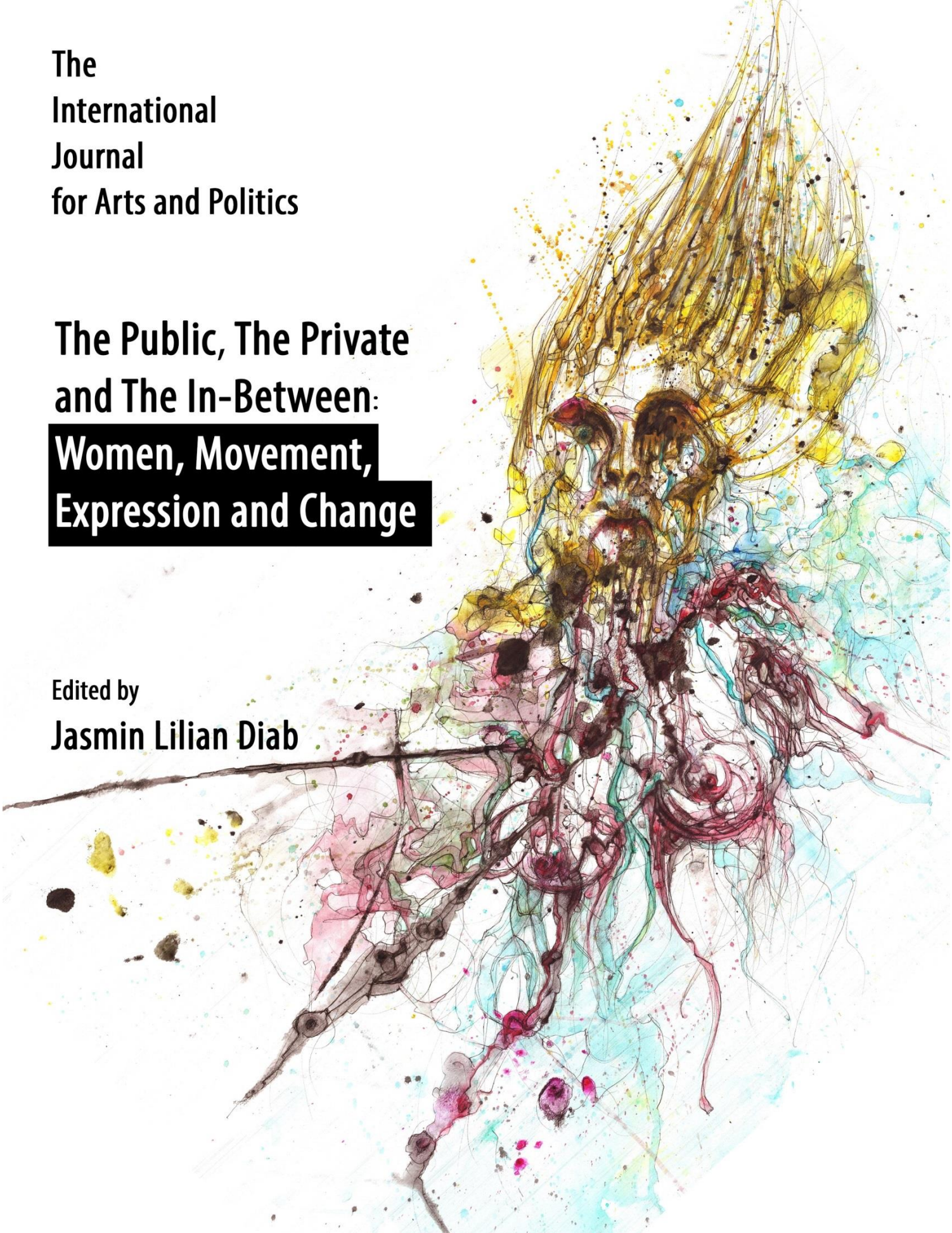
The
International
Journal
for Arts and Politics

The Public, The Private and The In-Between: Women, Movement, Expression and Change

Edited by
Jasmin Lilian Diab



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Edited by:
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DISCLAIMER

This journal has been published by the Global Arts and Politics Alliance (GAPA) in Austria with the support and editing of its Head of Think Tank, Ms. Jasmin Lilian Diab in Lebanon. The views and opinions herein are those of the authors and contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the GAPA.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This issue was published through the generous support of the international GAPA community. The GAPA Team wishes to acknowledge each and every individual who took the personal initiative to contribute to GAPA – this journal is the fruit of your continuous support and belief in GAPA's vision.

The GAPA Team also wishes to thank our featured artist as well as every researcher who contributed their paper, thoughts, creativity and efforts to the inaugural issue of this journal. You have, without saying, contributed to its success and value.

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On Expression and Change

FOREWORD

In a world that sees less and less space for critical discourse, advancing the role of the arts is vital in maintaining a healthy environment of freedom of expression and creativity. The Global Arts and Politics Alliance (GAPA) was founded with the goal of strengthening the opportunities creativity brings to the political discourse, and fostering them alongside their creators. A vital pathway to achieving this vision of strengthening arts in politics is legitimacy throughout academic circles.

GAPA strongly believes in the importance of academics and research in acting as a platform for budding and established researchers who have recognized this vital connection between arts and politics, and who seek to build on it and strengthen it. We seek to provide a space for those who wish to communicate fresh ideas and create links across the social sciences, the arts, and indeed, politics and current affairs.

The GAPA Think Tank was founded as one of three pillars – next to events and a thriving community – and serves to establish the political possibilities that lie within the arts as legitimate and impactful processes that deserve close consideration. Through six working group, the GAPA Think Tank focuses on issues that occupy the social and political discourse today. The working groups, much like GAPA, are open, dynamic, and change according to issues and needs that arise. This means that we try to stay on top of current affairs by allowing working group members to establish their own focal points, interdisciplinary links, and networks.

Under the leadership of the Head of Think Tank, currently Ms. Jasmin Lilian Diab, the working group members write and publish essays and statements reflecting artistic, academic and political diversity. What unites them is the knowledge that the arts have played a vital role in transforming realities and can continue to do so. Our contributors come from all over the globe and hail from all backgrounds, ages, and professions. Their constellation very much reflects the diverse audience we wish to reach with this volume.

It is before this background that I, founder and chair of GAPA, wish to thank all contributors to this journal, and particularly the exceptionally talented Ms. Diab. We have managed to collect an

extraordinary range of texts that showcase opportunities, challenges, and new perspectives. It is what academia, and many who still doubt the impact of their creativity, sorely need.

Upon reading, I wish you enjoyment, moments of pondering, and instances of eureka!

Wanda Tiefenbacher, MSc
Chair & Co-founder of GAPA

ABOUT THE PUBLISHER: WHO WE ARE

The Global Arts and Politics Alliance (GAPA) is a vision, a network, and a movement centering on critical political innovation, artistic expression, and the advancement of art activism. GAPA brings together a unique mix of artists, activists and change-makers.

We aim to put art on the political agenda, and to make an impact on the political discourse through the arts and creative expression. We take an active part in strengthening the arts in the political discourse, generating innovative knowledge and practices, and creating a space for artistic activism and change-making.

The Global Arts and Politics Alliance operates around three pillars:

- The extensive online GAPA Platform and Community with the GAPA Blog, opportunities, and our very own bibliography.
- International GAPActivist Events
- The GAPA Think Tank with its own peer-reviewed journal, the International Journal of Arts and Politics (IJAP)

Our mission is to find the activists working for real change within their communities, in all corners of the world. We proudly feature young artists on our website, and actively encourage guest posting on our blog. As our organization grows, we will hold more events, connect with like-minded groups on local and national levels, and ultimately hope to provide sponsorship, grants and mentorship through a GAPA fund.

We welcome young people regardless of occupation, status or orientation and particularly encourage members of minorities and disadvantaged or under-represented groups to join our project.

You can read the GAPA Manifesto, here: https://goo.gl/4Up6k8

FEATURED ARTIST

Paul A. Douaihy: An Artist from the Suburbs of Beirut

Jasmin Lilian Diab, MA
Head of Think Tank at GAPA

About the Artist

"Self-Portrait" by Paul A. Douaihy (July, 2017)[1]

Born in the small village of Ehden in North Lebanon, and based in the suburbs of Beirut, Paul Antoine Douaihy (P.A.D) began his journey in the heart of the underground art scene of the city in 2012, after enrolling in Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts, at the University of Balamand in Lebanon.

Over the years, Mr. Douaihy's journey of self-discovery led him to experiment with several artistic practices; merging architecture with diagrammatical drawing, sculpting, virtual prototyping, and painting, following a coherent intuitive process, which he states is heavily *"supported by storytelling and narration."*

[1] *Self-Portrait by Paul A. Douaihy (P.A.D) (2017): Mixed Media On paper, Black Ink, and Alizarin Crimson watercolors, [100 x 70] cm*

As an artist and an architecture student, Mr. Douaihy's main influences and idols are *"those with unconventional and experimental minds",* such as Lebbeus Woods, Coop Himmelb(l)au, H.R Giger, Syd Barrett, Klaus Schulz among others.

According to Mr. Douaihy, the following quote by fellow French Architect, François Roche, illustrates his artistic and creative trajectory across the years perfectly:

> *"It is practice as fiction, fiction as practice, speculation, research.*
>
> *It cannot be broken down to just one element.*
>
> *It is about thinking that reality is also partly fiction.*
>
> *It not only consists of what we see, but at the same time hides another reality, a dream or phantasm.*
>
> *Something that at times can even scare us.*
>
> *We are interested in the question of how we can develop aesthetics from this.*
>
> *As such, reality becomes a narrative strategy."*

Mr. Douaihy also ventures into music. His creative process of work is heavily influenced by sound, which he calls *"one of his main inspirations"*. He further elaborates:

> *"[…] the keyboard is at the core of my musical platform. It is where acoustic and electronic combinations assert the rhythmic musical energy my brain is synthetizing, and my hands are following."*

Trapped in Beirut's concrete jungle throughout the completion of his Architecture degree, Mr. Douaihy finds refuge on the seventh and last floor of a building in the middle of Beirut, where he bases his *"laboratory"*. Overlooking the city, perched in his lab, he gathered and questioned a numerous number of organic elements and materials that he found over the course of his explorations across the mountains and the valleys of the country of Cedars Lebanon – collecting His rocks, woods, leaves, and bones *"an endless organic stream of inspiration amidst urban alienation"* as he describes it.

About the Cover

"Untitled" by Paul A. Douaihy (June, 2016)[2]

"Untitled", the painting selected for the inaugural issue's cover, is one example of Mr. Douaihy's aforementioned artistic experimental process. Developed in the summer of June 2017, after what the artist describes as *"[…] intense emotional circumstances, resulting in an impulsive act using black ink, crimson ink, and 0.2 pilot on paper, playing Burzum's dark ambient sounds of the album Hliðskjálf."*

After leaving for a much needed cleanse at the waterfalls of the Valley of Kadisha in the North of Lebanon, he further elaborated the painting upon his return with watercolor and acrylic over the ink, an addition he describes as: *"layers of blue and a bit of sun"*.

Mr. Douaihy generously donated his painting to the cover of the journal as it possesses themes and visuals which coincide and intersect with the themes of this issue completely.

[2] *Untitled by Paul A. Douaihy (P.A.D) (2016): Mixed Media on paper, Ink, Aquarelle, Acrylic and pilot, [120 x 90] cm*

INTRODUCTION

"Women, Movement, Expression and Change"

Jasmin Lilian Diab, MA
Head of Think Tank at GAPA

The four themes in this journal are inter-disciplinary, inter-connected, and often enough exist in parallel across research, literature and discourse. They not only reflect four of the most timely challenges and themes the international community faces and focuses on today, but also lay the foundation for efforts in the areas of local and international policy, reform, sustainability debates as well as development initiatives. This is not only seen in international efforts such as the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, but also in on-going discussions and debates revolving around globalization, human rights, freedoms, as well as human dignity.

Although in the past overlooked and overshadowed by debates in the areas of hard politics, power relations, and foreign policy debates, these four themes : Women, Movement (Migration), Expression and Change have proven to be pivotal in cementing sustainable international structures and comprehensive international policies in-line with individual and collective rights, civic and political rights, all while respecting the notions of freedom of expression, transparency, and political and social reform.

Not only have they managed to become central in the aforementioned areas, but have also managed to encompass once marginalized groups within communities, to provide a legitimate outlet to individuals and collectives who feel socially outcast, and have further allowed for a wider understanding of the necessity to think within an inclusive and sustainable mindset amidst a turbulent and evolving world order.

Within this framework, this issue of the International Journal for Arts and Politics combines papers and research across various fields of Social Sciences which come together in order to illustrate, provide recommendations and voice concerns within these four areas.

On Women and Movement

The "Gypsies of the Desert" and "Victims of the Collective Indifference": The Refugee as a Figure of "the Other" in Hungary

Laura Tarafas, PhD
Paris-Sorbonne University, France

Abstract

Many Eastern-European countries have mainly been considered as countries where people emigrate from, or "transit countries" rather than potential destinations for migrants and asylum-seekers. However, the ongoing refugee crisis reaches these countries as well, which have never previously been confronted with people from such diverse cultural backgrounds, with such "otherness". This paper aims to analyze how in the case of one specific Central-Eastern-European country, Hungary, the figure of the Refugee as "the other" is collectively perceived. These aspects include but are not limited to: the country's history of collective and unelaborated traumas, the particular traits of a fragile national identity and its complicated relationship with minorities. Media representation and certain prejudices which are at the heart of collective representations regarding the Roma can equally be identified in relation to refugees. The humanitarian crises during the summer of 2015 shed light on yet a new parallel: the Refugee as a victim of collective indifference, evoking the traumatic period of the deportation of Hungarian Jews. After a brief introduction to a few notions relevant to the subject matter, the paper focuses on how collective representation regarding the Roma and the Jewish minority in Hungary mitigate the perception of the Other-Refugee.

Keywords: Collective Representations, Minorities, Hungary, Other, Refugee

Introduction

"Our identity is changed so frequently that nobody can find out who we actually are."
(Hannah Arendt, 1994, p.110)

While conducting my doctoral research on young refugees in Hungary, I stumbled upon the famous text of Hannah Arendt, starting with the phrase: "First of all, we don't like to be called "refugees". What followed was a vivid, painstaking recount of being a newcomer. But Arendt's text wasn't only a testimony; it was also a story of entangled identities. Identities, which, first of all are experienced by the individual, but also formed and deformed by how they are perceived by the outside world: "We were told to forget; and we forgot quicker than anybody ever could imagine. In a friendly way we were reminded that the new country would become a new home; and after four weeks in France or six weeks in America, we pretended to be Frenchmen or Americans » (Arendt, 1994, p. 111). The more re-immersed I got in the complex, multi-layered context of my country, the clearer it became: in order to understand the "other," we should aim to unravel how we perceive the "other," in other words, become conscious of our own representations.

By attempting to disentangle the collective representations which emerge in the social-political-historical context of Hungary, I would like to show how complex and intricate they are in reality. These collective representations of Otherness combine conscious and unconscious aspects and are rooted in the country's own history. They also involve unelaborated collective traumas and the tense relationship it maintains with figures of Otherness it provides home for: their minorities. This paper focuses particularly on the latter: the country's complicated and many times acrimonious relationship with its two minorities - "neuralgic spots"[3]: The Jewish and the Roma. Studies analyzing media coverage on migration and the refugee crisis also allows to demonstrate how these collective representations mitigating our relationship to otherness becomes even more intricate and emotionally charged when government propaganda interferes – exploiting the deeply imbedded fear for the survival of the Hungarian nation[4] the current government's openly hostile campaign[5] against "migrants"[6] fuels hatred and rejection. By 2016, Hungary had become one of the most hostile countries against "others".[7]

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[3] Erős, 1998
[4] Bibó, 1986
[5] This includes a series of actions communicating open hostility against the other-refugee: the construction of barbed-wire fences at several borders, the termination of integration program asylum-seekers could benefit from, a hostile anti-migration campaign refusing the quota-system proposed by the European Union.
[6] The generic term "migrant" is wrongly used in the media and the political discourse to describe legally distinct categories such as asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants. Although this distinction is of crucial importance, this paper will also not distinguish between these terms and uses the word "Refugee" in order to refer to a particular figure of otherness.
[7] Apostolova, 2015

Otherness and Representations

The other, otherness, strangeness, and the uncanny are all concepts which are at the heart of psychoanalysis, especially when making reference to the mysterious word of the unconscious. For Freud (1956), the notion of the stranger appears in relation to trauma: the psychic trauma and its memory remain unrecognizable to the subject and constitute a "strange object". The world of the repressed is in fact an unknown world. In his famous text, Das Unheimliche (1919), Freud explains that in German, the word unheimlich means unfamiliar, and heimlich means familiar, or homely. Freud analyses the many definitions for heimlich and points out how the word can reach a point where it means it's exact opposite, without the word changing itself. Freud argued that the notion of heimlich, "homely", relates to something which is known and comfortable on the one hand and hidden and concealed on the other. For Freud, home means a secret place, whereas the uncanny (unheimlich) is something which should have been kept a secret but is revealed. The uncanny is that type of dread which returns to which is long familiar. In fact, the "canny-homely" and uncanny-unhomely are two opposites that bear each other's meaning.

For Freud, if psychoanalysis is correct in stating that an emotional effect of any kind can turn into anxiety by means of repression it follows that there must be types of anxiety that are the result of something repressed that has resurfaced. It is repression that renders the uncanny strange and unfamiliar. When it resurfaces, the uncanny generates anxiety not only on a personal but even on a collective level. In the words of Kristeva (1988, p. 284) "the other is my unconscious". The second key concept is representation. Freud (1950) defined this as a construct of thinking which can be completely independent of perception and depend on past experiences. Some of our representations are conscious: we have easy access to them and are usually based on perceptions of reality. They can be easily expressed verbally. Some representations, however are mistaken representations and belong to "psychical reality". Even though implicit and unconscious, they can feel more real than external reality, which causes considerable amount of distress. An important part of the therapeutic approach is in fact to reveal the existence of this unconscious or implicit representation and make them conscious. Freud spoke about two kinds of representations: the "thing" and the "word" representations. Whereas the latter can be expressed verbally, the former are simply images, which can't be put into words and are infra-verbal. A good example for "thing" representations is phobias:

often, the terrifying nature of the particular phobia cannot be verbally explained in an intelligent way by the person experiencing it.

According Prejudices

The flow of uncanny others entered Hungary during the summer of 2015. The government labelled the sudden intense flow of people in the country as "crisis situation".[8] Global attention quickly turned towards Hungary, as Apostolova (2015) writes: "the world's attention was attracted towards the civilized West and the barbarian East (…) intellectuals both from Eastern and Western Europe reinvented the humanitarian deficit of the Eastern Europeans and in the meantime ignored the quick spread of solidarity in Hungary, Macedonia, Serbia and Bulgaria." Indeed, describing the Hungarian society's reaction to the crisis as purely dismissive and barbaric would be far from accurate. It could rather be described as extreme, ranging from humanitarian and altruistic[9] to aggressive, and pitiless.[10]

The long-lasting indifference and lack of interventions on the government's side pushed civil groups, non-governmental organizations and other, recently formed informal groups to act: most humanitarian action was carried out by newly joined, enthusiastic volunteers. On the other end of the scale is what can be describe as the complete rejection of the other, labelled by some as "desert gypsies".[11] Coined during the period of the humanitarian crises provoked by the massive flow of refugees, it is unclear who exactly invented this term. Nonetheless, it became quite popular among a certain – mainly extreme right wing - group of people and is used to describe "Muslim mobs". What might only seem as just another racist and ignorant comment should not be taken lightly, as it unveils the reality of how the "other" is represented for some: A Roma of some sort. This – in many cases probably latent – amalgam between the Roma and the Refugee did not emerge as a result of the migrant crisis, but has been an underlying factor in the way the Other-Refugee has collectively been perceived.

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[8] This paper will make reference to this period as humanitarian crisis. Some, such as Kallius et al. (2016) argue whether labelling this period as « crisis » is accurate.

[9] Several volunteer groups were formed during the period of the crisis. Many of them would work until exhaustion, after work and during their holidays. Following the crises, the Volunteers on the Rise project was set up to record the testimony of both refugees and volunteers.

[10] The head of the Migrant Solidarity Group (civil group advocating for the human rights of refugees) of Szeged had evoked instances of aggressive reactions towards volunteers helping refugees.

[11] This expression is cited by Mark Kekesi, head of Migrant Solidarity Group Szeged in relation to the aggression volunteers have to endure from those who disapprove of humanitarian action.

Since the average Hungarian would not have direct interaction with refugees, many rely on the media's representation. This representation; however seems to have particular traits in Hungary. A study from 2008[12] exploring how left and right wing daily papers represented refugees, found that both newspapers treated refugees from a legal, official and political, rather than humanitarian point of view and tended to draw attention to conflicts, problems and the potential crime threat regarding the subject. Most newspapers proposed stricter legislation, and only 5% presented a more tolerant approach towards refugees. The thorough study carried out by the Hungarian Helsinki Committee (2014, p. 27) equally underlined the problematic representation of refugees and asylum-seekers, stating that the way the media represents the matters concerning refugees and asylum-seekers "continues to maintain the ignorance of the society and assures the survival of an obsessive fear associated with asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants, and contribute to the prolongation of the state's helplessness to tackle the real challenges due to the migration phenomenon". Despite a recently highly mediatized phenomenon, the representation of the Refugee remained unclear and maintained a terminological confusion. By introducing new, inexact or even meaningless terms with pejorative connotations in Hungarian, such as "economic migrant" and "illegal refugee", the government propaganda brought about moral panic in the society. The media – according to Bernath and Messing (2015) and Kiss (2017) - was unable to counterbalance the latter in creating a complex and more accurate image of refugee. As Kiss (2017) points out, the pro-government media and the critical media often created a completely different narrative of the same story, which gave the impression that they were describing two distinct realities.

The mass media is, however, not the only channel echoing simplified and often false representations of the "other," but this is true about state-ran institutions working with such populations: on the website of the institute hosting the center for unaccompanied minors,[13] these young people are openly criticized for not wanting to integrate in the Hungarian society. Moreover, the government's current stand on migration issues and most importantly the prime minister's discourses addressing the migrant crises often evoke[14] the frightful fantasy of being invaded by a hoard of strangers. The above-mentioned examples highlighting how the "other" is represented in Hungary seem to include the following characteristics: fear from the "other" as a source of danger and crime, condemnation

[12] *Vicsek, Keszi and Markus (2008)*
[13] *More at: http://www.wp.kigyk.hu*
[14] *"Refugees are a hoard of evils" was announced at the Conservative Nations Conference on 15.02.2016*

for the lack of motivation to integrate in the Hungarian society and a paranoid fear of being invaded by their hordes. These elements defining an attitude of rejection for some correspond in many ways to the major prejudices which fuel hatred in relation to the Roma in Hungary. Recent research has also drawn special attention to the one-sided and criminalized[15] media portrayal of the Roma. Clichés, stereotypes and attitudes concerning the Roma in the media seem to share common characteristics with the representation of migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees.[16]

More Parallels between the "Gypsies of the Desert" and the Roma of Hungary

The Roma – an ethnic minority cohabiting with Hungarians for centuries – are, much like the refugees crossing the country, from diverse origins, but often labelled and perceived as one homogenous group. According to Dupcsik (2009), attitudes about the Roma seem to divide people in two groups: those who support, and those who are against them. Polarized attitudes might be more hidden but can equally be identified when it comes to scientific approaches in research – remarks Dupcsik (2009). Some consider the Roma as members of a different race, prone to deviance, others emphasize their need to realize the importance of integration, while a third group romanticizes the Roma, perceiving them as the good and innocent savage, living in perfect harmony with nature up to the moment when society ruined them. The split image of the Roma was usually that of the "musician" associated with talent, and the "wanderer", associated with savagery.

After attempted forced assimilation[17] such as during the seventeenth century when many Roma children were forced to be raised by Hungarian families[18] and their "encouraged" assimilation during the communist era, the Romas turned out to be the greatest losers of the fall of communism, since many of them lost their employment. Following these failed attempts of integration, focus slowly started shifting from cultural differences to social difficulties of the Roma as explanation for their hindered integration (Kemény, 1994). Studies show that Roma student are often in marginal positions in their class, but they tend to be confronted with prejudices as early as in the nursery (Kende, 2010). Why such hate against the Roma? According to Lazar Guy (1988) the fact that the Roma is perceived as an external group, might play a rather important role. What it means is that

[15] *Bernath and Messing, 2011*
[16] *Bodrogi, 2012*
[17] *Majtényi and Majtényi, 2005*
[18] *Nagy Pál: Cigány csoportok és az együttélési modellek változásai a Kárpát-medencében a 15-20. században**

Hungarians tend not to consider the Roma as constitutive members of the Hungarian nation. This phenomenon seems to persist. Far from being hidden and latent, it seems to re-emerge, echoed publicly by the Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, who recently made the following discourse:

> *"Our situation is – irrespective of whether someone likes it or not, whether someone likes túrós csusza (a Hungarian dish), or not – the historic situation of Hungary is that it lives together with a few hundred thousand Roma. Someone, somewhere, has decided this sometime ago. We inherited this; this is our situation. This is a given. Nobody can object to this, either way. At the same time, however, we cannot require others – in particular, others to the west of us – to follow suit, and demand that they should also live with a substantial Roma minority. What is more, when members of our Roma minority decide to leave for Canada, we want to make it very clear that we would like them to stay, and that we want to solve the formidable problems involved in our co-existence so that they can stay."*

Reading between the lines, the text implies that the Roma are an external group, and also a burden on society. Kóczé and Rövid (2016) argue that the Prime Minister's speech hides a double discourse: on the one hand, it wishes to promote the integration of the Roma, but on the other hand denies the recognition and the means to address the persisting structural violence and the growing social insecurity that they are victims of. Other authors, such as Ljujic, Vedder, Dekker and Van Geel (2012) speak of a specific Roma phobia, which can be qualified as a distinct construct from antisemitism, islamophobia, and other type of phobias regarding different cultural groups, and might be the last acceptable form of racism. Referring back to the expression "desert gypsies" describing "Muslim mobs", we might be witnessing the birth of a hybrid phobia, merging Romaphobia with islamophobia, which includes conscious and unconscious representations of the Roma projected on the other-refugee, who is mainly distinguished from the Roma based on religion.

Another strong aspect creating common ground for rejection of refugees and the Roma might be what Malkki (1992) describes as metaphysical *sedentarism*. The author argues that nations tend to be represented as discrete spatial partitioning of territory. The people's relationship to place is often defined in terms of plant metaphors. Furthermore, culture is connected to the idea of the nation and therefore also thought as rooted in concrete spaces, which reflect the metaphysical sedentarism in scholarly and other contexts. Malkki (1992) considers that refugees' loss of corporeal connection to their homelands is associated with losing moral bearings. Without their roots, they can no longer be

considered as "honest citizens". This assumption about real attachment to a place can lead one to define displacement not as a simple fact about socio-political context, but an inner and pathological condition of the displaced.

The "Family of Nations" and the Externality of "the Refugee" might be linked to a third process, which externalizes the Refugee from the national – and natural – order of things. As the generalization and *problematization* of the refugee excludes the refugee from the national (and natural or normal), so does the similar generalization and *problematization* of the Hungarian Roma. The image of the "wanderer" leads to the externalization of them from the national and might explain why they are not perceived as a constitutive member of the Hungarian Nation. These few examples demonstrate the parallels between the perception of the Roma of Hungary and refugees as both being members of homogenous external groups with "shared" prejudices that are maintained collectively first and foremost by mass media and the official political discourse. However, the humanitarian crisis of 2015 seems to have activated yet another image of the other: The Jewish population of Hungary facing deportation.

The Other as a "Victim of Collective Indifference"

The summer of 2015 brutally confronted several parts of Hungary with the ongoing refugee crisis. The images of people camping in parks and train stations waiting to continue their journeys to Western Europe left many inhabitants shaken and pushed them to join the helper groups, many of which were created at the time. Volunteers were from diverse social milieus, of different age and sometimes shared little in terms of personality traits apart from one aspect: they were against the passive behavior of the government in such an intense situation. In many countries, this might not be considered as a particularly surprising reaction, but such engagement in volunteering used to be completely uncommon in Hungary.[19]

This phenomenon therefore raises the question of: "What prompted this previously rarely seen activity?" According to a recent survey,[20] volunteering during this period expressed a political position declaring itself in opposition of the current government. This moral opinion mobilized

[19] *Kende, 2016*
[20] *Kende, 2016*

those who weren't previously involved in politics and suggests that for Hungarians volunteering became a form of political activism for social changes. Helping the other became a way of expressing opinion and helping oneself, but not only from a political standpoint point of view. Volunteers seemed to relate in specific ways to the "other" they are fascinated with, completely identify with and often idealize the Other-Refugee. The divided attitudes relating to the Roma resurface during the crisis but this time in relation to the Other-Refugee: there are people "for" and "against" the refugees. Volunteers were often insulted because of helping. Those who were active would criticize those who were passive and indifferent.

Within a very short period of time collective memories of the deportation of the Hungarian Jews appear in the media. The main actor of the Oscar winner film "Son of Saul" draws the following parallels:

> *"Auschwitz wasn't made by the extreme right at the time, but by those who were calmly walking their dogs while people wearing yellow starts were lead to the ghettos. Those people, including lawyers and doctors, who had comfortable lives, didn't demonstrate any solidarity, but rather closed their curtains. We should not fear those who provoke by comments filled with spelling mistakes on social media, but of the silent majority, who turn a blind eye. They are those bystanders who didn't show solidarity with the Jews the same way they lack solidarity today with the Roma and the refugees."*[21]

The figure which emerges from this discourse beside the victim and the helper is not that of the perpetrator, but the bystander (Hilberg, 1992). As Bar-On (2001) argues, some of these bystanders can easily become perpetrators, so their neutral position is more than questionable and they can be considered as potentially dangerous. A well-known Hungarian politician, volunteering with a civil group underlined the danger that lies in indifference and lack of solidarity:

> *"I help because as a Jew the most important conclusion is the following: I cannot standby without doing something while the state constantly abandons groups. We can never again walk by without saying something, because this is exactly how our story began: with little exclusion, a little bit of humiliation, a little bit of abandon and we all know well how it ended."*[22]

[21] *Librarius, 2015*
[22] *L. Horvath K., 2015*

The former head of the Examining Medical Officers made an even stronger parallel between refugees and persecuted Hungarian Jews in relation to the idea of these people being subjected to health exams in closed quarantines:

> *"The discourse about epidemic among the refugees makes us think of the controversies preceding the deportations. It would have to be believed that a group of people doesn't deserve to be treated as whichever member of the Hungarian society and therefore we can hit them, beat them, shoot them or lock them up in wagons".*[23]

Why Be Aware of Collective Representations?

