of Japanese citizens who have emigrated overseas since the Meiji period (1868-1912).²¹ Fearing unrest from population pressures, the government provided ample logistical and financial support.²² 188,209 Japanese citizens migrated from 1899 to 1941 to Brazil, whose coffee plantations needed labor following the abolition of slavery.²³ After a brief hiatus during World War II, between 1952 and 1963 a further 46,000 Japanese immigrants entered Brazil.²⁴ The Japanese International Cooperation Agency continued to support emigration to Brazil until 1993.²⁵

By the 1960s, urbanization and rapid economic development produced middle class *nikkeijin* descendants who had “grown up in Brazil, spoke Portuguese and knew little of Japanese language and culture.”²⁶ But hyperinflation in the 1980s threatened the *nikkeijin* professional class. Japan was facing a labor shortage during the bubble economy period.²⁷ Seeing an opportunity, the Brazilian *nikkeijin* began returning to Japan to earn higher wages than they would in Brazil. A network of

²⁰ Tsuda, *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland*, 131.

²¹ Daniela De Carvalho, *Migrants and Identity in Japan and Brazil: The Nikkeijin* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 4.

²² Michael O. Sharpe, *Postcolonial Citizens and Ethnic Migration: The Netherlands and Japan in the Age of Globalization* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 119.

²³ Koji Sasaki, “Between Emigration and Immigration: Japanese Emigrants to Brazil and Their Descendants in Japan,” *Transnational Migration in East Asia Senri Ethnological Reports* 77 (2008): 54.

²⁴ Sharpe, *Postcolonial Citizens and Ethnic Migration*, 122.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 122.

²⁶ Keiko Yamanaka, “Return Migration of Japanese-Brazilians to Japan: The Nikkeijin as Ethnic Minority and Political Construct,” *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 5, no. 1 (1996): 73, doi:10.1353/dsp.1996.0002.

²⁷ Fukui Chizu, “Nanbei Nikkeijin Ni Kakawaru Mondai To Kaketsusaku No Ichi Kousatsu (南米日系人に関わる問題と解決策の一考察),” *Takasaki Keizai Daigaku Ronshu* (高崎経済大学論集) 52, no. 2 (2009): 74.

recruiters and return migrants formed between Japan and Brazil, encouraging second and third-generation *nikkeijin*, especially those without Japanese language proficiency, to connect to employment opportunities in Japan.²⁸ Despite the “relative absence of close economic or political relationships between the two countries,” according to Tsuda, Brazilian *nikkeijin* kept a Japanese “ethnic consciousness” for socioeconomic status privileges *vis-à-vis* other Brazilians, leading to “feelings of nostalgic longing for the ancestral homeland” and therefore “a desire to visit the country of their parents and grandparents.”²⁹ By 1996, over 200,000 Brazilian *nikkeijin* had settled in Japan, representing 16 percent of the number of people with Japanese descent in Brazil.³⁰ They settled as contract laborers in factories in cities, such as Hanamatsu, Shizuoka and Oizumi, which predominately contained small and medium manufacturing firms that had difficulty attracting enough Japanese citizen laborers since the 1980s, and were employing undocumented workers from Pakistan and Bangladesh.³¹

To simplify admitting the influx of Brazilian *nikkeijin*, the government revised the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Law in 1989. The law created a new *teijusha* (‘long-term resident’) visa status tailored specifically for second and third-generation *nikkeijin*. They could stay for up to three years with no restrictions on their employment activities and renew their status indefinitely.³² The *teijusha* visa effectively created a “side door” for unskilled labor without establishing a formal immigration policy.³³ Ministry of Justice officials tailored the *teijusha* visa for *nikkeijin* because, according to one who spoke with Tsuda, “if people have blood ties or descendants from that nationality, the same nationality then of course it is easier to accept those people.” Admitting

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 73.

²⁹ Takeyuki Tsuda, *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland: Japanese Brazilian Return Migration in Transnational Perspective* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 90-91.

³⁰ Yamanaka, “I Will Go Home, But When?”, 134.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 138.

³² Yasuki Izawa, “‘Tabunka Kyousei’ no Sogo: Zainichiburajirujin No Genjou to Shisaku No Seigou/Fuseigou (「多文化共生」の齟齬：在日ブラジル人の現状と施策の整合/不整合),” *Toyo Daigaku Ningenkagaku Sougoukenkyusho Kiyou* (東洋大学人間科学総合研究所紀要), no. 15 (2013): 88.

³³ Michael O. Sharpe, “What Does Blood Membership Mean in Political Terms?: The Political Incorporation of Latin American Nikkeijin (Japanese Descendants) (LAN) in Japan 1990–2004,” *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 12, no. 1 (2011): 123, doi:10.1017/S1468109910000253.

nikkeijin aligned with the national interest, not only because the government could discourage firms from employing undocumented workers, but also “ethnic homogeneity and cultural continuity were crucially important to the public.”³⁴

The Nikkeijin Action Plan

The 2008 economic crisis disproportionately hurt the Brazilian *nikkeijin*. As contract workers in factories, they were the first to be fired.³⁵ One survey in Hanamatsu by a local non-government organization (NGO) in January 2009 interviewed 2,773 Brazilian *nikkeijin* and found that 47 percent self-reported that they were unemployed.³⁶ The remaining community was a shadow of its former self. Only one of the four Portuguese-language newspapers survived, sixteen schools for the Brazilian community closed its doors, and mainstream media ran feature reports on Brazilians living in abandoned karaoke clubs.³⁷

In January 2009, the Cabinet Office established the *Teiju Gaikokujin Shisaku Suishin Shitsu* (Council to Advance Long-Term Resident Policies) to address the mass unemployment and poverty faced by the Brazilian *nikkeijin* who remained. To scaffold its policy of integrating the Brazilian *nikkeijin*, the Cabinet Office issued the *Nikkei Teijyu Gaikokujin Shisaku Ni Kansuru Kinhon Shishin* (日系定住外国人施策に関する基本指針, henceforth the Basic Guidelines) in August 2010. One year later, the Cabinet Office released the Action Plan, based on the Basic Guidelines (see Appendix 1). The Action Plan categorizes areas where ministries can enact policies to incorporate *nikkeijin* residents as members of Japanese society.³⁸

³⁴ Yamanaka, “Return Migration,” 76.

³⁵ Michael O. Sharpe, “When Ethnic Returnees Are de Facto Guestworkers: What Does the Introduction of Latin American Japanese Nikkeijin (Japanese Descendants) (LAN) Suggest for Japan’s Definition of Nationality, Citizenship, and Immigration Policy?,” *Policy and Society* 29, no. 4 (2010): 369, doi: 10.1016/j.polsoc.2010.09.009.

³⁶ Higuchi Naoto, “Keizaikiki To Zainichi Burajirujin: Nani Ga Tairyō Shitsugyō Kikoku Wo Motarashita Noka (経済危機と在日ブラジル人:何が大量失業・帰国をもたらしたのか),” *Oohara Shakaimondai Kenkyūjo Zasshi* (大原社会問題研究所雑誌), no. 622 (2010), 53.

³⁷ Kahori Yamamoto, “Tabunka Kyōsei Shisaku’ Ga Miotoshitekita Mono—Keizai Fukuyō Shita Ni Okeru Burajirujin (「多文化共生施策」が見落としてきたもの—経済不況下におけるブラジル人),” *Kaigai Ijyu Shiryoukan Kenkyū Kiyō* (海外移住資料館研究紀要) 5, no. 1 (2011): 35-36.

³⁸ There is a fifth category in the Action Plan with regards to raising children (子供を大切に育てていくために) that I will not analyze. It is unfortunately beyond the scope of my analysis to examine the integration of Brazilian *nikkeijin* youth—those born in Japan to the migrant

The Basic Guidelines are the first national policy document that explicitly delineates not only the need for foreign residents to find their place in their local communities, regardless of *where* that community might be, but also a national obligation the government has to the Brazilian *nikkeijin*.³⁹ Acknowledging that many *nikkeijin* desire to remain in Japan for the long-term despite the economic downturn, the Cabinet Office believes that is the “country’s responsibility” to develop policies to incorporate these people as “members of Japanese society” and “not be excluded from society.”⁴⁰ The rhetoric is represents a reversal from the status quo. Previously, the Japanese government allowed Brazilian *nikkeijin* to enter without creating the supporting immigration integration infrastructure, because it expected the *nikkeijin*, by virtue of their ancestry, to exhibit Japanese cultural behaviors that would allow for seamless integration. Consequently, the government deliberately maintained a “policy of having no policy (*seisaku teki musaku*)” because the Brazilian *nikkeijin* were never formally laborers by immigration law, merely the children of citizens who wanted to return to their ancestral homeland.⁴¹

Assessing the Nikkeijin Action Plan

One major focus in the Action Plan is language education and access, the lack of which has contributed to the *nikkeijin*’s unemployment post-recession.⁴² In fact, the first visual that visitors see in the Cabinet Office’s online

workers—in the Japanese education system.

³⁹ To reconcile the contradiction created by the Ministry of Justice of having foreign laborers with no immigration policy, local governments such as those in Kawasaki and Hamamatsu autonomously assisted foreign residents by providing them with targeted services and involving them in foreign resident councils. For a discussion of incorporation policies created by local governments, see Katherine Tegtmeier Pak, “Cities and Local Citizenship in Japan: Overcoming Nationality?,” in *Local Citizenship in Recent Countries of Immigration: Japan in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Takeyuki Tsuda (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006), 65–96.

⁴⁰ The original Japanese reads as follows: “今後もこれらの人々の定住を認める以上、日本社会の一員として受け入れ、社会から排除されないようにするための施策を国の責任として講じていくことが必要である。” See Cabinet Office, Japan, “Nikkei Teiju Gaikokujin Shisaku Ni Kansuru Kihon Shishin.”

⁴¹ Nanako Inaba and Naoto Higuchi, “Ushinawareta 20 Nen: Zainichi Nanbeijin Ha Naze Kyugen Shitanoka (失われた20年: 在日南米人はなぜ急減したのか),” *Ibaraki Daigaku Jinbun Gakubu Kiyou Jinbun Komyunikeshon Gakka Ronshu* (茨城大学人文学部紀要人文コミュニケーション学科論集) 14, no. 1 (2013): 9.

⁴² Cabinet Office, Japan, “Nikkei Teiju Gaikokujin Shisaku Ni Kansuru Kihon Shishin (

portal about policies for *nikkeijin* residents is an image of students learning *kanji* (see Figure 3). Traditionally, “expectations about what will/should come out of a foreigner’s mouth—the pain when these expectations are not met” dictated the Japanese language’s relationship with non-Japanese individuals.⁴³ This social attitude views only people with Japanese ‘blood’ could speak fluent Japanese, and conversely, people without Japanese ‘blood’ are better off with only elementary or no knowledge of the language. The result is a “boundary-maintaining mechanism” which compartmentalizes non-Japanese people in Japan as transient guests viewed from afar.⁴⁴

Figure 3: Prioritizing Language Learning in Nikkeijin Policy



The homepage of the Cabinet Office’s online portal on *nikkeijin* resident policy. (Source: Cabinet Office, Japan)⁴⁵

日系定住外国人施策に関する基本指針,” August 31, 2010, <http://www8.cao.go.jp/teiju/guideline/pdf/fulltext.pdf>.

⁴³ Chris Burgess, “It’s Better If They Speak Broken Japanese’: Language as a Pathway or an Obstacle to Citizenship in Japan?,” in *Language and Citizenship in Japan*, ed. Nanette Gottlieb (New York: Routledge, 2012), 39.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁴⁵ Cabinet Office, Japan, “Nikkei Teiju Gaikokujin Shisaku (日系定住外国人施策),” accessed December 11, 2016, <http://www8.cao.go.jp/teiju/index.html>.

If knowledge of Japanese is a prerequisite for ethnic affinities, then language proficiency, or lack thereof, is an especially acute source of pain for the Brazilian *nikkeijin*. In a 2009 Sophia University survey on the living conditions of 683 labor migrants across seven prefectures, of which 583 were Brazilian *nikkeijin*, 46.7 percent said that they could manage only the most basic conversation levels in Japanese, and only 13.8 percent said that they could write *hiragana* and *katakana*, the two Japanese syllabaries.⁴⁶ Seeing the *nikkeijin*'s mismatching ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, the homeland population marginalizes them as 'conceptual anomalies' who cannot be "children and grandchildren of the Japanese" because they do not know their ancestral language.⁴⁷ Broken language bonds discourage the homeland population from including the Brazilian *nikkeijin* in residential and workplace communities.⁴⁸

Furthermore, as a 'positive minority' in Brazil's professional class, the *nikkeijin* had protected their "Japanese cultural characteristics," which draw admiration from "mainstream Brazilians... [for] their affiliation with the highly respected First World nation of Japan."⁴⁹ Thus, language inability becomes a "stigma" that delegitimizes the Brazilian *nikkeijin*'s stake to the Japanese ancestry that they had so treasured.⁵⁰ The greater one held his/her Japanese identity in Brazil, the "more negatively [they react] to their ethnic exclusion as 'foreigners' in Japan, resulting in considerably greater inner conflict and identity dissonance."⁵¹

The government thus recognized the reality for language to be not only an obstacle for accessing social services crucial for the *nikkeijin*'s health and safety but also a tool of social oppression that compartmentalizes the *nikkeijin* as "second-rate Japanese" or "inadequate Japanese."⁵² A language-focused policy can rebuild ethnic affinities and alleviate the Brazilian *nikkeijin*'s status of cultural

⁴⁶ Chiyoko Mita et al., "Gaikokujin Rodosha Seikatsu Jittai Chosa Kekka (外国人就労者生活実態調査結果)" (Tokyo, Japan: Sophia University, October 2009), <http://pweb.sophia.ac.jp/cmmta/NRC091106.pdf>.

⁴⁷ Cabinet Office, Japan, "Nikkei Teiju Gaikokujin Shisaku Ni Kansuru Kihon Shishin."

⁴⁸ Personal accounts best illustrate how the Brazilian *nikkeijin* were "cultural disappointments" to the homeland population. See Tsuda, *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland*, 157-171.

⁴⁹ Takeyuki Tsuda, "Transnational Migration and the Nationalization of Ethnic Identity among Japanese Brazilian Return Migrants," *Ethos* 27, no. 2 (1999): 147.

⁵⁰ Tsuda, *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland*, 117.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 164.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 177.

disappointment to the homeland population.

The growing age of the *nikkeijin* laborers undermine the efficacy of the language initiatives. The situation is ironic because the government imported the *nikkeijin* laborers to solve Japan's existing aging labor problem. Although Japanese government does not collect demographic data specifically on *nikkeijin* residents, a 2010 report by the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare acknowledged that "unemployment and aging of foreign laborers could add pressure to social security and welfare measures in the future," suggesting that they are aware of the *nikkeijin* population's aging problem.⁵³ Izawa estimates that if most Brazilian *nikkeijin* came to Japan in their 30s when the Diet revised the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Law in 1989, then they must now be in their 50s.⁵⁴ Long work hours also eliminated opportunities for Japanese self-study. It is a burden to ask an aging population to commit hundreds of hours to learn Japanese, let alone participate in job retraining programs. For example, the highest level of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test, an international benchmark of fluency for non-native speakers administered by the Japan Foundation, requires around nine hundred hours of study.⁵⁵ They have already spent two decades in almost linguistic and social isolation from the homeland population, working in factory lines whose peers and supervisors were also Brazilian *nikkeijin* and living in apartments where their Japanese neighbors refused to communicate with them or moved out to avoid them.⁵⁶

Another focus of the Action Plan, "Respecting One Another's Cultures," places the onus on the homeland population to diversify what it means to be a "member of Japanese society" and allow outsiders to assimilate.⁵⁷ In the spirit of

⁵³ Sho Noguchi, "Wagakuni Ni Okeru Gaikokujin Rodosha Wo Meguru Jyokyou Ni Tsuite (わが国における外国人労働者を巡る状況について)" (Presentation, Dai 50kai Rodo Seisaku Forum (第50回労働政策フォーラム), Tokyo, Japan, December 4, 2010).

⁵⁴ Izawa, "Tabunka Kyousei' no Sogo," 91.

⁵⁵ Burgess, "It's Better If They Speak Broken Japanese," 47.

⁵⁶ Citing a 1997 survey, Tsuda states: "A third, 33.6 percent, live in apartments where over 25 percent of the residents are other *nikkeijin* and only 12.7 percent of them live in apartments with only Japanese residents." See Tsuda, *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland*, 162. In the post-2008 recession context, recent surveys on foreign laborers focus more on their employment conditions rather than residential segregation.

⁵⁷ The original Japanese reads as follows: "日系定住外国人のための施策を進めるに当たっては、日系定住外国人自身が日本の文化・慣習を十分に理解することが重要である一方、彼らを日本社会の一員として受け入れることが、将来に向かって社会の活力になること、そのためにはお互いの文化を尊重しながら受け入れていくことが

tabunka kyosei, Japanese citizens must accept that the *nikkeijin* are here to stay and are crucial for Japan's future growth.⁵⁸

Many scholars have extensively studied the discourse of 'Japaneseness' in excluding and including individuals as "members of Japanese society," but a brief review here is worthwhile. It is not an overstatement to argue that the homogenizing characteristics of 'Japaneseness' is diametrically opposed to the homeland population's perception of the Brazilian *nikkeijin*, perpetuating a clear hierarchical nationhood. If Japan is a First World nation of prosperity, then Brazil is the "Amazon jungle, Indians, poverty, crime, drugs, political corruption, and samba."⁵⁹ If all Japanese belong to the middle class, then the Brazilian *nikkeijin* are destitute, holding so-called '3K' jobs (*kiken*/dangerous, *kitanai*/dirty, *kitsui*/difficult) to escape from their poverty in Brazil.⁶⁰ If Japanese culture is clean, quiet, and refined, then Brazilian culture is dirty, loud, and garish. The Brazilian *nikkeijin* cannot separate their garbage, "cluster in the dark and speak loudly," and wear vulgar clothes.⁶¹ If "the construction of the state in Japan was based on the idea of the nation as a family," then the Brazilian *nikkeijin* are not qualified to be part of that body politic.⁶² Although they have Japanese 'blood,' they have become "culturally contaminated and defiled through prolonged contact with an impure and unclean Third World country."⁶³

Once a vicious cycle of fear and discrimination begins, it is difficult for the homeland population to stop asserting their cultural superiority and distrust towards the Brazilian *nikkeijin*. A June 2014 *Asahi* article about Oizumi during the World Cup in Brazil had the ominous sub-headline: "City and Prefectural Police on Alert for 'Overheated' Celebrations (「過熱」には警戒: 町・県警)."⁶⁴ For an article that supposedly celebrated Oizumi's diversity during a major international event, the qualifying statement drew unnecessary attention

重要であることについて、日本国民の理解を深めていくことが重要である。” See Cabinet Office, Japan, "Nikkei Teiju Gaikokujin Shisaku Ni Kansuru Kihon Shishin."

⁵⁸ Yamamoto, "Tabunka Kyosei Shisaku' Ga Miotoshitekita Mono," 36.

⁵⁹ Tsuda, *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland*, 193.

⁶⁰ John Lie, *Multiethnic Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 50.

⁶¹ Tsuda, *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland*, 124.

⁶² Carvalho, *Migrants and Identity in Japan*, 116.

⁶³ Tsuda, *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland*, 134.

⁶⁴ Taro Fujita and Ipppei Nakada, "Burajiru Ouen, Takamaru Netsu (ブラジル応援、高まる熱)," *Asahi Shimbun*, June 7, 2014, Morning edition, sec. Shakai (社会).

to the worst fears about the Brazilian *nikkeijin*, compartmentalizing them as loud, unpredictable, and dangerous.

For a policy document that ambitiously aims to integrate *nikkeijin* residents as long-term “members of Japanese society,” the Action Plan provides elementary policy details that do not liberalize the membership criteria. It abhors the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications to continuing promoting the “Plan for the Promotion of *Tabunka Kyosei* in the Local Community (地域における多文化共生推進プラン),” an initiative it began in 2006 to encourage local governments to educate residents about the importance of *tabunka kyosei* through autonomous policy initiatives. The Plan’s suggestions for how to do so include symposiums in schools and libraries about creating *tabunka kyosei*-centric environments and “exchange events” that introduce foreign cultures to Japanese residents, and Japanese culture to foreign residents.⁶⁵

Such events are insufficient for Japanese citizens to understand the value that non-Japanese residents bring to their local communities. An “exchange (*kouryu*) event,” for example, is inherently “divorced from the everyday,” because it creates *nikkeijin*-homeland population interactions in artificial, controlled settings. Thus, the homeland population cannot envision non-Japanese residents as ‘normalized’ contributors to society.⁶⁶ Kurimoto and Yamamoto characterize the ideology as the consumerist ‘three Fs’: food, festival, and fashion.⁶⁷ Figure 4 exemplifies this *tabunka kyosei* ideology: Oizumi’s government encourages Japanese tourists to spectate the samba carnival (festival), eat Brazilian *gurume* (food), and admire Brazilian ‘traditional’ dress (fashion). By commercializing non-Japanese cultures, *tabunka kyosei* hides the past and present of the Brazilian *nikkeijin*’s structural inequalities, unemployment, and discrimination.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan, “Tabunka Kyosei No Suishin Ni Kansuru Kenkyukai Hokokusho (多文化共生の推進に関する研究会報告書),” March 2006, http://www.soumu.go.jp/main_content/000400765.pdf.

⁶⁶ Izawa, “Tabunka Kyousei no Sogo,” 96.

⁶⁷ Eisei Kurimoto, “Nihonteki Tabunka Kyosei No Genkai To Kanosei (日本の多文化共生の限界と可能性),” *Mirai Kyosei Gaku* (未来共生学) 3, no. 1 (2016): 78.

⁶⁸ Yasuko Takezawa, “Jo: Tabunka Kyosei No Genjou To Kadai (序: 多文化共生の現状と課題),” *Bunka Jinrui Gaku* (文化人類学) 74, no. 1 (2009): 91.

Figure 4: Food, Festival, and Fun in *Tabunka Kyosei*

Fashion, food, and festival on the homepage of Oizumi's tourism website.

(Source: Chiharuya)⁶⁹

Morris-Suzuki further characterizes the situation as “cosmetic multiculturalism,” where “diversity is...a form of exterior decoration that does not demand major structural changes to existing institutions... divorced from politics and the mundane world of everyday existence.”⁷⁰ Indeed, in the two decades that the Brazilian *nikkeijin* have stayed in Japan, they have formed soccer clubs and made Oizumi the city of samba, but have neither created national organization focused on political advocacy, nor elected any Brazilian-born naturalized representatives to the Diet.⁷¹ When *tabunka kyosei* becomes a sterile celebration of the exotic, it no longer serves its original purpose of educating Japanese citizens on the importance of foreign residents to Japan's future growth. When the Japan Center for International Exchange surveyed all 47 prefectures and 20 major cities on *tabunka kyosei* policies in November 2015, all the responding governments said that they had some form of initiative

⁶⁹ Chiharuya, “Oizumimachi Kankyo Kyokai (大泉町観光協会),” accessed December 19, 2016, <http://www.oizumimachi-kankoukyoukai.jp/index.html>.

⁷⁰ Tessa Morris-Suzuki, “Immigration and Citizenship and Contemporary Japan,” in *Japan - Change and Continuity*, eds. Jeff Graham, Javed Maswood, and Hideaki Miyajima (London: Routledge, 2002), 171.

⁷¹ Sharpe, “What Does Blood Membership Mean in Political Terms?,” 131.

that targeted foreign residents. However, none of them agreed that Japan should create an immigration policy, suggesting that as *tabunka kyosei* became mainstream public policy, it has become divorced from immigration integration.⁷² In effect, the homeland population's tolerance of them may remain a veneer, and they are free to harbor ethnic prejudices in private, although further fieldwork on attitudinal values would be required.⁷³

Overall, the Basic Guidelines and the Action Plan show that the Japanese government is changing, albeit incrementally, its approach to engaging its foreign residents. In the 1980s, it tried to “internationalize” the country through foreign exchange: recruiting exchange students to Japanese universities, inserting foreign English language teachers into schools across Japan in the Japan Exchange Teaching (JET) program, and encouraging overseas travel. Yet these interactions, centered on Japanese engagement with the exotic, were temporary, “not meant to diversify Japan, to address the diversity that already existed, or to confront questions of difference.”⁷⁴ The Action Plan and its commentary on improving the post-recession Brazilian *nikkeijin* condition reflect the new paradigm of “multicultural coexistence (*tabunka kyosei*),” specifically, “a shift in perspective from [foreigners as] ‘visitors’ to [them as] ‘residents.’”⁷⁵

However, the Action Plan presents an incomplete vision of the government's newfound responsibility to the Brazilian *nikkeijin*. While ambitious in recognizing the need for a path for them to become “members of Japanese society,” the policy's linguistic assistance to them may merely be a cosmetic measure, and thus the *nikkeijin* languish as cultural disappointments to the homeland Japanese population. By inviting them to reproduce exotic experiences for the homeland population to consume, the Action Plan does not go far enough to challenge

⁷² Toshio Japan Center for International Exchange, “‘Tabunka Kyosei To Gaikokujin Ukeire’ Ni Kansuru Jichitai Ankete (「多文化共生と外国人受け入れ」に関する自治体アンケート 2015調査結果報告書)” (Tokyo, Japan: Japan Center for International Exchange, November 27, 2015), 18.

⁷³ Tsuda argues that *honne* and *tatemae* in the “Japanese self” allows the homeland population to conceal their “true inner attitudes and feelings” in public, making discrimination against Brazilian *nikkeijin* subtle and indirect. See Tsuda, *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland*, 141-151.

⁷⁴ Petrice R. Flowers, “From Kokusaika to Tabunka Kyosei: Global Norms, Discourses of Difference, and Multiculturalism in Japan,” *Critical Asian Studies* 44, no. 4 (2012): 528, doi:10.1080/14672715.2012.738540.

⁷⁵ Chikako Kashiwazaki, “Multicultural Discourse and Policies in Japan: An Assessment of Tabunka Kyōsei,” *The Gakushuin Journal of International Studies* 3, no. 1 (2016): 7.

structures and attitudes that would otherwise open sociopolitical opportunity structures for the *nikkeijin* to address their marginalized status as a ‘conceptual anomaly.’

JOSEONJOK: MADE INVISIBLE UNDER SOUTH KOREA’S MULTICULTURAL DISCOURSE *Background*

Korean migration to northern China has occurred since the 1200s, but grew substantially in the twentieth century during Japanese colonial rule in Korea. While some fled to plot the overthrow of the colonial government, the Japanese encouraged “entire villages to move” into farming work camps in Manchuria to supply resources for the Sino-Japanese War.⁷⁶ The Korean population in China grew from an estimated 34,000 in 1894 to 2.2 million by the end of World War II.⁷⁷ As a recognized *shaoshu minzu* (minority ethnic group in China), the *joseonjok* were able to maintain a distinct cultural identity in enclaves such as the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture, where they have passed on cultural language education to their descendants to distinguish themselves from the Han Chinese majority.⁷⁸

Joseonjok women were the first group to participate in South Korea’s international marriages. In 1992, South Korea and China normalized diplomatic relations. China’s *joseonjok* and South Korea “rediscovered” one another.⁷⁹ Since the 1970s, South Korea suffered from an imbalanced sex ratio where families prefer giving birth to boys, leading to a surplus of men, especially poor rural farmers, were unable to find marriage partners.⁸⁰ Local jurisdictions helping these farmer bachelors looked towards Yanbian, “a specifically Korean geographic space.”⁸¹ The

⁷⁶ Dong-Hoon Seol and John D. Skrentny, “Joseonjok Migrant Workers’ Identity and National Identity in Korea” (Korean Identity: Past and Present, Yonsei University, Seoul, 2004), 3.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁷⁸ Choi Woo-Gil, “The Korean Minority in China: The Change of Its Identity,” *Development and Society* 30, no. 1 (2001): 1121.

⁷⁹ Jaeun Kim, *Contested Embrace: Transborder Membership Politics in Twentieth-Century Korea* (Stanford University Press, 2016), 182.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 235.

⁸¹ Amelia L. Schubert, Youngmin Lee, and Hyun-Uk Lee, “Reproducing Hybridity in Korea: Conflicting Interpretations of Korean Culture by South Koreans and Ethnic Korean Chinese Marriage Migrants,” *Asian Journal of Women’s Studies* 21, no. 3 (2015): 235, doi:10.1080/12259276.2015.1072940.

homeland population thought the *joseonjok* women had “uncontaminated and pure ‘Korean-ness’” and were “compatible with South Korean wifely ideals.”⁸²

Korea’s humiliating past as a colonized nation heightened the homeland population’s attraction to its *joseonjok* kin. To impose its claim that Koreans shared a common, but subordinate, origin with the Japanese, the Japanese empire forged a strong national consciousness of a unitary Korean race with a “common historic life, living in a single territory...[and] sharing a common destiny.”⁸³ The South Korean public saw marriages between Korean farmers and *joseonjok* women as fulfilling “the sacred goal of “restoring ethnic homogeneity” (*minjok dongjilseongdo hoebok halsuitda*) to the nation.”⁸⁴ Since *joseonjok* women shared the same Korean blood, “repatriating them to South Korea through ties of marriage was not simply pragmatic social policy but utterly patriotic.”⁸⁵ *Joseonjok* women also readily married Korean men shortly after meeting them for the first time. They were eager to move to a “wealthy ‘Asian Tiger nation’ where they would be received as equals and have the same economic opportunities and standard of living as South Korean citizens.”⁸⁶ According to qualitative interviews by Quan, for some, the most important element in their initial attraction to Korean men was that they felt “so familiar (*wu moshenggan*)” to one another, since, “after all, [they] shared the same ancestors (*yinwei women bijing shi tong yige zuxian*).”⁸⁷

The first international marriage occurred in December 1990, when a former assemblyman aided the marriage of an old bachelor farmer and a *joseonjok* woman.⁸⁸ In the following decade, agricultural associations and marriage brokering

⁸² Ibid., 235.

⁸³ Gi-Wook Shin and Paul Yunsik Chang, “The Politics of Nationalism in U.S.-Korean Relations,” *Asian Perspective* 28, no. 4 (2004): 122.

⁸⁴ Caren Freeman, *Making and Faking Kinship: Marriage and Labor Migration between China and South Korea* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 43.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 43.

⁸⁶ Amelia L. Schubert, Youngmin Lee, and Hyun-Uk Lee, “Reproducing Hybridity in Korea: Conflicting Interpretations of Korean Culture by South Koreans and Ethnic Korean Chinese Marriage Migrants,” *Asian Journal of Women’s Studies* 21, no. 3 (2015): 236, doi:10.1080/12259276.2015.1072940.

⁸⁷ Xin-zi Quan, “‘Chaoxianzu Xinniàng’ Zai Hanguó—Tongzu Yiguo De Wenhua Zhongtu (‘朝鲜族新娘’在韩国—同族异国的文化冲突),” *Shijie Zhishi* (世界知识), 2006, 54.

⁸⁸ Hye-Kyung Lee, “The Role of Multicultural Families in South Korean Immigration Policy,” in *Asian Women and Intimate Work*, eds. Emiko Ochiai and Kaoru Aoyama (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2014), 296.

agencies created a rapidly growing, and lucrative, international marriage market.⁸⁹ The literature has estimated that up to 100,000 *joseonjok* women have married South Korean men, a considerable number considering that the total Korean Chinese population is only 2.6 million.⁹⁰

The Support for Multicultural Families Act

Domestic violence, cultural tension, and broken expectations have plagued *joseonjok* brides. In 2011, 10 percent of all divorce cases in South Korea involved international couples, and 73 percent of those cases were former unions between Korean males and migrant females.⁹¹ The rural bachelor farmers “who sought wives abroad were those who had more or less failed to do so in the domestic marriage market.”⁹² It is also possible that *joseonjok* women strategically used international marriage to enter the South Korean labor market.⁹³ Either way, the South Korean mass media spread the word about the failure of these cross-border marriages, describing the *joseonjok* either “as victims of abusive uneducated rural men or as manipulative visa-seekers who never intended to remain married.”⁹⁴

Under President Roh Moo Hyun (2003-2008), the South Korean government enacted the “Policy Plan to Support the Social Integration of International Marriage Female Migrants, their Families and Children,” also known as the “Grand Plan,” in April 2006. It was the first policy initiative to address international marriages since *joseonjok* brides arrived in large numbers in the 1990s. The Grand Plan addressed issues from regulating international marriage agencies to providing support for domestic violence survivors and orientations for newly arrived foreign wives.⁹⁵ The Support for Multicultural

⁸⁹ Yean-Ju Lee, Dong-Hoon Seol, and Sung-Nam Cho, “International Marriages in South Korea: The Significance of Nationality and Ethnicity,” *Journal of Population Research* 23, no. 2 (2006): 172, doi:10.1007/BF03031814.

⁹⁰ Schubert, Lee, and Lee, “Reproducing Hybridity in Korea,” 233.

⁹¹ Gyuchan Kim and Majella Kilkey, “Marriage Migration Policy as a Social Reproduction System: The South Korean Experience,” in *Family Life in an Age of Migration and Mobility*, eds. Majella Kilkey and Ewa Palenga-Möllenbeck, Migration, Diasporas and Citizenship (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 151, doi:10.1057/978-1-137-52099-9_7.

⁹² Schubert, Lee, and Lee, “Reproducing Hybridity in Korea,” 236.

⁹³ Lee, “The Role of Multicultural Families,” 298.

⁹⁴ Schubert, Lee, and Lee, “Reproducing Hybridity in Korea,” 237.

⁹⁵ For a discussion of the ‘Grand Plan’ in the English language, see Hye-Kyung Lee,

Families Act, enacted in 2008, is intended to provide the ‘Grand Plan’ with a legal and institutional framework.

Between the ‘Grand Plan’ and the Act, the South Korean government’s immigration integration policy towards marriage migrants had a subtle shift. Instead of supporting marriage migrants as *individual women*, the South Korean government subsumed them under a broader social group. Any immigration integration support the government gave was under the context of on what it called ‘multicultural families.’⁹⁶ The Act’s first clause states the government’s aims: “to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of multi-cultural [sic] family members and the unity of society by helping multi-cultural family members enjoy stable family living.”⁹⁷

The Act enshrines the fact that the marriage migrant is merely a tool for South Korea’s demographic challenges. Many provisions center around supporting family *units*, not individuals: the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, for example, has to conduct a fact-finding survey on multicultural families every three years. The Act also imposes demographic obligations on marriage migrants. Article 2 defines a “multicultural family” as a unit comprised of either a “married immigrant or naturalized citizen” and a Korean citizen.⁹⁸ The prerequisite is that one of the two parents must be Korean. When the marriage migrant enters a union with a Korean citizen, they are able to continue the Korean ethnic bloodline. Article 10, which requires the national and local governments to “prepare measures of educational support to children of multi-cultural families to help them quickly adapt to school life,” hints that underlying aim that Korean children are clearly the desirable product of these ‘multicultural families.’⁹⁹ The faster these children can enter South Korea’s school system, the sooner they can become socialized as a Korean citizen. On the other hand, the definition excludes families in South Korea where both parents are immigrants who are outside the ethnic group, even if such families are multicultural in the sense of adding to South Korea’s ethnic and cultural diversity. They would be irrelevant to the South Korean government

“International Marriage and the State in South Korea: Focusing on Governmental Policy,” *Citizenship Studies* 12, no. 1 (February 2008): 107–23, doi:10.1080/13621020701794240.

⁹⁶ Byoung-ha Lee, “Incorporating Foreigners in Korea: The Politics of Differentiated Membership,” *The Journal of Multicultural Society* 1, no. 2 (2010): 60.

⁹⁷ Ministry of Government Legislation, Republic of Korea, “Support for Multicultural Families Act,” *Korean Laws in English*, accessed December 11, 2016, <http://www.moleg.go.kr/english/>.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

because their offspring does not contribute to the Korean biological bloodline, and therefore cannot be a part of Korean society. In essence, “the multicultural family has been appropriated by the South Korean government...in order to achieve the nationalist project of reproducing Korean families.”¹⁰⁰

Article 9, “Support for Health Management before and after Childbirth,” is most revealing about the ‘nationalist project.’ It states:

The State and local governments may provide married immigrants and naturalized citizens, etc. with necessary services, such as nutrition and health education and provision of helper service before and after childbirth, medical examination, so that they can manage pregnancy and childbirth under healthy and safe conditions.¹⁰¹

Although the Act does not specifically define the gender of marriage migrants, it is clear that the South Korean government primarily desires ‘multicultural families’ of Korean men and foreign women. It is thus demanding the biological reproduction of Korean children in a patrilineal way, deemphasizing childbirths from Korean *women* and foreign men whose marriages fit in the legal, genderless definition of ‘multicultural family.’¹⁰² Sookyung Kim argues that by framing the healthcare of marriage migrants around childbirth, the South Korean government does not “care about the health of a migrant woman unless she gives birth to babies.”¹⁰³ Indeed, the childbirth clause directly contradicts Article 7, which creates government programs for counseling to “help multi-cultural families maintain a democratic and gender-equal familial relationship.” It is, after all, the migrant mother who the government requires to reproduce and bear children for the Korean nation—excluding them from other domains of

¹⁰⁰ Hyun Mee Kim, “The Emergence of the ‘Multicultural Family’ and Genderized Citizenship in South Korea,” in *Contested Citizenship in East Asia: Developmental Politics, National Unity, and Globalization*, ed. Kyung-Sup Chang and Bryan S. Turner (Oxon: Routledge, 2012), 208.

¹⁰¹ Ministry of Government Legislation, Republic of Korea, “Support for Multicultural Families Act.”

¹⁰² Sookyung Kim, “Soft Talk, Hard Realities: Multiculturalism as the South Korean Government’s Decoupled Response to International Migration,” *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 24, no. 1 (March 1, 2015): 65, doi:10.1177/0117196814565165.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 65.

Korean public life.¹⁰⁴

The emphasis on motherhood continues in guidebooks for marriage migrants produced by the Korean government. An early English-language publication called *Let's live a happy life in Korea*, published by the Multicultural Family Support Centers, dedicates just three out of 48 pages to finding employment.¹⁰⁵ The last page of the guide is most revealing in how marriage migrants are to become 'daughters-in-law' of a big national family:

You are a beloved wife.

You are a respected mother.

You are a wonderful daughter-in-law.

You are a valuable new citizen of Korea.

The Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs will be your reliable friend and we will help you plan for a brighter future in Korea. We love you.¹⁰⁶

The guide's longest section, on pregnancy, childbirth, and childcare, is titled "Congratulations and Welcome to Motherhood!" with the sub-text, "Becoming a mother is *one of the most valuable experiences of a woman* [emphasis added]."¹⁰⁷ In effect, the government refuses to validate marriage migrants' lives, or be their "reliable friend," unless they are mothers. Indeed, the Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs asserted in 2008 that it only wants growth in multicultural families "to curb the low-fertility and the ageing trend in Korea, especially in rural areas, by increasing the fertility rate."¹⁰⁸ Since marriage migrants are most likely to access these guides in their first days of Korean life to familiarize themselves with the social services available, the government, through such prescriptive messages, demands that they conform to expectations of birthing children and becoming

¹⁰⁴ Ministry of Government Legislation, Republic of Korea, "Support for Multicultural Families Act."

¹⁰⁵ The *Let's live a happy life in Korea* guide refers to "Transnational Marriage & Family-support Centers," which is an early official English-language translation of the Multicultural Family Support Centers.

¹⁰⁶ Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs, Republic of Korea, "Let's Live a Happy Life in Korea: Guide Book for Marriage-Based Immigrants in Korea," October 2011, <http://www.129.go.kr>.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁰⁸ Kim and Kilkey, "Marriage Migration Policy as a Social Reproduction System," 150.

mothers from the moment of arrival.

As Figure 5 shows, newer guidebooks have removed the explicitly gendered language, but a gendered target audience remains. The 310-page *2016 Guidebook for Living in Korea: Guidance for Multicultural Families and Foreigners Living in Korea* contains an extensive 58-page section about childbirth and placing children in the Korean education system, and frames information about employment with the possibility of maternity while employed.¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, the guidebook documents Korean domestic life in painstaking detail; for example, making sticky ‘Korean’ rice, preventing gas-related accidents in the house while cooking, and creating a savings account to “pay for your child’s tuition.”¹¹⁰ Implicit in the guidebook is that the Korean husband is absent to teach his migrant wife these crucial details, or even to share any of these household duties in the family. The government has to dedicate a ministry to intervene and publish this guide for migrant wives to navigate the demands of domestic life themselves.

¹⁰⁹ Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, “2016 Guidebook for Living in Korea: Guidance for Multicultural Families and Foreigners Living in Korea,” October 2016, <http://liveinkorea.kr/global/guidebook/guidebook.asp>.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

Figure 5: Guiding a Marriage Migrant's Domestic Life



(Sources: Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs¹¹¹; Ministry of Gender Equality and Family¹¹²)

Assessing the Support for Multicultural Families Act

Idealized, neo-Confucian gender roles and family life form a major tenet of the Support for Multicultural Families Act. In the neo-Confucian family, the breadwinner father is absent because his engagement with work is unending. The mother, as a result, must “take care of every small emergency in the household,” and produce children who are entirely dependent.¹¹³ Instead of accommodating different cultural values or lifestyles, the Act imposes a “matrifocal and child-oriented [structure] that is attempting to preserve the integrity and continuity of

¹¹¹ Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs, Republic of Korea, “Let’s Live a Happy Life in Korea: Guide Book for Marriage-Based Immigrants in Korea,” October 2011, <http://www.129.go.kr>.

¹¹² Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, Republic of Korea, “2016 Guidebook for Living in Korea: Guidance for Multicultural Families and Foreigners Living in Korea,” October 2016, <http://liveinkorea.kr/global/guidebook/guidebook.asp>.

¹¹³ Kwang Kyu Lee, “Confucian Tradition in the Contemporary Korean Family,” in *Confucianism and the Family*, ed. Walter H. Slote and George A. De Vos (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 257.

the family” in a country that has rapidly modernized.¹¹⁴ Hence, under the Act, “social support for migrant women is conceptualized as a ‘life-cycle service,’” from arriving in South Korea, becoming pregnant, giving birth, and entering motherhood.¹¹⁵ Ignoring their past careers or education, “such imagination on migrant women even justifies discrimination against those who don’t fit into the norm” of knowing their domestic space in the Korean family.¹¹⁶ Migrant wives who face domestic violence, cultural tension, and isolation in their own homes turn to a government support system which coaxes them to remain as obedient wives, mothers, and daughters-in-law.

Gender roles have long been major sources of dissatisfaction with *joseonjok* women and their Korean husbands from the very beginning of the cross-border marriage phenomenon.¹¹⁷ Regardless of whether the family could realistically afford to be single-income households, some urban-based Korean husbands actively discouraged *joseonjok* wives to work because they “aspired to the middle-class ideal of maintaining gendered spheres of work and home.”¹¹⁸ Their Confucian attitudes were fundamentally at odds with how their *joseonjok* spouses viewed gender relations. Under the rule of Mao Zedong, the Chinese education system championed gender equality (*nannu pingdeng*) to encourage women to participate in the public sphere, specifically to advance the Maoist revolution. In the modern day, “the Chinese media still valorize the ‘superwoman’ (*qiangnuren*) for her ability to manage both household and career.”¹¹⁹

Scholars have differing views as to why *joseonjok* women retain strong emotional ties to China. Kim argues that *joseonjok* brides experienced a certain level of socioeconomic mobility that their poorer South Korean male counterparts may not have, because “the expense of the brokerage fees...meant that the poorest of the poor among the Korean Chinese were unlikely” to be in international marriages.¹²⁰ Quan offers a more nationalistic view, arguing that

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 262.

¹¹⁵ Kim, “The Emergence of the ‘Multicultural Family’ and Genderized Citizenship in South Korea,” 212.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 212.

¹¹⁷ For an extensive discussion on gender roles from the *joseonjok* perspective, see Freeman, *Making and Faking Kinship*, 109-152.

¹¹⁸ Freeman, *Making and Faking Kinship*, 134.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 129.

¹²⁰ Kim, *Contested Embrace*, 216.

Yanbian is the *joseonjok's* true home. The *joseonjok*, she argues, belong in the history of communist China, developing the northeast and joining forces with the communists to drive the Japanese out of Manchuria. Since “*joseonjok* culture has evolved from Korean culture (*chaoxianzhu wenhua you bieyu hanguo wenhua*), Quan finds little reason to doubt why Korean gender roles are alien to *joseonjok* women. Granted, it is impossible to generalize the experiences of *joseonjok* women. Further ethnographic research is needed to confirm or challenge both perspectives.

Nonetheless, *joseonjok* women struggled in a Korean society organized along patriarchal and hierarchical lines. In China, they supported “their families through both paid productive labor and unpaid domestic labor” in China.¹²¹ Some brides came from Chinese factories where they worked, ate, and spent leisure time alongside men as equals. Consciously being male or female was never a part of these friendships.¹²² Interestingly, Freeman found that some parents of *joseonjok* women in Yanbian drew on their diasporic bonds—specifically, their ethnic-based knowledge about the Korean family system and its wifely responsibilities—to discourage their daughters from even entertaining the idea of marrying Korean men.¹²³ The flashpoint for domestic violence in the marital household was precisely the *joseonjok* women’s competing construction of gender. According to one *joseonjok* wife informant in Quan’s study, her Korean husband believed that verbally contending with him was not behavior fit for a woman, and that she would “definitely be soliciting violence (*najiu kengding zao baoli*)” if she lost her temper.¹²⁴ The Support for Multicultural Families Act, therefore, is unlikely to reverse the alienation and tension *joseonjok* women feel with their partners. Whereas the Korean husband or mother-in-law privately enforced the *joseonjok* wife’s demarcated space, the Act now officially endorses such rigid gender roles as a method of immigrant integration into Korean society.

Minjeong Kim provides a cynical view. Marriage is closely related to Korean hegemonic masculinity, which Korean men struggle to fill if they remain

¹²¹ Schubert, Lee, and Lee, “Reproducing hybridity in Korea,” 240.

¹²² Xin-zi Quan, “Lun Kuaguo Minzu Rentong De Changjing Yu Chayi—Yi Zhongguo Chaioxianzu Hunyin Yimin Nuxing Wei Li (论跨国民族认同的场景与差异—以中国朝鲜族婚姻移民女性为例),” *Yanbian Daxue Xuebao Shehui Kexueban* (延边大学学报社会科学版) 45, no. 5 (2012): 90.

¹²³ Freeman, *Making and Faking Kinship*, 115.

¹²⁴ The original Chinese reads as follows: “他都嫌我的嗓门大，若与他解释，他就说顶嘴，不像女人，没有女人味等，你如果生气与他顶嘴，那就肯定遭暴力。” See Quan, “Lun Kuaguo Minzu Rentong De Changjing Yu Chayi,” 90.

single. Bachelor farmers drew national attention to their suffering by committing suicide in protest in the 1980s.¹²⁵ International marriage compensates for such “disabled manhood” by allowing unmarried Korean men to achieve “adult status by marrying, by fathering children, and by earning enough to provide for his family.”¹²⁶ Therefore, if *joseonjok* women were not obedient wives and reproductive mothers, Korean men stood to lose social acceptance in their families and communities. Thus, the Support for Multicultural Families Act is not so much reconciling the cultural tensions and potential for domestic violence as perpetuating a destructive vision of hegemonic masculinity.

Figure 6: Images of Race in South Korea’s Multicultural Policy



(Sources: Ministry of Health and Welfare¹²⁷; Ministry of Gender Equality and Family¹²⁸)

Another problem the Act poses is that it equates culture and race, thereby marginalizing the *joseonjok* out of the government’s contemporary “multicultural” focus. While the Support for Multicultural Families Act is an integration that applies to the *joseonjok*, it is *not* tailor-made for them. It is for

¹²⁵ Schubert, Lee, and Lee, “Reproducing hybridity in Korea,” 235.

¹²⁶ Minjeong Kim, “South Korean Rural Husbands, Compensatory Masculinity, and International Marriage,” *Journal of Korean Studies* 19, no. 2 (2014): 303, doi:10.1353/jks.2014.0030.

¹²⁷ Ministry of Health and Welfare, Republic of Korea, “A Guidebook for Marriage Migrants,” November 2007, <https://www.scribd.com/document/75867974/2007-Guidebook-for-Marriage-Migrants>.

¹²⁸ Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, Republic of Korea, “Rainbow+ Webzine,” January 2015, http://www.liveinkorea.kr/liveinkoreaData/rainbowpdf/en_2015_1.pdf.

all marriage migrants, regardless of nationality. Korean government publications about multicultural families reinforce the notion that the foreign brides are *not* Korean and have to discard their non-Korean cultures to successfully integrate in Korean families (Figure 6). In the 2007 version of the Ministry of Health and Welfare's guidebook for marriage migrants, the foreign bride has a perceptibly darker skin tone than her Korean husband. The same ideology continues in a 2015 issue of a bilingual magazine on diversity called *Rainbow+* published by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, an article about multicultural families ironically shows seven women in national dress and name tags with country flags to emphasize their *non*-Koreanness. On the same vein, the 2016 *Guidebook for Living in Korea* tells marriage migrants that it takes a week to get used to 'Korean rice,' which is "stickier than Southeast Asian rice."¹²⁹ By emphasizing the differences between 'them' marriage migrants and 'us' Korean citizens, the images reinforce the notion of a distinct Korean race. The multicultural family, in practice, is in reality a *multiracial* family. The Support for Multicultural Families Act and its associated didactic guidebooks are supposed to help these women assimilate into the Korean ethnic nation and lose their distinctive, non-Korean characteristics.

It is unclear where *joseonjok* women fit in an integration policy focused on incorporating non-ethnic Koreans. The following quote in a 2015 study from a Ministry of Justice official is revealing: "Migrants with different ethnicities are enemies of national solidarity...By contrast, there is *no need to worry* about the adaptation of ethnically Korean migrants. They are just Korean like us [emphasis added]."¹³⁰ The remark illustrates not only the depth to which that government official believes in a unified Korean race, but also the continuing reality of the *joseonjok's* hierarchical nationhood under a supposedly multicultural Korea. Despite extensive anthropological research in the past decade that points to the contrary, the government remains in a cognitive dissonance about the *joseonjok's* ethnic affinities. Precisely because they are ethnic Koreans, *joseonjok* women do not need any special attention—the Korean families they are marrying to in South Korea are no different than the families in Yanbian by virtue of their common ancestry. In this context, ethnic kinship is oppressive. The homogenizing discourse of the single Korean race is so strong that the homeland population does not even realize that the *joseonjok* have cultural differences.

¹²⁹ Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, "2016 Guidebook for Living in Korea: Guidance for Multicultural Families and Foreigners Living in Korea."

¹³⁰ Sookyung Kim, "Soft Talk, Hard Realities," 69.

Further fieldwork is necessary to answer why the government would introduce a policy that further marginalizes the experiences of *joseonjok* women and international marriages. In the meantime, Hyunok Lee and Sookyung Kim offer a bleak perspective. The Korean government's commitment to multiculturalism is not sincere, because it has an instrumental political goal. Politicians in areas with serious population decline will aggressively promote multicultural families to prevent constituencies from being merged, and therefore, elected positions from being eliminated.¹³¹ Nationally, the multicultural family "has been used instrumentally to project an increased openness of Korean society."¹³² If the union of a foreign bride and a Korean man represents a new, 'open' Korea in a globalizing world, then *joseonjok* brides are irrelevant to that project, since they do not appear 'foreign' in racial terms, and therefore cannot contribute to the national image of an internationalized Korea.

Analyzed holistically, the Support for Multicultural Families Act perpetrates a two-tiered hierarchical nationhood on *joseonjok* women. It first subsumes migrant women's issues into family policy. In creating support structures to support the women through the context of families, the government prescribes that the success of international marriages depends on whether the foreign bride is willing to fulfill the expectations of being a Korean mother for the family and for the Korean nation. Those expectations conflict with how *joseonjok* women view their roles *vis-à-vis* their husbands in a marital household. The Act then obscures their presence in Korean families through a broader focus on multiculturalism, even though the *joseonjok* were targeted as ideal brides with ethnic affinities. Although there remains a plurality of *joseonjok* brides in international marriages, the Act does not address the possibility that a person's ancestry and cultural behavior are unrelated. In other words, the needs of *joseonjok* women are rendered invisible. Political motivations, and not responding to problems foreign brides face in Korean families, perhaps explain why South Korea is interested in protecting and promoting international marriage through the Act. The ethnic return migrants therefore remain in a state of hierarchical nationhood, because the homeland population fails to consider the possibility that *joseonjok* spouses

¹³¹ Ibid., 71.

¹³² Hyunok Lee, "Political Economy of Cross-Border Marriage: Economic Development and Social Reproduction in Korea," *Feminist Economics* 18, no. 2 (2012): 179, doi:10.1080/13545701.2012.688139.

may not necessarily be socially compatible with their Korean husbands even if they are coethnics. As a result, the homeland population continues to create expectations based on beliefs of a Korean race that *joseonjok* women will not fulfill.

CONCLUSION

Two decades after importing Brazilian *nikkeijin* workers and *joseonjok* spouses for their respective national goals, both Japan and South Korea have each created national-level policies to address social problems that both groups of migrants have faced, representing a new chapter in both countries' relationships with their ethnic return migrants. I have attempted to demonstrate that the *Nikkeijin* Action Plan and the Support for Multicultural Families Act do not address thoroughly the structures and attitudes among the homeland population that invited prejudice and isolation when they first returned to their ancestral homelands. The policies set ethnic-based expectations that do not cater to the interests of the migrants themselves, especially when the return migrants no longer feel the ethnic affinities they once had with the homeland population. Barring no further changes to these policies, I predict that in the long run the Action Plan and the Support for Multicultural Families Act will continue to place both populations in a hierarchical nationhood, and they cannot achieve more than a superficial level of social integration.

One shortcoming built into this study is that because the policies are so new, their effects on return migrants are not yet fully stable. My assessment of the integration structures that the policies is based on past anthropological work conducted before the Japanese and South Korean governments made the policy pivot to multiculturalism. Evidently, further fieldwork is necessary to formally measure the degree to which the *Nikkeijin* Action Plan and the Support for Multicultural Families Act have facilitated integration along such dimensions such as civic and political participation, economic life, and the use of social services, which this paper did not have the benefit of accessing. However, I have also shown that discussions about integrating the *nikkeijin* and *joseonjok* require focus on not only socioeconomic indicators but also anthropological perspectives—reconciling intangible, existential questions of identity and belonging stemming from their ancestry and migration experiences. How integration structures affect the return migrants' self-identities, the homeland population's attitudinal values towards the return migrants, and the dichotomy of the return migrant as "conceptual anomaly" require attention in future anthropological research.

If globalization is the antithesis of nationalism, then the two policies present an apparent paradox: given that Japan and South Korea both have low birth rates and declining labor force populations, successfully integrating migrants into Japanese and Korean society is literally a matter of national survival. In addition, the normative question of whether and to what extent should migrant-sending states be responsible for their diasporas. After all, Japan was directly involved in creating the Brazilian Japanese diaspora, and the transborder *joseonjok* community in China expanded during a humiliating time in Korean history. What level of immigration integration is desirable, or even necessary to be considered integration beyond the 'cosmetic'? As both countries seek to attract and import more people from abroad, xenophobia, discrimination, and conflict could embroil these ethnic nations if the government does not work to broaden existing conceptions of citizenship and membership in mainstream society.

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APPENDIX 1: THE CABINET OFFICE’S ACTION PLAN FOR *NIKKEIJIN*¹³³

Category	Reason for Category	Action Plan Policy Examples	Responsible Agencies
Learning Japanese for Daily Life (“日本語で生活できるために”)	In order to be integrated, it is necessary to learn the communication techniques of Japanese society. Language barriers cause obstacles to various facets of daily life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange information with organizations promoting Japanese language education • Disseminate guidelines for a language curriculum catered to foreign residents • Publish a handbook of basic Japanese in Portuguese and Spanish, etc. 	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology
Settling Down and Finding	The <i>nikkeijin</i> face a high unemployment rate. To become competitive in a difficult job market, the <i>nikkeijin</i> require assistance in language learning and job retraining.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide skills training and language training • Facilitate multilingual employment consultations • Exchange information and support with the private sector with regards to the employment of foreign residents, etc. 	Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry

¹³³ Source: Cabinet Office, Japan, “Nikkei Teiju Gaikokujin Shisaku Ni Kansuru Koudou Keigaku (日系定住外国人施策に関する行動計画),” March 31, 2011, <http://www8.cao.go.jp/teiju/guideline/pdf/fulltext-koudo.pdf>, translated and summarized by the author.