In conclusion, collective representations regarding Hungarian minorities have a considerable impact on how the figure of the Other-Refugee is represented. The rejection of the Other-Refugee perceived as lacking motivation to integrate, being potentially dangerous and intrusive constitute the main elements of the still existing prejudice against the Roma in Hungary. These appear to be constant elements in the collective representation of the Other-Refugee, which might also imbedded in physical resemblance, precarious living conditions and the non-recognition of the Roma as constitutive members of the Hungarian society. The humanitarian crisis of 2015 seems to have triggered the revival of collective traumas. In the Hungarian context, the crisis evoked the deportation of Hungarian Jews, who weren't only victims of Nazi collaboration, but also the indifference of passive bystanders. Instead of physical resemblance, the representation of the Other-Refugee as victim was rooted in their circumstances: their desperate attempt to arrive in a country which would welcome them, overcrowded trains carrying people in inhumane conditions, the narrative of epidemic, but above all certain words reminiscent of the deportation such as wagon, camp... Although the Holocaust had a great number of Roma victims (Szita, 2004 ; Hancock, 2013), the humanitarian crisis has not reawaken the parallels between the Other-Refugee and the Other-Hungarian Roma as victims of collective indifference and of the Holocaust.

This article isn't an exhaustive analysis of the ongoing refugee crises, neither that of Hungarian politics nor an expertise on minority groups living in the country. It also wishes to avoid

[23] *Danó, 2015*

generalization and - first and foremost – caricaturizing a country. Each and every personal encounter is unique and its complexity cannot be reduced to collective aspects. However, when and if these collective representations are present, they can act as mitigating factors. Identifying such mitigating factors – in relation to any and every host country – could help in attenuating the resurfacing anxiety generate by the uncanny "other" in this case in the face of a refugee, migrant or asylum-seeker. Reducing anxiety is of crucial importance, because it often leads to rushed and inaccurate representations and in worse cases, even extreme reactions to Otherness. In conclusion: the roots of discrepancies between self-representation and collective representation of the Refugee can be found in failed attempts to reduce anxiety when encountering the uncanny "other." The identity of the "other" gets so entangled in these inaccurate – or referring back to the psychoanalytical description – mistaken representations, that it can barely make sense for the them, just like this short passage of Arendt's text presents:

> *"In Europe the Nazis confiscated our property; but in Brazil we have to pay 30% of our wealth, like the most loyal member of the Bund der Auslandsdeutschen. In Paris we could not leave our homes after eight o'clock because we were Jews; but in Los Angeles we are restricted because we are "enemy aliens."*

Our identity is changed so frequently that nobody can find out who we actually are.

The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in the Empowerment Process of Women: A Case Study on Lebanon

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Abstract

Since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, millions of people have fled Syria, most of them ending up in neighboring countries such as Lebanon and Jordan. Around 75% of this refugee population is women and children. Women and girls are more prone to suffer than men during conflicts. However, life as a female refugee can have an unexpected side effect: empowerment. Refugee women need to take on more responsibilities due to the difficult economic and legal circumstances they live in, in order to survive. The goal of this research has been to find out to what extent the rise of aid organizations assisted in the empowerment of Syrian refugee women in Lebanon. The research has been carried out by interviews with Syrian refugee women and organizations set up since their arrival in Lebanon. Empowerment has always been a debatable concept by many scholars, as it is difficult to define. To measure empowerment, this research elaborates on the Gender and Development (GAD) framework, with a special focus on the third Millennium Development Goal (MDG).

According to this goal, empowerment can be seen as the ability to have a greater efficiency in carrying out a woman's desired responsibilities and activities, the so called 'effectiveness of agency'. The second concept of empowerment used in this research goes beyond this framing. It is the ability to make strategic life choices, whereby a woman is able to act on the restrictive aspects of her responsibilities and activities in order to change them, the so called 'transformative agency'. By using two different notions of empowerment, this research aims to give further insights to the concept of empowerment.

Furthermore, this research attempts to highlight the influence of Western donors on the programs offered by the organizations that have been set up since the arrival of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. By investing how the organizations have been supported, this research tries to detect a correlation between funding and possible outcomes of a program. Nevertheless, predominantly the intention

has been to show that female refugees are not solely victims, being a refugee can create possibilities for a more empowered life as well.

Keywords: Women, Empowerment, Non-Governmental Organizations, Refugees

Introduction

As in most conflicts, women and children are the largest proportion of displaced persons. Around 75% of the Syrian refugee population is women and children.[24] During war times, women and girls are disproportionately affected due to a lack of access to essential services, as humanitarian crises have shown before.[25] Women and girls are more exposed to gender-based violence (GBV), especially sexual violence, a deterioration of mental health and newborn and maternal complications. The burden on women increases as they are not only caregivers and providers, but becoming more often head of household as their husband is *away* or diseased. In the community, women and girls face more harassment than men, such as transactional sex and forced marriage, and at home they are more prone to domestic violence as their male relatives may feel *useless and frustrated* during conflict times. As women play an essential role in post conflict reconstruction, it is of major importance that their basic needs should be met.[26]

Women and girls are more prone to suffer than men during conflicts. However, life as a refugee can have an unexpected side effect as well: empowerment. According to The Washington Post,[27] Syrian refugee women in Lebanon need to take on more responsibilities due to the difficult economic and legal circumstances they live in, even if they don't want to. As more refugee women becoming heads of households, they have to take care of the family. These new circumstances can be regarded as something negative, but can be positive as well. Women have to undertake new roles which were previous only given to men. As most Syrian women need to work in order for the family to survive, they have to leave their homes without a male relative accompanying them. For many Syrian

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[24] UNHCR (December 4, 2016). Syria Regional Refugee Response. Retrieved from http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php

[25] Sami, S., Williams, H.A., Krause, S., Onyango, M.A., Burton, A., & Tomczyk, B. (2013). Responding to the Syrian Crisis: The Needs of Women and Girls. The Lancet, 383, 1179-1181

[26] Ibid

[27] The Washington Post (November 2016). For some Syrian women, refugee life proves unexpectedly liberating.

women, this can be their first time in public without a man by their side. Familial social constraints are removed, in order to survive. Besides taking on larger roles, refugee women come in contact with different aid organizations that promote women's rights. Different organizations are set up to help refugees, including organizations that advocate gender equality and women's empowerment. Syrian refugee women therefore, can experience a degree of personal autonomy they couldn't have experienced back in Syria, because of the shift in roles between men and women and the contact with aid organizations that make them more aware of their rights.[28] In this research, I would like to investigate to what extent the rise of aid organizations assisted in the empowerment of Syrian refugee women in Lebanon.

The focus will be on the empowerment of Syrian refugee women in Lebanon. The social relevance of this topic is of major importance, as women play an essential role in the post conflict construction of a state.[29] I therefore believe it is crucial to focus now on refugee women and girls, as they will play a key role in the rebuilding of Syria. By putting the emphasis on them, women and girls can invest later on in their own country, resulting in a more stable and prosperous Syria.

The term 'refugee' contains different perceptions. There is the negative understanding associated with this term, which is one of being helpless and *lost*. Although I don't want to deny the hardship refugees have to endure, I believe this view has been exploited by the media in the Western world to raise more money for aid, among other things. Nevertheless, there is a positive side as well. Refugee women can become more empowered as they have to take on different roles and need to work. Being a refugee can become liberating, as roles which were previously denied to women are now given to them in order for them to survive. This research also aims at breaking the stereotypical image associated with refugees.

The research area is Lebanon, as this country hosts the highest number of Syrian refugees in concentration in the world.[30] Different aid organizations have been set up in this country in order to help refugee women to become more empowered. Private organizations and voluntary institutions

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[28] *Ibid*
[29] *Sami, S., Williams, H.A., Krause, S., Onyango, M.A., Burton, A., & Tomczyk, B. (2013). Responding to the Syrian Crisis: The Needs of Women and Girls. The Lancet, 383, 1179-1181*
[30] *UNHCR (March, 2015). Refugees from Syria: Lebanon. Retrieved from https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=8649*

arise as reaction to the demand in the sudden increase in the amount of people that want to enter a state. This is called the Institutional Theory as described by Massey.[31] In this study, I would like to investigate what kinds of institutions are set up for the empowerment of Syrian refugee women. Furthermore, I wish to examine who is funding these organizations, as this might be of relevance for the outcome of the offered programs, according to scholars such as Easterly and Agyeman.[32] By investigating who the donors of the organizations are, I would like to detect a correlation between the outcome of a program and the way it is funded.

To measure empowerment, this research elaborates on the Gender and Development (GAD) framework, with a special focus on the third Millennium Development Goal (MDG). However, this approach to empowerment has its shortcomings. Therefore the notion of empowerment as described by Kabeer[33] is used to challenge the framing of women's empowerment in the GAD framework. This research might therefore create further insights to the concept of empowerment.[34]

Institutional Theory and NGOs

Private institutions and voluntary organizations arise when international migration has begun. This is to satisfy the demand that has risen as a result of the imbalance between the amount of people that enter a state and the limited numbers of visas these host countries normally have to offer. An economic niche is created for entrepreneurs, as well for institutions that are dedicated to make profit out of international movement.[35] Business and social institutions arise to help the migrants, such as immigrant lawyers, labor contractors and people smugglers. These institutions can be legal, illegal or ambiguous.[36] These illegal and ambiguous institutions are resulting in a black market in immigration. The organizations that are for-profit and entrepreneurs supply different services for the migrant,

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[31] Massey, D.S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A., & Taylor, J.E. (1993). Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal. Population and Development Review, 19 (3), 431-466

[32] Agyemang, G., Awumbila, M., Unerman, J., & O'Dwyer, B. (2009). NGO accountability and aid delivery. Research report 110. ACCA. Retrieved from http://www.alnap.org/resource/10534

[33] Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment. Development and Change, 30, 435-464

[34] Massey, D.S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A., & Taylor, J.E. (1993). Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal. Population and Development Review, 19 (3), 431-466

[35] Easterly, W. (2007). The White Man's burden: Why the West's efforts to aid the rest have done so much ill and so little good. New York: Oxford University Press.

[36] Teitelbaum, M. S. (2008). Demographic Analysis of International Migration. In Bretell, C.G., & Hollifield, J.F. (Eds), Migration Theory. Talking across Disciplines (pp. 51-62). New York: Routledge

asking a fee for this type of service. This can be smuggling across borders, illegal transportation, arranged marriage between migrants and inhabitants of the host country, illegal visas and documents, labor contracting between migrants and employers, and lodging and other activities in the host country.[37]

As a reaction to the exploitation of migrants, voluntary humanitarian organizations are set up to protect the rights of migrants, legal and illegal, and improve the way they are treated. These humanitarian groups help migrants by providing shelter, counseling, social services and advice how to obtain legal documents. After a while, these individuals, firms and organizations become institutionally stable and familiar to immigrants, leading to a form of social capital where immigrants can draw upon.[38] This research focuses on the aid organizations that arise when a sudden amount of refugees enter a state, according to the theory.

According to the World Bank, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are *'private organizations which pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interest of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development'.*[39] In a wider context, NGOs are value-based, non-profit organizations which are independent from any government affiliation. Instead they depend; in whole on partial funding, on charitable donations and on voluntary work.[40] In contrast to long established institutions such as the United Nations, NGOs have always tried to resist centralism as working together should entail a loose consensus. However, in the past decade there has been a shift in favor of closer cooperation between NGOs, as humanitarian assistance is needed more than ever.[41]

Since the 1970s, NGOs are trying to fill in the gaps that governments cannot, or will not, fill. In the field of international development, NGOs have become considerable players. Between 1970 and 1985, the aid spent by NGOs increased ten-fold.[42] NGOs spend nowadays collectively on an annual basis an estimated 9 to 10 billion US dollars, whereby they reach around 250 million people who live

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[37] Massey, D.S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A., & Taylor, J.E. (1993). Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal. Population and Development Review, 19 (3), 431-466
[38] Ibid
[39] Malena, C. (1995). Working with NGOs: a practical guide to operational collaboration between the World Bank and non-governmental organizations. The World Bank.
[40] Ibid
[41] Bennett, J. (2014). Meeting needs: NGO coordination in practice. New York: Routledge.
[42] Malena, C. (1995). Working with NGOs: a practical guide to operational collaboration between the World Bank and non-governmental organizations. The World Bank.

in absolute poverty. They are connected to the wider aid community, which are international governments, the UN, and other multilateral bodies, more than ever and the role NGOs play in the international response to human disasters is significant.[43] Since the increase of NGOs in developing countries, a 'third sector' has been created. NGOs deliver services, advocate for policy change, or build infrastructure. A network within and across sectors has been created, form local to global. Although NGOs differ in seize and structure, their networks have become increasingly powerful and of high importance in international issues.[44]

According to the definition of a NGO, they are non-profit organizations which are independent from any government.[45] However, NGOs need funding in order to survive, therefore depending on donations of businesses, private sources and as well governments. All or some of these funders can have an indirect or direct political influence on the actions and decisions that NGOs make. In fact, NGOs that receive aid or even depending of aid given by a government are the rule rather than the exception.[46] Lebanon has a very dynamic NGO sector whereby the organizations are operating in all domains and aspects of public life. According to the Institutional Theory,[47] aid organizations arise when a sudden amount of refugees enter the host country. This study would like to make use of NGOs that have arisen in Lebanon since the arrival of or have set up special programs for the Syrian population.

Gender and Development Framework

Since the seventies, gender has become more visible as an issue of development. After the publication of Ester Boserup's Women's Role in Economic Development, the term 'Women in Development' (WID) came into use. Boserup was the first one to systematically use gender as a variable in analyses.[48] Because more attention was drawn to gender, development supporters became

[43] *Ibid*
[44] *Ibid*
[45] *Malena, C. (1995). Working with NGOs: a practical guide to operational collaboration between the World Bank and non-governmental organizations. The World Bank.*
[46] *Robbins, R. (2002). Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism. Boston: Allyn and Bacon*
[47] *Massey, D.S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A., & Taylor, J.E. (1993). Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal. Population and Development Review, 19 (3), 431-466*
[48] *Rathgeber, E.M. (1990). WID, WAD, GAD: Trends in Research and Practice. The Journal of Developing Areas, 24 (4), 489-502*

more aware of the fact that women were excluded from the advantages of development activity.[49] Therefore, the WID approach was advocated, whereby local women's involvement in project activities and in the economy was stimulated. The emphasis was primary focusing on egalitarianism and on strategies and programs on ending discrimination and minimizing disadvantages of women in the productive sector.[50]

In the 70s, the WID perspective was closely linked with the concept of modernization that dominated the international mainstream thinking on development. Through industrialization, the standard of living would improve in developing countries. Better living conditions, education, health services and wages would improve once the economy of a developing country began to grow. In this concept of modernization, women weren't seen as a separate unit. The assumption was that if the situation of men improved, so would the situation of women, so all would benefit equally as society in total became more modernized.[51] The focus was therefore on men only. After the publication of Boserup, it became clear that women have different needs concerning development and therefore the focus shifted to women solely in the WID approach. Although the idea was good, it became obvious that women were already involved in economic activities and that involvement in project activities only increased the labor burden on women.[52] The WID approach did focus on women, only without taking the context in consideration. Men were not taking in account, therefore the WID approach became an ineffective strategy.

Overcoming the shortcomings of WID, Gender and Development (GAD) was touted as the new approach in the 1980s. One of the first definitions of the term 'gender' is given by Whitehead (quoted in Østergaard, p. 6):[53]

> *"The relations between men and women are socially constituted and not derived from biology. Therefore the term gender relations should distinguish such social relations between men and women from those characteristics, which can be derived from biological differences. In this connection sex is the province of*

[49] *Akerkar, S (2001). Gender and Participation: Overview Report. Institute of Development Studies.*
[50] *Rathgeber, E.M. (1990). WID, WAD, GAD: Trends in Research and Practice. The Journal of Developing Areas, 24 (4), 489-502*
[51] *Ibid*
[52] *Akerkar, S (2001). Gender and Participation: Overview Report. Institute of Development Studies.*
[53] *Østergaard, L. (1992). Gender. In Østergaard, L. (ed.), Gender and Development: A Practical Guide (pp. 1-10). London and New York: Routledge.*

biology, i.e. fixed and unchangeable qualities, while gender is the province of social science, i.e. qualities which are shaped through the history of social relations and interactions."

Gender is a cultural and social construction that refers to the relative position of men and women within society as in the family.[54] It is therefore subject to change while sex, as stated above, is permanent. The GAD approach has its roots in socialist feminism and focuses on the interactions and social relations between men and women, and the constructions and contexts of femininities and masculinities.[55] Men and women are socially constructed, and it lies in the understanding that these social constructions are reinforced by social activities that both define and are defined by them.[56] These gender relations often take a form whereby the men have a dominant role and women are subordinate.[57] Women cannot be seen in isolation to men, as WID does, so GAD focuses on gender relations instead of women only. The GAD approach has as aim to empower women to improve their position relative to men, therefore benefitting and transforming society as a whole. GAD is not only about women; instead it focuses more on the social construction of gender and the specific roles, expectations and responsibilities of men and women. The emphasis is not exclusively on female solidarity, but welcomes contribution from men as well who share the same concern for social equity and gender equity. The respect for human rights and the equity of women and men is the motivation for the GAD approach.

According to Young, the perspective of the GAD approach is holistic whereby the focus lay on reproductive aspects of economic, political and social life in order to understand the shaping of particular aspects of society.[58] The GAD approach, in comparison to WID approach, recognizes the fact that gender relations are correlated with socio-economic and political distribution of power as well as the distribution of wealth, work and resources. It questions these structures as well. GAD doesn't only want to integrate women more in the development process but has as aim to reexamine the social structures and institutions whereby the entrenched elite shall be questioned and changed.

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[54] *Razavi, S., & Miller, C. (1995). From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse. Occasional Paper 1, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development*
[55] *Akerkar, S (2001). Gender and Participation: Overview Report. Institute of Development Studies*
[56] *Razavi, S., & Miller, C. (1995). From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse. Occasional Paper 1, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development*
[57] *Ibid*
[58] *Young, K. (1997). Gender and Development. In Visvanathan, N. et. al. (eds.), The Women, Gender and Development Reader (pp. 51-54). London and New Jersey: Zed Books.*

It is therefore no surprise that a GAD perspective is rarely fully implemented in activities and projects of international development agencies, as this would in the end lead to a shift in the power relations. Nevertheless, examples can be found whereby the GAD approach is partially implemented.[59]

According to the WID concept, an improvement in a woman's economic situation will automatically lead to the development in other aspects of her life. The GAD approach however is less optimistic, as women are in a disadvantageous position because of their weaker socio-economic and political position and their limited bargaining power. Therefore women should organize together at the local, regional and national level.[60] NGO's and grassroots organizations play an important role in the development process according to the GAD approach, but the state has as well the responsibility for regulating and promoting women's empowerment and emancipation . The state can play a dual role in the developmental process as major employer and as the allocator of social capital. However, this is quite contradictory because of the poor presentation of women and a shortage of decision-making power in the state apparatus, especially in developing countries.[61]

To realize structural change in order to lessen or eliminate gender inequality and to increase gender awareness in all areas and all levels of public life, the strategy 'gender mainstreaming' is introduced by the GAD approach. The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations define 'gender mainstreaming' as follows:

> *"Mainstreaming as a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for men and women of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programs, in all areas and levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality (Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, quoted in United Nations, p.1)."*[62]

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[59] *Ibid*
[60] *Tasli, K. (2007). A Conceptual Framework for Gender and Development Studies: From Welfare to Empowerment. Vienna: Österreichische Forschungsstiftung für Entwicklungshilfe*
[61] *Ibid*
[62] *United Nations (2002). Gender Mainstreaming. An Overview. Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. Department of Economic and Social Affairs: New York*

This definition has as aim gender-sensitive institutional change.[63] The family is the primary institution which should be addresses, followed by the state, market and the community. As this is an extremely demanding task, the GAD concept is quite difficult to implement. In the Beijing Platform for Action from the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, gender mainstreaming was established as a major global strategy for the support of gender equality. This can be seen as the main reference for the GAD approach. Several governments signed this Action Plan but it was never implemented in total by any country. The GAD approach has only made a small impact on the thinking of governments and NGO's, as it is not easily translated into simple policy demands.[64]

Empowerment

As stated in the previous section, the GAD approach has as aim to empower women to improve their position relative to men, therefore benefitting and transforming society as a whole. For many feminist scholars, the fact that 'empowerment' cannot be clearly defined is highly appreciated. As an NGO activist put it 'I like the term empowerment because no one has defined it clearly yet; so it gives us breathing space to work it out in action terms before we have to pin ourselves down to what it means' . However, in the policy domain, measurement is of high importance as there are competing claims for scarce resources.

The third Millennium Development Goals (MDG) is a good example of such a policy. This MDG has as aim gender equality and women's empowerment[65] and fits in the GAD concept. It is rather an intrinsic that an instrumental goal, seen as an end in itself instead of an instrument for achieving other goals.[66] To ensure gender equality and women's empowerment, three indicators are established that measure the progress: 1) ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education; 2)

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[63] Goetz, A.M. (1997). Introduction: Getting Institutions Right for Women in Development. In Goetz, A.M. (eds.), Getting Institutions Right for Women in Development (pp. 1-28). London and New York: Zed Books.

[64] Unterhalter, E. (2005). Fragmented Frameworks? Researching Women, Gender, Education, and Development. In Aikman, S., & Unterhalter, E. (eds), Beyond Acces: Transforming Policy and Practice for Gender Equality (pp. 15-35). Eynsham: Oxfam.

[65] Easterly, W. (2007). The White Man's burden: Why the West's efforts to aid the rest have done so much ill and so little good. New York: Oxford University Press.

[66] Kabeer, N. (2005). Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A Critical Analysis of the Third Millennium Development Goal. Gender and Development, 13 (1), 13-24

increasing women's share of wage employment in the non-agricultural sector; 3) increasing the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments . According to this MDG, education, employment and political participation is needed to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. However, there are other resources that are being overlooked by this approach on empowerment.[67]

According to Kabeer power is the ability to make choices. Therefore disempowerment means the denial of choice, so empowerment requires a process of change. A person can have many choices in life, so the person's life can be very powerful. However, it is not an empowered life because the person was from the beginning never disempowered.[68] The distinction is specific – empowerment implies a process, whereby a person that in the first place is denied the ability to make choices and subsequently acquires this ability.[69] Choice is relevant to the analysis of power, so the notion of choice should be explained first. The first thing is that choice implies the likelihood of alternatives, so that one could have chosen otherwise. Disempowerment and poverty have a logical correlation because not having the means to meet basic needs exclude the capability to make significant choices. On the other hand, when the basic needs are met not all choices are as important to the definition of power. Therefore it is important to distinguish first- and second-order choices. First-order choices are strategic life choices which are crucial for a person to live the life he or she wants, such as if and whom to marry or whether to have children. Second-order choices are being framed by first-order choices, and they may be important for the quality of a person's life but they don't define life in general. Concerning empowerment, which is about change, it are the strategic life choices, so first-order choices, that create change for a person.[70]

Through resources (pre-conditions), agency (process) and achievements (outcomes) choice can be exercised. Resources are not only material resources, but as well various social and human resources. Social relationships which are directed by institutional domains that form society, such as family, market and the community, decide what kind of resources are acquired. These kinds of resources

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[67] Kabeer, N. (2005). Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A Critical Analysis of the Third Millennium Development Goal. Gender and Development, 13 (1), 13-24
[68] Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment. Development and Change, 30, 435-464
[69] Ibid
[70] Ibid

can be real allocations as future claims or expectations.[71] Access to these resources reflects the rules and norms which control exchange and distribution in the separate institutional domains. These certain norms and rules give specific actors authority over other actors. As they determine the distribution and exchange of resources, the allocative resources tend to be entrenched in the distribution of authoritative resources, which is the ability to determine priorities and enforce demands. Examples of this decision-making authority within a particular institutional domain are heads of households, elites within a community and employers.

Agency, the ability to define a person's goal and act upon it, is the second dimension to exercise choice.[72] Not only observable action, but as well the motivation, meaning and purpose a person brings to its activity is part of agency. It is the 'power within', a person's sense of agency. The way people see themselves is the basis of empowerment, and this in turn is correlated with how they are seen by others and society. Agency can be exercised by individuals or collectivities and is seen as decision-making, but it can as well be a form of negotiation and bargaining, manipulation and deception, resistance and subversion or a process of reflection and analysis. In relation to power, agency can have a positive or negative meaning. In a positive way, agency refers to a person's capacity to make its own choices in life and to chase after its own goals, even when opposed by others. In the negative sense, agency can be used by a person to override the agency of another person through the use of coercion, violence or threat.[73]

Agency and resources together are the capabilities. It is the potential that people have for living the life they want, to achieve a valued life in 'being and doing'. Achievements, the third dimension, are the outcome of people's effort, the extent to which the potential of agency and resources is being realized or has failed.[74]

A distinction can be made between the 'effectiveness' of agency and 'transformative' agency. When a woman has a greater efficiency in carrying out her desired responsibilities and activities, she makes

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[71] *Ibid*
[72] *Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment. Development and Change, 30, 435-464*
[73] *Ibid*
[74] *Kabeer, N. (2005). Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A Critical Analysis of the Third Millennium Development Goal. Gender and Development, 13 (1), 13-24*

effective use of her agency. For transformative agency, a woman is able to act on the restrictive aspects of her responsibilities and activities in order to change them. The conceptualization of women's empowerment in the third Millennium Development Goal[75] and therefore the GAD framework, contributes to effectiveness of agency, but not to transformative agency. Transformative agency can be found through the three dimensions of empowerment, as change in one dimension can lead to changes in others. Not changes in the immediate inequalities are therefore of importance, but institutional transformation is necessary to initiate change in the long-term. To ensure this institutional change, there should be a movement from individual to collective agency, from private negotiations to public action, and from the informal level to level where power is exercised.[76] In this research, I make use of the two conceptualizations of empowerment, according to the third MDG and as described by Kabeer, to combine effectiveness of agency and transformative agency. To ensure sustainable change for women, not only the effectiveness of agency should be taken in account, but transformative agency as well.

Outcomes of the Research

To answer my research question, I first investigated what kind of organizations or programs have been set up for women's empowerment since the arrival of Syrian refugees in 2011. I interviewed six organizations, all related to women and empowerment, located and operating in Lebanon: ABAAD, Amel Association, Basmeh & Zeitooneh, Chabibeh, Hayya Bina & Relief and Reconciliation for Syria. All these organizations were funded by Western international donors. Besides the organizations, I interviewed 16 Syrian refugee women enrolled in one of the programs.

According to the organizations and Syrian refugee women I interviewed for this research, it is possible to state that the rise in the existence of aid organizations assisted in the empowerment of Syrian refugee women in Lebanon. However, in which way empowered is questionable. According to my findings, Syrian refugee women make more effective use of their agency, with help of the programs offered by the organizations. Different programs increase their chance to find a job and they become more educated. The women have therefore a greater efficiency in carrying out their

[75] *Easterly, W. (2007). The White Man's burden: Why the West's efforts to aid the rest have done so much ill and so little good. New York: Oxford University Press.*
[76] *Ibid*

desired responsibilities and activities.[77] On the individual level, Syrian refugee women improve their situation with the programs offered by the organizations set up since their arrival. Nevertheless, I measured as well to what extent Syrian women can challenge the restrictive aspects of their responsibilities around them, in order to change them, the so called transformative agency.[78] I discovered this differs per program. The program Teach Women English set up by Hayya Bina and Chabibeh, which runs already for over 8 years, shows some aspects of transformative agency. Women enrolled in the program became more confident. They took their daughters to the program and some Syrian women met for the first time Lebanese women. However, I didn't find any proof of institutional change, which is necessary in order to make lasting improvements for women. At Amel Association, women invite other refugee women to the program as well, so they make each other aware of possibilities. At the organizations Basmeh & Zeitooneh and Relief and Reconciliation for Syria I didn't found any proof of transformative agency. Solely the program by ABAAD showed characteristics of transformative agency. Once a refugee woman goes to the one of the women center, she decides to make a strategic life choice as she decides to leave her abusive husband. Besides, ABAAD raises more awareness of women's rights on the political level. However, this concerns women in general, not specific Syrian women.

My conclusion is that Syrian refugee women become more empowered in Lebanon with help of programs offered by organizations set up since their arrival, conform the goal of third Millennium Development Goal whereby the effectiveness of agency is taken into account. Transformative agency is to a lesser extent detectable. I believe this is the result of the funding of the programs. All the programs were funded by Western donors. Goals should be measurable, as results are needed in order to continue the funding. It is therefore no surprise that empowerment that fits in the GAD framework is found in this research. It is measurable how many women is part of a program such as Teach Women English, or how many women are learning a skill in the program of Amel. As Ms. Tabet of Chabibeh told me 'It is a pity that a huge amount of money is spent on programs that are oriented on a specific amount of numbers. When such a program ends, you don't see any sustainability. If the programs focused more on what has been happening on the ground, it would be more successful. When it is all about the numbers, you can't make real achievements. It is better to

[77] *Kabeer, N. (2005). Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A Critical Analysis of the Third Millennium Development Goal. Gender and Development, 13 (1), 13-24*
[78] *Ibid*

work with a small amount of people with a clear idea of what you are going to do, than instead reaching a lot of people by only focusing on numbers with a program that doesn't work. When the programs are being designed, and if they are targeting quantity, you are going to lose the quality. But if you are more about the quality of the program and its outcome, you are not after this number, you can make more results.'