<p>Resolving Difficult Situations in Daily Life (“社会の中で困ったときのために”)</p>	<p>Considering their limited language proficiency, the <i>nikkeijin</i> require human resources and special attention to access social services such as healthcare, pensions etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate multilingual information about disaster and crime prevention • Provide multilingual information on traffic safety • Provide leaflets encouraging foreign residents to sign up for national health insurance • Publish a guidebook assisting foreign residents to search for housing • Simplify procedures for foreign residents to move into subsidized housing units • Move towards a pilot plan for hospitals to provide translation services when providing medical services to foreign residents, etc. 	<p>Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, National Police Agency, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Ministry of Internet Affairs and Communications, Cabinet Office</p>
<p>Respecting One Another’s Cultures (“お互いに文化を尊重するために”)</p>	<p>While it is important for the <i>nikkeijin</i> residents to “thoroughly understand” (十分に理解する) Japanese customs and cultures, considering their importance to the vitality of society in the future, it is important for Japanese citizens to understand the importance of respecting each other’s cultures (日本国民の理解を含めていくこと).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the “Plan for the Promotion of <i>Tabunka Kyosei</i> in the Local Community (地域における多文化共生推進プラン)” to local authorities in meetings • From creating a portal site on policies for foreign residents, recognize NGOs, local governments, corporations etc. that help advance the aim of educating each Japanese citizen about the importance and necessity of incorporating foreign residents in Japanese society. 	<p>Ministry of Internet Affairs and Communications, Cabinet Office</p>

WHEN TRYING TO SURPRISE YOUR OPPONENT BACKFIRES: EXPOSING THE WEAKNESS OF THE INDIRECT APPROACH

JOSHUA SCHWARTZ¹

INTRODUCTION

It is often thought that great military strategists do not engage in simple, frontal assaults, but instead devise complex plans meant to deceive, manipulate, and surprise their enemies. However, do such strategies always lead to victory? If not, what are some of the reasons why they fail to? In order to answer these questions, this paper will examine one such strategy known as the “indirect approach,” which was developed by Basil Liddell Hart, a famous British historian and military strategist. The main concept of the indirect approach is that the optimal military strategy is to position your forces in such a way that victory in the battle is essentially guaranteed before any fighting occurs. This is accomplished by concentrating your forces against a weak point of your enemy and, as a result, catching the enemy commander off-guard, which is a process that is heavily dependent on surprise. Although the indirect approach and other similar strategies provide valuable insights and can be of great utility to military commanders, this paper advances three central criticisms against the indirect approach. First, while the indirect approach assumes that you can successfully surprise your opponent, this may not be the case if you have incorrect and/or incomplete information about their strategies and capabilities. Therefore, the benefits of successfully surprising your opponent may never materialize. Second, the methods used to achieve surprise can reduce military effectiveness. For example, to surprise your opponent

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you may need to take the road less traveled by climbing over the mountain rather than going around it. However, this can increase the fatigue of your soldiers and reduce their performance on the battlefield. Thus, there may be costs associated with adopting an indirect approach as opposed to an alternative strategy that calls for different methods. Third, partially due to the above factors, the indirect approach does not *always* lead to victory on the battlefield. In fact, adopting an indirect approach *can* lead to worse battlefield outcomes than if a more “direct approach” (e.g., a simple frontal assault) is employed.

In order to support these limited claims, I begin by describing in detail what the indirect approach actually is and discussing some of the theoretical disadvantages related to its reliance on surprise. I then proceed to utilize a case study (the Battle of Midway between the U.S. and Japan) as evidence to support my claims. The Battle demonstrates that Japan utilized an indirect approach, that this strategy failed miserably to achieve victory due to points one and two above, and that Japan would have been better off adopting a more direct approach that avoided the harmful methods associated with point two above.

WHAT IS THE INDIRECT APPROACH?

In order to critically analyze the indirect approach, we must first understand exactly what it is. Unfortunately, this is no simple task, as its mechanics are obscure and open to differing interpretations. While some scholars like Brian Bond believe the indirect approach cannot be applied to real-life cases at all because it is so abstract², I will do my best to overcome this difficulty by presenting a general and simplified version of the indirect approach. For the sake of clarity, it makes sense to chart the logic of the indirect approach backwards (i.e., from its desired end to its initial phases).

The first key aspect of the indirect approach to recognize is that it is a general *military* strategy, which means that it does not operate at the grand strategic level of warfare. Grand strategy has to do with defining the state’s political objectives in a war and specifying what military *and* nonmilitary means (e.g., financial, commercial, diplomatic, and ethical) will be employed to achieve those objectives.³ The indirect approach takes the political goals of a war as

² Brian Bond, *Liddell Hart: A Study of his Military Thought* (London: Cassell, 1977).

³ Paul Kennedy, “Grand Strategy in War and Peace: Toward a Broader Definition,” in *Grand*

fixed and is solely focused on how to utilize military means to achieve the state's political ends. Consequently, the indirect approach can operate at the theater level (the use of campaigns to win wars), operational level (the use of battles to win campaigns), and/or tactical level (the conduct of individual battles) of warfare.⁴

A second important feature of Liddell Hart's indirect approach is how it conceptualizes the purpose of military strategy. Carl von Clausewitz, the famous Prussian general and military theorist, defined strategy as "the use of engagements (i.e., battles) for the object of the war."⁵ Liddell Hart, however, dislikes this definition because it assumes that battle and the use of brute force are the only means to achieve your political ends in war.⁶ Instead, he believes you can achieve your objectives without using physical force and the true purpose of military strategy is to diminish the possibility of enemy resistance *before the fight actually occurs*.⁷ As Sun Tzu, the famous Chinese general and military strategist, said, "A victorious army wins its victories before seeking battle; an army destined to defeat fights in the hope of winning."⁸ This concept is one of the strengths of the indirect approach since it rightly emphasizes the importance of pre-planning in war. A perfect military strategy (and the optimal outcome of the indirect approach), then, reduces the ability of the enemy to resist so effectively that they surrender before the fight actually begins.⁹ This is the best outcome of military strategy since it allows you to disarm your enemy without having to suffer the costs of battle (e.g., money and lives).¹⁰ The belief that bloodless war is possible and preferable is another strength of the indirect approach, as it provides a counterpoint to those who assert that war is an inherently bloody affair and there is no other alternative. A near perfect military strategy (and the second best outcome of the indirect approach) puts you in such a strong position vis-à-vis your enemy that, even if he does not surrender before the battle begins, your victory in the battle is essentially

Strategies in War and Peace, ed. Paul Kennedy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 2-3.

⁴ Stephen Biddle, "Strategy in War," *Political Science & Politics* 40, no. 3 (2007): 462-464.

⁵ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. & ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 128.

⁶ Basil Liddell Hart, *Strategy* (New York: Penguin Group, 1991), 333.

⁷ *Ibid.* 337.

⁸ Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), 87.

⁹ Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 338.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 338.

guaranteed.¹¹ In order to carry out a successful indirect approach, the question then becomes: How do you diminish the possibility of enemy resistance before the battle occurs?

In order to degrade your opponent's ability to resist before the battle occurs, the indirect approach calls for "dislocating" your enemy, or disturbing his equilibrium, both physically and psychologically.¹² Physical dislocation involves positioning your forces against a weak point of your enemy.¹³ For example, if you manage to outflank your opponent and threaten his supply chains, his ability to resist will be diminished because your move has the potential to reduce or completely cut off the flow of critical matériel like food, water, and ammunition to him. Therefore, physical dislocation directly diminishes the possibility of enemy resistance. It also indirectly reduces the enemy's ability to resist by causing psychological dislocation, which is the sensation of hopelessness that forms in the enemy commander's mind after he realizes the effects that physical dislocation will have on his forces (e.g., that they will not be adequately supplied).¹⁴ Since it is more difficult for the enemy commander to muster the energy necessary to rally his troops and prepare countermoves when he is discouraged and feels trapped, psychological dislocation also degrades your opponent's ability to resist. The concepts of physical and psychological dislocation provide valuable insights about how to gain an advantage over your opponent, and when they are successfully achieved, history has shown that they are effective.

Before we discuss how to dislocate your enemy's forces, it is important to recognize what types of actions do not cause dislocation and thus are not examples of the indirect approach. For instance, planning to attack your opponent head on when he more or less expects it (also known as the direct approach) is one such case. Since your enemy is physically and mentally prepared for a frontal assault (no military wants to be attacked from the side or the rear), engaging your opponent in this manner is striking them at their point of greatest strength and resistance rather than their point of vulnerability.¹⁵ Instead of threatening

¹¹ Ibid. 339.

¹² Ibid. 339.

¹³ Ibid. 339-340.

¹⁴ Ibid. 340.

¹⁵ Ibid. 340.

their supply routes, you are pushing your enemy back towards them.¹⁶ Instead of reducing the morale of the enemy commander, you may be raising it because a frontal assault is the kind of attack he was planning on encountering all along. According to Liddell Hart, frontal assaults without any element of surprise do not cause dislocation and thus are not examples of the indirect approach.

Returning to the mechanics of the indirect approach, dislocation of enemy forces is produced by finding the path of least resistance. Only by *discovering* a weak spot of your enemy can you understand how to actually disturb his physical equilibrium.¹⁷ As discussed above, Liddell Hart believes that the enemy's side and rear are the weakest parts of his formation. For him, the enemy's front, where he expects to be attacked and has likely built up his strongest defenses, is presumably the path of most, not least, resistance.

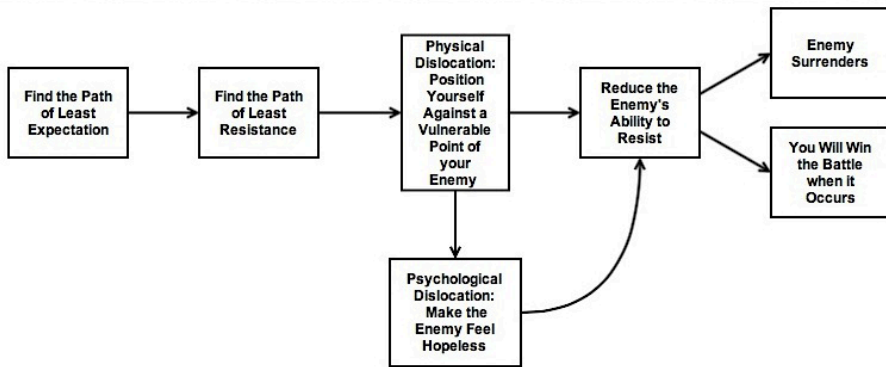
The final link in our causal chain of the (simplified) indirect approach is that in order to identify the path of least resistance, you must first find the path of least expectation. If you simply take what appears to be the obvious path of least resistance, then the enemy may have already identified this as their weak point and prepared for an attack along it.¹⁸ Accordingly, what seemed to be the path of least resistance may cease to be. Identifying the path of least expectation should be causally prior to finding the path of least resistance. Surprise, then, is the central component of the indirect approach. Without surprise, your enemy will be able to identify where he is vulnerable and take steps to prevent you from physically (and therefore psychologically) dislocating him. This logic is another one of the strengths of the indirect approach since it takes into account one of the central lessons of game theory, which is that in order to choose a winning strategy you must consider what is rational for your opponent to do given what you are doing. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the indirect approach is a compelling and useful military strategy, it is not a panacea and its dependence on surprise can cause significant disadvantages.

¹⁶ Ibid. 341.

¹⁷ Ibid. 341.

¹⁸ Ibid. 341.

Figure 1: Simplified Causal Map of the Indirect Approach



THEORETICAL FLAWS WITH THE INDIRECT APPROACH

Though there are many potential sources of weakness with the indirect approach that can reduce its effectiveness¹⁹, this paper will focus on exploring its reliance on surprise. As we will soon see, it may not be possible to successfully surprise your opponent, and the methods used to try and achieve surprise can often put you in a worse position relative to adopting a more direct approach. One of the principal reasons for these flaws with the indirect approach is the presence of “friction” in war. As Clausewitz, who coined the term, said, “Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult.”²⁰ While it seems easy enough in theory to trick your opponent in order to place yourself in a favorable position before the battle occurs, in practice it is much more difficult. Why it is more difficult corresponds to friction. I begin by arguing that “fog,” one of the three classical components of friction, can prevent military commanders from discovering the path of least expectation and achieving surprise. I then argue that the common methods employed to achieve surprise (taking the psychologically scarier path, taking the physically harder path, diversion, and secrecy) can decrease battlefield effectiveness.

¹⁹ For example, enemy commanders may be less susceptible to psychological attacks than Liddell Hart assumes (Bidwell, *Modern Warfare*, 1973).

²⁰ Clausewitz, *On War*, 119.

Implicit Assumption of Accurate & Ample Information

In order to find the path of least expectation and surprise your opponent, you need to have relatively good intelligence on your enemy.²¹ Without understanding (to some extent) how your enemy's forces are distributed, what capabilities the enemy has, and what strategies the enemy commander is pursuing, there is little hope of achieving surprise. Unfortunately, this is easier said than done since there are some types of information that are inherently difficult to acquire (e.g., you can never know exactly what is going on in someone else's mind), and in war you have an enemy that is actively trying to deceive you. Remember, your opponent can also try and use the indirect approach to trick you! The problem of incorrect and/or incomplete intelligence in war is known as fog.²² If fog prevents military commanders from successfully surprising their opponents, then the promised benefits of adopting the indirect approach (physical and psychological dislocation) are unlikely to materialize. Consequently, fog is one of the reasons why employing a strategy based on the indirect approach may not lead to victory on the battlefield. Be that as it may, it should be noted that fog by itself is *not* one of the reasons why using an indirect approach can lead to worse outcomes than a more direct approach. Since adopting a direct approach will only lead to surprise by accident (it does not do so by design), fog just serves to (sometimes) level the playing field between the two strategies. If neither strategy leads to the benefits of surprise (physical and psychological dislocation), then we cannot say, all else equal, which is superior. In the next section, I will illustrate how imperfect information prevented the Japanese from successfully surprising the Americans at Midway, and how this contributed to their defeat.

Typical Methods Used to Achieve Surprise

To successfully surprise your opponent, one method that can be used is to take the psychologically scarier path. For example, your adversary may not expect you to engage in dangerous activities like night attacks and parachuting behind enemy lines.²³ Consequently, to achieve surprise you may have to do just that. The

²¹ Stephanie Markam, *Intelligence & Surprise: The Battle of Midway* (Newport: Naval War College, 1993), 9.

²² Ibid. 117. Note that incorrect intelligence is when you have information that is wrong, while incomplete intelligence refers to a situation where the intelligence you have is accurate, but there is important intelligence that you do not possess.

²³ Edward Luttwak, *The Logic of War and Peace* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 8.

problem with this method is that it can intensify the second classical component of friction, “fear.” This is a significant problem in war because you have an enemy that is actively trying to injure or kill you, and so fear of death or injury can cause soldiers to be less effective fighters. As Clausewitz asserted, it is difficult to keep your composure and think rationally when there are bullets whizzing past your head and some of your friends and fellow soldiers lie injured or dead beside you.²⁴ If taking a more direct approach reduces soldiers’ fear by avoiding scary activities, then their performance on the battlefield should be enhanced and the direct approach may be a superior strategy.

Another method that can be utilized to achieve surprise is to take the physically harder path. For example, to surprise your opponent you may need to move your troops through a desert rather than on a road, as your enemy might not anticipate you would do such a crazy thing!²⁵ The problem with this method is that it can intensify the final classical component of friction, “fatigue.” This is a noteworthy problem in war because your enemy will attempt to weaken you by any means necessary, including starvation and physical exhaustion.²⁶ If soldiers are fatigued before the battle begins, then they obviously will not be as effective fighters during the battle. Therefore, if taking a more direct approach reduces soldiers’ fatigue by avoid physically taxing routes (e.g., by taking the road instead), then their battlefield efficiency should improve and the direct approach may be a superior strategy.

A third method that might be employed to generate surprise is diversion. According to Liddell Hart, in order to surprise your enemy and achieve physical dislocation, you often need to distract the enemy commander’s mind and divert his resources to unprofitable ends by means of one or a series of diversions.²⁷ For example, you might first attack your enemy’s northern forces to distract him from your true target, which are his southern forces. The problem with diversion is that it reduces the amount of force available for the main target of your attack.²⁸ This is an even more serious problem when the enemy does not take the bait of your diversion, as then you have weakened your own forces without

²⁴ Clausewitz, *On War*, 113.

²⁵ Luttwak, *The Logic of War and Peace*, 9.

²⁶ Clausewitz, *On War*, 115.

²⁷ Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 341.

²⁸ Clausewitz, *On War*, 203 and Luttwak, *The Logic of War and Peace*, 10.

gaining anything substantive in return. In war, where battles are won and lost by the smallest of margins, even tiny differences in force can mean the difference between victory and defeat. Again, utilizing a direct approach would mitigate this problem, as there should be no need for diversion since the direct approach is not concerned with achieving surprise. The Battle of Midway case study will show that the decision by the Japanese to attempt a diversion, as well as disperse their fleet for the sake of surprise, was a critical mistake that contributed to their defeat on the battlefield. Note that dispersion of forces falls under the general category of diversion if the purpose of dispersion is to divert the enemy commander's attention away from your true plan and maintain and/or enhance surprise. Since this was the goal of Japan's decision to disperse their fleet, it qualifies as a type of diversion.

The final method I will discuss here that may be used to achieve and/or maintain surprise is secrecy. Obviously, in order to surprise your opponent, you need to keep your plans secret. Secrecy, however, entails significant disadvantages. For example, it may prompt you to reduce the amount of communications between your own soldiers in order to prevent the enemy from intercepting your messages and discovering your plan. Though this may enhance surprise, it also reduces the ability of your own forces to coordinate and thus might decrease their effectiveness. For example, a lack of coordination can lead to some commanders not having the most up-to-date information, which may cause tactical and/or strategic mistakes. Alternatively, direct approaches should prioritize coordination over secrecy and therefore not face this issue. Japan's experience at Midway will demonstrate how an intense concern for secrecy motivated by the indirect approach can lead to significant military costs due to lack of coordination.

I will now turn to the Battle of Midway to provide empirical evidence for my main critiques of the indirect approach — that the promised benefits of surprise do not always materialize, that the methods used to try and achieve surprise can lead to significant military drawbacks, that it does not always lead to military victory, and that it is not always superior to direct approaches. The Battle will also provide evidence that, specifically, the problems related to fog, diversion, and secrecy contributed to the failure of the indirect approach in this case.

CASE STUDY: THE BATTLE OF MIDWAY

The Battle of Midway (June 4–7, 1942) was one of the most critical naval battles fought between America and Japan in World War II. While Japan attempted to utilize an indirect approach in this battle to deal a decisive blow to the U.S.

Navy in the Pacific, it was Japan that ended up suffering a terrible defeat. In this section, I will first explain why this case was chosen over others. I will then describe how Japan's Midway Operation resembled an indirect approach. Third, I will make an argument about why Japan lost the Battle of Midway. Finally, I will present and preemptively respond to alternative explanations to my argument.

Case Selection: Why Midway?

Before diving into the details of the case, it makes sense to explain why it was specifically chosen. There are four main reasons why this case was chosen instead of others. First, as I will argue below, in my estimation Japan's strategy in this Battle was a clear example of the indirect approach, as it was heavily reliant on surprise and employed traditional indirect approach tactics like diversions and heightened secrecy. This clarity is preferable to a case where surprise is not the predominant feature of the military strategy and thus it is questionable whether the case can be used to test the indirect approach. Second, the fact that the Japanese outnumbered the Americans in terms of aircraft carriers, ships, and planes makes this a more than plausible test case of the indirect approach.²⁹ We should not expect the indirect approach to somehow magically allow Luxembourg to defeat the U.S. military in battle, but it could (and should in some proponents' opinion) tip the scales in a relatively even fight. Third, since the outcome of the Battle of Midway was so devastating for Japan even though they were about evenly matched with the U.S. in terms of forces, it is much easier to examine the counter-factual of how they would have fared if they employed a more direct approach. Clearly, something went horribly wrong for the Japanese in this Battle, and thus we should be able to direct blame somewhere. Fourth, several factors related to the indirect approach's dependence on surprise led to Japan's defeat in the Battle, which means that we can substantiate several of the theoretical defects of the indirect approach hypothesized above.