To ensure lasting improvement in the areas of women's empowerment, the focus should not solely be on the goals that have been set up by the donors, but rather on the extent to which women are being able to make strategic life choices. Therefore political awareness is needed. Organizations and their donors should not solely focus on the measurable outcome of a program; they should take the sustainability of the program into account as well. To ensure lasting improvement, the focus should therefore be on programs that make a real difference for refugee women. The focus must shift from measurable goals to lasting outcomes. However, this is hard to achieve as Western donors need to have proof that their funding is being used in the 'right' way. This research aims to show that measurable output doesn't always have the intended effect. Donors, especially in the Western world, should become more aware of this outcome in order to make real changes.

Shortcomings of the Research

For this research, I have interviewed six organizations and 16 Syrian refugee women enrolled in the program Teach Women English. I didn't interview other Syrian women who were involved in others programs, so I needed to rely on the comments made by the persons of the organizations. As this research concerns Syrian women and their empowerment, it is a shortcoming I couldn't interview more Syrian refugees in Lebanon. My findings are based on the remarks of only 16 women, but for future research more Syrian refugee women should be interviewed. The same applies to the amount of organizations. Six organizations were sufficient for this study; however more organizations should be taken into account in order to make future proclamations.

Furthermore it is a shortcoming that for this research no organization was interviewed that focused on political participation. One of the indicators of the third MDG is to increase the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments, therefore I should have interviewed an organizations affiliated with this goal. However I didn't find any organization that had as aim to improve the

amount of women in the Syrian parliament. Besides, this would be rather impossible as Syria is in a civil war right now. ABAAD works with governments in order to advocate women's rights, however in that interview I focused on the program for Syrian women, which concerned protection against gender based violence. Also, this organization focuses on women's right in general, not particular on those of Syrian women.

What should be taken into account is that empowerment as described in the GAD framework can become transformative as well. What for now is seen as making effective use of a person's agency, can become in the long run transformative. For example, if a refugee woman has to work in Lebanon, she might continue to do so once back in Syria. This can become an example for her daughter, who wants to work as well. Besides, Lebanon can become a lesson for Syrian women. Hopefully near soon, as the Syrian population return to their own country, they can take Lebanon with them as an example for women's rights. Although Lebanon is far from perfect for women, it might create a starting point for Syrian women on which they will build their own country. Making effective use of one's agency can become in the long of transformative nature.

Conclusion

As described in the context, women play a significant role in the state-building process of a state. It is therefore of major importance that Syrian refugee women become more empowered during their time in Lebanon, as this will increase their possibilities to make a lasting change for future generations once they are back in Syria. According to Mr. Atassi, Program Officer of the National Agenda for the Future of Syria at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA) 'women will have a huge role in the rebuilding [of Syria], first in reconciliation as traditionally women always had a big role in that. Women need to step up because there has been such a devastating war with lots of men dying or leaving.' The role that international aid donors play in the outcome of programs should therefore be further investigated. As it turns out that donors might restrain the empowerment process which are transformative of nature and therefore prevent empowerment in the long run from happening, it is necessary that more research should be done. There could be other reasons for this outcome as well, for example the program was in the first placed wrong implemented or the organizations lack adequate resources to ensure lasting change. However I believe that donors play a significant role in the outcome of a program, therefore their influence should be further investigated. The over-simplification of measurable goals

denies the complex process of women's empowerment. For the sake of Syrian women in Lebanon and women from all over the world, further research should be done concerning empowerment and the role international aid donors play in the programs that facilitates this process.

Hysterical Deleuze: From Autoscopia to Becoming Woman

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Abstract

This article attempts to highlight the convergence between the terms which become more than the meaning assigned to them, and the body of a woman manifesting the creative process of hysteria. This is undertaken through addressing Gilles Deleuze's artistic conceptualization of a body without organs. The terms used in the textual and patriarchal form of political articulation offer a limited set of sensations which could be overcome in a counter measure of resistant sensations which do not apply a restraining 'logic' of recognition.

After a discussion of concepts such as what constitutes a *being-woman* and a *becoming-woman*, the article locates hysteria as an element stranger to the being – one capable of obstructing the common sense approach and the organization of different bodies: the physical body, the body of relationship and the body of ideas. The paper concludes with a new Deleuzian meaning for hysteria which challenges the male-centered dogmatism and unmasks the difference art can make in a pure critique of politics.

Keywords: Hysteria, Becoming, Vision, Poststructuralist, Enlightenment

Introduction

The expression of political theory has seldom been limited to one form. The political expression of resistance has taken even more forms due to the nature of its opposition to the dominant political theory and its expression. In the tradition of *post-structuralists* and third-wave feminists, a certain reiteration of philosophical and artistic forms of resistant political theory surfaced; the hegemony of political sensations resulting from the patriarchal and textual form of political articulation limit understanding and not the least understanding of the political. In Deleuze's book Francis *Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, he expands on unorganized sensations outside the order of 'logic'. The significance of the title refers to the meaning assigned by Deleuze when 'logic' stands for an institutionalized system that reduces thought by restricting recognition (Deleuze and Guattari, 1991, Chapter 6) and

'sensation' is the pre- individual, impersonal plane of encounters that is also opposite to any representation. It is an idiosyncrasy of Deleuze's thinking to use terms outside their textual meanings so as to manifest the creative process embedded in between the terms which become more than the meaning assigned to them. Much like Francis Bacon does in creating his painting, Deleuze creates his concepts about these paintings. In this context of the critical political theory, emerges the concept of 'hysteria.'

For matters of practicality, the working definition of *Deleuzian Hysteria* for this essay is the attempt to escape from one's own body that is experienced as a trap (Roffe, 2005, 122). This essay seeks to discuss Deleuze's artistic conceptualization of hysteria in terms of being-woman and becoming woman. It will be concluded that through hysteria the fracturing vectors of becoming-woman can undermine the habitual modes of being-woman and seeing-woman.

Seeing and Being Woman

Hysteria was first described as a malady by Hippocrates. As its name suggests, it is the wandering of the organ inside the body. It was thought to be the result of an unmarried patient in need of sexual intercourse and 'the husband would keep that wandering womb where it belonged.'[79] Women affected by hysteria had been accused of the 'hyster' of the womb in the woman's body entailing organ athleticism and a *movement* that renders the behavior of women unexpected and outside the outlined social norms. The Freudian connotation also contributed to considering hysteria pathology. Hysteria for Deleuze however takes on a different meaning. It is a name for the friction between the body itself and the organizations that it undergoes socially and politically and the most malleable body is the hysterical one (Roffe, 2005, 123). In the light of this malleability, Deleuze ascribes to a body that is not structured by the boundaries of set organs.

It is not the organs of a body, per se, that limit the potential but rather the sum of organs that confer a certain organism, a fixed organization of organs, and relevant thresholds. For Deleuze, there is a sense of a hysterical body that goes beyond the organs and beyond the constitutive organism. He

[79] *See Copelia Kahn' article The Absent Mother in King Lear, where traces the history of Hysteria and explores the emphasis on circles as representations of the womb in the literary medium of Shakespeare's King Lear. She explains that the repetitive referrals to zones that encompass the motherly nature of things signify King Lear's repressed identification with the mother figure.*

refers to what Antonin Artaud (1977) coined 'a body without organs' (pp. 38-39). By the body without organs, Deleuze invokes the possibility of going beyond the organism to rid it of its biological limits, not the least of its sex (and ultimately gender). It is important to ground the Deleuzian concept of an organization that overcomes the biological patterns of organization. Organizational Studies suggest a dualism of organization (man-made) versus disorganization (nature-made like hurricanes) while Deleuze explains organization that is alien to the anthropocentric framework (Curtis 121). A vehement reader of Baruch von Spinoza, Deleuze indeed does not ascribe to the conventional distinction of what is natural and what is cultural but to a creative way in understanding the assemblages of both. In understanding the woman via a spatial pattern of encounters, there is a necessary process of organization, disorganization, and reorganization of the woman and ultimately a hysterical woman, a becoming-woman.

The concept of going beyond the organs and emerging with multiplicities in order to overlook the specific differences, however, did have its critics. The drawback of totality in philosophy had led to more than one political regime (Nazism and Stalinism) that categorized people and defined the differences among different people. Deleuze and his contemporaries' philosophy challenged this problem of totality (Clayton, 2013, 5) and advanced concepts more in line with pluralism, *perspectivism*, difference and multiplicity. Despite the advantages of advancing pluralism for Feminist Studies, this approach of going beyond the woman does away with the subject of the woman and thus poses the risk of women not realising that their subject had been subjected to the other sex in the first place (Colebrook, 2000). For certain feminists, most notably Luce Irigaray, there lies in the indiscernibility of the phases of multiplicity, the danger of the woman becoming a threshold that man passes without noticing (Shukin, 2000, 154).

Furthermore, Deleuze discusses hysteria in terms of its artistic implications on the transient organs in painting through the phenomenon of "autoscopia" (Deleuze 35). First, painting the organs requires a concrete manifestation of sensation of the body without organs as opposed to a body without organs felt only beneath the body. Second, the process of autoscopia[80] entails an encounter that would allow the individual to *see* itself from another's point of view (as its name suggests). For other art historians, though, autoscopia empowers others over the being of the woman due to social

[80] *Originates from the Greek language as "self" for "auto" and "watcher" for "scopia."*

factors. For instance, the being of a woman applying autoscopia on herself may see herself naked even if it were clothed (refer to Figure 1 below).

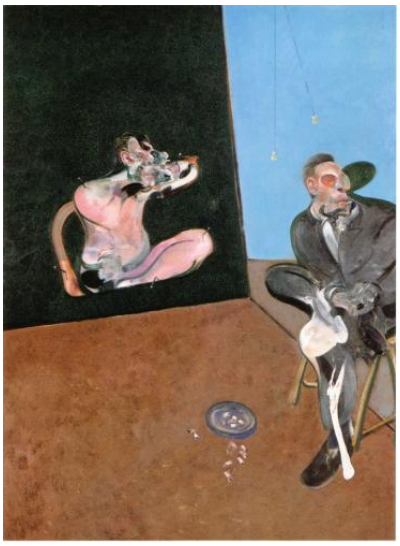

Figure 1[81]

The phenomenon of 'autoscopia' is further elucidated in the book based on the BBC series *Ways of Seeing* by John Berger. Berger explains how the presence of a woman in her social surrounding suggests "what can or cannot be done to her" (5). The male gaze replaces the woman's own sense of being. Ultimately, the woman internalizes the sight of men and "her being is split into two: the surveyed and the surveyor" (5). Sight becomes the leading sense that results from the woman's presence and social standing and determines her being. The eye in Berger's understanding submits to the organism and the hegemony of representation and norms. As for the gaze, it affects the *being* of the feminine albeit not the *becoming*.

The being is defined by the Man who is "the self-evident ground of a politics of identity and recognition" (Colebrook 2000: 2) and delineates itself in the image of how a man *is*. For Deleuze, the phase of being is a temporary one and indeed comes from a fixed organ. Being in terms of the body without organs is an organism attempting to organize the chaos of sensations. The being of woman had occupied the second wave feminists for several years before being was deconstructed

[81] *Bacon F, 'Two Studies for a Portrait of George Dyer' (Oil on canvas at Sara Hilden Tampere Collection 1968).*

and there was space for Deleuze to integrate his concept of becoming-woman as part of the third-wave of feminism (Colebrook 2000).

A rich understanding of the being takes precedence in the works of the Enlightenment philosophers. For them even the terminology implies a certain light and the eye as the guiding organ for the sense of sight. Indeed in "Seeing with the hands': Blindness, touch and the Enlightenment spatial imaginary," Mark Paterson explores the centrality of the psychology and neuropsychology of blindness through the discourse of several Enlightenment age philosophers like Locke, Berkeley, Descartes, and Diderot. Even more so, sight and the ways of being open the space for the *image of thought* which is a notion of being that is guided by what everybody sees and what 'everybody knows.' The rest of this section holds a discussion on this image of thought and the being perhaps on the expense of magnifying the views of Immanuel Kant, one of the prominent thinkers of the Enlightenment era.

Kant's conceptualization of a pure being does not only rest on the *cogito ergo* (I think) identity provided by Descartes, but also assumes and presupposes a common sense. Common sense, as opposed to good sense, is grounded in the norm by virtue of the pure self and in how representation of reason is. This common sense thus gives rise to an empirical being that embodies all its presuppositions and reiterates the image of thought (Deleuze 1968, 129). So despite claiming a "philosophical difference" by wiping away and starting anew from the one pure self, Kant effectively re-engenders an image of truth by claiming the same subject and claiming the existence of thought (131). Hence, the critique is surreptitiously reinvested with the very concepts ("I", "think," "am") that Kant seeks to resist.

The Cogito is also the unity of faculties (perception, understanding, imagination, recognition) and it relies on this synthesis to recognize an object in terms of the common sense (Deleuze, 1968, 133). The cogito is thus the one who makes sense of everything. Deleuze ponders the effectiveness of the Kantian attempt to assemble in the Cogito more than one image. The Cogito synthesizes a surrogate God, an image of knowledge, an image of faith and image of morality (137).

Sense hence submits to an order of the sensations and a hegemony that sets a threshold to the encounters. Deleuze (1968) delineates the difference between the dogmatism of the thought and the

encounters of learning. The Image of Thought applies a common sense that makes the subject a being and as essential conjunction for the syntheses of the faculties of understanding whether in quality, quantity, relation, or modality (Kant, 1790). Hysteria in this context would constitute an element stranger to the being and part of an external body of causes obstructing thought. The Image of Thought recognizes an "error" when thought takes on an erroneous path (Deleuze, 1968, 148). A submission to the common sense and its hegemonic Image can indeed transfer hysteria to an error of the transcendental being; hysteria becomes the transcendental problem. The manifestation of the being in painting thus takes on a more common sense approach that could be said to prejudge a fixed organ, a non-myopic eye that will see what the social structures confer. This era allows a certain organism or organization of organs to dominate. One's senses are disciplined by the external apparatus of the social structures and the image of sensible women arises.

Becoming Woman and Hysteria

Becoming is the concept of considering the man not to be the ground representation of everything. Hence the Deleuzo-Guattarian (1987) confirmation that there can be no 'becoming man" (322) only a becoming that starts with woman. Considering the man as the being upon which all else is referenced, the woman becomes the "special introductory power" (277) and the key to beginning the inverse of the system. It is important to note however that the aim of this essay is not a normative reading of the hysterical woman but to expand on bodies that can be organised differently and these bodies include the physical body, body of relationship, and body of ideas surrounding women.

In a distinction between the body without organs and the organism (that is, the organization of the organs) Bacon paints heads without definite faces and figures without defined bodies. The organism calls for the final being with definite organs- an outlined mouth, certain shape of teeth- whereby the nose and mouth are not sealed and no sporadic rectums open in the head. The body without organs, however, constitutes most importantly a "temporary and provisional presence of definite organs" (Deleuze, 1981, 34) that is the organs are fixed for a certain *time* only. Finally, the transferral from an organism to a body without organs requires a force- an encounter -that transports the organ to another level. At this point sensation emerges and implies another domain. For Deleuze, sensation is not the most spontaneous perception that we already possess and that manifests itself through

perception. Sensation is rather the end result of a very specific artistic procedure. In fact, the aesthetic judgment of whether one artwork is indeed a piece of art or not, is by whether it overrides the subject/object duality and infuses the audience. In a sense, the spectator of art is no longer looking at the external object and judging it objectively or subjectively. The aesthetic artwork for Deleuze is constitutive of the spectator. An example to the Deleuzian aesthetic judgment is the moment when cavemen started creating bright-colored and impractical knives that could not necessarily assist them in hunting the next prey. The image of thought had not been established when the cave-dwellers started thinking of creating an object that is not practical, neither did they refer to a passive being that contemplated objects around them. Yet they created a knife neutral to their subject and the stone material object they were using. And most importantly, the artistic knife realizes a sensation because it realizes an encounter with art, and perhaps the first art.

Figure 2[82]

Deleuze in creating his ideas focuses on the ontological impact of the determined organism and the temporary organs that are worked upon by time. Unlike Kant, Deleuze exculpates the eye from being a fixed organ (Deleuze, 1981) and anoints it the transient organ "that sees the body without organs as a pure presence" through painting (37). The presence and its social implications thus become a result of the sight as opposed to the sight determining the being of the woman.

For the becoming-woman, there is no fixed being and there is no subject. A becoming-woman is constitutive of the experience when it allows herself to have encounters. In the case of a becoming-woman, the subject becomes constitutive in the immanent process as opposed to the subject synthesizing the sensory information through a certain innate feature as Kant suggests. The bridge

[82] *Set of knives from the Nottingham Archaeological Collection*

between the sensory data and making the data meaningful is the 'making sense' moment. Making sense, however, is not referenced to a common sense and a dogmatic image despite the notion that making sense is time-based. The meaning of time for Deleuze is not connecting the past present and future tenses. Rather, time constitutes the subject and the potentiality of the impersonal event at once (Colebrook, 2010, 24).

The event is sense itself (Deleuze, 1990, 22) and it is exonerated from the state of affairs because it does not dwell in the past or in the future, it is rather present in the ever mobile present as it manifests itself in the becoming (151). The event is a rupture in time so that the hysterical body seizes to remain in a certain tense (past present future) and is transported to another plateau. The concept of an external time different from the lived experience, hence, is only a representation of the common sense notion of Kant.

In the sense that, it is in the *memory* (first synthesis), *habit* (second synthesis), and *the new* (third synthesis) that the becoming-woman is constantly making sense of the encounters. Since the present tense is the becoming of the past and the future, it will suffice to expand mainly on this first synthesis while mentioning succinctly the features of the past and future or the second and third syntheses respectively.

First, habit is the present of the body with all it constitutes as part of the body. The chronobiology, or the body clock, and the mental balance are an example of how the body is constantly becoming although it can easily be disturbed. If a body gets jetlagged, its biological clock is affected. Similarly, mental fatigue leads to a break in the habit and affects the encounters that may not be happening for the becoming-woman. Kant, however, attributes such a synthesis to the passivity of the pure self that could only receive the external sensations and could only *know* them once the being synthesizes them. In fact, time in addition to space exist only because a subject experiences and organizes them in an organism. Deleuze criticizes the organism that creates two genders.

As for the other syntheses, the Deleuzian approach consider the past as no-longer existent but rather existent in the representation it has made. The category of genetic heredity is a past synthesis while the future tense is the difference that keeps starting anew. Differential relations occupy a great deal of Deleuze's writings and a major theme of his book *Difference and Repetition* to say the least. The

making sense moment in the future tense is not based on a fixed identity but on an inherent difference. There is more than one subject making sense of a certain individual and so there is more than one identity, there is a multiplicity and a different subject that emerges every time.

In contrast to Kant's potent subjectivity, Deleuze investigates the "fractured self" in relation to the Kantian distinction between the transcendental subject and the empirical ego (1968: Chapter 3). The transcendental ego is what emerges from the moral law and does not pertain to empirical experience like the idea of god for instance. The Deleuzian criticism for such an idea is not because it creates a gap between the "what we experience" and "what it really is" but because it creates a gap "within the phenomenal realms" (Clayton, 2001, 63).

Finally the Deleuzian link between making sense and the subject is one where the subject is not the reason that there is common sense as exposed in the Kantian thinking. Rather, it is the senses and objects that constitute the subject-- in its fractured sense.

Conclusion

As the title suggests, the transformation of hysteria from autoscopia to becoming-woman can be traced through the understanding of the being-woman. While the autoscopia of John Berger is based on the social standing of the woman, the autoscopia linked to hysteria (in Chapter 7 of The Logic of Sensation) constitutes the becoming-woman. In the principle of multiplicity in the Deleuzian body, the ways of seeing touch upon the ontological meaning for women instead of trapping them in their own bodies. The Kantian being or identity mirrors an image of thought that engenders the subject/object duality into all the experiences of the sensory date, not the least of which is the art. Deleuze, engages with this claim to attest for an aesthetic judgement that constitutes the subject judging it whereby the judge and the judged are the both the encounter in the present tense. At any tense in time, to make sense is to be truly creative and one has to get rid of the image of thought and to bring into being a thought without an image (Deleuze, 1968, 147).In deconstructing the being and allowing the woman to thrive in the hysterical twilight of becoming-woman, Deleuze confers not only a new meaning for hysteria but also a more fluid body of women without organs. This multiplicity of hysterical women is always: challenging the gaze of men, transgressing their own biological boundaries, un-thinking the image of thought and disorganizing the body of the woman. More importantly, a body of resistance to the male-centered dogmatism is actualized and hysterical

Deleuze unmasks the difference that art makes, and that is an expression of pure critique (MacKenzie, 2004).

Through the Eyes of a Woman: The Gender Extremism Nexus

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Abstract

Conventional IR theories and strategies developed in the field of Security Studies fall short when being utilized to explain the phenomenon of terrorism. They are based on assumptions and concepts that are outdated and do not depict the world as it is today. Wars no longer begin with a declaration of war and are then settled by two state armies on a battlefield. The world has changed, and so did the conflicts. New disciplines as Critical Security Studies try to accommodate those changes by developing existing concepts and theories and producing new ones. The general objective of the article is to offer an alternative explanation for the roots of terrorism and an approach for how it can be prevented. This will be done by establishing a link between the fields of violent extremism and gender. I will explore the relationship between gender inequalities in a society and the latter's potential for radicalization resulting in the birth of extremist groups.

While the nexus between gender and conflict has been examined throughout the last decades and led to the inclusion of more gender sensitivity in the fields of conflict analysis, peacebuilding and transitional justice processes and policies, the linkage between gender and terrorism has yet to be further studied. Accordingly, concepts and methods from Gender Studies, Security Studies and (Counter) Terrorism Studies are borrowed and brought together under the theoretical umbrella of Feminist Security Studies. Feminist methods and theories are applied to the field of peace and security. The result of adopting gendered amplified concepts is the exposure of a net of power structures, linked systems of oppression and interconnected levels of violence.

My line of argumentation is that socially constructed differences between women and men (gender inequality) manifest in patriarchal power structures, so-called male-dominance hierarchies. The latter foster discrimination and violence against women (and men) through acts of gendered micro aggression. Violent behavior patterns, as they are also adopted and promoted by extremist groups, are reproduced within the family, the peer group and the society through cycles of violence and

enable a culture of violence. This is the breeding ground for violent extremist organizations capitalizing, especially in the context of political terror and violent conflict, on existing grievances.
In conclusion it has been demonstrated how patriarchal structures with severe gender gaps enable the emergence of violent extremism. Vice versa, women empowerment and gender mainstreaming might be efficient strategies for the prevention of violent extremism and conflict.

Keywords: terrorism, violent extremism, patriarchy, Feminist Security Studies, gender inequality

The Gender-Extremism Nexus

When I open my laptop and take a look at the newsfeed, I usually read headlines stating "Syrian president welcomes US troops to fight 'terrorists' in Syria"[83] or "US plans sale of weapons to Nigeria to fight Boko Haram"[84]. I have been closely following the events concerning the spread of terrorism in several regions of the world over the last years. And I am wondering how such groups, committing the most horrific crimes, came into being and how they can be stopped. The thousands of troops deployed and air planes send out, all the weapons delivered and the hundreds of bombs that have been dropped; nothing seems to provide an efficient cure for the violent extremism that has captured our world. Al Qaida has been 'defeated', shortly after ISIS arises. It is not the people that have to be eliminated. It is an underlying system that is giving birth to such radical ideologies and enables extreme violence, and this system has to be destroyed.

Due to decades and even centuries of women's activism and feminists deploying research to depict and analyse the situation of women and girls around the globe, women and women's issues are increasingly recognized by the world. A web of connections surfaced with the common nominator of inequality between men and women commonly resulting in the discrimination of the latter. Women, their situations, roles, experiences and challenges have been related to and analyzed in a wide range of diverse fields, as economics and development, education, health, etc. In the studies of

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[83] Global News (February 10, 2017): Syrian president welcomes US troops to fight 'terrorists' in Syria, URL: https://globalnews.ca/news/3241291/syrian-president-welcomes-us-troops-to-fight-terrorism/0 (accessed: September 25 2017).
[84] NY Times (April 11 2017): U.S. plans sale of warplanes to Nigeria for fighting Boko Haram, URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/11/world/africa/us-warplanes-nigeria-boko-haram.html?mcubz=0 (accessed: September 25 2017).

International Relations (IR) and Security Studies – the last remaining male bastions where male practitioners and masculinist constructs form bedrock of the supposedly anarchical relations between states – and in the more recently developed subfield of (Counter)Terrorism Studies, women have until lately widely been neglected; Neglected in terms of female participation in decision making and policy developing processes as well as in terms of women's issues, experiences and challenges being part of the research agenda.[85] The quantity of research in Terrorism Studies accelerated since the 09/11 attacks. However, the two dimensions of women and terrorism rarely have been set in relation to one another. In this article I will link the macro topics of violent extremism and gender under the theoretical umbrella of Female Security Studies. I argue that discrimination and violence against women and girls trigger a range of negative short- and long-term consequences as the repetition of violent behavior in so-called cycles of violence. As a consequence, a set of push and pull factors enhance the radicalization of (parts of) a society leading to a toxic environment of violence, out of which extremist groups likely emerge.[86]

The Theoretical Framework of Feminist Security Studies

"The questions of women and peace and the meaning of peace for women cannot be separated from the broader question of relationships between women and men in all spheres of life and in the family."[87]

The academic discipline that is most ambitious to examine, uncover and eliminate patriarchal structures in the field of peace and security is *Feminist Security Studies (FSS).* It is a branch of *Critical Security Studies (CSS)* and an outcome of the waves of feminisms with the aim to explain and counter the disproportional suffering of women and girls in violent conflicts across the world. FSS builds up on common CSS concepts – human security, positive peace, deep conflict prevention – and combines them with feminist methodologies and theories. To counter the insufficiencies of conventional IR theories FSS challenges dominant patriarchal concepts to envision more adequate ones. The practice of (self-) reflectivity, crucial to feminist thinking, entails the continuous

[85] *DasGupta, S. (2008): Security, Gender and Conflict Prevention: Perceptions from South Asia, in: Banerjee, P. (ed.): Women in Peace Politics, New Delhi: SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd, 27.*

[86] *The term terrorism resonates with an undeniable historical legacy due to its usage as political label for opponents. Therefore the term violent extremism might be less historically charged and more objective, and will be used in the context of this article instead.*

[87] *United Nations (1985): Report on the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Paragraph 27, Nairobi, 15th-26th July 1985.*

scrutinizing, re-thinking and re-evaluating of already existing claims and assumptions based on the current state of knowledge. It thus enables a high level of flexibility and timeliness of feminist concepts.[88]

What does that mean in detail? From a feminist perspective the concept of security mirrors that of human security and replaces the nation state's security as the central concern with "standards of living and freedom from various types of subordinations"[89]. A feminist definition of peace includes "women's achievement of control over their lives" and "not just the absence of armed and gender conflict […] but also the absence of poverty and the conditions which recreate it"[90], states Cynthia Enloe, one of today's leading feminist theorists.

Such an understanding of (positive) peace with human security as the underlying paradigm widens the focus of peace building approaches towards a broader area for (state) interventions.[91] "Violent conflicts appear to be cataclysmic events, but they are in fact the result of processes that have developed over time. They are rooted in some way in the interactions between identities of class, ethnicity and sometimes religion […] and structural socio-economic factors."[92] As a result "[c]onflict analysis needs to understand how historically rooted injustices, exclusions, inequalities, and rivalries that exist in all societies turn into internal war in some."[76] Strategies to prevent conflict and violent extremism changed accordingly. Structural causes were addressed through the concepts of early warning and response. The main instruments within the newly developed framework of so-called "deep prevention" are preventive diplomacy and structural prevention.[93] With this shift in the

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[88] Ibid: 18.

[89] DasGupta, S. (2008): Security, Gender and Conflict Prevention: Perceptions from South Asia, in: Banerjee, P. (ed.): Women in Peace Politics, New Delhi: SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd, 29.

[90] Enloe, Cynthia cited in: Kelly (2000): Wars against women: sexual violence, sexual politics and the militarised state, in: Jacobs, S. Jacobson, R. and Marchbank, J. (eds.) (2000): States of Conflict: Gender, Violence and Resistance, London: Zed Books, 48.

[91] Accordingly, feminist theorists used three key strategies to redefine traditional concepts: Broadening, by including more types of threats, deepening, by including referents and agents beyond nation states, and opening, by questioning existing concepts and adding feminist narratives, the latter. Wibben, A. T. R. (2011): Feminist Security Studies: A Narrative Approach: 5-7. Pankhurst, D. (2004): The 'sex war' and other wars: towards a feminist approach to peace building, in: Afshar, H. and Eade, D. (eds.): Development, Women, and War: Feminist Perspectives, Oxford: Oxfam GB, 11- 12.

[92] Pearce, J. (2004): Sustainable peace building in the South: experiences from Latin America, in: Afshar, H. and Eade, D. (eds.): Development, Women, and War: Feminist Perspectives, Oxford: Oxfam GB, 238.

[93] DasGupta, S. (2008): Security, Gender and Conflict Prevention: Perceptions from South Asia, in Banerjee, P. (ed.): Women in Peace Politics. New Dehli: SAGE Publications Pvt Ltd, 23.

dominant security narrative and the according changes in the focus of conflict analysis and preventive and peacebuilding practices and policies the livelihood of the individual, and therewith also the livelihood of women, occupy a central position.

> *"Gender power is seen to shape the dynamics of every site of human interaction, from the household to the international arena."*[94]

While the nexus between gender and conflict has been examined throughout the last decades more closely and led to the rise of gender sensitivity in the fields of conflict analysis, peacebuilding and transitional justice processes, the linkage between gender and terrorism has yet to be further investigated. Arjuna Gunawardena states that a terrorist organization's intra-group dynamics mirror a society's everyday life, values, and gender stereotypes.[95] Accordingly, patriarchal societies with traditional gender roles and high levels of gender inequality are expected to give birth to oppressive, male-dominated and conservative groups.

In the following section I will scrutinize the breeding ground for violent extremism as a potential outcome of severe gender inequality within a society. The result of adopting gendered amplified concepts is the exposure of a global network of power structures with overlapping systems of oppression and interconnected levels of different kinds of violence. The power structure based on gender differences leading to male dominance is named patriarchy. Accordingly, I will depict the evolution of existing patriarchal structures and its implications on men's and women's lives, and show how it enables an environment of inequality and violence, the breeding ground for violent extremism.

The Evolution of a Man's World

In order to explain how the contemporary world order and social structures came into existence, numerous and diverse lines of thought can be utilized. From the perspective of evolutionary theory one can argue that throughout the process of natural selection certain (human) behavioural patterns turned out to be more efficient for survival than others.

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[94] *Cockburn, C. (2001): Women Organizing for Change, Zenica: Medica Zenica ug, Infoteka, 15.*
[95] *Gunawardena, A. (2006): Female Black Tigers: A Different Breed of Cat?, in: Schweitzer, Y. (eds.): Female Suicide Bombers: Dying for Equality?, 81-90, Tel Aviv: Institute for National Security Studies.*

> *"[…] men use aggression to try to control women, and particularly to try to control female sexuality, not because men are inherently aggressive and women inherently submissive, but because men find aggression to be a useful political tool in their struggle to dominate and control women and thereby enhance their reproductive opportunities."*[96]

As a consequence, social structures ascribe certain attitudes, behaviors and expectations to each gender. A useful strategy for survival for males was to apply violent, aggressive and sometimes risky behavior aiming at the subordination of others and the accumulation of resources. Feminist researcher Valerie Hudson defines the results of human social structures that are characterized by male dominance as *male dominance hierarchies*. Within the framework of such male dominance hierarchies a group's security is guaranteed by male protection. Conflict between males of one group is reduced and redirected against outsiders. Furthermore, the unification of males to exert more power over other men and over women promotes dominant male behavior and therewith increases gender inequality. Also it has been discovered that there exists a positive correlation between inequalities – and so attended grievances – prevailing in terms of unequal resource distribution among society members, and the persistence and intensification of aggressive behavior exhibited by males.[97]

However, the – biological and socially constructed – differences between the genders not only play out in the direct relation between woman and man. Beyond that, gender gains broader societal relevance if it is put into the context of major institutional and power structures. "The sex with the physical power also dominates the political power, so that when law developed in human societies, men created legal systems that, generally speaking, favored male reproductive success and interests"[98]. That is, why there are so few women among the male heads of states, CEOs, movie directors, et cetera.[99] In compliance with this statement the "Charter of Feminist Principles for African Feminists" by the AFF phrases the following definition of patriarchy, which will be applied here:

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[96] *Hudson, V. M. (2012): Sex and World Peace, New York: Columbia University Press, 59-60.*
[97] *Hudson, V. M. (2012): Sex and World Peace, 85-87.*
[98] *Ibid: 88.*
[99] *The magazine ELLE recently came up with the campaign #morewomen and a video, in which the photoshoped all men out of the pictures. URL: http://www.elle.com/culture/career-politics/a31098/men-photoshopped-out-of-history-video/ (accessed: September 20 2017).*

"Patriarchy is a system of male authority which legitimizes the oppression of women [and other men] through political, social, economic, legal cultural, religious and military institutions. […] Patriarchy varies in time and space, meaning that it changes over time, and varies according to these factors, but is inter-related with and informs relationships of class, race, ethnic, religious, and global-imperialism […]. Patriarchal ideology enables and legitimizes the structuring of every aspect of our lives by establishing the framework within which society defines and views men and women and constructs male supremacy."

It's All About intersectionality: Linking Levels and Types of Violence

As has been shown so far, patriarchy is a net of power structures based on gender inequalities that transcends all spheres of life from the personal to the institutional and societal level. To gain a deeper understanding of how those power structures function I will depict different levels and types of violence.

Johann Galtung can be counted as one of the leading scholars in the study of violence, peace and security. In his concept of the *triangle of violence* or *devil triangle* (see Figure 3) the scholar differentiates between direct physical and psychological violence, structural violence and cultural violence.[100]

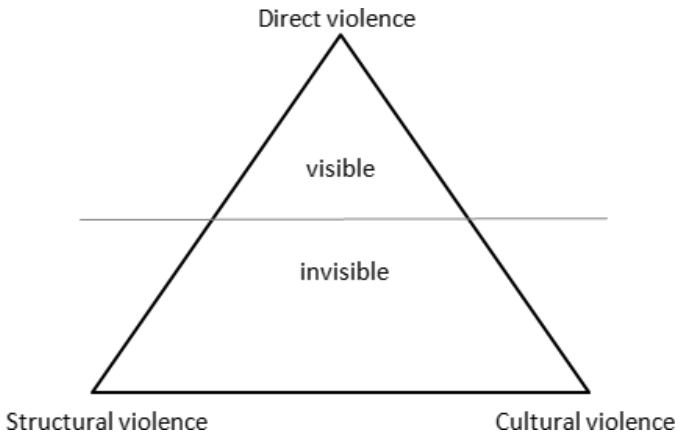

Figure 3: Galtung's triangle of violence

[100] *Positive peace defines Galtung as the freedom from all kinds of oppressions. Negative peace is defined as an absence of violent conflict. Galtung, J. (1969): Violence, Peace, and Peace Research. Journal of Peace Research 6(3), 167-191. Galtung, J. (1990): Cultural Violence. Journal of Peace Research 27(3), 291-294.*

Accordingly, Galtung defines positive peace as the absence of direct physical violence (visible) and indirect structural and cultural violence (invisible).[101] By applying a gender coat to Galtung's categories of violence, they offer a framework to analyse and explain gender-based limitations, discrimination and violence rooted in patriarchal structures. Gendered hierarchies (mostly male dominance hierarchies) can be understood as one of the roots of structural inequality. Therein group identities are influenced by the societal (cultural) context and might, in the case of extreme gendered hierarchies, give rise to patriarchal nationalism and extremism.[102] The feminist Peace Studies scholar Betty Reardon highlights, that "there is a fundamental interrelationship between all forms of violence, and that violence is a major consequence of the imbalance of a male-dominated society."[103] An interesting concept to link levels of violence and to show how individual acts of gender based violence and discrimination transform into the existing patriarchal world system is the concept of *gendered micro aggression* introduced by Valerie Hudson in her book "Sex and World Politics". The idea of gendered micro aggression can be understood as a conceptualization of the feminist slogan *the personal is political!* – And as its adaption to the field of peace and security. Beyond that, the concept also reverses the slogan in *the political is personal!* by establishing a causal relation from the state and society level to the family level.

> *"While each specific act of gendered micro aggression may seem inconsequential to human society, the cumulative impact of millions of acts of micro aggression against women is enormous and […] is one of the taproots of violence at all levels, including the international."*[104]

Hudson explains that discrimination and violence within the household, similarly to a microcosm, mirror such behavioural patterns within the larger society, state institutions and the state apparatus. The latter, vice versa, construct a restrictive framework out of laws, rights, duties, expectations and

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[101] *To give some examples: Killing, repression, and delocalization can be listed as direct violence. Exploitation, penetration, and marginalization are listed as forms of structural violence. Cultural violence is the legitimization of direct and structural violence through their implementation in a cultural context. In this way direct and structural violence are justified and, therewith, normalized within a society.*

[102] *Hudson, V. M. (2012): Sex and World Peace, 107.*

[103] *Reardon, B. (1993): Women and Peace: Feminist Visions of Global Security, Albany: State University of New York Press, 39.*

[104] *Hudson, V. M. (2012): Sex and World Peace, 31.*

regulations transcending all spheres of the individual's everyday life. To illustrate how violent behaviour spreads throughout society, I will employ three approaches that compose a culture of violence.

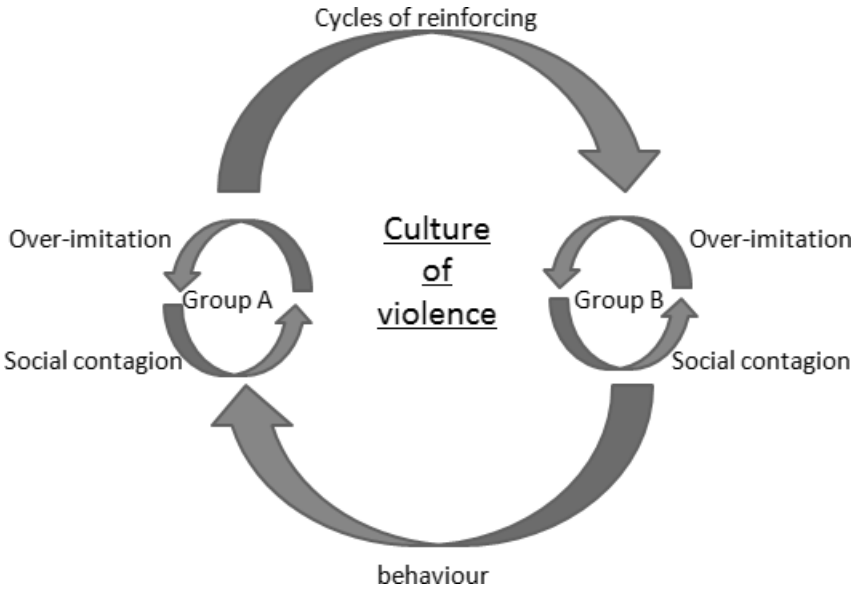

Figure 4: Cycles of violence

Jeffry Fagan, Deanna Wilkinson and Garth Davis' concept of *social contagion* explains the adaption of violent behavior. The idea of social contagion implies that an individual is most likely to imitate the behavior of those persons it is most frequently in contact with.[105] Such a replication of violence has also been analyzed in behavioral studies. Similar to the concept of social contagion, Nielsen and Tomaselli found out, that children from an early age on start to engage in *over-imitation*. Accordingly children re-enact the behavior they observe on others. The consequence of such over-imitation is the adaption of i.e. violent behavior patterns (as inter-parental violence) experienced at home. The children follow their parents' footsteps (on the path of violence). Violence in one generation is replicated and 'inherited' by the next generation. Through so-called *cycles of reinforcing behavior* a violent climate is further perpetuated. Therein, the violent behavior of one group results in the use of even more violence by the counter group. In this way a spiral of violence emerges leading to higher and

[105] *Fagan et al (2007): Social Contagion of Violence, in: Flannery, D. J., Vazsonyi, A. T. and Waldman, I. D. (eds): The Cambridge Handbook of Violent Behavior and Aggression, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 716.*

higher levels of violence and finally establishing a culture of violence.[106] The consequence of the perpetuation of violent behavior between generations, among peers within a group and between opposing groups is the genesis of *vicious cycles of violence* (see Figure 4).

Breaking it Down – From Gender Inequality to Violent Extremism

In my approach I understand gender is not only as a cross-cutting variable transcending all spheres of human life but beyond that as the center from whereon everything else will be interpreted. Accordingly I borrowed methods and approaches from feminist theories and FSS to build up an argument to claim a correlation between gender inequality and terrorism (see Figure 4 for a conceptualization). The starting point of my argument is inequality between the sexes/genders. The differences between women and men are not only biologically but even more importantly socially constructed. *Male dominance hierarchies* are systems of power that are built on and institutionalize those gender differences, and combined, they establish a *global patriarchal system*. These patriarchal structures promote the oppression of women and girls through a multitude of acts of *gendered micro aggression* and of other males through male dominance. Another trait of patriarchal structures is that they not only enhance male dominance but also certain behavior patterns as i.e. male aggression and violence. Aggressive behavior can bring immediate advantages for the perpetrator but, on a broader scale, might also enable a more violent environment for and among the society. The consequences are social exclusion, discrimination, spreading inequality and violence. The *intersectionality of different kinds of oppressions* across all aspects of life increases already existing inequalities and injustice. "[T]he repressiveness and unquestioned dominance… of the male in relation between men and women replicate themselves in broader society, creating a culture of dominance, intolerance, and dependency in social and political life."[107]

Through *cycles of violence* (see Figure 4) such aggressive behavior patterns are reproduced in groups among peers (through *social contagion*), between generations within the families (through *over-imitation*) and between opposing groups (through *reinforcing behavior*). Not solely, but particularly if (a history of) violent conflict and severe political terror build up the context – and thereby aggravating already existing grievances – patriarchal structures and violent behavior patterns are reinforced. A toxic

[106] *Rosen, S. (2005): War and Human Nature, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 89-95.*
[107] *Fish, M. S. (2002): Islam and Authoritarianism. World Politics 55(1), Cambridge University Press, 30.*

environment of spreading violence is created. These factors compose the breeding ground for violent extremism.

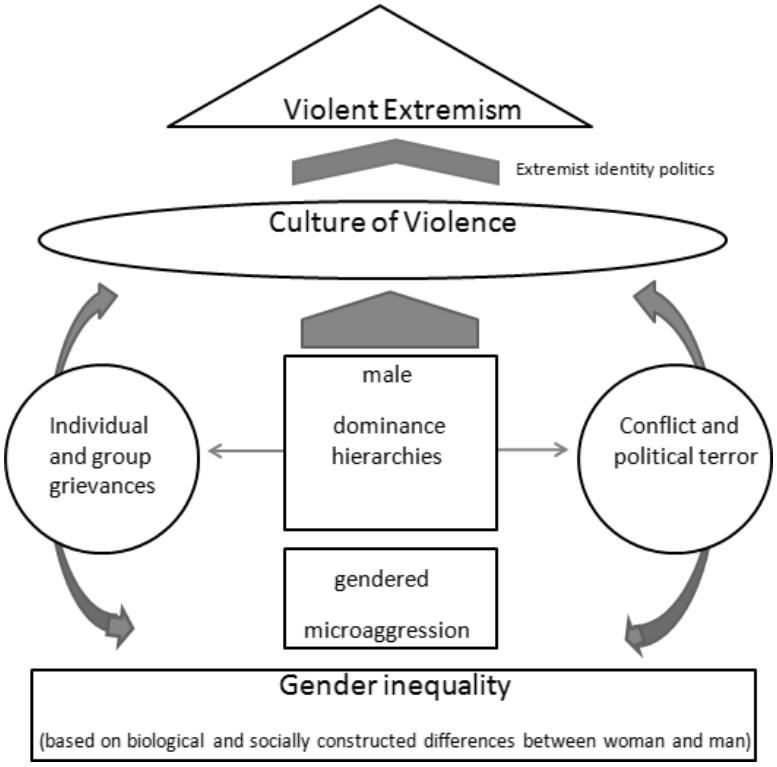

Figure 5: Conceptualization of the correlation between gender inequality and violent extremism

The phenomenon of violent extremism aka terrorism, probably more than most other forms of violent conflict, is closely connected to identity politics as a central pillar for recruitment and to ensure group solidarity and unity. Incorporated and a basic component of the identity politics of those organizations is a clear separation of the world into binaries of "us" and "them". Moreover, the group shapes its members' attitudes and behaviors leading to a further homogenization of the inner group individuals. Through the identification with the group its members adapt, form and propagate a shared identity. Therewith a depersonalization takes place, shifting from diverse individual identities to a fused common identity. Strong group solidarity is enforced through rituals and initiations performed within the group.[108] A central part of violent extremist groups' identity politics constitutes the perception of a certain notion of masculinity. This propagated notion of masculinity includes in most cases traits as extreme aggressiveness, dominance and violent behavior

[108] *Hudson, V. M. (2012): Sex and World Peace, 101-103.*

patterns. Thus, patriarchal values are frequently among the main drivers of excessive militarism, which in the context of extremist groups leads to the consideration that the engagement in violence is a sort of "proof of manhood".[109]

> *"[W]ar of all types creates militarized societies, and in many different cultural contexts militarization is linked to masculinity – not as a socio-biological attribution but rather as 'cultural constructions of manliness'."*[110]

Moreover, terrorist groups capitalize on local injustices and existing grievances of their potential members by offering financial incentives, security, but also a purpose, comradeship and the promise of a resort from all problems. In the context of an existing environment of violence, where grievances are severe and the use of extreme violence as a means to solve problems appears acceptable, violent extremist organizations have an easy game recruiting new members. The parallel occurrence of violent extremist, conflict and political terror prove on the one hand the connectivity and cycles of different kinds of violence perpetrated by different actors on different levels. However, they complicate an analysis of violent extremism, as the causes and effects of the three phenomena are hardly to distinguish from one another.

A Call for More Superwomen

For centuries half of the world population has been excluded in and from research and arenas of decision making. The consequences are inadequate analyses and inefficient peacebuilding approaches. For the women and girls living in contexts of violent extremism and conflict those deficiencies have vital consequences, they have been left alone for too long. Feminist methods and theories as applied in Female Security Studies offer relevant contributions to the academic fields of IR, Security Studies and (Counter) Terrorism Studies. They deploy a gender lens to matters of peace and security whereby women and girls become visible.

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[109] *Peleg, I. (1994): Otherness and Israel's Arab Dilemma, 262, in: Silberstein, L. J. and Cohn, R. L. (eds.): The other in Jewish thought and history – Constructions of Jewish culture and identity, New York University, 258-280.*
[110] *Turshen, M. (1998): Women's war stories, in: Turshen, M. and Twagiramariya, C. (eds.): What women do in wartime: gender and conflict in Africa, New York and London: Zed Books.*

The two dimensions of gender inequality and violent extremism do not only share several parallels but appear, indeed, to be directly correlated. Their most prevalent common denominator is the (pre-) existence of patriarchy. Apparently strong patriarchal structures enable an environment of both gender discrimination and violent extremism. But there is hope. Academics attest that the patriarchal system with a culture of violence is neither inevitable nor unchangeable. According to social role theory, the disparity of the sexes is rooted in physical sex differences but is heavily influenced by social constraints of men's and women's everyday life. John Archer and Sylvana Côté highlight that besides the social context and personal experiences, the relevance of historical ties and the usefulness for survival of any form of behavior are relevant factors for its sustention or suspension.[111] "[In] cultures where violence against women is allowed to persist, male perpetrators are continually committing numerous daily acts of micro aggression and violence."[112] Accordingly, the environment – social, legal, and institutional structures – plays a crucial role for whether violence is accepted and even promoted and rewarded as a behavioral strategy or not. On this background, tapping the full potential available – of women and men – and eliminating patriarchal structures to realize gender equality are promising strategies to prevent violent extremism and conflicts. To adopt gender mainstreaming and empower women and girls does not only profit a society at large, but it might be more efficient than sending soldiers and weapons once violent extremism evolves.

> *"Women are the best drivers of growth, the best hope for reconciliation in conflict and the best buffer against radicalization of youth and the repetition of cycles of violence."*[113]

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[111] *Archer, J. and Côté, S. (2005): Sex Differences in Aggressive Behavior: A Developmental and Evolutionary Perspective, in: Tremblay, R. E., Hartup, W. W. and Archer, J. (eds): Developmental Origins of Aggression, New York: Guilford Press, 425-443.*

[112] *Hudson, V. M. (2012): Sex and World Peace, 99.*

[113] *UN Women (2015): Executive Director calls for ending gender-based violence and women's inclusion in the peace process in South Sudan, URL: http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2015/7/ed-in-south-sudan- peace-process (accessed: July 15, 2016).*

The UN Failure to Resolve the Syrian Crisis: A Contextual Analysis of the Past, Present and Future Mitigation Efforts

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Abstract

On the heels of the Arab Spring revolts, instability rocked the Middle East and North Africa Region alongside a call for reformed governments. This forced one of the most significant situations of 2016: the escalation of the Syrian refugee crisis to monumental proportions. Suddenly, instability in the Middle East was no longer a sovereign problem, as the ramifications were wide-spread. Despite the international impacts of conflict in Syria, as well as the resultant refugee exodus, there has been little to no international intervention or response. This paper critiques the failure of the global community to deem the Syria crisis worthy of intervention: despite the adherence of the Syria crisis to all conditions outlined in the 2005 Outcome Document, including Responsibility to Protect, and the precedent set by the international intervention in Libya, there has been little, if anything, done for Syria. The failure of international law is also discussed, with criticisms presented about the United Nations' inefficacy to mediate world conflicts. It remains to be seen whether the UN is sufficiently equipped to be applicable for the current economic, political, and social reality. The crisis is ongoing, with multiple actors and state interests playing out on a global stage. The question remains: can something be done for Syria?

Keywords: Syrian Crisis, United Nations, Mitigation

Background and Overview

In 2011, the Arab world was rocked by what is considered one of the greatest moments of political revolution in recent history. Coined the Arab Spring, early 2011 witnessed a ripple effect of young people calling for government accountability within the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region. Though extensively criticized by the West (henceforth referring to North America and Western Europe), the Arab Spring infused a sense of nationality into a Region that was weakened

following the early 21st century invasion of Iraq by the United States of America[114]. The Arab Spring took root in Tunisia and grew outwards throughout the MENA Region, resulting in the Syrian conflict, and the toppling of the Tunisian, Egyptian, and Yemeni governments[115]. The context in which the Syrian fallout is based stretches back many decades, beginning in post-World War II as countries around the world struggled to recuperate from the destruction of the war.

Following World War II, European colonial power within the MENA receded, leaving in its place a vacancy in the power structure[116]. Parties such as military coups, single-party states, and authoritarian monarchies were left to vie for power. Though the individuals leading these parties were Arab in origin, the power structure was eerily reminiscent of European powers, and was dubbed 'neo-colonialism'[117]. Thus began a new structure of power that, while rooted in rulers from the Arab Region, perpetuated many of the economic and political difficulties presented by the former, European colonialists within the Region[118].

The Arab Spring was the regional response to the frustration stemming from these political and economic circumstances. The people of Syria lobbied for the removal of Bashar Al-Assad, the dictator whose family had ruled over the Syrian regime for decades preceding the Arab Spring. The West celebrated the call for democracy and secularism within the MENA Region, with states such as the USA going as far as to providing weapons to groups rebelling against the authoritarian regime[119]. Assad refused to abdicate, beginning state-sanctioned violence against his own people. According to the UN, Assad had killed more than 5,000 people by the end of 2011[120]. This conflict gave rise to one of the primary rebel groups within Syria, the Free Syrian Army (FSA), which was supported by the West and the Gulf States against the Russian-backed authoritarian regime[121]. The presence of rebel groups was subsequently compounded by the splintering of the FSA, with defectors joining

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[114] Ruthven, M. (2016) How to Understand ISIS. The New York Review.
[115] Ibid
[116] Hashemi, N. (2013) The Arab Spring Two Years On: Reflections on Dignity, Democracy, and Devotion. Ethics & International Affairs. 27:2:207-221
[117] Ibid
[118] Ibid
[119] Shoumali, A. & Barnard, K. (2015) "U.S. Weaponry Is Turning Syria Into Proxy War With Russia. The New York Times.
[120] CBSNews. (2011) "Syria crackdown had killed 5,000 people, UN says." CBSNews.
[121] Dettmer, J. (2013) "Syria's Rebels: Radicalizations and Division. Middle East Institute.

groups such as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and the al-Qaeda-based group al-Nusra[122]. Though each group was working to achieve the same goal – the removal of Assad from his position – the motivation varied: the FSA's primary goal was to remove Assad, whereas ISIL and al-Nusra were working to establish a coalesced 'Islamic State' throughout the MENA Region[123].

Reports from the region have highlighted the economic and social burden of asylum seekers fleeing violence, including hospitals that are insufficient to deal with the mass influx of injured peoples, and refugee camps that are overfilled[124]. The onus has been placed upon the international community to play a role in the reconciliation within the Syrian state, and the mitigation of the subsequent fallout – economic, political, and social. Many have looked to supranational organizations such as the United Nations (UN) to initiate reconciliatory measures to address not only the Syrian refugee crisis, but the MENA Region instability as a whole. This essay aims to present historical examples of the UN's failing capacity as a supranational mediator in contrast to the UN's commitment and success in social and economic pursuits. It is postulated that in order to improve the MENA region, it is incumbent upon the UN to move beyond military intervention to invest in grassroots, community-focused solutions to terrorism, political instability, and social deconstruction.

Mitigation: A Timeline

In 1998, the Rome Diplomatic Conference for an International Criminal Court concluded with the creation of the Rome Statute, which contained the plan for an International Criminal Court[125]. The ICC was established following the end of the Cold War. The Cold War was an impediment to the international community's commitment to 'Never Again', a phrase borne of the repercussions of the Nuremberg and Tokyo Tribunals[126]. Though the international community, following the aforementioned Tribunals, pushed for these atrocities to never be repeated, the advent of the Cold War brought about a plethora of further crimes. Yugoslavia was held accountable following the Cold War for crimes against humanity[127], but the subsequent Rwandan genocide instigated another

[122] *Ibid.*
[123] *Ibid.*
[124] *AlJazeera. (2016) "Turkey clinic 'running out of prosthetics' for Syrians." AlJazeera.*
[125] *Scharf, M.P. (1998) Results of the Rome Conference for an International Criminal Court. InSights. 3:10*
[126] *Ibid*
[127] *Ibid*

visceral reaction to the international community's complacency and inaction in the face of crimes against humanity[128]. As a result, the international push for the establishment of an ICC was approved, and the Rome Statute came into force on July 1, 2002[129]. The ICC was created in close association with the UN and is considered the international legal body[130]. The ICC has jurisdiction against states in four main areas: genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes of aggression[131]. States that are found guilty of perpetrating any of these crimes will be held accountable by the ICC, which can pass judgement for retributive action against the state.

Though the ICC is in tandem with the UN's intent of creating a supranational authority to regulate and mediate international relations, many concerns have been raised about the ICC's efficacy. One such criticism is the ambiguity of definitions laid out by the ICC with respect to genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes of aggression. The vagueness of these concepts has not created a solid basis on which persecutions can be carried out against perpetrator states. For example, "extermination," under the definition of crimes against humanity, is defined as *"[…] the intentional infliction of conditions of life […] calculated to bring about the destruction of part of a population […]"*[132]. How can these intentions, however, be proved? Situations such as warfare are multi-faceted – for example, in the case of Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory, the free movement of Palestinians has been significantly restricted by Israeli authorities[133]. This has led to cascading effects, including the inaccessibility of sufficient medical treatment by Palestinians who are unable to move freely to hospitals from their territory[134].

Under the ICC's definition of "extermination," this blockade of access to medication could be understood to be an "intentional infliction of conditions of life." However, this has been justified by Israeli officials as a method through which Palestinian terrorists are controlled, and no punitive action has been launched against the Israeli government. The ambiguity associated with the definitions outlined within the Rome Statute, including the methods by which justifications can be used to rationalize either side of a conflict, has resulted in general stasis when holding states

[128] *Ibid*
[129] *United Nations. (1998) Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. United Nations.*
[130] *Ibid*
[131] *Ibid*
[132] *Ibid*
[133] *B'Tselem. (2011) Infringement of the Right to Medical Treatment. B'Tselem.*
[134] *Ibid*

accountable for their actions. This will continue to provide a challenge for the ICC's work regarding Syria.

Where Does Civil Society Fit?

Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria have charged Syria with state-sanctioned war crimes and crimes against humanity[135]. As a result, the ICC does have jurisdiction within Syria and, according to the Rome Statute, should initiate punitive action against the Syrian government. However, the ICC's general inaction thus far has not garnered international optimism on the efficacy of the ICC to hold Syria accountable. This is consistent with the ICC's track record of mitigating or resolving international conflict. One glaring example is that of the US invasion of Iraq – though ruled as illegal infringement on the sovereignty of another country and the perpetration of war crimes by the US, the ICC has not thus far held the US accountable[136]. This inaction in the face of transgressions of justice is an example of the ICC's – and by extension, the UN's – inability to successfully hold states accountable that have committed one of the egregious crimes outlined by the Rome Statute. It is justified to say, then, that the international community should not expect a substantially different outcome regarding Syria's crimes, despite the ICC having jurisdiction in Syria.

In addition, the initial support of the ICC by the international community is problematic, specifically in reference to the US vote against the Rome Statute[137]. Historically, the lack of US support has been associated with the failure of a supranational organization or initiative; the League of Nations, the direct precursor to the UN, is one such example. Without the US' support, the League of Nations failed[138]. As a result, ICC judgements must be delicately navigated to ensure that US support is sustained throughout. The UN and other international entities cannot initiate collective security or other punitive measures without the financial and military backing of the US. Once again, historical evidence shows that the ICC cannot be successful, particularly moving forward with the case against Syria, due to the dependence on the US.

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[135] *Hashemi, N. (2013)*
[136] *MacAskill, E. & Borger, J. (2004) Iraq war was illegal and breached UN charter, says Annan. The Guardian.*
[137] *Scharf, M.P. (1998)*
[138] *Cooper, I. & Patterson, E. (2011) UN Authority and the Morality of Force. Survival: Global Politics and Strategy. 53:6:141-158*

US Dependence and the UN Failure

This dependence on US involvement is an indicator of another failure of the UN as a whole – the inherent state interests that instigate or negate international involvement in holding states such as Syria accountable. This is intertwined with the challenge presented by the five veto powers of the UN, particularly the US and Russia. Firstly, the structure of the veto powers is based in the economic and social strength of states immediately post-World War II, a context that is no longer applicable to the current state of the world[139]. The perspectives and contributions of the five veto powers are not necessarily reflective of the current economic and military power of the world. This is compounded by the contradiction of the UN having to hold the same states accountable from those which it derives its power. The UN cannot remain both a neutral body that acts as a supranational organization while it relies on the support of states such as the US and Russia to achieve its mandate; this dependence can lead to biased resolutions – in the favor of powerful states such as the US and Russia – and can ultimately be detrimental to the achievement of the UN's mandate of peaceful and effective international relations[140]. One such example from the Syrian conflict is that of Russia and the US' state interests in Syria; the former supports the authoritarian regime, while the latter has supported and continues to supply arms to many of the rebel groups across the MENA Region[141]. As a result, the UN has been stuck in a deadlock when discussing solutions to the Syrian crisis. These present two overarching problems with the current UN response to the Syrian conflict: firstly, the outdated and overly powerful veto powers of states that are no longer reflective of the current economic and social reality of the world, which has resulted in a continued standstill in resolutions and interventions in Syria. Secondly, the involvement of state interests of each country has polluted the achievement of peace both presently and historically within the UN.