Japan's Military Strategy & Why It Was an Indirect Approach

The motivation for the Midway Operation was the failure of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor to destroy any of America's aircraft carriers, which just

²⁹ Dallas Woodbury Isom, *Midway Inquest: Why the Japanese Lost the Battle of Midway* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2007), 2, 3, 95, 100.

happened to not be there that day.³⁰ If Japan was to have any hope of winning the war, they needed to destroy the American carrier fleet as soon as possible.³¹ Consequently, the most important goal of the Midway Operation was not to capture the Midway Islands, but to destroy the American carrier fleet.³² Doing so would likely knock America out of the Pacific for at least a year, which would give Japan the time and space to exploit the oil and other resources of Southeast Asia.³³ This was of critical importance to Japan because they had previously depended on U.S. oil exports to fuel their military, but the American government cut off their supply in August 1941 with a full embargo.³⁴

Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese Combined Fleet, was chosen to lead the operation. His plan was to use an attack on Midway as a trap to lure the American carriers in so that they could be destroyed in one decisive battle. Although the Midway Islands are just six miles in diameter, they were a vital air base and refueling point for the American military in the mid-Pacific³⁵. Furthermore, because of their proximity to Hawaii, anyone who controlled the Islands also threatened important military bases on Hawaii like Pearl Harbor and, by extension, the U.S. west coast.³⁶ For these reasons, the Japanese were confident that an attack on Midway would induce the Americans to send their carriers to defend or retake the Islands.³⁷

³⁰ Paul Dull, *A Battle History of the Imperial Japanese Navy* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1978), 20.

³¹ Isom, *Midway*, 91.

³² Mitsuo Fuchida and Masatake Okumiya, *Midway: The Battle that Doomed Japan, The Japanese Navy's Story* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1955), 78.

³³ Isom, *Midway Inquest*, 91 and Fuchida & Okumiya, *The Battle that Doomed Japan*, 19-20.

³⁴ Fuchida & Okumiya, *The Battle that Doomed Japan*, 18.

³⁵ Walter Boyne, *Clash of Titans: World War II at Sea* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 179.

³⁶ Fuchida & Okumiya, *The Battle that Doomed Japan*, 78.

³⁷ Isom, *Midway Inquest*, 92.

Figure 2:



(Source: U.S. Army Center of Military History, “Aleutian Islands”)

The specifics of Yamamoto’s plan were as follows. First, he planned on launching an attack on the Aleutian Islands, which are north of the Midway Islands, on June 3.³⁸ This attack would serve two purposes. The first was to divert American attention and naval forces away from Midway.³⁹ Just as the indirect approach prescribes, Yamamoto wanted to use an attack on the Aleutian Islands as a way to distract the Americans from his true objective, which was to destroy the American carrier fleet. This would, theoretically, enhance the surprise of his true operation and therefore make it easier to destroy the American carriers and capture Midway. The second reason for this attack was that the Japanese Naval

³⁸ Ibid. 238.

³⁹ Dull, *A Battle History of the Imperial Japanese Navy*, 134, 138.

General Staff was worried that the Americans would launch an invasion of the north Japanese islands from the Aleutians, and thus they wanted to capture the Islands or neutralize them as a military base to counter this threat.⁴⁰

The second part of Yamamoto's plan was to launch an air attack against American forces on Midway on June 4, followed by a ground invasion two days later.⁴¹ Admiral Chichi Nagumo (who oversaw the attack on Pearl Harbor) was tasked with leading this portion of the offensive. His force was the core of the entire operation, as it contained four of Japan's six attack aircraft carriers, which had about 225 operational planes between them.⁴² As mentioned before, the primary aim of this part of the operation was to draw the American carrier fleet to the Midway Islands, while the secondary objective was to actually capture the Islands. Nevertheless, the Japanese did assume that they could capture the Islands before the American carriers arrived.⁴³

The third component of the plan involved Yamamoto himself. While Nagumo launched his attack against Midway, Yamamoto, with the three most powerful battleships in the Japanese Navy, would be 300 miles to the west.⁴⁴ While it might seem strange that the Japanese decided to disperse their strength, Yamamoto believed that dividing his force would reduce the chances that American reconnaissance assets in the Pacific would discover the true extent and purpose of the Midway Operation. Again, as the indirect approach recommends, this action was taken to deceive the enemy and preserve the surprise of the Japanese attack.

If all went according to plan, the American carrier fleet would rush to Midway to recapture it, and Nagumo and Yamamoto's forces would be waiting there to ambush them. With the American Pacific fleet severely crippled, the Japanese would have free reign in the Pacific for a year and would be one step closer to winning the war. Therefore, the Japanese plan was operating not only at the tactical level of warfare, but also at the operational and strategic levels. The Midway Operation was related to the operational level of warfare because the Japanese were attempting to link together a series of battles (the attack on the Aleutian Islands, the attack on the Midway Islands, and the planned attack on

⁴⁰ Isom, *Midway Inquest*, 92.

⁴¹ Gordon Prange, Donald Goldstein, and Katherine Dillon, *Miracle at Midway* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1982), 32-33.

⁴² Isom, *Midway Inquest*, 93.

⁴³ Dull, *A Battle History of the Imperial Japanese Navy*, 133.

⁴⁴ Prange et. al., *Miracle at Midway*, 33.

the U.S. carrier fleet) in order to gain a decisive advantage in their campaign to control the Pacific Ocean. The plan also was operating at the theater level of warfare because the Japanese needed to control the Pacific in order to exploit the resources of Southeast Asia and thus have a chance of winning the war. While the broad scope of the Midway Operation meant that if it was successful it would be a great victory for the Japanese, it also meant that the consequences of failure would be much more catastrophic.

While Liddell Hart implies that Japan's Midway Operation was not a true indirect approach because, by committing themselves to an attack on Midway at a specific time, it lacked flexibility, I contend that it strongly resembles an indirect approach in at least some critical respects.⁴⁵ The Japanese were clearly trying to take the path of least expectation to destroy the American aircraft carriers, as their entire strategy was predicated on surprise, deception, and misdirection. By taking the path of least expectation, the Japanese hoped to find the path of least resistance and dislocate the Americans. They thought their strategy would achieve physical dislocation by concentrating a superior Japanese force against a relatively weaker American force, and psychological dislocation by catching the Americans unawares. These factors would presumably reduce the Americans' ability to resist and facilitate Japan's eventual victory in the battle. However, though Yamamoto's plan seemed flawless in theory, in practice he would have been better off adopting a direct approach.

Why Japan Lost the Battle of Midway

The root cause of the colossal Japanese failure at Midway was that their operation was not actually a surprise. Prior to the battle, the Americans had partially broken the Japanese communication code (known as JN25) and roughly knew what the Japanese had planned.⁴⁶ While the indirect approach assumes that you can find the path of least expectation, because of the fog of war (the Japanese did not know the Americans had broken their code), this can be extremely difficult, if not impossible. If fog was a non-issue, then the Japanese could have fed false information to the Americans and therefore achieved surprise in a different manner. Nevertheless, this is not how events unfolded, and therefore the Japanese did not obtain the promised benefits of the indirect

⁴⁵ Basil Liddell Hart, *History of the Second World War* (New York: Putnam, 1971), 349-350.

⁴⁶ Prange et al., *Miracle at Midway*, 19, 37.

approach.

Specifically, the fact that the Americans knew of Yamamoto's plan had two directly negative consequences. The first was that any psychological dislocation the Japanese may have achieved due to surprise was negated. Instead of being the victim of surprise, it was the U.S. commander, Admiral Chester Nimitz, that did the surprising.⁴⁷ The second was that when the Japanese arrived at Midway, the American carrier fleet would already be there, waiting to ambush them. As previously mentioned, the Japanese had hoped to neutralize American forces on Midway *before* having to confront the American carrier fleet. Consequently, it was the Americans that physically dislocated the Japanese rather than the other way around.

Even though these were serious problems, the fact that the Midway Operation was not a surprise to the Americans did not directly doom the Japanese since they outnumbered the Americans in terms of ships and planes, and they could have won the battle even without the element of surprise.⁴⁸ Moreover, even after discovering the Japanese plan, the Americans still sent their carriers to defend Midway, which is exactly what Yamamoto wanted. What really condemned the Japanese to an awful defeat were the methods they used – secrecy, dispersion, and diversion — to maintain and enhance the surprise of their plan. Since this was a folly because the Americans had broken their code, these actions only served to weaken their force in exactly the manner discussed in the previous section. Alternatively, if Japan had embraced a direct approach that eschewed the need for surprise, it would not have suffered the negative consequences of these actions and would have fared better in the Battle. This would have been the case even if the Americans were still intercepting Japan's communications and knew they planned to use a direct rather than an indirect approach. The reason is that a direct approach would not have called for secrecy, dispersion, or diversion.

The first critical mistake made by the Japanese, which followed precisely from the indirect approach's emphasis on surprise, was to refrain from ship-to-ship radio communications as much as possible during their sortie from Japan to Midway in order to prevent the Americans from intercepting their messages and learning about their plan (which, of course, they already knew about). During this journey, there were many signs that the attack on Midway was no longer a secret.

⁴⁷ Markam, *Intelligence & Surprise: The Battle of Midway*, 1.

⁴⁸ Isom, *Midway Inquest*, 100.

Early on in the voyage, Yamamoto's fleet encountered American submarines, and the next day the Japanese intercepted a message sent by an American submarine to Midway.⁴⁹ At the very least, the Americans knew that a large group of Japanese battleships was headed somewhere in the Pacific. Then, on June 1, because of dense fog (the literal, not metaphorical kind), Yamamoto had to break radio silence to ascertain where his oil tanker was located in order to refuel.⁵⁰ This gave the Americans an opportunity to intercept Yamamoto's message and determine his location. Later that day, Japanese radio intelligence found a sharp increase in radio traffic coming from Hawaii, suggesting that the Americans might be preparing to send naval forces from Pearl Harbor.⁵¹ That same day, a Japanese patrol plane encountered a Midway-based American patrol plane 700 miles west of Midway, indicating that the Americans had increased the radius of their reconnaissance flights.⁵² On June 2, Yamamoto received an urgent message from the Naval General Staff in Tokyo that the Americans were probably aware of the Midway operation and might be rushing carriers to Midway in order to ambush the Japanese.⁵³ By this point, Yamamoto realized that the Americans probably knew about the planned attack on Midway and therefore it would not be a surprise. The problem was that Nagumo, whose carriers' radio receivers were much weaker than Yamamoto's, had not received this report from Tokyo and knew nothing about the other incidents described above.⁵⁴ Despite the fact that Nagumo had requested Yamamoto to relay any important intelligence to him, Yamamoto, in the interest of secrecy, made the fateful decision not to inform Nagumo that the Americans probably knew of their plans.⁵⁵ Essentially, Yamamoto was worried that the Americans might intercept a message sent to Nagumo, which would diminish whatever remaining surprise the operation might have left. As a consequence of Yamamoto's decision to prioritize surprise, Nagumo believed that the Americans were unaware of the Midway Operation and that there would be no American carriers in the area when he launched his attack against American forces on Midway. This assumption was one of the

⁴⁹ Prange et. al., *Miracle at Midway*, 121-122.

⁵⁰ Fuchida & Okumiya, *The Battle that Doomed Japan*, 126.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* 122.

⁵² Prange et. al., *Miracle at Midway*, 139.

⁵³ Isom, *Midway Inquest*, 98.

⁵⁴ Prange et. al., *Miracle at Midway*, 145.

⁵⁵ Isom, *Midway Inquest*, 96-99.

main reasons why the Japanese lost the Battle of Midway. If Japan had instead employed a direct approach that did not highly value surprise, then Yamamoto would have prioritized coordination over surprise and this error likely would not have occurred.

On June 4, at 4:30 a.m., Nagumo launched his attack against American forces on Midway. He had hoped to catch American planes on the ground and destroy them all before the Americans even knew what was happening.⁵⁶ For this mission, Nagumo allotted about half his planes. The other half (including the critical torpedo planes) were held back in case any American carriers made an early appearance, at which point Nagumo would want enough planes to defend himself.⁵⁷ The plan started to unravel when the first wave of Japanese planes failed to eliminate American aircraft on the ground, as the Americans knew the attack was coming. Nagumo then made the catastrophic decision to have the other half of his planes, which were earmarked for attack/defense against American carriers, refitted with *land* bombs so that they could strike military targets on Midway.⁵⁸ If Yamamoto had informed Nagumo that the Americans had likely discovered the operation and might be rushing carriers to Midway's defense, Nagumo probably would not have disarmed his strongest weapon against American carriers (his torpedo planes).⁵⁹ However, by the time American carriers started attacking Nagumo's forces it was too late, as it is time-consuming to rearm torpedo planes.⁶⁰ The American carriers were able to land a devastating first strike on Nagumo's forces, from which they could not recover. Alternatively, a direct approach would have put little or no value on achieving surprise, and thus Yamamoto would have had no good reason to withhold critical information from Nagumo in the interest of extreme secrecy. Therefore, this mistake could have been avoided if a direct approach was taken.

The second crucial mistake the Japanese made was to disperse their fleet in the interest of deception and surprise. Since Yamamoto's battleships were 300 miles to the west of Nagumo's carriers on June 4, they were not able to come to their defense in time. If Yamamoto's powerful battleships had been there, then they could have screened Nagumo's carriers from American attacks and destroyed

⁵⁶ Dull, *A Battle History of the Imperial Japanese Navy*, 145.

⁵⁷ Prange et. al., *Miracle at Midway*, 36.

⁵⁸ Ibid. 214.

⁵⁹ Isom, *Midway Inquest*, 268-269.

⁶⁰ Prange et. al., *Miracle at Midway*, 218.

many of the American planes with their immense firepower.⁶¹ Instead, it was the Americans who concentrated their fleet and were able to bring superior forces to bear at the Battle of Midway.⁶² Again, if the Japanese had been less concerned with achieving surprise and instead embraced a direct approach, then they would have concentrated their forces at Midway, their main strategic target, and avoided this issue. There would have been no strong rationale for dispersion, as the benefits of surprise would have been devalued.

The final consequential mistake made by the Japanese was the Aleutian diversion. Seeing that the Americans knew the main target of the Japanese operation was not the Aleutian Islands, the Americans did not let the attack distract their attention from where the true battle would be.⁶³ Therefore, the Japanese did not gain much from the Aleutian diversion, but they did lose the benefit of having those forces available for their main attack on Midway and against the American carriers. While the two carriers sent to the Aleutians did not have the capability to launch torpedo attack planes, they would have brought more Zeros (a powerful type of long-range fighter plane) to the battle, which would have enhanced Nagumo's ability to fend off American attack planes and provided his own attack planes with valuable escorts.⁶⁴ Once again, the Japanese's focus on surprise hurt them in the Battle, and a direct approach likely would have led to better results. There would have been no strong logic for diversion, as the benefits of surprise would have been devalued and more force would have been wanted for the main attack on Midway.

When all was said and done, in just over a day, the Japanese lost all four of Nagumo's carriers, while the Americans lost only one carrier, the Yorktown. The Battle of Midway was not just a failure for the Japanese; it was a catastrophe that probably sealed their fate.⁶⁵ If my argument that Japan's strategy adhered to the indirect approach is convincing, which I believe it is, then clearly the indirect approach does not always lead to victory on the battlefield. In fact, it can end in humiliating defeat. However, it did not have to be that way for the Japanese. According to naval intelligence officer and WWII historian Dallas Woodbury

⁶¹ Fuchida & Okumiya, *The Battle that Doomed Japan*, 234.

⁶² Boyne, *Clash of Titans*, 183.

⁶³ Prange et. al., *Miracle at Midway*, 155.

⁶⁴ Isom, *Midway Inquest*, 161, 238, 241.

⁶⁵ Fuchida & Okumiya, *The Battle that Doomed Japan*, 166.

Isom, if they had concentrated their strength and kept their eye on the real prize, which was the American carrier fleet, they most likely would have won the battle, albeit by a small margin.⁶⁶ Instead, their adherence to the indirect approach and its emphasis on surprise put them in a worse position than if they had pursued a more direct approach and concentrated their forces on Midway and the American carriers. The result was that the American forces were able to physically dislocate Japan by positioning themselves against a vulnerable point of the Japanese fleet, and psychologically dislocate them by achieving surprise. The indirect approach failed the Japanese at Midway, and they paid dearly for it.

Alternative Explanations

While I have argued that Japan utilized an indirect approach at the Battle of Midway, that this strategy failed miserably to achieve victory, and that Japan would have been better off adopting a more direct approach, it is essential to consider alternative explanations to my argument. One such alternative explanation could be that Japan did not actually adopt a “true” indirect approach at Midway, as Liddell Hart has asserted.⁶⁷ Given the abstract and convoluted mechanics of the indirect approach, this is an easier argument for critics to make. Nevertheless, I believe there are at least two convincing reasons to reject this potential criticism. The first is that even if the Japanese did not follow the exact letter of the indirect approach (if such a thing can even be ascertained), it clearly adhered to the essential spirit of the indirect approach and embraced many of its preferred tactics. This should be clear from the discussion above. The second reason to reject this criticism is that, if taken too far, it can bring us perilously close to circular reasoning: utilizing the indirect approach always leads to victory, and therefore any strategy that does not lead to victory cannot be a true indirect approach.⁶⁸

A second alternative explanation could be that the Japanese utilized an indirect approach, but it was their general incompetence rather than the strategy itself that led to battlefield failure. For example, a critic might argue that Japan should have better secured their communications to prevent the Americans from intercepting them. Or, perhaps the Japanese should have developed an enhanced intelligence-gathering system that would have revealed that the U.S. had cracked

⁶⁶ Isom, *Midway Inquest*, 151, 278.

⁶⁷ Liddell Hart, *History of the Second World War*, 349-350.

⁶⁸ Bond, *Liddell Hart: A Study of his Military Thought*, 56.

the Japanese communication code.⁶⁹ If they had done either or both things, then the indirect approach may have succeeded for the Japanese at Midway. The problem with these arguments is that the fog of war, combined with general human limitations, means that lack of good information is ubiquitous in conflict. In other words, this problem is not just limited to the Japanese during WWII, but is a more general issue with the logic of the indirect approach. Consequently, the indirect approach's assumption that actors can find the path of least expectation can be wildly optimistic in many cases.

In line with this second alternative explanation, a critic might argue that the indirect approach only failed in this case because of the mental mistakes made by Yamamoto and Nagumo after the plan had been set in motion. There is certainly some evidence for this criticism, as the mental errors made by Yamamoto and Nagumo were undoubtedly an important factor in the Battle. Furthermore, in hindsight there were warning signs that Yamamoto and Nagumo could have recognized. If not for human error, then Yamamoto would have alerted Nagumo that the operation was no longer a surprise and Nagumo would never have refitted his planes with land bombs. However, it is important to remember that the argument in the theoretical section regarding secrecy is about how employing an indirect approach can increase the likelihood of human error! In the case of Midway, Japan's adoption of the indirect approach meant that Yamamoto and Nagumo were so focused on achieving surprise that they were willing to overlook the warning signs in order to maintain it. The need for secrecy led to a lack of coordination, which then caused an increase in the likelihood (and incidence) of human error. If they had instead adopted a direct approach that put little value on surprise, then the need for secrecy would have been diminished and the human error associated with a lack of coordination would have been lessened.