The UN has entertained previous reconciliatory discussions, most pertinently the creation of the 2005 Outcome Document. Adopted by the General Assembly, the 2005 Outcome Document was a push for international action through the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) to intervene in conflicts

[139] *Ibid*
[140] *Ibid*
[141] *Shoumali, A. & Barnard, K. (2015)*

perpetrated by states, particularly genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing[142]. Firstly, states have a responsibility to not subject their peoples to these crimes, and secondly, the international community should respond with diplomatic and peaceful means should a state be perpetrating these crimes[143]. This was meant to be a document through which the UN, as a supranational organization, would mediate conflict with international cooperation to uphold human rights and peace. Though the R2P doctrine cannot be retroactively applied to conflicts, the historic action of the UN in the face of conflict does not bode well for Syria moving forward.

Precedence and Incompetence: the UN Responsibility to Protect

One of the most pertinent examples of the international community's inability to effectively act in the face of one of the aforementioned crimes was that of the Rwandan genocide. In 1994, Rwanda experienced an ethnic cleansing of massive proportions, with 800,000 people killed during the conflict[144]. The international community was and is highly criticized for inaction during the state-sanctioned violence in Rwanda. In fact, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations turned down a request from the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) to raid secret stashes of weapons of which UNAMIR's commander had learned[145]. The conflict was only retroactively designated genocide, but the international response was lukewarm at best; neither the state nor an individual was held accountable for the egregious crimes committed against the Tutsi people. Though the R2P doctrine was not present at the time of the Rwandan genocide, the UN's initial mandate to maintain peace and mediate international conflict highlights the contradictory nature of the UN's mandate and its actions. If this can be extrapolated to the current Syrian crisis, it once again does not bode well for the Syrian people.

In addition, paragraph 138 and 139 of the Outcome Document highlight the importance of states in maintaining the safety of their own people against genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and ethnic cleansing. The doctrine indicates that states that fail to maintain these conditions for their

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[142] *United Nations General Assembly (2005) "Resolution adopted by the General Assembly" United Nations. 60:1*
[143] *Ibid*
[144] *Dorn, A.W. & Matloff, J. (2000) Preventing the Bloodbath: Could the UN have Predicted and Prevented the Rwandan Genocide? J. Conflict Studies. 20:1*
[145] *Ibid*

citizens should expect the international community to intervene[146]. Unfortunately, the presence of non-state actors such as ISIL and al-Nusra presents a challenge when coalescing the Syrian crisis with the R2P document: how can a doctrine that explicitly speaks of punitive action as a means to mitigate state-sanctioned violence prevent the same crimes from being committed by non-state actors? The R2P doctrine does not explicitly state the plan of action in the case of non-state actor-perpetrated violence, and as such creates a gap in the application of R2P to the current Syrian conflict. Once again, the UN's ambiguity and irrelevance to the current social reality – one that includes powerful non-state actors – alludes to an inability of the UN to effectively mediate the conflict in Syria.

Another relevant concept is that of Just Cause, which is inherently tied to the UN's Responsibility to Protect. The Just Cause threshold indicates that the international community will only intervene in a military capacity where there is a large-scale loss of life or large-scale ethnic cleansing[147]. Just Cause also outlines the precautionary principles of intervention, including right intention (solely to resolve conflict and not motivated by state interests), last resort of military intervention (all diplomatic and peaceful solutions to resolve conflict are exhausted), proportional means (minimal military force as necessary should be used), and reasonable prospects (military intervention should be a realistic measure to address the conflict)[148]. The UN has not provided concrete definitions that could unarguably define each condition – a percentage of an ethnic group that has been targeted or killed, for example, that would move a conflict beyond senseless violence to a 'large-scale loss of life.'[149]

This is evident in the case of the Rwandan genocide, where violence was not initially attributed to intent for ethnic cleansing and resulted in inaction. Once again, the UN's failure to outline concrete definitions – including what constitutes a 'large-scale' loss of life – has led to ambiguity and inaction. In addition, the term 'ethnic cleansing' is not reflective of all creed-based violence. If 'ethnic-cleansing' were to refer to persecution based on an individual's identification within a specific group, then the definition should expand accordingly. The Holocaust was an atrocity committed against individuals that identified with the Jewish faith. Religion, however, does not denote ethnicity. Racial

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[146] *United Nations General Assembly. (2005)*
[147] *Evans, G. et al. (2001) "The Responsibility to Protect: Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty." International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty.*
[148] *Ibid*
[149] *Ibid*

and ethnic ties – in the most accurate definition of the term 'ethnic-cleansing' – are often clear-cut and easy to determine, especially when highlighting crimes against individuals who identify within the boundaries of certain races or ethnicities. Intervening to mitigate crimes against individuals that identify with a certain creed inclusive of religion is more difficult to justify. An example is that of the Yazidi genocide perpetrated by ISIL. The Yazidis are a religious group[150] being targeted based on their religious identity. Though the UN has declared this genocide by ISIL against the Yazidis[151], no action is being taken to protect the Yazidis, as this persecution does not fit within the term 'ethnic-cleansing'. Once again, the UN's ambiguity in documents raises many points of concern that reflect the UN's general history of unsuccessful interventions and inaction or delayed action in the face of international crises.

Finally, in regards to Just Cause, section 4.24 of the Just Cause doctrine highlights the broadness of the "Just Cause" principles, but indicates that they "[…] exclude some situations which have been claimed from time to time to justify the coercive use of military force for human protection purposes."[152] Who is responsible for passing judgement on what is considered a situation that can justify the use of coercive force? If the UN or UNHRC (UN Human Rights Council) were responsible for deciding on appropriate intervention, how can the UN mitigate state interests that may be detrimental to the achievement of peace? How can the UN address the hypocrisy of some of its members – including Saudi Arabia, which sits on the UNHRC despite having committed numerous human rights transgressions in the past few decades? Essentially, how can the UN be confident that the consensus reached on the coercive use of military force in the face of international conflict is impartial and fair?

Libya was also acutely affected by the fallout of the Arab Spring revolts, and in 2011 the UN adopted two resolutions to address the issues faced by Libya; UN Resolution 1970 and UN Resolution 1973. This resolution was supported by the Arab League, the African Union, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference[153]. Resolution 1970 was based on the conviction that the Libyan government may have been perpetrating crimes against humanity in a state-sanction method

[150] *Attewill, D. (2007) Background: The Yezidi. The Guardian.*
[151] *UN News Centre. (2016) "UN human rights panel concludes ISIL is committing genocide against Yazidis. UN News Centre.*
[152] *Evans, G. et al. (2001)*
[153] *United Nations Security Council. (2011a) Resolution 1970. United Nations.*

against their own people[154]. As a result, Libya was referred to the ICC for punitive action. The ICC resulted in outcomes that urged the international community to enact non-military measures to stifle conflict, including an arms embargo on Libya, a travel ban, and asset freeze[155]. The ICC decided that Libya was to be bound to the decisions of the ICC however; the ICC was unable to enforce these measures.

In fact, only 19 days after the adoption of UN Resolution 1970, the lack of adherence to the resolution prompted the reconvening of the UN to adopt Resolution 1973[156]. This second resolution confirmed that human rights violations were being carried out by the Libyan government, including detention, enforced disappearances, and torture[157]. Resolution 1973 adopted the no-fly zone previously established by the Council of the League of Arab States to protect civilians from military aircrafts[158]. Though Muammar Ghaddafi has now been removed from power, the conflict and post-regime collapse fallout is still evident in the Libyan nation. This example of the UN's failure to mitigate state-sanctioned threats against civilians presents an example for why the UN cannot be successful in mediating or resolving the Syrian crisis. This failure is due to the inability of the UN to enforce the adopted resolutions. In addition, the ICC document indicates that states "not party to the Rome Statute have no obligation to follow or conform to the outcomes of the ICC,"[159] thereby undermining the intended motivation behind the ICC's role as a supranational institution of justice that can hold states accountable for egregious crimes.

Eurocentrism and International Development

Many critics of the UN have stated that the Eurocentric approach to international development and relations has stifled the efficacy of the UN because measures and recommendations made by the UN are not universally applicable. In the case of Syria and the MENA Region at large, the Arab Spring was largely celebrated in the West due to the secular and democratic nature of the

[154] *Ibid*
[155] *Ibid*
[156] *United Nations Security Council. (2011b) Resolution 1973. United Nations.*
[157] *Ibid*
[158] *Ibid*
[159] *United Nations. (1998)*

revolution[160]. Unfortunately, what was not taken into account in the midst of the Arab Spring was the long-term fallout of the revolution – much of the MENA Region has not yet recovered from the Arab Spring, and is still experiencing significant instability. The West has largely regarded this "lack of development" with pessimism, and with the rise of "religiously"-motivated terror groups such as ISIL and al-Nusra, have criticized the MENA Region for being unable to embrace secularism. However, the historical and social contexts of the MENA Region are not the same as those of the West, and as such *"[…] there is a flaw in assuming that the MENA Region will go through the same experiences of democracy of the West […]"*[161] In particular, for a region that is inherently infused with religious identity - being the birthplace for the Abrahamic religions - navigating a future with democracy cannot be achieved without religious considerations. To assume that the conditions that have led to positive development in the West, including democracy and secularism, are the solutions to the conflict in the MENA Region is a fault in the approach towards resolving and mitigating crisis in Syria. In fact, in the review "The Arab Spring Two Years On: Reflections on Dignity, Democracy, and Devotion," Nader Hashemi sums up the nuances and negativity, and by extension failures, associated with navigating the Arab world from a Eurocentric lens: "The Middle East is not Eastern Europe […] the social conditions that provided for relatively smooth transitions to democracy in Eastern Europe do not exist in the case of the Arab-Islamic world."[162] As a result, the UN's Eurocentric approach to human rights can only be detrimental to the resolution of the Syrian crisis.

In 2014, the UN held the Geneva II Conference, which marked the first time the Syrian government and opposition formally negotiated since the start of the conflict in 2011[163]. The conference was meant to discuss the strategic plan of action and development for Syria lay out by the Geneva communiqué[164]. The Iranian president expressed skepticism at the UN's ability to mediate the conflict due to the "lack of influential players" in the Geneva communiqué and the Geneva II Conference[165]. Unfortunately, the Geneva II Conference was unsuccessful. Renegotiation of the peace talks took place in 2016, during the Geneva Peace Talks on Syria conference[166]. As indicated

[160] *Hashemi, N. (2013)*
[161] *Ibid*
[162] *Ibid*
[163] *UN News Centre. (2013) "Preparations for upcoming Syria peace conference 'on track,' says UN chief." UN News Centre.*
[164] *BBC News. (2014) "Syria Geneva II peace talks witness bitter exchanges." BBC News.*
[165] *Ibid*
[166] *Miles, T. et al. (2016) "U.N. announces start of Syria peace talks as government troops advances." Reuters.*

by an official from the Syrian opposition's High Negotiations Committee, the opposition would leave the conference if there was no indication of progress[167]; by February 3rd, the Peace talks had been suspended[168]. Though there was intent to resume the Peace Talks at a later date, no such resumed talk has yet been held. Once again, the UN has failed to mediate international conflict and as such may not be able to resolve the Syrian crisis under their current plan of action.

What Other Options Does Syria Have?

In light of the UN's inability to mediate the Syrian conflict, the international community is left asking one question: are there other options? Thus far, the UN has demonstrated an inability to present solutions to the Syrian conflict. It is important, therefore, to employ alternative measures to address the Syrian crisis beyond international military intervention and economic sanctions. One recommendation is to harness the ongoing efforts of regional powers to mitigate conflict. The country of Jordan, for example, has taken in many refugees escaping the Syrian conflict, increasing the former's population by 8 percent by the end of 2015.[169] Supporting regional powers may be the best course of action for the international community, as empowering Syrians outside of their country will not only minimize the burden of refugees, but will develop a stronger ex-patriot population that can one day work to rebuild the unstable region. This would require the international community to contribute not only financial support, but social and structural support, to the countries taking in refugees. This would include increased funding for social services, employment and professional training for long-term integration of refugees into society, and infrastructure funding to provide basic standards of living for refugees. Harnessing the power of a country as economically, socially, and politically stable as Jordan within the Middle East will set a precedent for the region's development. It will also strengthen ties between countries as they work together to mitigate the terror and threats posed at the region, while simultaneously ensuring that displaced peoples are not marginalized.

In addition, the empowerment of regional powers within the framework of the MENA Region conflict will address the Eurocentric lens criticism of the UN's previous measures to address the

[167] *Ibid*
[168] *BBC News. (2016) "Syria conflict: UN suspends peace talks in Geneva." BBC News.*
[169] *Carrion, D. (2015) Syrian Refugees in Jordan: Confronting Difficult Truths. Chatham House.*

Middle Eastern conflict. Empowering regional players would engage powers that are not only sensitive to the economic and social contexts of the region's conflict, but countries that understand the social navigation necessary to build strong institutions and states. For example, Jordan's identity as a stable, Muslim country would be the most relevant example to be applied to Syrian development and conflict resolution. As a result, the UN should harness the power of regional powers to empower populations and mitigate conflict within Syria, taking advantage of the cultural relativity that these regional powers would be able to apply to the conflict.

Another strategy to the Syrian conflict includes grassroots, community-focused initiatives. Grassroots-focused solutions would empower those directly affected by the conflict to co-create solutions to problems they see in their country. This could include developing programs to engage youth productively in lieu of allowing terror groups to prey on impressionable minds: in April 2015, as the youngest President of the UN Security Council, Crown Prince Hussein bin Abdullah of Jordan touched on the importance of engaging young people in developing peacebuilding solutions; *"[youth] are targeted for their huge potential, self-confidence and ability to change the world […] but when they face a dead-end, their ambition transforms into frustration that groups use to fuel their own agendas."*[170] The demonstrated interest in Jordan to empower young people to be co-creators of solutions to violence and terror in the region has led to the creation of the Crown Prince Foundation in Jordan, which empowers youth to develop leadership skills and initiatives[171]. In fact, the 2005 Outcome Document, the same document that gave rise to the international commitment to Responsibility to Protect, reaffirmed the UN's collective commitment to the Millennial Development Goals (now the Sustainable Development Goals) as a tool for social and economic development[172], and this proposed solution would be a way to enact the Sustainable Development Goals as a pathway to reconciliation and resolution in Syria.

A successful example of empowering individuals in rebuilding grassroots projects is The Voice of Libyan Women, started by Alaa Murabit in the midst of the Arab Spring uprising in Libya[173]. Initially started to project the voice of women in the region's changing social reality, the Voice of Libyan

[170] *Al Hussein bin Abdullah II. (2015) Speech: HRH Crown Prince Al Hussein Bin Abdullah at the United Nations Security Council. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II.*
[171] *J.T. (2016) "New board of Crown Prince Foundation appointed.The Jordan Times.*
[172] *United Nations General Assembly. (2005)*
[173] *AboutVLW (accessed 2016) The Voice of Libyan Women. Via http://www.vlwlibya.org/about-3/*

Women addressed the gap of women's voices not being heard in the Libyan narrative. The initiative launched the first International Women's Conference in Libya, changing the culture of women's engagement in political and social reform[174]. Participants made 22 recommendations to the government on children's and women's rights[175]. This is an example of the success of community-created, grassroots-based initiatives to empower individuals to internally effect change and shift culture in the midst of crisis. It is incumbent upon the international community to harness the experiences and voices of those directly affected by the crisis in Syria to develop strategies to mitigate conflict through establishing grassroots programs.

What Does the Future Hold for Syria?

With the perpetually-changing nature of international power arises one damning question – what does the future hold? The most significant recent development in international political structures is the election of Donald Trump as the next President of the USA. Arguably the most powerful position in the world, Trump's presidency has the power to create international effects, including in countries as far removed as Syria. While Hilary Clinton advocated staunch military intervention in Syria to counteract violence, Trump has presented a verbal front with no substance[176]. Instead his stance on Syria must be inferred from his oft provocative statements during his presidential campaign. Trump has lauded the Assad regime, suggesting that under his ideal vision for the USA, the US will either change sides and support the Russians in backing Assad, or will pull out of the Middle East altogether and leave it in the hands of the Russian-backed authoritarian regime[177]. His stance thus far suggests that, if Trump were able to make all decisions on behalf of the country, Syria would eventually be at the mercy of the Russian-backed Assad regime.

Hillary Clinton's claims that Trump is ISIL's greatest recruiter[178] may contain some truth: the anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant, -Muslim, and -refugee rhetoric perpetuated by Donald Trump throughout his presidential campaign has led to bitterness within the USA. Xenophobia has grown since the start of Trump's campaign, and has created a culture that condones racism and discrimination.

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[174] *The Tripoli Post. (2011) "Libyan Women Want a Say in Running the New Libya." The Tripoli Post.*
[175] *Ibid*
[176] *Phillips, C. (2016) "'Unknown unknowns': What Trump means for Syria." Middle East Eye.*
[177] *Ibid.*
[178] *Berenson, T. (2015) "Hillary Clinton: Donald Trump IS 'ISIS's Best Recruiter'" Time.*

Increasing discrimination leads to individuals feeling marginalized, and this sense of 'otherness' and insignificance is the primary target of terror groups – "Experiences of discrimination […] lead to greater support for radicalism, which promises a sense of meaning and life purpose."[179] Though Donald Trump has not yet spoken of any concrete strategies pertaining to Syria, his vocal support of Assad's regime as well as marginalization and xenophobic rhetoric towards minority groups may exacerbate the Syrian crisis, either through inadvertently radicalizing more individuals or overtly facilitating the reign of the Assad regime. In either case, Trump's actions and words thus far do not bode well for Syria's future.

Conclusion

The international community has tried, and failed, to mediate the Syrian crisis. Spurred by the Arab Spring Revolts of 2011, the violence in Syria has led to many deaths. Though the International Criminal Court has jurisdiction under the Rome Statute, the ambiguity of terms within the Statute as well as the previous impunity does not suggest it would be effective in resolving the Syrian conflict. The power the US holds over the ICC and the UN as a whole is indicative of the UN's weakness, as its power is derived from the states of which it is composed. The 2005 Outcome Document once again highlights the importance of international intervention in Syria, but the stagnation of action in the face of crisis – as proven by the Rwandan genocide – and the ambiguity of the document do not bode well for Syria's future. The failure of previous resolutions in Libya as well as the Geneva communiqué and Peace Talks is an indication that the international community cannot look to previous methods of intervention to mitigate the crisis in Syria. It is incumbent upon the international community to seek alternative ways of intervention in the Syrian conflict; employing community-based, grassroots-focused initiatives to rebuild Syria. The international community must explore novel ways of mediating the conflict and rebuilding Syria, as the multi-faceted nature of the conflict, as well as the far-reaching consequences of the crisis are not discrete. Turning a blind eye to the Syrian crisis and the instability of the MENA Region will only disadvantage the world in the future.

[179] *Lyons-Padilla, S. et al. (2015) Belonging nowhere : Marginalization a& radicalization risk among Muslim Immigrants. Behavioral Science & Policy.*

Migration, Heat Maps and the Myth of Privacy

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Abstact

Over the last couple of years, documentary photographers, photojournalists and citizen photographers alike have photographed in abundance human bodies socially-discursively-visually constructed as migrants. One of these photographers is Richard Mosse who, in his prize-winning photo and video series Incoming and Heat Maps, visually engages with patterns of migration in the current, ongoing refugee crisis. In this article, we argue that we can use the photography in Heat Maps to think about the visualisation of migrants, showing how Heat Maps can be leveraged to expose how western democracies have reconceptualised privacy from a fundamental right to a strategic tool deployed or withheld to fit the political goal of limiting migration.

Mosse presents a unique body of work. It shares some features with both photojournalism and aftermath photography, but it is neither. Instead of documenting events photo realistically as they occur or reflecting on the traces traumatic events leave after the fact, Mosse re-negotiates and estranges the event while it takes place, thus distancing himself from both photojournalism and aftermath photography. Essentially, his aesthetic politics is one of visually emphasizing anonymity (of the subjects depicted) and obscurity (of the overall patterns of migration and its underlying politico-economic conditions) in order to fight both anonymity and obscurity.

Mosse fights anonymity and obscurity by employing military-grade border surveillance cameras, similar or identical to those deployed by border agencies, to create Heat Maps in which he depicts migrants heading for Europe. With an extreme telephoto thermal camera that detects the heat of a human body from some thirty kilometres distance and identifies a person from more than six kilometres, he thus shows how migrants are exposed by border agencies as they undertake the perilous journey towards Europe. The use of this apparatus, according to the artist, does not only anonymize the subjects depicted but also renders them more human. In portraying an event through a photographic technique that is intimately involved in the production of that event, the camera

becomes more than a technique of representation, it becomes a tool that is represented and exposed as much as that which it depicts.

In questioning the relation between anonymity, invisibility and privacy, we argue, Mosse's special photographic technique compromises privacy to show that it has already been compromised. He portrays privacy as deployed by western democracies – not as a fundamental right but as a strategic tool leveraged in a politics of *surveilling* migration and managing its visibility to discourage compassionate responses. Mosse violates the privacy of the subjects depicted; this violation, however, is necessary and reflects, among other things, tension between the inevitable violence of the photographic act of exposure and the violence of enforced invisibility.

Keywords: Richard Mosse, Heat Maps, Photography, Migration, Privacy, Surveillance

Introduction: Richard Mosse's *Heat Maps*

In the spring of 2017, the Irish photographer Richard Mosse was declared winner of the Prix Pictet, a global award in photography and sustainability, for his series *Heat Maps*.[180] *Heat Maps*,[181] similar to his larger project *Incoming*,[182] visualizes patterns of migration, refugee camps and detention centers. Deviating from standard photojournalistic procedure, the photographer uses an extreme telephoto military grade thermal camera that is capable of recording body heat from large distances. He does so in order to visualize political and military processes that, for political purposes, are not supposed to be seen.[183] Furthermore, Mosse's photography links the event (on which traditional photojournalism focusses) with its underlying socio-political conditions (which photojournalists find notoriously difficult to capture). As a result of doing this, Mosse's work does not only critically engage with the policy of migration but also with the politics of image production in a time in which

[180] *http://www.prixpictet.com/2017/05/richard-mosse-announced-as-winner-of-prix-pictet-space (accessed June 20, 2017).*
[181] *Heat Maps was on show at Jack Shainman Gallery, New York City, from February 2 to March 11, 2017.*
[182] *Incoming was on show at Barbican Curve, London, from February 15 to April 23, 2017.*
[183] *This political desire for enforced invisibility is well documented in Roland Bleiker, David Campbell, Emma Hutchinson and Xzarina Nicholson, "The visual dehumanisation of refugees," Australian Journal of Political Science, Vol. 48, No. 4 (2013), DOI: 10.1080/10361146.2013.840769, pp. 398–416. For an European example, consider how conservative pre-election politics in Germany aimed at keeping migration off the agenda until after the September 2017 general elections. See http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ deutschland/martin-schulz-in-italien-und-das-heikle-thema-fluechtlingspolitik-a-1160072.html (accessed July 31, 2017).*

visual sensors and media are constantly expanding and mutating. Indeed, the state and much recent photography join hands in "*decoupl[ing]* where necessary the 'singular event' from the political process"[184] thus depoliticizing this very process and rendering it invisible. Mosse, however, reconnects event and process by focusing, not on individual migrants, seemingly appealing to viewers' empathy and support, but on migration as a socio-economic and socio-political process that implies authorities as well as migrants and, as condition for its possibility, relies on anonymity and obscurity, yet (somewhat paradoxically) also on visibility. His work shows that, even if the state *"has no space for the photograph – in any constructive and transformative sense – this does not mean that subordinate forms of cultural production […] are thereby defined by these conditions."*[185]

Over the last couple of years, art photographers, documentary photographers, photojournalists and citizen photographers alike have photographed in abundance human bodies socially-discursively-visually constructed as migrants.[186] They have also taken numerous pictures of refugee camps and detention centers, relying on the belief in the power of the visible to affect politics. Adding to the existing body of work yet another body of work reflecting a similar politics of awareness raising, subscribing to the same aesthetics, and following the same documentary impulse would have been redundant and, in all likelihood, politically pointless. As Victor Burgin notes, *"[n]ot only is there something inevitably patronizing in the attitude of artists setting out to raise other consciousnesses to the level of their own, but also the exercise is generally futile."*[187]

Aesthetically, Mosse takes Thomas Keenan's words seriously that *"[f]aced with something obscure […] it is radically insufficient merely to shine the light of publicity."*[188] Mosse, rather than simply relying on the – limited – power of visibility, plays with that which we know is seen but which is not supposed to be seen, rendering it visible in a manner that deviates from standard photojournalistic patterns thus engaging with and expanding what Mark Reinhardt calls "the limits of representation."[189] He did this already in his acclaimed photography series *The Enclave* located in the Democratic Republic of the

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[184] *John Roberts, Photography and Its Violations (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), p. 111.*
[185] *Roberts, Photography and Its Violations, p. 112 (italics in original).*
[186] *For a survey, see British Journal of Photography, Issue 7851, September 2016 ("The Migration Issue"). Sebastião Salgado's Exodus is one of the classics of migration photography (Cologne: Taschen, 2016).*
[187] *Victor Burgin and Hilde Van Gelder, "Art and politics: A reappraisal," http://www.eurozine.com/art-and-politics-a-reappraisal, July 30, 2010 (accessed May 17, 2017).*
[188] *Thomas Keenan, "Disappearances: The Photographs of Trevor Paglen," Aperture, No. 191 (Summer 2008), p. 38.*
[189] *Mark Reinhardt, "Picturing Violence: Aesthetics and the Anxiety of Critique," in Mark Reinhardt, Holly Edwards and Erina Duganne (eds.), Beautiful Suffering: Photography and the Traffic in Pain (Williamsburg/Chicago: Williams College Museum of Art/The University of Chicago Press, 2007), pp. 13–36.*

Congo (DRC) where he worked with disused camouflage-detecting film to interrupt habits of visualizing and seeing. In *Heat Maps*, Mosse engages vision. However, by infringing upon the right to privacy on the part of the subjects depicted, he takes visibility not only to a new, but also to a controversial level. What, then, is new, and what is controversial in Mosse's visual approach to migration?

Technology and (de)Humanization

Mosse's politics is one of visually emphasizing *anonymity* (of the subjects depicted) and *obscurity* (of the overall patterns of migration and its underlying politico-economic conditions) in order to fight both anonymity and obscurity. Many critics of his work agree with Mosse that the use, in *Heat Maps*, of a thermal camera recording body heat "is used against its intended purpose of battlefield awareness and border enforcement to map landscapes of human displacement."[190] Some also believe that the replication of military patterns of surveillance and control qualifies *in itself* as an act of resistance to the intended military and border control purpose of this technology (rather than its confirmation through a process of repetition and naturalization). Likewise, many critics seem to agree with the artist's claim that he does not only anonymize the subjects depicted but also that he renders them "more human."[191] In terms of photographic genre, Mosse's work shares some features with both photojournalism and aftermath photography, but it is neither. Instead, Mosse re-negotiates and visually estranges the event while it takes place; in contrast to both photojournalism and aftermath photography, he searches for alternative representations of the event *when it happens*. Mosse, thus, simultaneously shares some elements with, and distances himself from, both photojournalism (with its emphasis on mere documentation) and aftermath photography (with its emphasis on post-conflict). Mosse's work epitomizes the renegotiation of genre boundaries in current photographic work.

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[190] *http://www.prixpictet.com/2017/05/richard-mosse-announced-as-winner-of-prix-pictet-space (accessed June 20, 2017).*

[191] *See https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/may/04/prix-pictet-2017-richard-mosse-wins-prize-heat-map-refugees-incoming-v-and-a (accessed June 20, 2017). At the same time, however, Mosse acknowledges that the camera he uses, while resulting in "unusually candid portrait[s]" may also "dehumaniz[e] the subject [depicted], portraying people in zombie form as monstrous." See, respectively, Richard Mosse, "TRANSMIGRATION OF THE SOULS," in Richard Mosse, Incoming (London: Mack, 2017), http://www.americansuburbx.com/2017/03/incoming-photography-contemporary-art-whiteness.html (accessed June 27, 2017).*

Figure 6: Richard Mosse, Idomeni Camp, Greece, 2016[192]

None of the above can be understood properly without reference to camera technology and the regimes of visibility that surround it. In *Heat Maps*, the visual recording instrument is not only a means to activate the viewer's attention, but also part of the process of (re)constructing the event depicted, and the form or technology of depiction is as important as what is depicted. The use of this particular technology is, thus, a central part of the artwork itself. The object of depiction, that is, people migrating towards Europe, is extensively covered by standard photojournalistic means in Western media, and is the subject matter of public debate within the European Union (EU). Therefore, raising awareness for this tragic event would have been redundant; it can hardly have been Mosse's sole purpose.

For *Heat Maps*, Mosse used an extreme telephoto military grade thermal camera, which detects the heat of a human body from some 30 kilometers distance and identifies a person from more than 6 kilometers.[193] The camera depicts its object in grey shades, depending on the various grades of heat radiation of the environment, depicting heat signatures in either white or black at the discretion of the operator. By doing so, this technique visualizes the recorded scene in a way that on the one hand makes every single individual identifiable, but on the other hand generalizes the subject's "normal" optic features into anonymity. The camera is manufactured by a European multinational company

[192] *Richard Mosse, Idomeni Camp, Greece, 2016. Digital c-print on metallic paper, 40 x 120 inches (print), 42¼ x 122 x 2 inches (framed). (Photograph: Frank Möller, March 2, 2017 at Jack Shainman Gallery, New York City; photograph taken and reproduced courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery, New York City.)*

[193] *The following camera details derive from Mosse, "TRANSMIGRATION OF THE SOULS."*

which also fabricates cruise missiles, drones, and other security and defense products. According to Mosse, the camera is developed mainly for surveillance purposes. As it is also capable of being attached to weapons systems, the camera is classified as an armament under the rules of the International Traffic in Arms Regulations, and arms export/import clearances are needed to transfer it between jurisdictions. According to Mosse, the camera's surveillance capabilities are "most suited for long range land, coastal or maritime environments."[194]

Due to the camera's extremely high technical requirements (parts of the lens need to be cooled down to -323°Celsius), its tremendous size and weight (the camera weighs 23 kilogram), and its handling (managed by a video game controller), the whole apparatus has an overall weight of some 80 kilograms.[195] Even though the exact camera type and its manufacturer is unknown to us, it is likely that this very camera type or a similar one is part of the comprehensive EU surveillance system in the Aegean and Mediterranean Sea.[196] In a forceful critique of the agency of visual surveillance strategies, Özgün Topak lists the technologies of visualization deployed at the same border that Mosse photographs: "[T]he Greek authorities use patrol vehicles, long-distance day goggles, night vision goggles, thermal cameras, mobile infrared cameras, thermo-vision vans (equipped with thermal cameras, day and night cameras, laser rangefinders, pulse radars surface, silent generators, and communications and data transfer systems), and helicopters (equipped with infrared and visual cameras, spotter cameras, and geographical coordinate systems)."[197] Through making visible the unseen "seeing" of migrants that takes place through border surveillance, *Heat Maps*, according to some critics, serves as an act of resistance against the current European political discourse and practice around the topic of global migration.

Mosse proceeds by "stripping the individual from the body and portraying a human as mere biological trace."[198] By reducing the person to this biological trace, he stresses the similarities between the subject depicted and the viewer. Showing "the commonalities of being human" has always been a major strength of photographic representation, necessarily "reiterat[ing] the general

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[194] Mosse, "TRANSMIGRATION OF THE SOULS."
[195] Mosse, "TRANSMIGRATION OF THE SOULS."
[196] For a description of the use of a thermal camera as part of the surveillance of the Aegean Sea, see Huub Dijstelbloem, Rogier van Reekum and Willem Schinkel, "Surveillance at Sea: The Transactional Politics of Border Control in the Aegean," Security Dialogue, Vol. 48, No. 3 (2017), DOI: 10.1177/0967010617695714, pp. 230–231.
[197] Özgün E Topak, "The biopolitical border in practice: surveillance and death at the Greece–Turkey borderzones," Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, Volume 32 (2014), p. 826. doi:10.1068/d13031p.
[198] Mosse, "TRANSMIGRATION OF THE SOULS".

forms in which the particular is contained."[199] By depicting human beings as mere biological traces, emphasizing biological functioning and thus the most basic general condition conceivable, Mosse takes this strength of photography to a new level and renders a clear-cut separation of "us" (viewers) from "them" (migrants) impossible. Additionally, the camera allows Mosse to make long-distance photographs. The result is that the subjects depicted are not necessarily aware of their picture being taken and this, for Mosse, "enabled an unusually candid kind of portrait, free from embarrassment, posturing, or self-consciousness."[200] Again, the photographer strives for an effect of humanization[201] in a time characterized by both the increased institutionalized, rhetorical dehumanization of human beings in terms of "mass migration," "wave of refugees," "illegal" or "irregular migrants" and strict limits imposed on such photographs that may encourage identification with migrants by depicting their humanity.[202] In hiding the individuality of the migrant, the connection and empathy between domestic populations and migrants is cut. "[S]ocial–psychological studies have revealed that such close-up portraits are the type of images most likely to evoke compassion in viewers. Images of groups, by contrast, tended to create emotional distance between viewers and the subjects being depicted" making cruel actions such as closing borders or restricting the asylum rights for political purposes easier to justify.[203]

In *Heat Maps*, Mosse attempts to show what is normally both visualized by European states' surveillance systems and kept invisible to their public, intending to reveal what political actors try to cover – the human being and the hardships seen but not prevented by border agencies. In his own words, he attempts "to spark an uneasy feeling of complicity in the viewer, in relation to xenophobia and fear of the other and to globalization as an updated modern form of colonialism."[204] By using a technology designed for military purposes and already deployed on migration routes, he seeks to reveal, in a sense, what "we" as a political community already know. The uncanny images are the usually hidden visual aspects of the event depicted, the EU's efforts to control the migration process into the EU – a process which saw a turn from a rescue oriented approach (for example the "Mare

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[199] David MacDougall, Transcultural Cinema. Edited and with an introduction by Lucien Taylor (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1998), p. 246.
[200] Mosse, "TRANSMIGRATION OF THE SOULS."
[201] http://www.americansuburbx.com/2017/03/incoming-photography-contemporary-art-whiteness.html (accessed June 27, 2017).
[202] Bleiker et al., "The visual dehumanisation of refugees."
[203] Bleiker et al., "The visual dehumanisation of refugees," p. 399
[204] See https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2017-02-10/a-new-view-of-the-refugee-crisis (accessed June 29, 2017).

Nostrum" mission) to one focusing on surveillance under the lead of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex (for example the "Joint Operation Triton").[205] By showing how the EU in the name of its citizens sees, perceives, and treats refugees, the camera allows Mosse to visually-discursively reconstruct and reveal the greater structures behind the event depicted, especially the state's ongoing visual invasion of the refugee's privacy. Thereby, he strives to get the viewer "consciously and cautiously engaging with the work and its meaning, while checking themselves, their baggage and reflexes."[206]

Migration and Privacy

What, then, is controversial in Mosse's approach? The people who visit a gallery to look at Mosse's work are hardly those who are depicted in his work. There is a clear, and clearly unbridgeable, gap between the subjects depicted in Mosse's large-scale panoramas (see Figure 7) and the people seeing them. Given the long-distance nature of much of Mosse's photography, in many cases the subjects depicted could not possibly have been aware of their picture being taken when it was taken, nor could permission be easily obtained afterwards. Long-distance photography of human beings is ethically problematic just as is the dissemination and publication of the resulting images without the informed consent of the people depicted. Thus, there is a clear gap here between the subjects depicted and the photographer. The photographer, and we with him, intrudes on a space that is not his, even if it is public or partly public and even if he does so aiming to intervene visually on behalf of the people depicted. Viewers, by looking, intrude on a space that is not theirs. This space has to be respected as someone else's.[207] They are complicit, not only with the photographer but also with the monitoring eyes of the authorities. The monitoring eyes of the authorities, in turn, do not only increasingly undermine privacy as a core of liberal political thinking; they also challenge or even thwart expectations migrants can be expected to carry with them when starting their perilous journey towards Europe – expectations triggered, among other things, by the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the EU.

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[205] The Italian marine states on its website: "Operation Mare Nostrum had therefore the twofold purpose of • safeguarding human life at sea, and • bringing to justice human traffickers and migrant smugglers." See http://www.marina.difesa.it/EN/operations/Pagine/MareNostrum.aspx (accessed September 21, 2017).

[206] See https://photoworks.org.uk/incoming-richard-mosse/ (accessed June 29, 2017).

[207] The terminology here is borrowed from Ernst van Alphen, Art in Mind: How Contemporary Images Shape Thought (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005).

An individual's space – the space that others have to respect as belonging to this individual alone – is physically separated from other individuals' spaces, usually by a wall or, in the case of refugee camps, often by canvas or similar material of which makeshift tents are made. Privacy for migrants, thus, is to a significant degree a visual expectation and phenomenon, as few refugee accommodation spaces or modes of transport allow physical privacy. While migrants or those engaged in helping them along are aware of at least some of the visual forms of surveillance migrants are exposed to during their journey,[208] they can also be expected to look for and even to rely on privacy in the refuge of these tents. Freedom, including freedom from persecution and other forms of violence, cannot be thought of without at least some degree of privacy: "The private is not for other eyes, ears, or hands."[209] Such expectation would indeed be in accordance with the understanding in liberal political thought of both the wall as the core of privacy, securing an individual's personal space, and privacy as the core of liberty.[210] To be sure, migrants withdrawing into tents cannot – and surely do not want to – connect tents with permanence and taking roots but the inside of the tent appears, for the time being, as the only place where individuals can live unaffected and unseen by the surveilling eyes of the authorities or of anybody else – except that, as Figure 8 shows, in a regime of surveillance by long-distance thermal camera surveillance, they cannot.

Figure 7: Richard Mosse, Idomeni Camp, Greece, 2016[211]

[208] *Dijstelbloem et al., "Surveillance at Sea," pp. 230–231.*
[209] *Wolfgang Sofsky, Privacy: a Manifesto. Translated by Steven Rendall (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), p. 12.*
[210] *Sofsky, Privacy, p. 23.*
[211] *Richard Mosse, Idomeni Camp, Greece, 2016. Digital c-print on metallic paper, 40 x 120 inches (print), 42¼ x 122 x 2 inches (framed). Detail. (Photograph: Frank Möller, March 2, 2017 at Jack Shainman Gallery, New York City; photograph taken and reproduced courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery, New York City.)*

But migration privacy is complicated, privacy is not just a good that refugees desire, and concerns about privacy thus have to be seen as intertwined with other concerns, chiefly, we argue, concerns about (in)visibility. In exposing the ways in which we – as a body politic represented through institutions of national and supranational governance as well as in international agreements such as the EU-Turkey migration deal – already see migration, Mosse leverages our discomfort as spectators – about visually intruding into the privacy of migrants – to remind us about two overlooked aspects of refugee policy. First, that we already see migrants, and already render their privacy an illusion, through the myriad of visual and electronic surveillance technologies deployed on them. Second, it reminds us about the ways in which privacy concerns also function as a shield to keep the disturbing but effective images of migrants in pain and distress at bay – rendering migrants invisible through the regimes of taste, decency, privacy and visibility related to migration.[212]

Bleiker and colleagues demonstrate this latter point well – how privacy concerns ostensibly invoked to protect the privacy of refugees and refugee seekers keep these invisible and thus break the compassion between migrants and Australian citizens.[213] They show how government media guidelines and mandatory restrictions upon journalists visiting refugee centers result from "explicit governmental directives not to 'personalize' or 'humanize' the issue of asylum seekers."[214] An Australian senate investigation found that "[a] key reason for the ensuing tight control of photo-journalists was 'to ensure that no imagery that could conceivably garner sympathy or cause misgiving about the aggressive new border protection regime would find its way into the public domain.'"[215] Visual privacy, they find, is also visual anonymity, and it encourages public perceptions of migrants in terms of a flood rather than in terms of an individual in dire circumstances with whom one can feel empathy.

Perhaps this simultaneous invasion of privacy and invocation of privacy as a value that should be respected is what Mosse shows us when he reveals what our migration authorities actually see – the lively or lifeless bodies of children, at night or at day, playing in the safety of a temporary home or undertaking the perilous journey to find such safety. As is evident from the intrusiveness of Mosse's *Heat* Maps, visual privacy is not a realistic expectation for migrants. Yet privacy for migrants is

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[212] *David Campbell,"Cultural Governance and Pictorial Resistance: Reflections on the Imaging of War," Review of International Studies, Vol. 29, 2003, p. 64.*
[213] *Bleiker et al., "The visual dehumanisation of refugees."*
[214] *Bleiker et al., "The visual dehumanisation of refugees," p. 412*
[215] *Australian Senate, as cited in Bleiker et al., "The visual dehumanisation of refugees," p. 412.*

intertwined with visibility in ways in which visibility is both "a technique for controlling and detecting migrant movements" and "a strategic field for migrants themselves, who play with visibility and invisibility (e.g., becoming visible in order to be rescued at sea or remaining invisible to dodge controls)."[216] Visual privacy, thus, is also a strategic playing field for migrants: "immigrants and their 'facilitators' frequently turn the means of surveillance back against efforts to 'control the border'. Being noticed opens up possibilities that can hardly be subdued precisely because perception requires action. So when a migrant boat is noticed and sufficiently close to a patrol boat, people on those boats are able to become subjects of an emergency of some kind, redrawing the lines of sight."[217] *Heat Maps* shows western spectators two things they already know: they know that they, first, are intruding into the privacy of migrants through the border authorities acting in their name, but hiding this intrusion in a form of "reverse secrecy."[218] Second, they know that western society, through the invocation of privacy in relation to media representations of migrants, keep migrants hidden and out of sight as individuals whose dire existence demands compassion.

The uncomfortable re-emergence of this knowledge is exactly what one can gain from a critical reading of Mosse's *Heat Maps*, a revelation of the strategic use of privacy to simultaneously expose and hide migrants, rendering them both exposed and invisible.

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[216] *Martina Tazzioli & William Walters, "The Sight of Migration: Governmentality, Visibility and Europe's Contested Borders," Global Society, Vol. 30, No. 3 (2016), p. 462, DOI: 10.1080/13600826.2016.1173018.*
[217] *Djistelbloem et al, "Surveillance at Sea," p. 232.*
[218] *Tazzioli & Walters, "The Sight of Migration," p. 453.*

Figure 8: Richard Mosse, Idomeni Camp, Greece, 2016[219]

Figure 9: Richard Mosse, Idomeni Camp, Greece, 2016[220]

[219] *Richard Mosse, Idomeni Camp, Greece, 2016. Digital c-print on metallic paper, 40 x 120 inches (print), 42¼ x 122 x 2 inches (framed). Detail. (Photograph: Frank Möller, March 2, 2017 at Jack Shainman Gallery, New York City; photograph taken and reproduced courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery, New York City.)*

[220] *Richard Mosse, Idomeni Camp, Greece, 2016. Digital c-print on metallic paper, 40 x 120 inches (print), 42¼ x 122 x 2 inches (framed). Detail. (Photograph: Frank Möller, March 2, 2017 at Jack Shainman Gallery, New York City; photograph taken and reproduced courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery, New York City.)*

Conclusion: Invisibility, privacy and surveillance in Heat Maps

By using an extreme telephoto military grade thermal camera capable of recording body heat from large distances, Richard Mosse visually-discursively reconstructs the event (the migration process to Europe) while it takes place thus creating a photographic genre sui generis. In the process, he violates the privacy of (some of) the people depicted. This act of violence, however, is necessary. Paraphrasing John Roberts,[221] we want to suggest that Mosse's violations of the privacy of individual migrants are justified because they reveal the truth of all migrants: for migrants, privacy, as a rule, does not exist. Neither does anonymity, which, according to western political thinking, "is indispensable for protecting privacy."[222] Mosse's work shows that anonymity and, therefore, privacy do not exist – neither for the migrants nor for western spectators who are complicit with the European Union's and their national governments' increasingly restrictive politics towards migrants and migration, invoking or withholding privacy strategically. As Mosse's photography confirms, western authorities deny the right to privacy – an indispensable ingredient of western political thinking – those who need it most: migrants in search of protection. This denial cannot but have profound consequences for western political thinking beyond the current politics of migration. Mosse's photographs transform the western myth of privacy into a ghostly illusion.

[221] *Roberts, Photography and Its Violations, pp. 145–164.*
[222] *Sofsky, Privacy, p. 32.*

On Expression and Change

Victimizing Art: The Story of a Monument from the Center of Sofia

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Abstract

Bulgaria is supposedly a democracy, though a "flawed one" according to the terms of *Transitology* and the qualifications of contemporary Democracy-surveying indexes[223]. Regardless of the measurements of various socio-political in-depth researches where it fells in the group of democratic states the country still faces lots of deficits along the way of institutionalizing democracy and its values in the fabric of the society. That is best illustrated trough the attitudes towards the legacy of communism, in particular art monuments.

Bulgarians find still troubles differentiating between their own history and the world's one which is no surprise given the fact that the country was barely independent in the past six centuries first as a part of the Ottoman empire and later, after a brief spell of some six decades as the most trusted Soviet satellite behind the Iron curtain. That combined with the lack of realistic vision for its own value, role and place in Europe leads to a quite troubled perception of some contemporary events and their twisted reflections in the national history.

As art is the perfect filter for these moods and the self-esteem of a nation, the Bulgarian one is no different even being severely ideologically indoctrinated as all art which had to produce results in an extremely politicized environment. As a nation that lacks clear-cut perception of its national identity, Bulgaria is swinging in between the poles of the mood of the general public opinion of the day which is capable of loving Russia and cherishing EU at the same time! That is why the destiny of a

[223] Economist intelligence Unit's "Democracy in the World" ranks Bulgaria in the respective category under number 46 for its 2015 survey, Democracy Ranking allocates to Bulgaria 41st place (http://democracyranking.org/wordpress/rank/), while Freedom in the World index (https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2016) ranks it among the group of free states, i.e. country with above the average recognition of both political rights (PR) and civil liberties (CL) with a score of 80 (the overall sum is 100-60 for PR and 40 for CL) and index value of 2 (1=most free and 7 for least free).

monument which marked the celebrations of the over one millennia history of the state of Bulgaria at the time became nowadays not a matter of patriotic or aesthetic debate but of a pro and anti-communism one.

Keywords: Art, Politics, Democracy, Communism, Political System

Introduction

As attitudes towards communism appear to be still a vibrant cleavage within the Bulgarian society, reinvigorated now and then after major electoral cycles, its divisive character translates to numerous fields and subjects – monuments one of most prominent. The whole transition in Bulgaria is a process which, at least on theory attempted to re-build the Bulgarian identity from the "glorious past" preceding the WWII and the communist terror that followed suit. However, it never managed to produce anything even close to the ambitions of that goal, instead drawing red border lines in the fabric of Bulgarian society, tearing it apart.

That destructive process seemed to be put down, especially in the decade after the accession of the country to the structures of NATO and EU in 2003 and 2007 respectively. Still it did not disappear. The trend was set up by the wave that arose before and after the demolition of the Mausoleum of former communist dictator Georgi Dimitrov in the center of the Bulgarian capital. It began a never-ending struggle for the monumental legacy of communism exemplified by other prominent monuments like the one of the Red Army in the center of Sofia and Alesha above Plovdiv, the second big town in the country, which became focal points for vandalizing as a protest against their very existence and the message they bear and stand for. One slightly different piece of art shared their faith though for quite other reasons – that of the Founders of the Bulgarian state in the National Palace of Culture Park, downtown Sofia.

Some Prehistory and Background

In order to understand why communism and its historical legacy is still an issue in Bulgaria one must have in mind that it is extremely dependent on the attitudes towards Russia in the country. There is a near-irrational sense of glorification and eternal gratitude towards Russia imposed by the propaganda of the communist regime on the grounds of various make up stories, exaggerations and sheer frauds from the past relations between the two parties. These are probably best exemplified by the myth

within the Bulgarian society that Russia fought the war from 1877-78 to liberate the country from the Ottoman Empire and not to make another attempt to seize the control over the Bosporus under the nose of France and Great Britain. To add further prove one must bear in mind that the Bulgarian Communist party leadership attempted on a couple of occasions to convince their Soviet counterparts to accept the country in the Union of the Soviet Socialistic Republics as a full member. And that on the back of Bulgaria siding with the Germans in the World Wars pursuing in vain its national dreams and ideals of national grandeur dating back to the Middle Ages and brought to an abrupt end by the Ottoman Empire.

It is pretty evident that Bulgaria had quite a troubled past thorn between its national identity and its influential wannabe protectors and neighbors. The fact that communist propaganda managed to re-write the history and turn it over its head is not surprising at all too. What raises eyebrows is that after communism was overthrown or at least compromised as political doctrine Bulgarians did not manage to come to terms with the real, actual history of their past. On the contrary, the society split almost even into two parts for and against communism and its legacy, respectively pro and against Russia and all its perturbations over the past centuries.

Therefore, follows the subsequent misunderstanding of crucial importance that everyone against communism is democrat. This false statement has huge multidimensional bearings on the contemporary Bulgarian socio political and economic life through its projections in the forms of laws, regulations, norms and standards. The bumps on the road during the transition to democracy made everyone opposing its pace, means and price antidemocrat and on the contrary, every ardent supporter of transition at any cost genuine democrat.

The damage to the Bulgarian society could hardly be more devastating in terms of political implications as all wrong decisions were justified in the name of the coveted democracy while all righteous ones were slipped under the carpet of inevitability. The process therefore is not a surprise that ended in widespread disappointment and dissatisfaction with democracy on general scale. Bulgarians are quite supportive for EU and its values[224], but still not just find a place for Russia in their hearts-they continue to adore it, regardless of the historically proven injustices this affection brought to the country in hindsight.

[224] *Eurobarometer - http://www.europarl.europa.eu/bulgaria/bg/news_events/media/press-release/2015/oct/eurobarometer2015.html*

It is still surprising nowadays that the Bulgarian society did not get over the propaganda of communism, naturally seeking to assert itself to Europe and the world as democratic. On the contrary, the national identity of Bulgaria, at least the contemporary one seems to be centered on Russia and Orthodox Christianity instead on genuine Bulgarian features, accomplishments and characteristics. This fondness of Russia is truly astonishing given the historical facts that it never ever had any other purpose for Bulgaria but subjugation and exploitation for Russia's own goals and purposes. Still Bulgarians seem to turn in their majority a blind eye to history and continue to adore Russia in various ways and strikingly appear unable or unwilling to differentiate between Russia of Ivan the Terrible, of Catherine the Great, of Alexander III, of Stalin and of Vladimir Putin.

Of course, this process falls quite in line with some more recent and contemporary developments. Starting from Huntington's revitalized theory of clashing civilizations where small countries are simply following suite, especially as Bulgaria being on the border lines between the struggling parties and then moving forward trough the viewpoint of the juxtaposition between the domains of political ideology where liberalism and its most prominent political achievement – modern liberal democracy, faces constant pressure and competition from the likes of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, the situation in Bulgaria seems to gain focus and rationale. Be it for believing that Russia is integral to Bulgarian national identity or on the contrary finding it the very obstacle before its crystallization the affection for Russia is polar and thus divisive for the contemporary Bulgarian society. And so, the correlating attitudes towards the art legacy of the past decades become much more explicable.

Seen from the viewpoint of sociology and political culture, the Bulgarian society is one that clearly still lacks basic integrity and clear-cut pack of core values to stick to in contrast to being defined as parochial and even conservative by its own measures. For this reason, Bulgarians tend to live in a very controversial socio-political environment even to the standards of contemporary frenzied world.

One the one hand they long for all what is worth from the past, communism next to Medieval glory, while on the other they find real pride and historical justice in the national membership to NATO and EU after long being exiles from their "natural" civilizational homeland. In this regard backing up strong leaders like, especially, Vladimir Putin or Donald Trump, with all due doubt, perfectly complies with cheering for stronger institutions and civic involvement. Respectively, longing for the enforced social and political tranquility and equality and miserable inflated economic security of

communism naturally co-exists to the ardent support for the market economy, private entrepreneurship and representative democracy of competing political subject.

The Monument at a Glance

The monument – "1300 years Bulgaria", notorious among Sofian citizens with many other quite unflattering and vulgar names, though not depicting anything that may be considered even close to the communist hailing mainstream became a symbol of it in the eyes of the contemporary Bulgarians and another talking point in the anti-communist narrative. Even though it is considered as a probably the first piece of de-constructivism according to a Bulgarian architect and professor at the Academy of Fine Arts Dr. Georgi Daskalov, thus bearing quite a unique artistic value the arguments for its removal are extremely ideology grounded and almost have nothing to do with aesthetics, art or culture. The monument was built in 1981 for the supposed 1300th anniversary of Bulgaria[225]. The architectural layout is on architect A. Barov and architect A. Agura, and the bronze sculptures are by Professor Valentin Starchev. The project was not exactly constructed following strictly the original plan and schemes of the authors due to the rush for the upcoming event which was considered to be extremely important for the Communist party because of its falling legitimacy and support at the time, resulting in some materials and technological practices being saved, ignored or replaced. Subsequently, the construction began to collapse and its aesthetic appearance, though controversial from the onset and under rising negative public scrutiny, was compromised further by its dangerous technical condition. After the communist regime collapsed the monument was almost entirely neglected for two decades which added to its structural misery and ruining despite its central location.

Finally, Sofia Municipal Council (SMC) announced, under pressure from the general public inspired by politicians from parties like GERB, SDS and DSB that the monument will be removed and the historical injustice behind its erection undone by reconstructing the monument of the Fallen Soldiers from the First and Sixth Sofia Infantry Regiments, which was standing nearby until 1977. With decision N842 from 18.12.2014 SMC demonstrated undergoing logic that perfectly exemplifies and epitomizes all of the abovementioned findings and present controversies within the fabric of the Bulgarian society. Basically, it states that the monument should be removed from its location and

[225] *the debate about the exact date of foundation of the state is still ongoing and despite public believes it is not yet undoubtedly fixed among Bulgarian historians*

temporarily relocated for storage until a permanent location is identified for its reconstruction, allowing its author architect professor Starchev subsequently to remodel the artefacts in accord to his original idea in the new environments. Intriguing are the arguments of the Council which are at least dubious and demonstrate inconsistency with the fate of the artwork. SMC finally succumbed, quite willingly though, to the politicization of the problematics which was not new for Sofians and Bulgarians. The whole debate started by the demolition of the mausoleum of former communist dictator Georgi Dimitrov in August, 1999 – an act which split the Bulgarian society. In the aftermath, all Soviet or Communist related and inspired monuments across Bulgaria became subjects of increased public concerns. Their role, message, functions and destiny occupied the society's attention for long periods resulting in petitions to the respective local and national authorities for the removal of some of the most prominent ones like Alesha above Plovdiv and the Monument of the Red Army in Sofia's downtown. The arguments varied from appeals to repairing historical injustices (by restoring previously destroyed monuments on the same locations) and to the overarching notion of denouncing once and for all the communist regime as inhumane and criminal by stripping Bulgaria from all that reminds of its reign.

In result, SMC held a contest for project proposals that will cover the area of the half-demolished memorial. The aim of the competition was to obtain conceptual proposals for a spatial solution for the area of the existing architectural and artistic synthesis "1300th Bulgaria" in the reconstructed environment of the park of the National Palace of Culture - Bulgaria Square. The contest program provided an opportunity for the general public to express their approval or disapproval of participants' projects, as well as make suggestions. The majority of the proposals received were to support the restoration of the memorial of the fallen soldiers of the first and Sixth Sofia Infantry Regiment. The proponents of the idea of restoration of the memorial plaque argue that this is a moral act that all Bulgarians owe to the warriors who sacrificed their lives for their homeland and our national dignity embodied in this stone monument. Expressions of respect for the heroes are an important link in the patriotic and patriotic upbringing of the growing generations and preservation of our nation's native memory.

Resolving the Issue

From a legal point of view, according to SMC "dismantling and moving the architectural and artistic synthesis "1300th Bulgaria" would not lead to copyright infringement. Under the current Copyright

and Related Rights Act, there will be no violation of the rights of the authors of the monument if Sofia Municipality, as the architect of the site, abolishes or reconstructs it without their consent, according to an explicit provision – Art. 24, paragraph 1, item 15 of the Law on the Protection of Competition, where it is explicitly stipulated that without the consent of the author and without remuneration, "a building that is a work of architecture or a plan of such a building for the purpose of its reconstruction, carried out after consultation with an organization under Article 40" – in this sense is the norm of Art. 15, paragraph 2 of the law which allows the owner of the architectural work to destroy it and reconstruct it without the author being able to oppose it. As long as the architectural composition "1300 years Bulgaria" is not declared as an immovable cultural value, the restrictions laid down in the Cultural Heritage Act related to the removal or relocation of cultural monuments will not apply to it".

In an open letter, reacting to the intent of SMC, the Union of Bulgarian Artists took a full stance in defending the idea of preserving the architectural and artistic synthesis in front of the National Palace of Culture, pointing out that it is part of the Bulgarian history and its removal not only will not erase it but will only harm the Bulgarian art. Members of the Union defined the monument as innovative for its time, and to this day, despite ruin, it "bears an epic impression". Its symbolic architecture, stripped "naturally" out of details now, is even more impressive and sounds even more dramatic and completely contemporary, writes in the open letter of the alliance.

The decision of SMC acknowledges the artistic significance of the bronze sculptures by prof. Valentin Starchev along with his contribution and role in the development of monumental art as a proof of the treasured values in his works, regardless of the turn of the times. It concludes that "the rethinking and re-imaging of the elements of the old monument under professor Starchev could lead to a new concept, while preserving the author's artistic message and exhibited in a contemporary and original way. The sculptural composition, placed in an appropriate architectural environment, can acquire a contemporary and actual embodiment of the author's design, preserving its sacredness."

The Benefit of Doubt and Closing Remarks

There has always been a concern about the "real" value and meaning of art. Since the very first artwork people have argued about the message it bears, the feelings it prompts and the impression it delivers. Paradoxically, some of the most famous artworks were subjects of public disapproval and

even dissent, most notably the Tour de Eifel, the Pyramid of Louvre and Sagrada Familia, just to make these very same monuments symbols of their societies and dwellings. But as Kenneth Clark reminded us on the back of a quote from W.B. Yeats[226] in his famous "Civilization", Art sometimes depend solely on the good will, individual characteristics and selfish desires of those who can afford to invest in it through the ages, refusing to pay homage to the general moods of their times instead following some transcendent or imagined civilization standards of beauty, aesthetics and finesse. Thus, the true contribution or value of a monument-be it even a by-product of an inhumane regime, is hard to tell or denounce guided by its context or timing.

It is not surprising that as Manol Glishev, a prominent political and social activist said in this regard:

> *"[…] the Nazi monuments were pretty well done as well. They are removed because European societies have judged that these monuments express inhuman ideas, not because they were supposedly ugly or inappropriate. Bulgarian churches and soldiers have been abolished because the Communist authorities have wanted in their place to erect their own monuments to alter (and replace) the nation's historical memory. Today, a process of overturning this communist experience is slowly running"*[227].