A fourth alternative explanation is that the Japanese did employ an indirect approach and it did fail to lead to victory, but that the Japanese also would have failed if they used a direct approach. The main piece of evidence for this argument likely would be that whether or not the Japanese had chosen to use an indirect approach, the Americans probably would have intercepted their communications and roughly known their plans. While it is impossible to know exactly how this counter-factual situation would have played out, there are several

⁶⁹ Markam, *Intelligence & Surprise: The Battle of Midway*, 16.

advantages the Japanese would have obtained from adopting an optimal direct approach. First, they would not have had to prioritize secrecy, and so they could have avoided Nagumo's decision to re-arm his planes with land bombs. Second, there would have been no need to disperse the fleet, and thus Yamamoto would have been able to bring his powerful battleships into the fight. The third reason is that there would have been no need for the Aleutian diversion, and therefore the Japanese would have had those carriers and their planes available for the Battle as well. Though it is possible the U.S. would have redirected more forces to Midway in this counter-factual scenario, it seems implausible that the Japanese would have suffered such a devastating defeat with a fully concentrated and coordinated force.

The final alternative explanation that will be explored here relates to the external validity of the Battle of Midway. Since this is only one case, we cannot learn from it whether most attempts at the indirect approach lead to victory or defeat, or whether for most battles, adopting a direct approach is preferable to other strategies. It may be that this case is an extreme outlier and that in almost all other cases the indirect approach is the optimal military strategy and leads to victory. It may also be possible that Midway is a mild outlier and that the indirect approach is the optimal military strategy and leads to victory a majority of the time, but there is a significant minority of instances where it is unsuccessful. We cannot really know unless additional cases are examined in-depth. Furthermore, this potential weakness of the paper is bolstered by the many notable historical cases where surprise was utilized to great effect (e.g., the Battle of Trenton in the Revolutionary War or Operation Focus in the Six-Day War). However, this limitation should not significantly diminish the results of this paper for a few reasons. First, this paper only makes limited claims, and thus its internal argument would not be invalidated even if Midway is a mild or extreme outlier. Second, we should probably expect to see lots of cases of successful surprise in the historical record, as indirect approach strategies are more likely to be adopted when the problems described in the previous section are less severe (i.e., there is a selection effect).⁷⁰ Finally, given the logically sound theoretical critiques made in the previous section, we should expect to find other cases where attempts at surprise backfired, or at least entailed significant costs.

⁷⁰ A critic could reasonably retort that weaker and more desperate states are also more likely to try and utilize surprise, which might result in an empirical bias towards failed cases of surprise. Of course, if both indirect and direct approaches are extremely unlikely to succeed, then surrender or negotiation is also possible.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper has not been to argue that the indirect approach is a terrible strategy that never leads to victory. The indirect approach provides many valuable insights, and there are certainly many historical cases that demonstrate its utility. In fact, one might even consider the American strategy at Midway a kind of indirect approach. The real aim of this paper has been to demonstrate that the indirect approach does not *always* succeed on the battlefield, and to point out that it *can* fail due to its assumption that actors have accurate and ample information, and that the benefits of surprise outweigh the costs of the methods used to achieve it. Therefore, in deciding whether or not to utilize surprise, truly great military strategists carefully weigh its advantages and disadvantages in each case. In some situations, the disadvantages may surpass the advantages, and a more direct approach may lead to better results.

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THE RED ARMY FACTION: UNDERSTANDING A MEASURED GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO AN ADAPTIVE TERRORIST THREAT

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INTRODUCTION

For three decades prior to 9/11, West Germany fought its own war on terror. For 28 years, it faced off against the Red Army Faction (RAF), a small yet highly adaptable terrorist organization that constantly evolved to meet the countermeasures deployed against it. The RAF repeatedly reformed its ideology, operational objectives, and modus operandi when confronted with setbacks. In turn, the West German government approached the RAF with three primary measures: police and intelligence work, special counterterrorist paramilitary forces, and legislative reforms.

The present article will analyze all three components of the West German counterterrorism strategy. The first section surveys the historical background of the RAF, with a particular focus on its organizational and ideological underpinnings to understand its critical strengths and weaknesses. Second is a brief overview of the various police, paramilitary, and legal measures put in place. The article then moves on to an examination of the effectiveness of each measure, the public perception of the policies put in place, and the role they each played in the downfall of the RAF. Finally, this article will extract lessons on counterterrorism from the West German experience that can be used to inform the current U.S. campaigns against al Qaeda and ISIS.

While West Germany was predisposed against a strong central government because of the Nazi past, the government overcame those concerns in order

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to strengthen and create centrally-controlled intelligence and paramilitary organizations, the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) and GSG-9, respectively. Both measures had initial successes but faltered in the long run: intelligence collection due to rising public concern over civil liberties and paramilitary forces because later generations of the RAF avoided situations susceptible to GSG-9's skill-set, namely hostage taking.

Legal initiatives, while also fraught with public concern and debate, were the measure that sealed the RAF's fate. With the fall of the Soviet Union and the failure of the RAF's efforts to create a united pan-European terrorist front, the group had little to fight for except the release of the RAF prisoners, becoming what Jeremy Varon described as "free-the-guerilla-guerrillas."² The Kinkel Initiative, a prisoner release program for those who denounced terrorism and were near the end of their sentence, helped to break down the narrative of the prisoner's plight propagated by the RAF. Due to the combination of those factors, the commando level of the RAF was left with no choice but to abandon the armed struggle.

Thus, while effective shifts in operating procedures made the RAF an enduring threat in Germany for the better part of three decades, the group was hampered by its own ideological misgivings. West German innovations in police and paramilitary work crushed the first two generations of the RAF, and a prisoner release program was the final step in convincing the elusive third generation to give up the fight.

ASSESSING THE ENEMY'S STRENGTHS AND VULNERABILITIES—HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The First Generation: Sparking the Global Marxist Revolution, 1970-1977³

² Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the War: The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 234.

³ While all of the first generation's leaders were arrested in 1972, they would remain active in a command and control role until their suicides in 1977. The leaders were prevented by their imprisonment from participating directly in attacks, but they were not completely neutralized. RAF prisoners used their lawyers to communicate with commandos on the outside and order attacks to be staged. Their continuing involvement in active command and control until their suicides makes it important to denote 1977 as the true ending period of the first generation, even as a second generation was staging attacks in the meantime.

The Red Army Faction was born out of the student protest movement of the 1960s. The children of the Nazi generation worried that their parents were once again letting Germany become an authoritarian state.⁴ This came to a head on June 2nd, 1967, when unarmed student protestor Benno Ohnesorg was shot at a rally during the Shah's visit to Berlin by a plainclothes police officer, leading to a series of further protests. The student movement also took up the cause of the North Vietnamese. Led by the charismatic Rudi Dutschke, they held rallies and congresses to show solidarity with the Viet Cong in their fight against American imperialism.

Pushed to action by this political environment, young couple Andreas Baader and Gudrun Ensslin, who would form the core of the first generation, lit two Frankfurt department stores on fire on April 3rd, 1968.⁵ They were promptly caught and arrested, and both narratives were on display during their trial. Early on, Ensslin spoke for both herself and Baader, stating that the act of arson was committed “in protest of against people's indifference to the murder of the Vietnamese.”⁶ Yet, later in the trial, their lawyer Horst Mahler gave a much different explanation—the arson was an act of “rebellion against a generation that had tolerated millions of crimes in the Nazi era.”⁷ Baader and Ensslin felt they had no choice but to act violently against what they perceived as an increasingly dangerous state.

Just eight days after the arson incident, young anti-communist Josef Bachmann staged a failed assassination attempt on Rudi Dutschke, galvanizing further anger in the left-wing student movement. Prominent left-wing columnist Ulrike Meinhof watched all of this unfold and, after covering the trial and interviewing Ensslin, decided it was time that she too “crossed the boundary between verbal protest and physical resistance.”⁸ Together with Ensslin, Meinhof helped to break Baader out of prison on May 14th, 1970, marking the official start date of the RAF or, as it was labeled in the press and by the government at the time,

⁴ Konrad Kellen, “Ideology and rebellion: Terrorism in West Germany,” in *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*, ed. Walter Reich (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1998), 47.

⁵ Ulrike Meinhof, “From Protest to Resistance,” in *Everyone Talks About the Weather -- We Don't: The Writings of Ulrike Meinhof*, ed. Karen Bauer (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2008), 239.

⁶ Stefan, Aust, *Baader-Meinhof: The Inside Story of the R.A.F.* trans. by Anthea Bell, (London: The Bodley Head, 2008), 37.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

the “Baader-Meinhof Gang.”

After briefly training with the Palestinian Liberation Organization in Jordan, the group was unable to decide between the two motivating factors, and so the first generation attacked targets symbolic both of the U.S. and the FRG. In 1972, they launched the “May Offensive,” a series of five bombings targeting U.S. Army installations, the West German police, and the right-wing press. In line with their anti-imperialist ideology, the RAF sought to use tactics that would galvanize public support for their cause. The RAF sought to portray themselves as loyal defenders of everyday people against an oppressive state. The title of the RAF’s first communiqué, “The Urban Guerilla Concept,” is a reference to the *Minimanual of the Urban Guerilla* by Carlos Marighella, which advocated that terrorists provoke the government into repressive countermeasures that would mobilize the population against the state.⁹

However, the May Offensive scared more ordinary Germans than it did mobilize support for the RAF, and the public was forthcoming with tips to the police. In June and July of 1972, West German authorities arrested ten RAF members, including all of the group’s leaders.¹⁰ A loyal group of supporters then filled in the ranks and became the second generation. While imprisoned, Baader, Ensslin, and Meinhof developed an “info-system” of note-passing through their lawyers, through which they communicated with each other and commanded operations on the outside.¹¹ However, all efforts to free the prisoners failed, and on October 18th, dubbed “Death Night” in Stammheim Prison, Baader, Jan-Carl Raspe, and Ensslin all committed suicide.¹²

The Second Generation: Fighting for the Prisoners, then Against American Imperialism, 1972-1982

The second generation had two distinct phases. From 1972 to 1977, the second generation existed solely to secure the release of the original leaders. During those years, the RAF was led by lawyer Siegfried Haag, who planned

⁹ Carlos Marighella, *Minimanual of the Urban Guerilla*, in *Voices of Terror*, ed. Walter Laqueur (New York: Reed Press, 2004), 370-6.

¹⁰ Assaf, Moghadam, “Failure and Disengagement in the Red Army Faction,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 35, no. 2 (2012), 161.

¹¹ Aust, *Baader-Meinhof*, 196-8.

¹² *Ibid*, 411.

the unsuccessful 1975 attack on the West German embassy in Stockholm, where the RAF took hostages and demanded the release of the Stammheim prisoners.¹³ Haag was arrested in November of 1976, but upon her release in February 1977, Brigitte Mohnhaupt took command of the RAF along with Christian Klar.¹⁴ The second generation planned one last-ditch effort to free the Stammheim prisoners by kidnapping Hans Martin Schleyer, who they killed after failing to secure the release of the prisoners.

Thus, a second phase ensued, the “Mohnhaupt-Klar years” from 1978 to 1982, when the dominant operational focus shifted away from freeing the prisoners and to an increase in anti-U.S. and anti-NATO attacks.¹⁵ Their operations were “aimed at killing representatives of the ‘Military-Industrial Complex’,” in what they dubbed the “‘M-I-C’” strategy.¹⁶ Attacks included failed assassination attempts of American generals Alexander Haig (then Supreme Allied Commander of NATO) and Frederick Kroesen and the successful bombing of the U.S. airbase at Ramstein. Klar and Mohnhaupt were arrested in November of 1982, marking the end of the second generation.

The Third Generation: Rebelling Against the European System, 1984-1998 Organization of the RAF

In 1984, West German authorities identified a new pair of leaders, Wolfgang Grams and Birgit Hogefeld, who would bring about another change in the RAF.¹⁷ The third generation carried on the tradition of “anti-imperialist” rhetoric but picked a new target for their aggression—the continent of Europe itself. Claiming that Germany was at the forefront of a push for European global economic supremacy, the third generation picked targets involved in banking, diplomacy, and industry. The RAF also attempted to raise its international profile by calling on other European leftist terrorist groups Direct Action (DA) of France, Red Brigades (RB) of Italy, and the Communist Combatant Cells (CCC) of

¹³ Dennis A. Pluchinsky, “An Organizational and Operational Analysis of Germany’s Red Army Faction Terrorist Group (1972-91),” in *European Terrorism: Today and Tomorrow*, ed. by Yonah Alexander and Dennis A. Pluchinsky (New York: Brassey’s, 1992), 47.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Pluchinsky, “An Organizational and Operational Analysis,” 47.

¹⁶ Hans Horchem, “The Decline of the Red Army Faction,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 3, no. 2 (1991), 65.

¹⁷ Moghadam, “Failure and Disengagement,” 168.

Belgium to create together a “West European Guerilla.”¹⁸ Arrests of key members in those organizations prevented any serious collaboration from materializing.¹⁹ However, the RAF continued to internationalize its struggle by claiming attacks in the names of foreign terrorists; named commandos of the third generation included Patsy O’Hara of the IRA, Mara Cagol of the Red Brigades, and Khaled Aker of the PFLP-GC.²⁰ The third generation struggled to redefine itself when Communism receded from the international stage with the fall of the USSR and the ensuing democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe.²¹ Hogefeld was arrested and Grams was killed in a police operation in 1993, and the RAF remained dormant until finally announcing its dissolution in a statement sent to Reuters on April 20th, 1998.²²

RAF Tactics and Ideology: The Primacy of the Primacy of the Prisoners

As a left-wing Marxist group, the RAF holds a clear position in the terrorist typology. David Rapport theorized the “four waves” theory of terrorism, which describes how terrorism has changed since the late 19th century. The theory stipulates that modern terrorism began with the first wave of anarchists, primarily in Eastern Europe, and was followed by the anticolonial second wave from 1920 to the 1960s.²³ The RAF belongs to the third wave or “New Left,” which was initially motivated by the Vietnam War and lasted from then until the end of the 20th century.²⁴ The third wave learned from the second—in the case of the RAF, their founding document begins with Mao’s famous call to draw “a clear dividing line between the enemy and ourselves.”²⁵ The RAF hoped to reinvigorate Mao’s revolutionary ideas for a new age and a new cause. Among the third wave were

¹⁸ Tom Parker, “Fighting an Antaeus Enemy: How Democratic States Unintentionally Sustain the Terrorist Movements They Oppose,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19, no. 2 (2007), 171.

¹⁹ Horchem, “Decline,” 68-9.

²⁰ Pluchinsky, “An Organizational and Operational Analysis,” 66-72.

²¹ Pluchinsky, Dennis A, “Germany’s Red Army Faction: An Obituary,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 16, no. 2 (1993), 136.

²² Moghadam, “Failure and Disengagement,” 170-1.

²³ David C. Rappaport, “The Four Waves of Terrorism” in Audrey Kurth Cronin and James Ludes (eds.), *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy*, (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2004), 47.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Andre Moncourt, and J. Smith, *trans.*, *The Urban Guerilla Concept*, (Montreal: Kersplebeed, 2009), 7.

the groups Dennis Pluchinsky classified as the Fighting Communist Organizations (FCOs) of Western Europe, namely the RAF in West Germany, RB in Italy, DA in France, and CCC in Belgium, among others.²⁶ Internationally, left-wing groups such as Sendero Luminoso and the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) materialized. The RAF differed from other third wave groups such as the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) or the Basque ETA, both of which mixed left-wing radicalism with nationalist sentiments. The RAF also differed from its left-wing West German contemporaries—the 2 June Movement and the Revolutionary Cells—who were more anarchist in ideology and used cell structures that were far less hierarchical than the RAF.²⁷

This ideology of leftist radicalism terrorism lent itself to highly symbolic acts that killed few but struck specific targets that spoke to the organization's cause, such as airplane hijackings, hostage taking, and assassinations.²⁸ In line with this pattern, the RAF favored kidnappings, assassinations, and bombings. The RAF was noted for its excellent tradecraft, following potential targets and learning their habits before staging an attack.²⁹ Even if a target was heavily protected, the RAF would spend weeks looking into potential flaws that it could exploit instead of moving on to a more vulnerable target.³⁰

Moreover, the organization's tactics and modus operandi did not stay stagnant over its 28-year lifespan. The third generation turned the RAF into a professional learning organization by studying the court cases of the first and second generation to "discover their weak spots."³¹ Third generation members even began to apply an ointment to their fingertips when they realized that police were lifting fingerprints from toilet seats and refrigerators.³² Measures like that allowed the third generation to consistently evade authorities. While the core of the first generation was arrested within a span of two months in 1972, after 1984, "not a single safe house used by RAF members was found."³³ This high level of tactical and organizational adaptability allowed the RAF to outlast almost all of the other

²⁶ Pluchinsky "Obituary" 136.

²⁷ Della Porta 117-8

²⁸ Rappaport, "Four Waves," 57-8

²⁹ Horchem, "Terrorism and the Government Response," 51

³⁰ Pluchinsky, "An Organizational and Operational Analysis," 55.

³¹ Frederick Kempe, "Deadly Survivors: The Cold War is Over, But Leftists Terrorists in Germany Fight On," *Wall Street Journal*, December 27, 1991, accessed November 29, 2016.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, 168.

Western European FCOs.³⁴

Yet while the RAF was adaptive in terms of technique and tradecraft, the group's attempts to shift its ideology to gain widespread support were unsuccessful. The RAF began with the initial goal of a global Marxist revolution, then moved on to anti-American and anti-military sentiment, and finally established their stance as anti-European global power. Yet each attempt failed to create mass support or sympathy. In fact, beginning with the first generation, the RAF was frequently criticized from the left for both the group's motives and actions. A 1978 editorial board statement in a left-wing paper criticized the RAF, stating that the group lacked "the moral justification of the right to resistance" because "*the Federal Republic is not a fascist regime.*"³⁵ Then, the second generation failed to galvanize anti-American sentiment with attacks on military and NATO targets. Finally, the third generation was widely criticized for its methods and targeting; at the 1986 Frankfurt Congress, the participants labeled the 1985 murder of an American GI to obtain his ID card "an act of revolutionary self-justice."³⁶ The RAF became, in short, "outsiders, desperadoes in the eyes of extremists of the Left."³⁷

While the RAF made several ideological shifts during its 28 year lifetime, there was always one constant from 1972 on—they always talked about the prisoners. The RAF's founding act was freeing Baader from prison, and prison and liberation often stood as metaphors for the RAF's battle against the FRG. As Dennis Pluchinsky notes, "the RAF essentially was born in the prisons," with the entire leadership of the first generation being arrested shortly after the May offensive of 1972.³⁸

Moreover, the issue of the prisoners was a major recruiting tool for the RAF. Mohnhaupt and Peter-Jürgen Book were two of the few members of the second generation who had personally known Baader and Ensslin. The others joined "out of sympathy—especially following the hunger strikes of some of the

³⁴ Pluchinsky, "Obituary," 136.

³⁵ Quoted in Sarah Colvin, *Ulrike Meinhof and West German Terrorism: Language, Violence, and Identity* (Rochester: Camden House, 2009), 233.

³⁶ Quoted in Horchem, "Decline," 67.

³⁷ Hans Horchem, "The Lost Revolution of West Germany's Terrorists," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 1, no. 3 (1989), 356.