In line with the abovementioned brief historical overview of Bulgarian fondness of Russia, Glishev finds out that in the Bulgarian society, "there is a dispute about historical memory, and it has to be resolved on the basis of politics and morality, not on the professional opinions of sculptors and architects. Sculptors and architects can initially engage exclusively with their political and moral arguments – as citizens, not as professionals. Until the dispute is resolved and it becomes clear to what monuments our nation has stopped, it will come time for the purely aesthetic aspect of the question, namely - how to embody in stone and metal the present will of the Bulgarian people".

"To destroy a monument again (or to move it, although I do not see how such a huge monument can be moved – it can only be dismantled as the plates have been dismantled), to reshape all this space again in front of the National Palace of Culture is hardly the most appropriate solution. And it is not possible at all", Vladimir Levchev a prominent Bulgarian artist believes[228]. On the other hand, Levchev thinks that the monument of Valentin Starchev is in its natural environment for which it

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[226] *"To a Wealthy Man who promised a second Subscription to the Dublin Municipal Gallery if it were proved the People wanted Pictures". (Responsibilities and Other Poems, 1916) http://www.bartleby.com/147/4.html*

[227] *http://www.ploshtadslaveikov.com/ideite-na-natsiyata-i-lichnata-tvorcheska-svoboda/ accessed on Aug, 27th, 2017*

[228] *http://www.ploshtadslaveikov.com/pametnikat-pred-ndk-e-proizvedenie-na/*

was designed. His deep belief is that this monument is a work of art – whether we like it or not, concluding (similarly to Yeats and Clark) that not all works of art and architecture are liked by all people.

> *"It is not possible to take artistic and other professional demands in a purely democratic way, by voting. Because if we consider mass taste, we will have to break down and destroy everything that is not part of the chalga mainstream (streak of modern day Bulgarian vulgar and kitschy subculture) or realism. Realism, including the socialist one, likes the masses. And modernism, including social-modernism, seems ugly to most people,"* is the verdict of Levchev.

To sum it up, it is pretty evident that art is losing ground against the logic of politics, especially in turbulent times where lack of socio-political and above all cultural and historic identity core is apparent. A society like the Bulgarian is finding it hard to identify itself on the back of the current developments in its modern history not least because of decade's long manipulation and controversies which became deeply rooted in the minds of Bulgarians. The methods for political domination of communism did not allow for anything rivaling its supremacy, i.e. other sources of national pride, identity or sovereignty to co-exist next to it thus all items or issues which were not in support of its logic fell victim to its propaganda machinery, being entirely twisted and malformed if not completely obliterated and forbidden.

At the end, it appears that contemporary politicians attempt to fill the void of history injustices and wrongdoings. Of course, it is a process that cannot transform Bulgarians overnight bringing justice and peace to their society. Regardless of the protests for the preservation of the monument "1300 years Bulgaria" and the various arguments brought about its art value and meaning for the overall composition of the environment in front the National Palace of Culture, one cannot deny the right of Sofians to oppose its existence and take measures for its removal. It must be underlined that the very origin of the monument was a by-product of the communist propaganda at the times which just found another way to manifest its center role for the Bulgarian society and its history, reaching out to the very beginning of its history. Awkwardly or not, but this was best epitomized by the dates inscribed in the national coat of arms during the communist regime – 681 and 1944 – the first being marking the foundation of the Bulgarian state and the second standing for the Communist coup-d'état, masked as a liberation from fascism by the Red Soviet army.

In conclusion, art is victimized, most often in order for the public focus to be shifted away from more important agenda. Still art is not to be blamed for following suit with the daily agenda of its time as art is the most vibrant evidence of what is meaningful and valuable for the society that inspires its accomplishments. Artist just share and give us their impressions and projections about the time they and all of us live in be it facilitated by wealthy, educated and benevolent philanthropists or by power obsessed dictators.

Performing Art in Politics to Performing Politics in Art: Sufism and Aesthetic Modernism in Pakistani Politics

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Abstract

This paper explores the nexus between religiosity, performing arts and political culture in Pakistan. Visual and Performing art in Pakistan seems *dead* as the country has an "image" of being conservative and providing no room for Art and Culture, considering it "un-Islamic". This descriptive- analytical paper argues that the performing and visual art are flourishing in Pakistan and the evolution of performing art never stopped – mainly due to the fact that the largest portion of the contribution to visual and performing art is coming from its so-called "conservative" religious community (Moulvis and Sufis) as compared to the professional artists and formally trained performing artists. This paper further argues that while in undertaking political decisions; the general public and decision makers sympathize with religious fraction (Sufis, Sajada Nisins) because of their impressive visual and performing art skills which leave their impression in subconscious mind of the people.

Keywords: Performing Arts, Sufism, Modernism, Politics, Pakistan

Art in Pakistan: A Historical Introduction

Art in the Sub-continent (Pakistan and India) dates back to the third millennium B.C. The Indus Valley Civilization (IVC) or Harappan Civilization was a Bronze Age Civilization (3300–1300 BCE; mature period 2600–1900 BCE) mainly in the northwestern regions of South Asia, extending from what today is Northeast Afghanistan to Pakistan and Northwest India.[229] Along with ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia it was one of three early civilizations of the Old World, and of the three, the most widespread. Even after the separation of India and Pakistan in 1947, both countries claim to be decedents of the Indus Valley civilization. In 711 CE, when the Umayyad Dynasty sent a Muslim Arab army led by Muhammad bin Qasim against the ruler of Sindh, Raja Dahir, Sub-continent got a

[229] *Wright, Rita P. (2009), The Ancient Indus: Urbanism, Economy, and Society.*

chance to adopt a romantic identification which included Islamic Art and Culture. Islamic Art further flourished between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries with Muslim conquests of Sub-continuant.

Pakistan, as an Islamic State was separated from India on the basis of ideological differences. It is the reason that literature especially poetry, calligraphy are the main form of art in Pakistan as compared to music, various forms of dances and visual arts in India.

Literature in Pakistan underwent various evolutionary phases – where Arabic and Persian remained dominant for a long part of its history. Even the famous poets of Urdu (Pakistan's national language) have a significant portion of their poetry written in Persian language. Urdu has a tendency to absorb words from foreign languages thus it couldn't get its status as the main representative of Pakistani art. Also, Urdu is mainly written in Nastaʿlīq font which is one of the main calligraphic hands used in writing the Persian script.

The only form of art which is still very progressive is Pakistani poetry. Pakistani poets are not only famous for their writings, but also for their presentation and performing of their poetry. The Ghazal (a form of poetry) is greatly honored by Pakistani poets. They have contributed greatly to this area/genre of poetry. Artists began creating works of art to promote Pakistan's independence in 1947, although the nation's government was still undecided. In the midst of this tense political uncertainty, writers questioned and critiqued Pakistan's founding in stories and poems. Poetry is a highly respected art and profession in Pakistan, with its preeminent form in Persian, partly due to the long standing affiliation the region had with the Persian Empire.[230] It seems that visual culture of Pakistan including music, dance, sculpture and painting is *dead* but as a matter of fact, they have made considerable progress as popular artistic expressions, often not considered as a part of cultural history of Pakistan.

Analysis of the Current Status of Performing and Visual Art in Pakistan

Theatre, stage drams, TV series and plays began to cement their presence in Pakistan in the early 80s, particularly in Urban Pakistan. Performing art (singing folklores, rhythmic poetry, Sufi chants)

[230] *Terra, The Art Culture of Pakistan, Pakistan Insider, March 12, 2011, http://insider.pk/entertainment/the-art-culture-of-pakistan/*

was the only source of entertainment in rural Pakistan before the arrival of the Internet and cable television. During those days, scripts were written by famous writers and poets and explicit dialogues were introduced by the experienced artists during extempore performances.

However, the reality of the matter is that this type of performing art in on the decline. Private TV channels have changed their entire approach to visual art. This is mainly due to the shift in the perspective of the audience. Audience has not only become more pre-occupied, but people have developed a preference to the Internet over virtually anything aired on television. People who understand the performing art in Pakistan say that the performing arts, particularly theatre, are a vital avenue of education and the formation of a national identity. It is here that a society debates its characteristics and politics, and forms an understanding of its history and context. Among the multiple reasons behind the decline of performing art in Pakistan are the lack of training institutes and investment, divisions amongst audiences on the basis of class and economic power, and the decreasing regularity of performances.[231]

In parallel to people in show business and stage performers, there was another category of people with same characteristics (melodic voices and charismatic characters and personalities).They have strong intuitions, sponsorship, support and contribute widely in the areas of performing art. These people are religious preachers, Moulvis and Sufis.

Performing Arts is a form of art in which artists use their voices or bodies, often in relation to other objects, to convey artistic expression. Many Moulvis in Pakistan live up quite particularly to this definition. They have practiced *taghanni* (reciting in a melodious voice) and compliment their performances with specific dresses or costumes, turbines and even colored beards. Many Moulvis have melodic voices which they use to perform and sing each and every speech – rendering it quite the spectacle. Though originally not a prerequisite to performing these types of sermons, having a beautiful voice and a charismatic personality has become more appealing to the general public. The Moulvis who have beautiful voice have more people on Friday sermons; have more following and appreciation in rural areas. The main talent of these Moulvis is to take their audience into an ecstatic state with their talented musical skills. On a more serious note, these are the very Moulvis who successfully end up in politics because of their huge cult following.

[231] *Dawan, Theatre in decline, February 17, 2010, https://www.dawn.com/news/846389*

Naat Khawans (people who praising the Prophet by singing the poetry) first used Dhikr Chants with the Naat to make it more attractive to the public and then resorted to using musical instruments as well. Hundreds and thousands of Naat Khawans have appeared in recent years. Moreover, many professional singers have turned to Naat Khawani because of more appreciation and fame, and subsequently for the financial benefits they reap.

There is a normative dimension of it as well. Naat Khawani is one of the oldest genres of performing art in South Asia. It never faced a decline. Many children are encouraged to read Naats at their homes and in their schools. This is more common in the Sunni population and especially in Barelvi sect of Islam (the Sunni Hanafi School of jurisprudence, originating in Bareilly (India) with over 200 million followers in South Asia). The founder of this sect Ahmed Raza Khan, himself was a great Naat writer and promoter of Naat Khawani. The majority of the population in Pakistan follows this sect and that is why, Naats are read in almost all religious ceremonies.

Another famous genre of the music is Qawwali, a form of Sufi devotional music and is part of a musical tradition that goes back more than 700 years. Sufi Saint Amir Khusro Dehlavi of the Chisti Order of Sufis is credited with fusing the Persian, Arabic, Turkish, and Indian musical traditions in the late thirteenth century in India to create Qawwali as we know it today. Many Pakistani musical families, who sang modern music, originally derived their identities by singing Qawwalis. But this genre of music was never appreciated by art lovers as Orthodox Perfuming Art despite the fact that it has been sung in every village, every city and every tomb of Saints in almost each and every corner of Pakistan. Qawalli as a genre of music was eventually accepted in Western communities as well. Well known Pakistani Qawwala include: Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Aziz Mian, and Sabri Brothers who gained international fame solely through singing Qawwalis.

Songs honoring famous Qalandars (wandering ascetic Sufi dervishes) are called Qalandri Dhamaal in Pakistan. Dhamaal is a combination of singing, hypnotic repetitive sound of drums, the ritual trance dance and it belongs to the multiple worlds of Pakistani Sufi shrines and is a characteristic of the concrete devotional practices of rural people and the urban poor, especially in Sindh and the Punjab. Dhamaal is a popular South Asian musical sub-genre revolving around Sufi Saints such as Lal Shahbaz Qalandar. These songs typically incorporate Qawwali styles as well as different local folk

styles, such as Bhangra and intense Naqareh or Dhol drumming.[232] Dhamaal has been very popular throughout the sub-continent and considered as a sacred ritual in many rural parts of the Sindh province. It is sung (as a musical genre) as well as performed. Although it is a *full-fledged* performace, it is not considered as part of the Performing Arts. Jürgen Wasim Frembgen defines Dhamaal (also spelled: DHamāl) as:

> "[…] *a full-bodied, active experience of mystical devotion which belongs to the 'social habitus' of the dancers and can be considered a pattern of appropriate ritual action embedded in the local cultures of both Sindhis and Punjabis which is shared among Muslims as well as Hindus'*[233].

However, he too fails to consider its role as a dynamic performance, or subsequently as a vital part of the Performing Arts.

Sufism and Political Culture of Pakistan

The gradual Fluid interaction among Sufis soon evolved into a more structured relationship of master and disciples adding a new level of social complexity.

> *"The Umayyad caliph in Damascus sent an expedition to Baluchistan and Sind in 711 led by Muhammad bin Qasim*[234] *but these military expeditions didn't contribute a lot in the expansion of Islam in this region. It was trade and missionary activity that had a more lasting influence on indigenous culture. Coastal trade and the presence of a Muslim community in Sind facilitated significant cultural exchanges and missionary activity which brought Sufism in its wake."*[235]

Sufis used to live with their Masters and participate in meditational gatherings. After the death of their Master, groups were disbanded.

> *"During the 10th and 11th centuries, Sufi adepts began to organize into groups of masters and their disciples that developed into mystical orders known as tariqas (paths), each with its own distinct doctrines, practices, and spiritual genealogy (silsila) which all members had to study and memorize. Sufis met in mosques, homes,*

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[232] *Malik, Iftikhar Haider (2006). Culture and customs of Pakistan. Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, page 171, ISBN 0-313-33126-X*

[233] *Jürgen Wasim Frembgen (2012), Journal of Sufi Studies, Volume 1, Issue 1, pages 77 – 113. http://booksandjournals.brillonline.com/content/journals/10.1163/221059512x626126*

[234] *Rahman, Fazul, "Islamic Thought in the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent and Middle East" in Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 32, 1973, pp. 194–200.*

[235] *Muhammed Hassanali , Sufi Influence on Pakistani Politics and Culture, Pakistaniaat: A Journal of Pakistan Studies Vol. 2, No. 1 (2010). P.26.*

> *and madrasas, but their chief centers were hospices and retreat centers (khanaqahs or tekkes). These usually contained tombs of former sheikhs and members of the order, and often became popular shrines that would attract devotees seeking blessings (baraka) from the saint."*[236]

The Sufi orders were established, more often lead by a disciple of the former Sheikh which followers then would begin to abide by. The Shrine of the Sheikh is considered as a sacred place and regulated by a Gaddi Nishin or Sajjada Nishin (the person who sits in the seat of the former Sheikh). This Gaddi Nishin is as respected as the Sheikh himself due to his descent from the bloodline of Sufis and by substitution the bloodline of the Prophet Muhammad himself.

> *"The Shrine's spiritual relationship was reinforced by an economic one: the sajjada nishin annually made a circuit of the tribes and villages traditionally tied to the Shrine to collect nazar (contributions). The circuit further reinforced the association of a Shrine with a particular territory over which it had direct influence. Religious and political structures, however, had never been merely separate but-parallel ones. Saints, since they controlled access to God, had an enormous influence over their followers and could use their influence for political purposes. This attracted the attention of the ruling class which, for spiritual as well as for political reasons, sought cooperation from the khanaqahs (building designed specifically for gatherings of a Sufi brotherhood or Tariqa) in maintaining political stability in the country. The Muslim rulers, realizing the political importance of the Saints, tried to bring the Pirs (Sufi Sheikhs) under their control by granting them large properties and contributing to the building of Shrines. Government support of the Shrines was one way of ensuring the legitimacy of the ruler among the population."*[237]

During the Post-colonial era, these Shrines and their Sajada Nisins gained legitimacy by the Pakistani Government due to the fact that they were considered among the most influential personalities in their respective areas. These personalities controlled these areas and subsequently worked as the *administrative machinery* of the newly born state of Pakistan. People from rural areas living in the territories of these shrines had spiritual affiliations with their Tareqa and Pir, a matter which assisted their ability to control, change and influence change in the newly born state even more effectively.

[236] *Ibid,*
[237] *Ibid*

Muhammed Hassanali[238] refers to two type of Sufism in Pakistan. The first is a populist Sufism of the rural masses, associated with religious rituals and practices that include belief in the intercessory powers of Saints, pilgrimage and veneration at their Shrines, and a binding spiritual relationship between the Pir (Sufi Sheikh) and Murid (Disciple). Muslims in some rural areas of Pakistan identify themselves as followers of a specific Pir, living or dead, and seek his intercession and intervention in solving their life obstacles (worldly or spiritual), and for salvation. There is belief in the powers of both the person (i.e. Pirs) mostly due to the legends depicting their abilities to perform miracles (Karamah). Many of these Pirs are either landlords, or are associated with the traditional landowning interests. The other type is scholastic or intellectual Sufism, a more recent phenomenon predominantly in urban areas which is also becoming increasingly popular among the more educated elite of the population. Influenced by the writings of earlier (Medieval) Sufis, and by the spiritual experiences of the Masters of the Suhrawardi and Naqshbandi orders, these modern Sufis are rearticulating Islamic metaphysics as an answer to Western materialism. For them, Sufism is the heart of Islam, and Islamic revival begins with the spiritual reawakening of individual Muslims.

What is evidently common among both types of Sufism is that they have an unchallenged influence upon the hearts and minds of the people within the political decision making process. Hassanali agrees with the political influence of the first type of Sufism which is populist one by saying *"Pir families use their spiritual influence to gain election to the national and provincial legislatures."*[239] Many politicians including former Prime Ministers pride themselves by having had such affiliations.

But we think that the educated population and the followers of Islamic Metaphysical Orders also prefer to select spiritual people as their representatives. It is a common observation that it is very easy for a religious scholar to get Sufi affiliation in Pakistan. Many Sufi orders prefer to have religious educated, public speakers with good voices and influential personalities to have with them in order to gain the attraction of the people.

Shermeen Bano, an independent researcher from Lahore in Pakistan, highlighted Sufism as a space of modern religious identity and its impact on religious indoctrinations in Pakistan. Sufism acts as a chief source of religious identity in the country. Mystical tradition continues to be a significant

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[238] *Muhammed Hassanali , Sufi Influence on Pakistani Politics and Culture, Pakistaniaat: A Journal of Pakistan Studies Vol. 2, No. 1 (2010). P. 42*

[239] *Muhammed Hassanali , Sufi Influence on Pakistani Politics and Culture, Pakistaniaat: A Journal of Pakistan Studies Vol. 2, No. 1 (2010). P. 42*

aspect of religious lives of a large majority of Pakistanis despite their diverse backgrounds. It is very important to note that the educated people in Pakistan have more appreciation for art as well as mysticism because it provides an alternate to the extremism. This is reflected in their electoral behavioral patterns as well. Repeated selection of Yousaf Raza Gilani, former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Vice Chairman of PTI, and Makhdoom Muhammad Javed Hashmi, former President of Pakistan Muslim League, are some of the examples of this type of electoral behavior.

Another example is Dr. Tahir ul Qadri, a Sufi mystic and an influential political leader. He had been very active since 2015 and still is today. He runs a network of school, colleges and universities and claim of mobilize masses on a very short call.

> *"A religious moderate from the gentle Sufi tradition, Mr. Qadri published a weighty tract against terrorism in 2010. He is able to tap into the religious beliefs of the majority of Pakistanis, who broadly follow the Sufi way, not the austere Saudi-influenced radical Sunni Islam that has come to dominate public debate in the country."*[240]

If we make a comparative analysis of Sufism and Orthodox Islam, unlike Orthodox Islam that is often perceived as rigid and extremist, Sufism through its message of love, tolerance and equality creates unique social spaces of religious diversity. Modernization and traditional practices merge and give rise to wide ranging religious and cultural practices within these social spaces; Sufi Shrines of Pakistan. Sufi ideology therefore, preserves a distinct Muslim Identity by abandoning conformity to Orthodox or conventional subject matters of Islamic thought. For this reason, Sufism is often criticized by the proponents of Orthodox Islam for introducing unlawful changes within the basic premise of Islam by intermingling religious aspects with cultural facets of the region. Some of these changes include ritualistic practices of Sama and Dhamal at Sufi shrines among many others.[241]

Concluding Aesthetic Modernism in Pakistani Politics

It is evident that although Islam is the ideology of Pakistan, liberal, progressive, democratic people welcome modernization. On the other hand, there is a large faction of people who tend to be

[240] *The Economist, The mystery of Tahir ul Qadri, https://www.economist.com/blogs/banyan/2013/01/pakistani-politics*

[241] *Shermeen Bano, Sufism vs Orthodox Islam: A Pakistan Case Study of Sufism as Space of Modern Identity, http://n11.cgpublisher.com/proposals/209/index_html*

moderate but who refuse to accept modernization in its real sense. This is mainly due to the perceived threat of coming in direct conflict with Islamic ideology. Thus Sufi instruments of Sufi music and dances help in providing a middle ground for these people which constitute the largest number of population. On another note, Orthodox religious scholars have also understood the gravity of situation and also encourage the use of Performing Arts in their daily sermons in order to attract the attention of the moderate and educated middle class (their main target group). A religious scholar with a melodic voice or a Sufi with his dancing gestures and mystic rituals complimented by music may fascinate any modern or moderate youngster alike.

As a conclusion, if Performing Arts are all about aesthetic modernism, music and dance, then the situation of Performing Arts in Pakistan is improving – the largest proportion of improvement coming from the religious community itself. It has also been observed in recent years that the religious scholars or Sufis are more successful in getting the sympathy of the people because of their temporal presentations of performing arts. Parallel to this, the Shrines and their Sajada Nisins culture is also flourishing not because of their Sufi orders or religious indoctrinations but because of their usage of the Performing Arts (dress code, music, dhamal, etc).

Implementing the Dutch Cycling Model in Lebanon: A Multi-disciplinary Approach of Social Sciences

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Abstract

Considering the high traffic congestion rate in Lebanon and its negative impact on the urban air quality, the Dutch Cycling Model is proposed as a potential solution. The reason being that it can help alleviate the problems of the high energy dependency, lack of efficiency in urban transport, and the environmental/health hazards that Beirut faces. This paper looks at how the different social science approaches such as behavioral economics, social psychology, sociology, and social shaping by technology can influence this travel behavior change in Lebanon and encourage cycling as means of transport within coastal cities.

Keywords: Cycling, Multi-disciplinary, Energy, Efficiency, Urban, Transport, Lebanon

Introduction: Lebanon, Congestion, and Cycling

Lebanon, nearly rectangular in shape with an area of 10,452 km^2, stretches from north to south along the eastern side of the Mediterranean. The entire West coast is bordered by the Mediterranean Sea providing a flat coastal area that runs from north to south. One might assume that with a moderate Mediterranean weather and flat coastal cities, people would be keen on cycling. However, the opposite is true.

In fact, Lebanon is known for its high traffic congestions that could last for hours in short distances. Vehicular transport is a primary factor contributing to poor urban air quality in Lebanon.[242] This is particularly seen in dense cities which are high in population and heavy in traffic. In the capital Beirut, air pollutant concentrations were found to exceed air quality standards and guidelines with

[242] *El-Fadel, M. (2001). Environmental impact assessment of traffic improvement in a highly congested urban area: the Beirut Urban Transport Project. Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal, 10, pp. 73-83.*

about 67% of non-methanic VOC emissions originating from the on-road transport sector.[243] A recent study on Lebanese traffic policemen for individual exposure to benzene showed that Lebanon has an exposure (mean concentration = 48.8 μgm^{-3})[244] higher than that measured in Bologna/Italy (mean = 17.3 μgm^{-3})[245], in Ioannina/Greece (mean = 30 μgm^{-3})[246], in Prague/Czech Republic (mean = 6.99 and in May = 4.53 μgm^{-3})[247] (Rossnerova et al., 2009) and even the highly congested Bangkok/Thailand (mean = 38.24 μgm^{-3})[248]. Considering the smaller size of Beirut in comparison, this signals a red flag on the high energy dependency, lack of efficiency in urban transport, and the environmental/health hazards.

Cycling, non-existent in Lebanon and inspired by the Dutch Cycling Model, remains the simplest solution to tackle air pollution and high energy use (as cycling consumes far less non-renewable resources than any motorized transport mode). In addition, cycling helps in decreasing noise pollution, requires a small fraction of parking space in comparison to cars, is economical, and requires less public infrastructure costs.[249] This paper will look into how different social science approaches such as behavioral economics, social psychology, sociology, and social shaping by technology can be used to influence this travel behavior change in Lebanon and encourage cycling as means of transport within coastal cities.

Behavioral Economics (BE)

Standard economic models assume that individuals assess options independently from each other and select the one that delivers the highest utility based on consequent costs and benefits calculated for each alternative. In addition, environmental problems are often analyzed as market failures and

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[243] Waked, A., Afif, C., (2012). Emissions of air pollutants from road transport in Lebanon and other countries in the Middle East region. Atmos Environ. 61, pp. 446–452.

[244] Borgie, M., Garat, A., Cazier, F., DDelbende, A., Allogre, D., Ledoux, F., Courcot, D., Shirali, P., Dagher, Z., (2014). Traffic-related air pollution: A pilot exposure assessment in Beirut, Lebanon. Chemosphere. 96 pp. 122-128.

[245] Barbieri, A., Violante, F.S., Sabatini, L., Graziosi, F., Mattioli, S., (2008). Urinary biomarkers and low-level environmental benzene concentration: assessing occupational and general exposure. Chemosphere 74 pp. 64–69.

[246] Pilidis, G.A., Karakitsios, S.P., Kassomenos, P.A., Kazos, E.A., Stalikas, C.D., (2009). Measurements of benzene and formaldehyde in a medium sized urban environment. Indoor/outdoor health risk implications on special population groups. Environ. Monit. Assess, 150, pp. 285–294.

[247] Rossnerova, A., Spatova, M., Rossner, P., Solansky, I., Sram, R.J., (2009). The impact of air pollution on the levels of micronuclei measured by automated image analysis. Mutat. Res. 669, pp. 42–47.

[248] Arayasiri, M., Mahidol, C., Navasumrit, P., Autrup, H., Ruchirawat, M., (2010). Biomonitoring of benzene and 1,3-butadiene exposure and early biological effects in traffic policemen. Sci. Total Environ, 408 pp. 4855–4862.

[249] Pucher J., Buehler, R., (2008). Making Cycling Irresistible: Lessons from The Netherlands, Denmark, and Germany. Transport Reviews, 28 (4) pp. 495-528.

not as a problem in the way individuals think and choose, which allows free-riders on the constructive behavior of others.[250] Unlike traditional economics which assumes rationality, behavioral economists often stress on the "irrational" aspect of decision making often referred to as "behavioral failures" which make individuals act against their own long-term interest.[251] In addition, this suggests that individual preferences are 'reference dependent, meaning that decisions have a comparative element inclined towards 'loss aversion', i.e. they prefer avoiding losses to acquiring gains which is inconsistent with rational behavior.[252] Price factors and tax incentives have also been shown to have an impact on behavior and conservations[253] by controlling heterogeneity in tastes for energy-saving activities, yet what BE adds is the hyperbolic discount rate implies that people will be farsighted when planning if both costs and benefits occur in the future yet make short-sighted decisions if costs or benefits are immediate.[254]

A question asked by Pollitt and Shaorshadze was why do individuals indulge in immediate gratification and knowingly compromise their long term well-being?[255] After all, as many scientific studies conclude, bicycling is healthy on different levels of physical activity, obesity rates, cardiovascular health, and morbidity, yet people are not ready to switch.[256] This is where BE introduces the familiarity or bias/status-quo, which we should keep in mind, that creates a reluctance in consumers to switch to the better alternative despite knowing its benefits. It can also be explained by the fact that people prefer rewards sooner than later, therefore they will not see the long-term benefits of cycling compared to the immediate comfort and convenience of the car.

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[250] Baddeley, M. (2011). Energy, the environment and behaviour change: A survey of insights from Behavioural economics, University of Cambridge, Faculty of Economics, Retrieve at: http://www.econ.cam.ac.uk/research/repec/cam/pdf/cwpe1162.pdf.

[251] Kahneman D and Tversky A (1979). Prospect Theory -An Analysis of Decision under Risk, Econometrica, vol. 47, no. 2, pp. 263-292.

[252] GHK Consulting Ltd (2010). Behavioural economics & energy using products: scoping research on discounting behaviour and consumer reference points - Final Report to DEFRA, DEFRA, London

[253] Metcalf, Gilbert E. & Hassett, Kevin A., (1995). Investment under alternative return assumptions comparing random walks and mean reversion, Journal of Economic Dynamics and Control, Elsevier 19, pp 1471-1488.

[254] Camerer, G. and Loewenstein, G. (2004). Behavioral economics: past, present, future. Advancesin Behavioral Economics, ed. C. Camerer, G. Loewenstein and M. Rabin, 3–51. New York/Princeton, NJ: Sage/Princeton University Press.

[255] Pollitt, M. G. and Shaorshadze, I. (2011) The Role of Behavioral Economics in Energy and Climate Policy, University of Cambridge, Electricity Policy Research Group, Available from: http://www.eprg.group.cam.ac.uk/.

[256] Bassett, D., Pucher, J., Buehler, R., Thompson, D., Crouter, S., (2008). Walking, cycling, and obesity rates in Europe, North America, and Australia. J. Phys. Act. Health 5, pp. 795–814.

On the other hand, BE can help in implementing the Dutch Cycling model in Lebanon by making use of the 'irrational' behavior, which focuses on the present cost rather than the future cost by introducing different taxes, fees, and regulations on vehicles that do not exist at the moment. Compulsory annual testing for vehicle emission levels, determining emission-related taxation rates, and the enforcement of controls and penalties are some of the regulations that if put into practice can lead to more commuters interested in cycling due to loss aversion. In addition, with the high hourly parking rate in Beirut (and some of the other coastal cities), programs that offer short-term rentals for a nominal fee (such as a onetime or annual membership fee), or bicycles that can be picked up and returned at designated spots around the city will suddenly become the more 'presently-convenient' choice for many commuters by saving them a lot.