³⁸ Pluchinsky "Obituary" 138.

inmates in the Stuttgart-Stammheim high security prison.”³⁹ These supporters were often members of the “committees against torture” created to protest the conditions of the RAF prisoners, and many of the active members of the RAF as of 1980 were recruited from these groups.⁴⁰ An April 7th, 1977 communiqué stated that the RAF “will prevent the federal prosecutors and state security organs from taking revenge on the imprisoned fighters,” clearly placing the active commandos as the defenders and protectors of the prisoners.⁴¹ From 1977 on, the RAF maintained a steadfast assertion that the Stammheim deaths were not suicides, but were in fact murders by the state, a narrative the group “consciously employed” to gain sympathy.⁴²

In this manner, the RAF was able to use the issue of the prisoners to overcome their lack of ideological sway. As Jeremy Varon noted, “the drama of the prisoners provided a way for the RAF to rhetorically compensate for its chief political failure: to win a critical mass of West Germans to its armed struggle.”⁴³ In order to rally support, the prisoners were portrayed as living in horrible conditions, even though in reality they “were given four newspapers a day and were allowed to have 20 books at a time, their own radios, unlimited mail privileges, and contact with other prisoners.”⁴⁴ Thus, the “myth of the prisoners” was a key component to sustaining the RAF’s armed struggle and an aspect of the organization that the FRG would have to address in order to defeat the group.⁴⁵

GOVERNMENT COUNTERMEASURES

Police and Intelligence Measures: Overview

There was one major hurdle for almost all FRG counterterrorist action—the design of the republic itself. In post-war Germany, the states (*Länder*) were

³⁹ Moghadam, “Failure and Disengagement,” 163

⁴⁰ Hans Horchem, “Terrorism and Government Response: The German Experience,” *Jerusalem Journal of International Relations* 4, no. 3 (1980), 45.

⁴¹ Pluchinsky, “An Operational and Organizational Analysis,” 60.

⁴² Beatrice de Graaf, *Evaluating Counterterrorism Performance: A comparative study* (Oxon: Routledge, 2011), 53.

⁴³ Jeremy Varon, “Stammheim Forever and the Ghosts of Guantánamo: Cultural Memory and the Politics of Incarceration” In *Baader-Meinhof Returns: History and Cultural Memory of German Left-Wing Terrorism*, ed. by Gerrit-Jan Berendse and Ingo Cornils (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004), 310-1.

⁴⁴ Bruce Hoffman and Jennifer Morrison Taw, “Strategic Framework for Countering Terrorism and Insurgency,” RAND Corporation, 1992, 62.

⁴⁵ Pluchinsky, “Obituary,” 142.

purposefully strong to prevent another ideologue from taking power.⁴⁶ West Germany was thus a federation where the central government (*Bund*) shared equal power with the states.⁴⁷ However, failures to effectively combat terrorism at the state level led the ministers of each *Lander* in 1972 to give the Federal Criminal Police Office (*Bundeskriminalamt*, or BKA) “final authority over all police activity” within West Germany.⁴⁸ The BKA was centrally-controlled, and thus an ideal organization to combat the RAF throughout the Federal Republic.

Horst Herold, named head of the BKA in 1971, would oversee an immense growth in the organization. When he took over, the budget was DM 54.8 million, and by 1981, it had increased to DM 290 million.⁴⁹ BKA staffing rose from 930 to 3,536 personnel in that period.⁵⁰ Herold was a proponent of computerized systems who believed that the “most important thing in the fight against terrorism is to be systematic.”⁵¹ However, in the early 1970s the BKA had a highly rudimentary card-index system that filed over 3 million documents.⁵² Herold set out to modernize the BKA’s intelligence system by creating a computer at the BKA’s Wiesbaden office. Every address and name found on a captured terrorist or at the scene of an attack was put into the database.⁵³ The computer’s database was split into two sections—PIOS (persons, institutions, objects, and things) and BEFA (observations and search).⁵⁴ By the mid-1980s, PIOS had upwards of 135,000 people, 5,500 institutions, and 115,000 objects and things on file.⁵⁵

This system was dubbed Herold’s “Nuremberg Model,” where “computers churned out up-to-the minute data and predictions that would be handed over

⁴⁶ Christopher Dobson and Ronald Payne, *Counterattack: The West’s Battle Against the Terrorists* (New York: Facts on File, 1982), 95.

⁴⁷ Stephen M. Sobieck, “Democratic Responses to International Terrorism in Germany,” in *The Deadly Sin of Terrorism: Its Effect on Democracy and Civil Liberty in Six Countries*, ed. by David Charters (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1994), 52.

⁴⁸ Alan, Rosenfeld, “Militant Democracy: The Legacy of West Germany’s War on Terror in the 1970s,” *The European Legacy* 19, no. 5 (2014), 577.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 576.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Dobson and Payne, *Counterattack*, 104.

⁵² Sobieck, “Democratic Responses,” 59.

⁵³ Dobson and Payne, *Counterattack*, 103.

⁵⁴ Sobieck, “Democratic Responses,” 59.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

to police.”⁵⁶ A key example was the July 1980 car crash that killed RAF members Wolfgang Beer and Juliane Plambeck. 2,500 pieces of information were gathered from the crash, some of which warned of an impending attack. Within days Herold announced the BKA had impounded four stolen cars with French plates that were going to be used in the operation.⁵⁷

Police investigative powers were also expanded in addition to the intelligence apparatus. After a series of second generation attacks in late 1977, the criminal code was amended to give police more leeway in conducting investigations, including setting up road checkpoints and searching whole apartment buildings if even only one unit was under investigation.⁵⁸ Police were also given the right to tap phones and read mail.⁵⁹

Paramilitary Measures: Overview

Similar to the case of police and intelligence reform, the structure of the FRG was an initial obstacle to the creation of an effective counterterrorist paramilitary unit. Until 1972, the central government had no special unit for combating terrorism. Instead, that responsibility was left to the individual states. The Black September attack during the Munich Olympics laid bare that flaw in the system. When Palestinian terrorists stormed the Israeli team’s quarters in the Olympic Village, took hostages and demanded a prisoner release, it fell to the woefully unprepared Bavarian police to manage the incident. In an attempt to ambush the terrorists at the airport, policemen without training in sharpshooting were assigned as snipers. After they took their first shots, they hesitated and the surviving terrorists had time to detonate grenades and kill the remaining eleven hostages.⁶⁰ Ultimately, “most of the deaths occurred during the poorly planned and conducted German attempt to rescue the hostages.”⁶¹

Thus, after the RAF’s May Offensive and the Munich Massacre, there was a strong desire in West Germany to develop a capable, well-trained counterterrorist special unit “in response to the proliferation of large, well-organized terrorist

⁵⁶ Rosenfeld, “Militant Democracy,” 576.

⁵⁷ Dobson and Payne, *Counterattack*, 104.

⁵⁸ Sobieck, “Democratic Responses,” 54.

⁵⁹ Hoffman and Taw, “Strategic Framework,” 60-1.

⁶⁰ Martin C. Arostegui, *Twilight Warriors: Inside the World’s Special Forces* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), 58.

⁶¹ Sobieck, “Democratic Responses,” 48.

groups.”⁶² The Federal Border Guard (BGS) was chosen as the parent agency of the new unit. For several years, the BGS had already acted as a frontline defense against terrorism in West Germany, protecting German embassies since 1970 and guarding airports since 1971.⁶³ The BGS was also chosen because it was centrally-controlled and thus could prevent the debacle of the Munich Olympics through dedicated training not available to local police forces.⁶⁴

In an emergency meeting less than ten days after the Munich Massacre, the Lander interior ministers unanimously voted to create a special federal antiterrorist police unit called GSG-9 (*Grenzschutzgruppe 9*).⁶⁵ Unlike its contemporaries such as the American Delta Force or British SAS, GSG-9 was a civilian police unit; GSG-9 members were drawn from the BGS.⁶⁶ GSG-9 members received an extra nine months of commando training after BGS training.⁶⁷ The first five months were spent learning psychology training in martial arts and target practice.⁶⁸ Much of the non-kinetic early training was “devoted to knowledge of the law, especially as it applies to anti-terrorist operations.”⁶⁹ Additionally, members studied the origins, ideology, and tactics of terrorist groups.⁷⁰ The last four months of training focused on special operations preparations, including hijacking, kidnapping, and criminal pursuit scenarios.⁷¹ Spurred on by the pressure of local police failures, the FRG was able to stand up a highly professional counterterrorist police unit in a short amount of time.

GSG-9 first saw use during the height of the German Autumn—the RAF second generation’s series of attacks in the fall of 1977 meant to pressure the FRG into releasing the first generation leaders held in Stammheim Prison. In September, an RAF commando kidnapped German industrialist Hans Martin Schleyer. In October, while Schleyer was still being held by the RAF, the PFLP hijacked a Lufthansa flight in solidarity and flew it to Mogadishu, Somalia. The

⁶² Hoffman and Taw, “Strategic Framework,” 131.

⁶³ Sobieck, “Democratic Responses,” 60.

⁶⁴ Dobson and Payne, *Counterattack*, 96.

⁶⁵ Sobieck, “Democratic Responses,” 60.

⁶⁶ Dobson and Payne, *Counterattack*, 97.

⁶⁷ Hoffman and Taw, “Strategic Framework,” 132.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Dobson and Payne, *Counterattack*, 97.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁷¹ Hoffman and Taw, “Strategic Framework,” 132.

FRG responded by deploying GSG-9 on “Operation Fire Magic,” a hostage rescue operation on the tarmac.⁷² The Somali government gave the FRG permission to deploy GSG-9, and the West Germans told the hijackers they would be delivering the \$15 million requested in cash.⁷³ Instead, German commandos stormed the plane. Airport workers lit a fire on the tarmac as a distraction while twenty GSG-9 members and two SAS advisors snuck underneath the plane, used rubber-coated ladders to get onto the wings, and breached the over-wing emergency doors with plastic explosives.⁷⁴ In all of two minutes, the unit killed three of the four hijackers and rescued all ninety passengers aboard the plane.⁷⁵ The Mogadishu raid was GSG-9’s first operational use, and its “flawless performance” endeared the group to the West German public while demonstrating the unit’s professionalism and elite status.⁷⁶

The unit would next see action during Operation Squirrel, the 1982 mission to capture the leading figures of the second generation.⁷⁷ In October 1982, German authorities discovered an RAF weapons cache with clues that led them to ten additional facilities.⁷⁸ On November 11th, police and GSG-9 arrested Brigitte Mohnhaupt and Adelheid Schulz and then captured Christian Klar five days later.⁷⁹ With the arrest of Mohnhaupt and Klar, leaders of the RAF since 1978, the second generation was essentially neutralized.

GSG-9’s final counter-RAF action took place in 1993. On June 27th, a West German informant met with the two leaders of the third generation, Birgit Hogefeld and Wolfgang Grams, at a train station in Bad Kleinen where 54 police agents, primarily GSG-9, were waiting.⁸⁰ Hogefeld was arrested, but Grams fled, killing a GSG-9 officer in the process before killing himself.⁸¹

Legal Measures: Overview

⁷² Rosenfeld, “Militant Democracy,” 568.

⁷³ Dobson and Payne, *Counterattack*, 98. Arostegui, *Twilight Warriors*, 71.

⁷⁴ Arostegui, *Twilight Warriors*, 72.

⁷⁵ Sobieck, “Democratic Responses,” 61.

⁷⁶ Sobieck, “Democratic Responses,” 61. Hoffman and Taw, “Strategic Framework,” 133.

⁷⁷ Hoffman and Taw, “Strategic Framework,” 133.

⁷⁸ Moghadam, “Failure and Disengagement,” 164.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ Stephen Kinzer, “Police Scandal Is Giving Germans an Inside Look at War Against Terrorists,” *New York Times*, August 13, 1993, accessed November 29, 2016.

⁸¹ Moghadam, “Failure and Disengagement,” 170.

The FRG also made several changes to federal legislation in order to combat the RAF. In 1971, laws were passed to specify what activities constituted terrorist acts under German criminal law.⁸² These included carrying out aircraft hijacking and hostage taking, as well as planning or preparing for such acts.⁸³ In April 1976, criminal law was expanded further. Amendment 129a to the Basic Law (the German constitution) criminalized membership in a terrorist organization, even if one had not participated in a terrorist act, with a five year maximum sentence.⁸⁴ Additionally, recruitment for or participation in a terrorist organization was made punishable under the law.⁸⁵

The most contentious legal measures came in 1977. When it became evident that the RAF's lawyers were acting as couriers for the terrorists, provisions were made so that lawyers with terrorist sympathies could be banned from representing terrorists.⁸⁶ Additionally, the controversial "contact ban" law was passed in 1977. The *Kontaktsperre* enabled authorities to seal inmates off from the outside world and from contact with one another in the case of an imminent threat.⁸⁷ It was first enforced during the kidnapping of Schleyer. While authorities later learned that the Stammheim prisoners were not actively controlling that operation (although they had ordered the 1975 attack on the West German embassy in Stockholm), the inmates were prevented from speaking to their lawyers for the duration of the incident.⁸⁸

By 1989 there was still no law on the books regarding informants or the release of prisoners who had already served most of their sentence. After nineteen years combatting the RAF and no end in sight, the FRG decided to try another method. In an April 1989 interview, Christian Lochte, head of the Hamburg Office of the Protection of the Constitution, remarked that terrorism in the FRG "can be combatted most successfully by such measures as offers and amnesty or

⁸² Hoffman and Taw, "Strategic Framework," 59.

⁸³ Kevin G. Horbatiuk, "Anti-Terrorism: The West German Approach," *Fordham International Law Journal* 3, no. 2

(1979), 172-3.

⁸⁴ Rosenfeld, "Militant Democracy," 578-9.

⁸⁵ Sobieck, "Democratic Responses," 54.

⁸⁶ Rosenfeld, "Militant Democracy," 579.

⁸⁷ Horbatiuk, "Anti-Terrorism," 182-3.

⁸⁸ Hoffman and Taw, "Strategic Framework," 61-2.

dialogue, that may lead to the RAF's internal erosion and disintegration."⁸⁹ That year, a law was passed to allow repentant terrorists (*Aussteiger*) to receive reduced sentences in exchange for cooperation with law enforcement.⁹⁰ The law stayed untouched until January 1992, when German media first reported that Justice Minister Klaus Kinkel was planning a gradual release of RAF prisoners.⁹¹ The idea originated in a coordination group on counterterrorism (*KG* at the BKA), which was made up of representatives from the Federal Prosecutor General, the BKA, and the BfV.⁹² The group assessed that "the RAF's ideology had gradually turned into an associated dedication to the release of the prisoners."⁹³ After deciding that the prisoners were an ideal component to test, Kinkel was placed in charge of implementing the plan. In the first year of the program, four RAF resistance members and one commando member were released.⁹⁴ By 1996, Kinkel had released at least eight prisoners total, all of whom had already served anywhere from 17 to 22 years in prison.⁹⁵

EVALUATING THE WEST GERMAN COUNTERMEASURES—SUCCESSSES AND COUNTERPRODUCTIVE EFFECTS

With the RAF's ideology and structure in mind, this article will move on to an assessment of each government countermeasure. In particular, the three measures will be evaluated on how they contributed to the arrests of RAF members and the decline of each generation of the group, and also on their inefficiencies and shortfalls.

The existing literature on counterterrorism effectiveness is comprised of tactical-level best practices manuals, cross-national analyses, and single-country analyses such as this article. Intelligence gathering is widely seen as "the most important dimension of any counterterrorism effort," but involves several challenges: intelligence work must be accurate and timely, information often needs to be shared amongst domestic and international agencies, and the surveillance

⁸⁹ Quoted in Hoffman and Taw, "Strategic Framework," 63.

⁹⁰ Sobieck, "Democratic Responses," 55.

⁹¹ Moghadam, "Failure and Disengagement," 171.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Pluchinsky, "Obituary," 143.

⁹⁵ Moghadam, "Failure and Disengagement," 171.

methods will be subject to much public scrutiny.⁹⁶ Moreover, “good intelligence can’t guarantee success, but bad intelligence can guarantee failure.”⁹⁷ Thus, while strong actionable intelligence is an important component of a counterterrorism response, it is sometimes even more important to not have poor information. With that intelligence in hand, law enforcement agencies are responsible for finding and arresting terrorists, but their effectiveness depends on cooperation between agencies and maintenance of a level of police professionalism that does not bleed into militarism.⁹⁸ Finally, calls for legal measures often occur when the existing system is perceived as “not sufficient to deal with a persistent or serious threat.”⁹⁹ These legal reforms can be necessary to support police and paramilitary effectiveness but run the risk of in fact undermining the rule of law if the measures infringe on civil liberties.¹⁰⁰

Counterterrorism theories focus largely on “the interplay between action and counter-reaction.”¹⁰¹ Therefore, one of the most challenging aspects of counterterrorism policymaking is that of a measured response. Tom Parker’s research shows that punitive measures can “enhance the credibility of the terrorist cause,” and thus undermine a liberal democracy’s fight against terrorism.¹⁰² Crafting a measured response was a factor that played into all three components of West German counterterrorism.

Police and Intelligence Effectiveness

The computerized intelligence apparatus built by Herold proved to be a helpful tool for the FRG. Within six weeks of using one database in 1978, fifteen terrorists were found.¹⁰³ The implementation of computer terminals connected to the database led to a threefold increase in arrests between 1975 and 1976, many

⁹⁶ James J. F. Forest, ed. *Essentials of Counterterrorism*, (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2015), <https://psi.praeger.com/Topics/Display/2058280?cid=137&sid=2058280>, 12-13.

⁹⁷ Quoted in Forest, *Essentials*, 44-5.

⁹⁸ Forest, *Essentials*, 21-2, 44.

⁹⁹ Alex P. Schmid and Ronald D. Crelinsten, “Western Responses to Terrorism: A Twenty-Five Year Balance Sheet,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 4, no. 4 (1992), 330.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Alex P. Schmid, *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*, (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2011), ProQuest Ebook Central, 255.

¹⁰² Parker, “Fighting an Antaeon Enemy,” 158.

¹⁰³ Dobson and Payne, *Counterattack*, 101.

at border checkpoints and airports with the new terminals installed.¹⁰⁴ However, these methods ultimately fell short against an increasingly adaptable enemy. Later generations worked to avoid detection, using regular cars instead of the flashy sports cars that Baader liked¹⁰⁵ and borrowing apartments from supporters rather than renting them.¹⁰⁶ Additionally, the third generation's modus operandi was far "less conducive to computer searches" because they executed operations that required "little in the way of prior arrangements."¹⁰⁷

The BKA computing system was also limited by an overabundance of information.¹⁰⁸ In 1978, when Gerhard Baum became Minister of the Interior, he ordered an inquiry into the Wiesbaden computer that found an overwhelming amount of data; 37 databanks contained 4.7 million names, 3,100 organizations, 2.1 million fingerprints, and 1.9 million photographs of individuals.¹⁰⁹ Additionally, the computer system could only work if all levels of government were cooperating. In 1977, a hint on the kidnapped Schleyer's location was lost for several days because of a dispute between state and city level officials.¹¹⁰

Finally, there was serious public concern about government surveillance and data collection. If an individual applied for a public service job, their name was fed into the database.¹¹¹ Baum expressed the concerns of many ordinary Germans when he commented that "we can always call for new laws when what we really need is more composure."¹¹² Thus, beginning in 1981, laws were passed restricting police surveillance.¹¹³ Stories of a new surveillance state appeared in German publications *Stern* and *Der Spiegel*, and Herold was pushed into retirement by Baum in 1981 amidst increased scrutiny of BKA surveillance.¹¹⁴ The debate was largely put to rest in 1983 with the "census verdict" of the Federal Constitutional Court, which reaffirmed the individual's right to protection against the individual

¹⁰⁴ Hoffman and Taw, "Strategic Framework," 109.

¹⁰⁵ He was known for a proclivity for red BMW's, which were dubbed "Baader-Meinhof Wagens" at the time.

¹⁰⁶ Hoffman and Taw, "Strategic Framework," 110.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Aust, *Baader-Meinhof*, 141.

¹⁰⁹ Sobieck, "Democratic Responses," 60.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Dobson and Payne, *Counterattack*, 107.

¹¹² Quoted in Dobson and Payne, *Counterattack*, 108.

¹¹³ Hoffman and Taw, "Strategic Framework," 110.

¹¹⁴ Rosenfeld, "Militant Democracy," 581

collection of their personal data, effectively putting an end to Herold's model.¹¹⁵ By 1992, less than 200 suspected sympathizers and associates were listed in the database.¹¹⁶

GSG-9: Effectiveness

GSG-9 had several early operational successes, but was hampered in later years by bureaucratic squabbles and an increasingly adaptive enemy. The unit's first operation, the Mogadishu raid, was so successful that it served as a strong deterrent—no West German plane was ever hijacked afterwards.¹¹⁷ However, this led the second and third generations of the RAF to turn to other tactics. After the Mogadishu raid, the RAF “modified their own activities, deliberately pursuing objectives by means that circumvent the force's particular abilities.”¹¹⁸ GSG-9 effectively put itself out of business, and its unique toolset of hostage rescue was unable to counter the third generation's hit-and-run attacks.¹¹⁹ Thus, since 1977, with the exception of the 1982 and 1993 arrests of RAF leaders, GSG-9's primary activity has been training other counterterrorist forces around the world.¹²⁰

GSG-9 also faced another major limitation—the bureaucratic and competitive nature of the individual German states. GSG-9 could only be deployed in Germany with the permission of the state authorities. Yet state-level law enforcement units were “extremely territorial” and often refused because GSG-9 members are paid more and the unit receives federal funding that could be going to the states.¹²¹ Even though GSG-9 is highly trained and capable, state ministers would even refuse their services. For example, in 1972 GSG-9 was asked to take part in a nationwide sweep for terrorists, but one state Minister of the Interior rejected them, remarking that “all they do is shoot.”¹²²

One final challenge to the effectiveness of GSG-9 was allegations of misconduct and unlawful use of force. In the 1993 operation to capture the

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 582.

¹¹⁶ Hoffman and Taw, “Strategic Framework,” 110.

¹¹⁷ Sobieck, “Democratic Responses,” 61.

¹¹⁸ Hoffman and Taw, “Strategic Framework,” 133.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 132.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Quoted in Dobson and Payne, *Counterattack*, 99.

leaders of the third generation, police were alleged to have subdued and summarily executed Wolfgang Grams.¹²³ However, this debate was ultimately resolved by the rulings of several courts, culminating in judgement by the European Court of Human Rights that found insufficient evidence for the claim.¹²⁴

It is important to note that GSG-9's three operations against the RAF were actions that directly or indirectly neutralized each generation's leadership (the Mogadishu raid led to the Stammheim suicides, and the 1982 and 1993 operations involved the arrests of the leading figures of the second and third generation). However, against an enemy such as the RAF, which was specifically designed with a small (never larger than 15-25 members) active, underground commando group and a larger pool of "militant supporters" living openly and legally, taking out the leadership cannot succeed on its own.¹²⁵ The RAF proved several times that even when its entire leadership was arrested, "new leaders stepped forward and were able to continue the RAF's activities," coming up from the ranks of the resistance or sympathizer levels to join the commando group and replace the arrested members.¹²⁶ Thus, GSG-9's successful capture operations were an important part of the counterterrorism campaign, but were not sufficient on their own because of the RAF's adaptive structure.

Legal Measures: Effectiveness

In a similar manner to the BKA's intelligence collection, legal counterterrorism measures were somewhat effective but also fraught with public outcry and debate. The implementation of the contact ban during the German Autumn proved ineffectual because RAF prisoner Jan Carl-Raspe had a smuggled transistor radio in his cell and heard of the failure at Mogadishu.¹²⁷ He shared the news with his fellow prisoners and they promptly committed suicide that night. Thus, the law's implementation failed to completely seal the prisoners off from the outside world. Had it been implemented earlier, the contact ban could have prevented the first generation prisoners from coordinating attacks. However, their involvement in outside actions was not widely known until 1976, when the

¹²³ Kinzer, "Police Scandal".

¹²⁴ Nils Melzer, *Targeted Killing in International Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 10-11.

¹²⁵ Pluchinsky, "An Organizational and Operational Analysis," 53.

¹²⁶ *Ibid*, 44.

¹²⁷ Aust, *Baader-Meinhof*, 410-11.

contact ban was promptly created and enforced. The suite of laws passed in 1976 and 1977 was effective at neutralizing the RAF lawyers—in one case radical lawyer Arndt Mueller was charged with smuggling the pistols that Raspe and Baader used to commit suicide.¹²⁸

The contact ban faced public criticism, particularly after the Stammheim prisoners appealed to several different courts. Both the German Federal Constitutional Court and the European Court of Human Rights found the measures constitutional and justified in mitigating the threat that the prisoners still posed.¹²⁹ However, that didn't stop the RAF from continuing to propagandize the myth of prisoner abuse. Instead, it would take further action to neutralize that narrative.

Effects of the Kinkel Initiative

The Kinkel Initiative can be directly tied to the decline of the third generation. The coercive measures of the BKA and GSG-9 had put pressure on the terrorists, but the RAF was always able to recruit more operatives who were sympathetic to the plight of the RAF prisoners. Thus, the logic behind the prisoner release program was that “defusing the RAF prisoner issue could damage the RAF’s recruitment efforts.”¹³⁰ In this regard, the program was highly successful, so much so that the RAF began debate over how to respond. Initially, the group publicly embraced the initiative, stating in an April 1992 communiqué that the government had finally “begun to understand that a solution has to be found in the matter of these prisoners,” and that the RAF would be beginning a ceasefire.¹³¹ The communiqué was released by those conducting attacks at the commando level, demonstrating that the ceasefire had the full weight of the operational RAF behind it.¹³² Yet not all of the prisoners agreed with this position. Several hardcore prisoners publicly refused to give up the armed struggle.¹³³ In October 1993, Brigitte Mohnhaupt, speaking for herself and many other RAF prisoners, decried the initiative and referred to a split in the RAF.¹³⁴ Yet the active

¹²⁸ Hoffman and Taw, “Strategic Framework,” 62.

¹²⁹ Horbatiuk, “Anti-Terrorism,” 186-8.

¹³⁰ Pluchinsky, “Obituary,” 139.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ Moghadam, “Failure and Disengagement,” 170.

¹³⁴ Moghadam, “Failure and Disengagement,” 170. Graaf, *Evaluating Counterterrorism*

RAF members continued to support the initiative, drawing a wedge between those in the group wanting to continue the struggle and those willing to take the way out being offered a way out by the government. Kinkel was correct in assessing that “without the prisoners, there would no longer be a RAF,” and the group would take no further action until disbanding in 1998.¹³⁵

In addition to dividing the group, the initiative also cut through the narrative of the prisoner’s plight. If the RAF sympathizers refused to believe that the prison conditions were in fact adequate, then this initiative would at least prove that the government was capable of treating prisoners well. Finally, the Kinkel Initiative broke through the RAF’s suicidal logic. First generation member Holger Meins wrote in his final letter that “people who refuse to end the struggle, they win or they die: instead of losing and dying.”¹³⁶ In contrast, the gradual release of prisoners provided an alternative exit strategy from terrorism.

External Factors

However, it is important to acknowledge factors other than government countermeasures that contributed to the RAF’s demise. The most evident of these was the reunification of Germany and the fall of the Soviet Union. For years, the East German Ministry of State Security, or Stasi, had aided the RAF. It remains unclear just how much support the RAF received from the Stasi, but there are three concrete examples of collaborations between the two. In 1980, the Stasi held strategy discussions with the RAF on the topic of recruitment, meetings that finished with a Stasi promise to provide intelligence to the terrorist organization.¹³⁷ Then, in early 1981, Stasi agents trained three RAF members to use rocket propelled grenades (RPGs), the same weapon the RAF would use in September of that year in their botched attempt to kill General Frederick Kroeson, the head of all U.S. forces in West Germany.¹³⁸ Finally, in a policy codenamed “Stern 2,” the Stasi gave safe haven to ten RAF members who moved to East Germany between 1980 and 1982.¹³⁹ This was not an operational safe haven, but rather an opportunity for disengaged members to escape law enforcement and a life underground in the

Performance, 54.

¹³⁵ Quoted in Pluchinsky, “Obituary,” 143.

¹³⁶ Quoted in Horchem, “Decline,” 74.

¹³⁷ Kempe, “Deadly Survivors.”

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Moghadam, “Failure and Disengagement,” 168.

FRG. As one Stasi official explained, “the former terrorists were granted GDR citizenship and their new cover stories only after they expressly sworn to desist from any further terrorist attacks and promised to break off any relationship with the RAF.”¹⁴⁰ Upon German reunification in 1990, nine of those former RAF members were arrested in the former German Democratic Republic.¹⁴¹ Thus, with the fall of the Berlin Wall came an end to the decades-long relationship between the Stasi and the RAF, and the loss of materiel and intelligence support that entailed.

More important than losing the Stasi’s support, the RAF had lost its ideological backdrop with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the ensuing democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe. There was no longer an East versus West conflict on the global stage to give the RAF a foundation for its armed struggle. The West had won, Marxism was discredited, and the RAF appeared to be a relic of a bygone age. The RAF’s April 1992 communiqué announcing an effective ceasefire coincided with these international changes. The communiqué refers to the changes in the “international balance of power” and how the “collapse of the socialist states” had caused the RAF to rethink their strategy.¹⁴²

LESSONS FOR THE U.S. CAMPAIGNS AGAINST AL QAEDA AND ISIS

What lessons can be extracted for the current U.S. campaigns against al Qaeda and ISIS? At a base level, the West German campaign against the RAF was primarily a domestic affair and countermeasures were always oriented towards an internal threat.¹⁴³ For example, the RAF completely failed to develop a united European terrorist front, but al Qaeda and ISIS have been notably successful at ‘franchising’ global Jihad and gaining affiliates worldwide. The RAF did build strong connections with the Palestinian movement, but never created anything even close the scale of the international network of ISIS and al Qaeda. Thus, there is much to learn from the German experience in how to properly address homegrown threats.

Another key difference between the RAF and al Qaeda, and especially ISIS, is targeting. The RAF was highly selective about its targets. Their ideology

¹⁴⁰ Quoted in Horchem, “Decline,” 63.

¹⁴¹ Horchem, “Decline,” 61.

¹⁴² Pluchinsky, “Obituary,” 148.

¹⁴³ Hoffman and Taw, “Strategic Framework,” 123.

might have been muddled, but the targets were always clearly explained in political terms for their symbolic value to the ideology of that generation of the group. Al Qaeda is less selective, and ISIS is practically not selective at all, killing ruthlessly and indiscriminately.

For all of these differences, there are still many similarities among the RAF, al Qaeda, and ISIS. All three groups viewed themselves as the vanguard. They were to bring about great change in the world, but did not have a clear idea of what to do afterwards. All three groups effused a very defensive logic. The RAF was first defending itself against a repressive state, then defending the Vietnamese against the U.S. military, and finally defending its own prisoners from mistreatment at the hands of the authorities. Similarly, Salafi Jihad ideology is inherently defensive, with influence from such works as *In Defense of Muslim Lands* by Abdullah Azzam. The Salafi Jihadi is viewed as the righteous defender of Muslims against foreigners who seek to dominate holy lands.

Yet another similarity is the demographic makeup of the leadership and ordinary members of the group. All three had educated or well-off leadership. As Bret Stephens noted, the leaders of the group were “not the wretched of the earth, but the educated and disgruntled children of the bourgeoisie.”¹⁴⁴ Of the core of the first generation of the RAF, Meinhof was a famous columnist, Mahler a lawyer, and Ensslin had been enrolled in a PhD program.¹⁴⁵ Similarly, Ayman al-Zawahiri, currently the head of al Qaeda, was a surgeon and Mohamed Atta, one of the 9/11 hijackers, was an urban planner.¹⁴⁶ Osama bin Laden was incredibly well off, coming from one of the richest families in Saudi Arabia. In the case of ISIS, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is a theologian who reportedly received a PhD in Islamic studies. However, the general makeup of the lower ranks of the group differed widely. The RAF initially recruited through the court-mandated social work of Baader and Ensslin. This attracted such members as Peter-Jürgen Book, a lost and impressionable young man who had dropped out of his apprenticeship, was arrested for drug possession, and ended up helping to start a riot in juvenile detention.¹⁴⁷ Al Qaeda and ISIS have similarly recruited less-educated foot soldiers to bolster the movement.

With these common and differing traits in mind, what lessons can be

¹⁴⁴ Bret Stephens, “Red Terror, Green Terror,” *Wall Street Journal*, Sep 11, 2007.

¹⁴⁵ Sarah Colvin, *Ulrike Meinhof*, 82

¹⁴⁶ Stephens, “Red Terror, Green Terror”.

¹⁴⁷ Aust, *Baader-Meinhof*, 46-49.

drawn from the West German counterterrorism experience? First, there is a clear lesson about breaking down terrorist narratives in order to stop radicalization and recruitment. The Kinkel Initiative helped to break down the narrative of the prisoner's plight. Similarly, ISIS built its early recruitment on the narrative of its success and the glory of traveling to the Levant to join the fight. James K. Glassman, former Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, suggested a policy of creating videos of interviews with former or captured ISIS militants detailing the accurate picture of the daily strife of fighting in Iraq and Syria, and posting those videos on message boards frequented by potential recruits.¹⁴⁸ Such a program could help to counter radicalization by breaking down the narrative pushed by ISIS on Twitter of the fun and adventurous life of the jihadi. If a potential recruit sees a video of a despondent captured fighter and has to compare that with the rosy picture ISIS presents on social media, they might think twice about committing to the fight.

Secondly, the government must be careful not to fuel the narrative themselves by overreacting. Terrorism is a strategy of provocation, and the RAF was explicitly channeling Marighella by trying to goad the FRG into repressive countermeasures. The West German government walked a fine line between crushing the RAF and overstepping civil liberties, and in doing so avoided playing into the hands of the terrorists. The historian Jeremy Varon went so far as to draw a parallel between Stammheim Prison and Guantanamo.¹⁴⁹ The comparison might be a stretch, but the lesson is clear. The U.S. needed to rethink its policies of rendition and torture, because they are actions that further propel the terrorists' narratives and the perceived legitimacy of their armed struggle.

Thirdly, and this is a lesson applicable to both domestic and international terrorism, it is clear from the West German experience that decapitation, or the process of targeting and neutralizing terrorist leaders, does not work on its own. As Pluchinsky notes, on "two occasions, in 1972 and 1982, the whole RAF leadership was arrested by German authorities; however, new leaders stepped forward and were able to continue the RAF's activities."¹⁵⁰ Decapitation initially failed because the first generation leaders were able to control operations from inside their cells. It later failed because the RAF had created such a strong

¹⁴⁸ Notes on Glassman presentation, June 3, 2016, AEI.

¹⁴⁹ Jeremy Varon, "Stammheim Forever," 303-325.

¹⁵⁰ Pluchinsky, "An Organizational and Operational Analysis," 44.

narrative around itself that more recruits came out when Mohnhaupt and Klar were captured in 1982, and the RAF's flexible structure of commando and sympathizer levels allowed supporters to fill the void. The U.S. campaigns against al Qaeda and ISIS have been similarly plagued with a sometimes singular focus on terrorist leaders and key figures such as bomb makers or propaganda producers.

This is not to say that decapitation is not effective or that it should not be used at all. Neutralizing terrorist leaders is a vital component of any counterterrorist strategy, but it's just that—a component. It was not until the FRG implemented measures to allow terrorists to disavow violence in exchange for freedom that the RAF's ideology and cohesion were damaged enough to prevent more sympathizers from taking the place of imprisoned members. Thus, the West German experience shows that decapitation is but a singular tactic, and that it will backfire if not effectively combined with and supported by a host of other policies.

CONCLUSION

At the outset of this 28-year battle, West Germany was woefully unprepared to face a determined and adaptable terrorist threat. The West German government scrambled to put together a response after the shock in 1972 of both the Munich Massacre and the RAF's 'May Offensive.' As Beatrice de Graaf aptly notes, "until 1975, a national strategy was virtually absent."¹⁵¹ However, once the threat was identified, the state greatly expanded the size and funding of the federal police and intelligence forces and stood up a new, highly professional paramilitary antiterrorist force. In turn, each element played its part. The demise of the first generation can be attributed to effective police work that captured all of the leaders of the RAF within two months of the May 1977 offensive. Paramilitary work by GSG-9 stopped the first generation's last hope of getting out of prison and ensured the capture of the second generation's two leaders in 1972. Finally, just as the RAF was struggling to redefine itself amidst the fall of Communism, the Kinkel Initiative sowed dissent in the group and led to its eventual dissolution in 1998.

West Germany's efforts to eradicate the RAF highlighted the tension for democratic states between defeating terrorists and maintaining liberal values. The RAF may not have posed an existential threat to the state, but it did "expose contradictions inherent in the modern democratic state's dual commitment to guaranteeing civil liberties while safeguarding the lives and property of its

¹⁵¹ Graaf, *Evaluating Counterterrorism Performance*, 65.

citizens.”¹⁵² At the heart of this was the controversy over surveillance, as well as the discussion of prisoner treatment and torture.

However, once a response was put together the West German government showed a great deal of restraint. The first generation of the RAF had mobilized because of heavy-handed police tactics, most notably the shooting of unarmed protestor Benno Ohnesorg. Yet, as Parker notes, “German authorities adopted a much more measured response to the terrorist threat after a while.”¹⁵³ The state was able to combat terrorism decisively, while still maintaining a sense of “moral legitimacy.”¹⁵⁴ In turn, it was the RAF that was isolated from the left because it was seen as too violent or too out of touch with their political goals. In short, the RAF’s attempt at provocation failed because West German counterterrorism was firm yet not over-reactive. Hans Horchem accurately described this balance:

The RAF must meanwhile realize that its attempt to bomb the Federal Republic into a revolutionary situation has failed. The state reacted with firmness and flexibility. Overreaction was avoided. The terrorists were unable to mobilize fresh recruits to fight on their side as a result of exploitation of any behavioural errors on the part of the police authorities and other organs of the state.¹⁵⁵

To be sure, the FRG’s actions did not account entirely for the decline of the RAF. The organization was successful in tactical and operational shifts, but its ideological changes failed to galvanize support, instead confusing and turning away potential supporters because of the frequent shifts in objectives. A perfect storm had truly occurred. The RAF had been losing supporters, having trouble recruiting, and hardcore members in prison were losing their “revolutionary zeal.”¹⁵⁶ Additionally, the organization was suffering from “ideological fatigue” because the fall of the Soviet Union left the RAF without a strong ideological background.¹⁵⁷ With only the cause of the prisoners left, the Kinkel Initiative

¹⁵² Rosenfeld, “Militant Democracy,” 569.

¹⁵³ Parker, “Fighting an Antaeus Enemy,” 172.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Horchem, “Lost Revolution,” 356.

¹⁵⁶ Pluchinsky, “Obituary,” 144.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

was able to cut the last legs out from under Western Europe's most evasive and adaptable terrorist organization.

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The Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, International Student Programming Board, Cornell Institute for European Studies, Department of Government, The Lencquesaing Family, The Pedraza Family, Michele Benton, Robert Andolina, Mitchell Alva, Sarah Eversman. We thank our contributors for their support.

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