Given the political and financial nature of Lebanon, it is also important to note that some of the policy makers are bounded by the same rationality, or irrationality, as those of the consumers. Therefore it becomes as important to use the BE concepts on them in order to push the cycling policies forward. Since Lebanon does not have adequate economic resources to finance many of its planned projects, the Government often seeks external investments and international loans, particularly for large infrastructure projects such as that of the Beirut Urban Transport Project financed by the World Bank.[257] By stressing to policy makers that cycling projects do not require such excessive amount of loans to implement yet target the same issues, they will become more 'appealing' by being 'presently' more convenient as well.

Social Psychology (SP)

To understand how the human behavior functions in regards to energy consumption and transportation, psychology is used to explain the cognitive process behind it. By understanding what motivates the individuals into doing what they do, SP looks at the collective individual behavior and their influences through social norms. This poses a challenge to implementing the cycling model in Lebanon because according to current SP trend, individual behavior of consumers is inclined towards fear of cycling due to the lack of safety measures and car convenience. However, what SP also suggests is the use of tailored information that can influence behavioral change. Yet within delivering tailored information, SP also warns about the boomerang effect which may result in an

[257] *CDR, Council for Development and Reconstruction (1998). January progress report, Lebanese Government, Beirut.*

increase of the undesired behavior among individuals who perform that behavior at a lower rate.[258] Given the fact that cycling is already not implemented in Lebanon, the boomerang effect simply means that things remain as they presently are, and therefore there is no fear about delivering descriptive normative information; The question thus becomes, how and to whom to tailor it for?

Neighborhoods and Communities

Individualized Marketing can be used for different programs that target neighborhoods and promote cycling as a mean to transform neighborhoods into greener, healthier, safer, and more family-friendly oriented neighborhoods. For one, neighborhood safety awareness programs can be aimed to reduce driving and increase use of walking and cycling and can be implemented by local municipalities or communities such as the "In Town Without My Car!" program which affected over 111 million inhabitants in 1,035 participating cities and 428 supporting cities in 2003.[259] Health oriented programs can focus on the health benefits of cycling, such as the 'Get Rid of the Sack' program in Odense that targeted overweight middle-aged men. Programs tailored for young children can be aimed to be more fun and interactive by involving candy, balloons, free bike accessories and other gifts to children learning to cycle. In addition, involving communities and informing them on how cycling implementation can affect their environment allows the facilitation of public participation in the decision-making process (which will be seen in the sociology section).

Young Professionals and the Workplace

In Lebanon, it is important to note that the lack of understanding of the economic impacts of congestion on users and the urban economy is one of the reasons why people don't see the issue for more than what it is. With the young professionals, it becomes easier to adopt knowledge-intensive high-technology management approaches for informing them about the benefits of cycling, best cycling routes, and comparisons between traffic congestions and cycling. Additionally such information can be transferred by programs and events that target and encourage first-time riders.

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[258] Schultz, P. W., Nolan, J. M., Cialdini, R. B., Goldstein, N. J. and Griskevicius, V. (2007). The Constructive, Destructive, and Reconstructive Power of Social Norms, Psychological Science, 18, pp. 429-434, Available from:http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/bpl/psci/2007/00000018/00000005/art00012 & http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2007.01917.x

[259] Cairns, S., Sloman, L.,Newson, C.,Anable, J., Kirkbride, A.,Goodwin, P., (2004). Smarter choices – Changing the way we travel. UCL, Transport for Quality of Life, The Robert Gordon University and Eco-Logica. Final report to the Department for Transport, London, UK.

These events can be organized by Beirut by Bike, or local municipalities as well as involve closing down certain roads for cars for an entire day to only allow cycling commuters. These promotional events may start as a day event, become weekend events, and depending on their rate of integration and acceptance may become over weeks, months…until they become permanent. A review of before-and-after evaluations for such promotional events and cases found an increase in bicycling in 8 of 10 worksite programs.[260]

Schools and Universities

Unfortunately for schools in Lebanon, it will prove difficult to use any social psychology campaigns at this early stage of the cycling model implementation for several reasons. The first and foremost is the lack of solid road safety to completely trust children on the streets by themselves going to school, or to have parents trusting the system enough to have their children on their own cycling. In addition to that, most children in Lebanon live considerably far from their schools to have cycling as an option. However, the case is different for university students for several reasons. Being adults, and the fact that they move to live closer to their university allows promotional campaigns to be easier. Aside from traffic congestion, parking in cities and around universities is a major issue to students and can be quite expensive. Around the two major universities in Beirut (AUB and LAU) parking memberships could range up to 200 USD/month or 10 USD/day. Although this can also fall under BE, the promotional aspect that is targeted to students utilizes SP in order to highlight the convenience of cycling. In addition, other types of promotional campaigns can include bicycle film festivals, recreational bicycle events around campuses, and bicycle awareness campaigns.[261]

Sociology: The Accidental Energy Consumer

Up until this point, both BE and SP have been investigating how decision making can be influenced based on an individual's point of view. However, sociology points out the social practices that are specific to certain historic periods and domains that may govern behavior as well. Policies may for instance ensure that low-emission vehicles are operating on the roads (as suggested in BE by taxing emissions), yet how can we account that efficient technology will not create potentials for new

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[260] *Australian Greenhouse Office, (2005). Evaluation of Austalian TravelSmart Projects in the ACT, South Australia, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia: 2001–2005. Department of the Environment and Heritage*

[261] *Horton, D., Salkeld, A., (2006). Bike film festivals: Taking a cultural approach to cycling promotion in the UK. World Transport Policy and Planning 12, pp.36–44.*

energy intensive practices?[262] Does the ability to afford paying for more energy intensive practices justify engaging in such practices? As Shove illustrates, the spread of the washing machine got people washing their clothes more frequently simply because they can, and cooling systems changed the way houses are designed pushing them to lose natural cooling aspects such as verandas.[263] Such practices are what create the "accidental energy consumer". It is worth mentioning here that before the 1975 civil war, Lebanon was much "greener" and energy friendly with a public transportation system that included a national rail.

With people getting around on the rail, cities were much more pedestrian friendly than they are now (also related to SST discussed later). After 16 years of war and unrest, it does not come as a surprise that the infrastructure was greatly damaged and a lot of the cities had to be rebuilt. In an attempt to quickly revive the country, the rail was ignored and does not exist anymore, and the focus was on roads; this directed the country to becoming a highly car-dependent society. Up to this day, reconstructions are being done, yet the more they focus on highways the more the gap in the transport system grows resulting in substantial losses in improvement opportunities for the urban transport system in which cycling is included.

To remain headed in the same direction is to continue increasing pollution from urban transport, to continue increasing vehicle ownership, and to continue being energy intensive. After the war and reconstructions, the transport demographics shifted to the extent where car ownership became as high as three-persons/car[264] with private vehicles constituting 90% of the Lebanese vehicle fleet compared to the 2% of public buses.[265] Another consequence with this sudden rise in vehicle ownership was the chaotic parking that followed. Besides being a major contributor to traffic congestion, especially in Beirut, it has also forced pedestrians from the sidewalk not only jeopardizing their safety but also discouraging people from walking short distances. Many are worried of the safety risks of cycling in Lebanon, but they will not be removed until a traumatic and unifying national experience takes place through lobbying and protests. Media should also play a

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[262] Wilhite, H. (2007). Will efficient technologies save the world? A call for new thinking on the ways that end-use technologies affect energy using practices, translated by http://www.eceee.org/conference_proceedings/eceee/2007/Panel_1/1.043/: European Council for an Energy Efficient Economy

[263] Shove, E. (2003). Converging Conventions of Comfort, Cleanliness and Convenience, Journal of Consumer Policy,26(4), 395-418, Available from: http://dx.doi.org/10.1023/A%3A1026362829781.

[264] ERM, Environmental Resources Management (1995). Lebanon, assessment of the state of the Environment, CDR, Beirut.

[265] Dar Al-Handasah (1995). Maintenance and rehabilitation of Lebanon road network, CDR, Beirut.

role in not painting cyclists as obstructive and dangerous law breakers, and constraint on car access or parking should no longer be seen as anti-car and a threat to business rather than a push towards a greener community. One way to change the view towards cycling would be to have some "Cycling Ambassadors". They could be any set of people ranging from government officials, to CEOs of socially responsible businesses, or even public figures, and have them engage in cycling to set an example as role models for others to follow. They can be asked to appear in one-time events (such as those mentioned in SP) or to do it on a more regular basis. Such actions can help shift the direction of reconstruction projects to follow the example of the Dutch streets and roads that are built today as the result of deliberate social movements and political decisions in the 1970s and turn away from the car centric policies.[266] The Dutch mass cycling protests in the 1970s, and those of today in some countries will change habits and perceptions. Those who remember Lebanon before the war would tell you stories about how much more beautiful it was to walk in its cities, its markets, and its small streets; they might not to choose to cycle today, but their children might.

Social Shaping for and by Technology (SST)

As it was previously mentioned, one of the reasons Lebanon had more parks and was pedestrian-friendly was the fact that the railway was used for transportation before the civil war. With the community becoming more car-dependent, more highways were needed, bigger roads were developed and parking spaces increased. The parking component was envisaged to include underground parking garages on sites owned by municipalities, and those sites were mostly public gardens. Despite these sites not being optimally located to address the parking deficit, public garden started slowly disappearing to become car parking spaces. This ongoing shift moves the country in the opposite direction of a sustainable, clean, energy efficient, and congestion-free future. Less public gardens means less places to walk in, less places to cycle in, and more people relying on cars to move around even in short distances. This is only a fraction of how SST can influence the behaviour of the society. Despite being used pro-cars and counter to cycling so far, it is not too late to change course by implementing SST.

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[266] *Bicycle Dutch (2011). How the Dutch got their Cycling Infrastructure. Available at: https://bicycledutch.wordpress.com/2011/10/20/how-the-dutch-got-their-cycling-infrastructure/*

By applying Latour's (1991) association and substitution dimensions (AND/OR dimensions) shown (see Figure 10), our cycling policy at its current state would be in phase (1) where the majority of commuters are in the anti-program.[267] Phase (2) and (3) represent using the BE and SP models as discussed above, but phase (4) can only be achieved by integrating SST into the Lebanese cycling model. To do so, bicycle boulevards, signed bicycle routes, and other traffic calming features that discourage motor vehicle traffic, such as speed bumps, diverters (bulb-outs, neck-downs, or chicanes), and traffic circles will be needed. This transformation then becomes integrated with increasing safety that can significantly raise the perception of cycling convenience and the likelihood of bicycling to work, universities, and neighborhoods.[268]

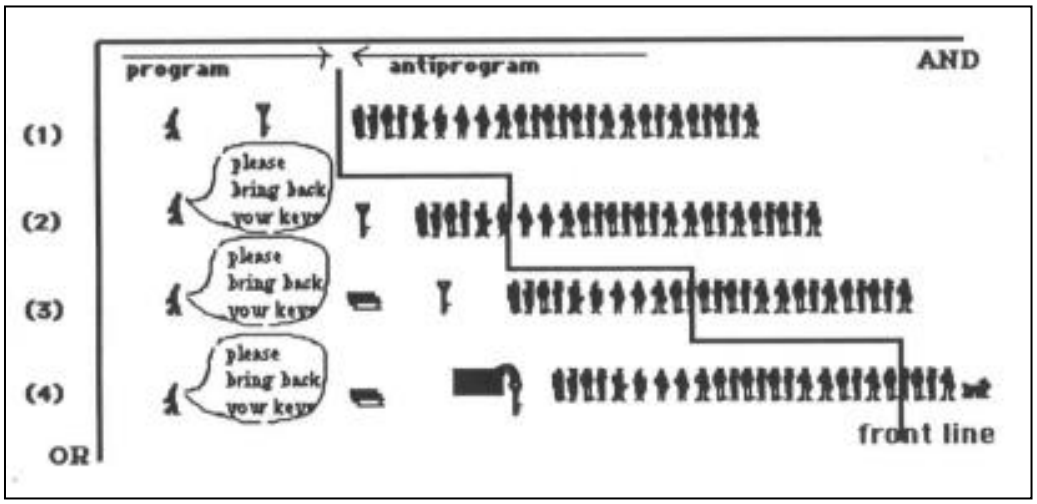

Figure 10: Latour's AND/OR Dimensions in Policy Implementation

A study found that people who agreed that there was bicycle "tracks" along their route and possible shortcuts were about twice as likely to bicycle as those who did not (Titze et al., 2008).[269] Having all those features will encourage less experienced cyclists and thus attract a larger number of commuters

[267] *Latour, B. (1991). Technology is society made durable in Law, J., (ed) A Sociology of Monsters: Essays on Power, Technology, and Domination,Routledge, 103-131, Available from: http://www.bruno-latour.fr/sites/default/files/46-TECHNOLOGY-DURABLE-GBpdf.pdf.*

[268] *Noland, Robert B & Kunreuther, Howard, (1995). Short-run and long-run policies for increasing bicycle transportation for daily commuter trips. Transport Policy, 2, pp. 67-79*

[269] *Titze, S., Stronegger, W.J., Janschitz, S., Oja, P., (2008). Association of built-environment, social-environment and personal factors with bicycling as a mode of transportation among Austrian city dwellers. Prev. Med. 47, pp. 252–259.*

as shown in phase (4) indicating the larger number of actors attaching themselves to this innovation. In addition, these traffic calming procedures will also attract pedestrians as much as cyclists.[270]

Conclusion

The Dutch cycling model could be the key to unlocking Lebanon's traffic congestion problems, high energy inefficiency in transport, and its low urban air quality. While behavioral economists may find that the lack of legislations such as emission taxation and policies are allowing car-users to free ride, social psychologists may find that the lack of targeted individual awareness on the policy is the problem. Still, the transition to a cycling-friendly community cannot be achieved without the infrastructural changes suggested by SST. It is only through a comprehensive approach if all disciplines that the engagement of all the actors in the cycling model for Lebanon can occur.

[270] *Pucher, J., Dill, J., Handy, S., (2010). Infrastructure, programs, and policies to increase bicycling: An international review. Preventive Medecine, 50 pp. 106-125.*

Momentums of Change: Culture in Understanding Strategic Planning and Reform in the Public Sector

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Abstract

Organizational culture is a fundamental aspect of strategic thought, strategic management, and strategic planning. It has impact on an institution's employees, stakeholders, its external relationships and internal environment. Whether in the public or the private sector, it is up to the administration's leader to establish their own specific strategy in alignment of unique organizational culture with a competitive space which is tailored to the administration's mandate and overall vision. The purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between organizational culture and strategic planning, as well as investigate the importance of a unique organizational culture in creating powerful strategies which give institutions and administrations a competitive and an efficient, feasible, and successful mandate. This research will tackle the implementation of this concept in the Lebanese public sector, as well as the concepts of reform and change within Lebanese understanding.

Keywords: Reform, Culture, Public Sector, Strategic Planning

Background and Introduction

Eldridge and Crombie (1974), deem the culture of an organization as "*the unique configuration of norms, beliefs, ways of behaving and so on that characterize the manner in which groups and individuals combine to get things done."* In a broader sense, it may also be defined as the set of fundamental assumptions which members of an institution, administration, or an organization share within their workspace. The culture of an organization is directly linked to the values the institution wishes to transcend, and wishes to incorporate into its image and vision, as well as into the manner in which it functions to achieve its vision. The culture of an organization must also be willing to be somewhat flexible, and to incorporate assumptions, adaptations, perceptions and learning experiences which may be

encountered under different unforeseen circumstances. Without a supportive cultural organization, and a clear vision, even the best-designed strategic plans may collapse during the primary stages of its execution and implementation – this in turn suggesting foundational and indispensable need for awareness of the importance of strategic planning, as well as awareness of managers, directors, and administrative leaders to be involved in their organizational culture, as well as involved with their employees, teams and consultants. A good strategic plan is comprehensive, encompasses the culture of the organization, and factors in the entire hierarchy of the administration in question.[271]

Methods of developing an effective strategic plan which factors in organizational culture, its vision, and its staff include: allowing for participation of stakeholders in strategic planning; aligning strategic planning with every day performance goals and internal management; focusing the majority of planning efforts on feasibility; creating a link between the administration's plan and the individual performance plans, and finally, eliminating cultural barriers to a strategic planning through keeping them as a foundation to the plan itself. Moreover, a successful strategic plan process is a systematic, documented, and feasible manner of determining the key decisions that an organization, must achieve in order to thrive over the term of its leader, director, manager, etc. Well-designed and effectively facilitated planning processes will yield practical, and achievable strategic plans which will improve the long-term performance of the administration.[272]

The importance of culture in strategic planning, as well as its incorporation within the vision of the administration also lies in its ability to improve the morale and motivation of the staff, as well as their efficient performance. Considering the impact and importance of organizational culture in strategic planning is crucial, it is vital that administrations contemplate the possibility of shifting their administration's culture while developing and implementing an updated or improved strategy. This generally occurs when a shift of leadership takes place, when a new board is elected, or when a new leader comes into power and brings his/her own vision of what they think the direction of the administration might be in the future. Moving from this reality, if cultural alignment is not at the heart of the strategic plan, the new strategy would likely fail in its preliminary stages of takeoff. A firm and structured organizational culture is one of the most sustainable competitive advantages an

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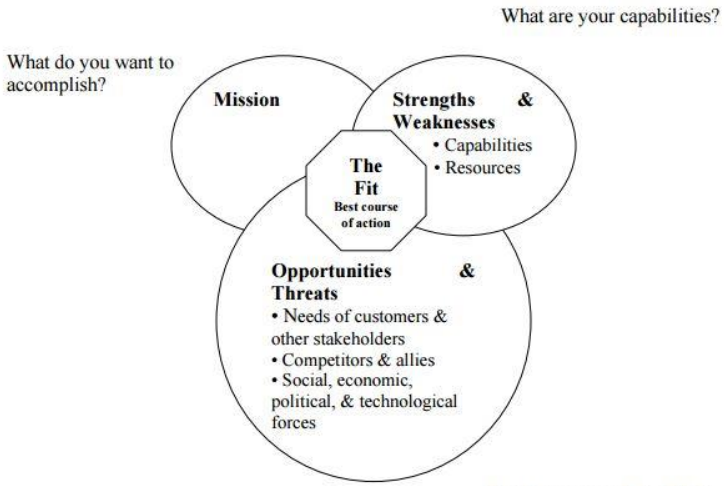
[271] *Alliance for Non-profit Management (2002), What is strategic planning? Retrieved from: http://www.allianceonline.org/faqs.html/*
[272] *Ibid*

administration may possess because it is unique to the administration. The collection of shared norms or values within a workplace, whether positive, negative, motivating, demoralizing, relaxing or stressful have positive influences on feasibility and performance, while others negative environmental and cultural realities are suggestive or contribute to organizational obstacles in functioning and getting things done.[273]

Strategic Planning Basics: What is Strategic Planning as a Concept?

Strategic planning is the planning process upon which organizations, institutions, corporations, and administrations in both the public and private sectors develop strategies for accomplishing visions, missions and objectives (see Figure 11). Strategic planning has four basic elements: studying the organization's environment, formulation of the strategy, implementation of the strategy and the evaluation of the strategy – internally and externally. The four aforementioned steps lay the foundation for a successive strategic process whereby the administration in question analyzes its current standing, prepares strategies, works on ensuring their implementation, and then reviews their strategic feasibility (Barry 1997).



Source: Bryan W. Barry (1997). *Strategic planning workbook for nonprofit organizations*. Saint Paul, MN: Amherst Wilder Foundation, p. 7.

Figure 11: "The Fit" by Bryan Barry (1997)

[273] *Ibid*

The above figure (Figure 11), illustrates the intersection of the mission with the administration's strengths and weaknesses keeping in mind its opportunities and threats. "The Fit" at the center, which lies in the middle of all three intersections, is the ideal formula, strategic plan, for any given administration (Barry 1997).

With reference to Barry (1997), the three main steps to develop a strategic plan in any sector whether public or private are:

- Developing a clear vision based on the organization's core culture and value system.
- Establishing a mission statement which depicts that vision in short-term subordinate goals.
- Specifying the strategies, goals, and objectives which are needed to execute the mission statement and develop feasible, action-based strategic plans.

The Five Essentials of Strategic Planning

As stated throughout the introduction of this paper, strategic planning is not merely a functional or administrative exercise. A feasible strategic plan can make all the difference between being a struggling administration and an innovative, cause-driven administration which truly possesses a vision and mission to make a difference in the public sector within the scope of its mandate. Creating awareness about the paramount importance of strategic planning, not just to survive a short-term project, but to thrive long after the project is completed, must be at the core of administrative training, and at the core of the value system of the individuals in positions of leadership especially within the public sector. Strategic planning is the sole mechanism which takes ideas, inspiration, and visions, and turns them into tangible and implementable realities on the ground. A public servant at all levels must be aware of this reality, as well as the reality that their administration will not be able to function on a basic level without a strong, clear vision materialized in a strategic plan.[274]

[274] *Baldrige National Quality Program (2002). Criteria for performance excellence. Washington, DC: National Institute of Standards and Technology of the US Department of Commerce.*

The Baldrige National Quality Program (2002) and Barry (1997) converge in their understanding of the four essentials of strategic planning that any administration or organization across either the public or the private sector can employ in order to transform their administrations:[275]

- Beginning from top to bottom: For administrations, especially those in the public sector, it is often about preserving a legacy by allowing new leadership to move forward and think bigger while still being within the spectrum of unified vision, mission, and values of the administration itself. The commitment begins at the senior leadership level, whereby the senior-most leaders demonstrate commitment to the strategic planning process, as well as to its implementation in the most feasible manner. Strategic planning will never succeed if leaders are not directly involved throughout the entire process, or if they attempt to delegate it. Strategic planning begins at the top. A strategic plan sets on the accomplishment of tasks associated with strategies which fall under the core objectives of the administration, and indeed, in alignment with its organizational culture.
- Being inclusive: Within an administration, everyone's voice is important to the success of a strategic plan. Often enough, when one wishes to maintain the culture of the organization as well as its integrity, it is vital to allow input to the strategic plan at all levels. This allows for the gain of valuable insights throughout planning phases; and also for the gain of practical knowledge about making the plan a feasible reality. Employees and staff at lower levels of the hierarchy often possess insight of on-the-ground realities. This ensures that the passion of an administration's internal community runs deep, and that their loyalty and integrity in serving their administration becomes a reality. Involving the administration at different levels in at least the brainstorming period before the take down of the strategic plan is a vital step towards ensuring feasibility.
- Remembering to consult internal and external expertise: A thorough understanding of the expert experience needed in order to accomplish your final vision through your strategic plan is vital for its success. It is important for a leader to surround him/herself with talent and different skill sets within their field of work —from strategists to planners and those who comprehend risk and analysis.
- Understanding that flexibility to a certain extent is critical: *"Only a fool does not change his mind."*[276] Realities are subject to shifts each and every single day. A strategic plan needs to act

[275] *Barry, Bryan W. (1997). Strategic planning workbook for non-profit organizations. St. Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.*

as a guidebook, but also needs to be a flexible, evolving document which takes unforeseen realities, emergencies, and other shifts into account. Out of the hundreds of tasks one initially outlines to accomplish over the term of his/her leadership term, several of these tasks change in priority or evolve in scope. Circumstances may also change due to economic or budgetary fluxes. When thoroughly thought out and implemented, strategic planning can honor the past leadership while looking toward improving the future of an administration, and can create a unique and inclusive culture within the administration itself. It may also be the foundation for significant social impact, and transparent and efficient public service.[277]

Figure 12 presents a clear example of the breakdown of strategic planning through a more tangible and relatable situation on a smaller scale:

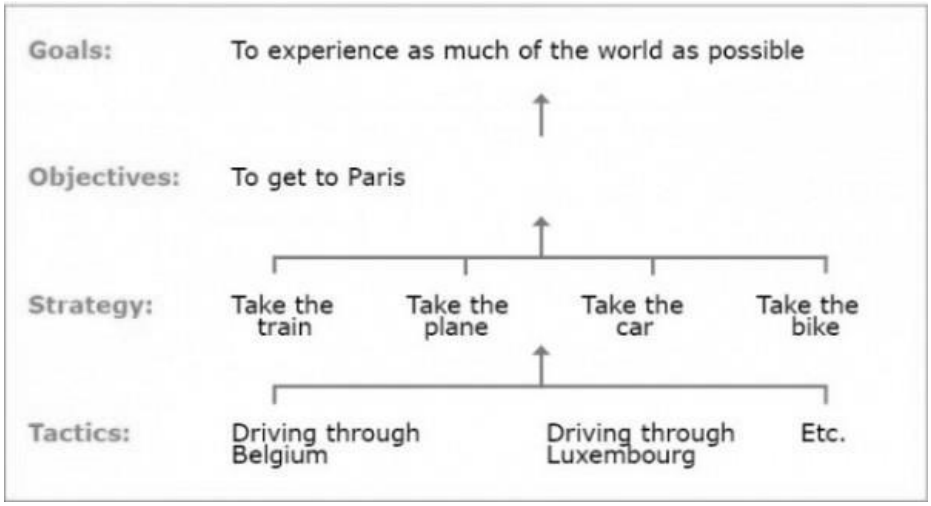


Figure 12: The Breakdown of Strategic Planning

The Link between Strategic Planning and Culture

Logically, we assume that strategy is the driver of behavior; however, in reality, it is the culture, the underlying norms, and belief systems dictate how organizations, institutions, and administrations in both the public and private sector behave. Common values and beliefs form the foundation of a particular culture, and this culture affects the strategic plan indefinitely. The matter of the fact is that

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[276] *Spanish proverb.*

[277] *Young, Richard D. (2002). The Baldrige quality process: Implications for public service organizations. Public Policy & Practice. 1, (3), available at http://www.iopa.sc.edu/ejournal/baldrige.htm*

culture is quite particular. It is entirely possible for two administrations within the same country or two companies within the same industry to possess divergent and at times conflicting cultures. However, their effectiveness is of course, bound to differ.[278]

The cultural component of the administration dictates the manner in which employees interact with one another and in turn, with the stakeholders outside the administration (i.e. with other public service agencies). The thought chronology is as follows: Culture determines values, beliefs and ideas and these very ideas determine the standards of behavior administrative members should adhere to in their quests to achieve goals. These standards will then act as guidelines which prescribe appropriate strategies in every situation.[279]

Figure 13 illustrates the parallel dynamic of strategy and culture as compliments to one another. It is not solely that one lays the foundation for the other, but also that culture accompanies the strategy as its driving path throughout the entire process, all the way until the final outcomes or results.[280]

Figure 13: Strategy and Culture as Compliments

[278] *Schein, E. (1992). Organizational culture and leadership (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.*
[279] *Ibid*
[280] *Hines, G. (1991), Strategic planning made easy. Training and development journal, 39 – 43.*

Although they work in parallel, strategy and culture often serve different functions towards a strategic plan. Strategy is the driver of the focus and direction of a strategic plan, while culture acts as the emotional, organic habitat in which a strategic plan either succeeds brilliantly or fails miserably. Strategy is the headline, while culture is an understood common "*language"* that encompasses everything from an administration's mission, to its vision, its values, and its expectations and desired outcomes. Strategy is rooted in the intent and ingenuity of the strategic plan, while culture determines the desire, the manner of its engagement, and the manner in which it is implemented. In laments terms, "*Strategy sets down the rules of the game, while culture fuels the spirit in which the game is to be played."* A vibrant culture delivers a strategic advantage over other administrations. In the instant where culture grips strategy, execution of the strategic plan is measurable, feasible, and sustainable. Culture is also a determining factor when it comes to the "*health"* as well as the engagement of an administration.[281]

Alignment of Culture and the Strategic Plan

Organizational culture although the common beliefs and aspirations that keep an organization as well as its strategic plan running, it is more precisely the essence which fosters the sense of belonging, duty and integrity among the organization employees. A strategic plan within the public sector which takes cultural realities into account urges employees to function in the same spirit and head in the same direction in the institution. This makes the vision and mission of the institution, as well as the public service it provides, more reachable and more efficient. The organizational, sustainable, and strategic development of the public sector's various institutions and services is consequently a domino effect (Davis, 1984). Strong organizational culture strongly affects the public sector's strategic decision-making, strategic options as well as the action of its strategies.[282]

Additionally, the quality of decision-making is closely linked to the management of employees' performances as well as the outcomes of these performances. This is particularly important in the

[281] *Culture Eats Strategy for Lunch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kiFMJfrCO_0*

[282] *Southern Growth Policies Board and the Southern Consortium of University Public Service Organizations (1996). Results-oriented government: A guide to strategic planning and performance measurement in the public sector. Research Triangle Park, NC: Southern Growth Policies Board.*

strategic decision-making of the intuitions' leaderships. Organizational culture consequently is capable of dictating priorities, concerns and focuses of an institution (Breen, 1973).[283]

Leadership in Promoting Organizational Culture in Strategic Planning

Organizational culture not only assists an institution in making suitable and feasible decisions through its strategic plan, but may also be a catalyst for the understanding of leadership qualities and understandings across cultures. On a macro scale, and rippling down to the micro level, institutions in both the public and the private sector face a growing need to understand leadership as it is exercised across different cultures (Jeremy, 2012). Today, globalization means leaderships across borders and with different cultural backgrounds cross paths daily, and encounter cultural clashes and intersections in almost each and every field of service. Two people from the same nationality who were raised on different corners of the Earth might have different manners of doing things, and are both qualified to assume positions in both public and private institutions back in their country of citizenship. Picture a completely plausible situation within the 21st century, whereby an English manager, who studied at an American business school, is tasked with running an Argentinian company of a Japanese firm. In the public sector picture two government officials of Lebanese decent, one trained in France, the other in the United States, both working within a public institution in their home country. In cases of the like, leadership in expressed across a number of layers, and understood differently. Organizational Culture takes all of these layers into account. It couples their international experiences with local cultural realities in order to come out with a strategic plan which is not only tailored for the institution itself, but one which also caters to the overall cultural realities of Lebanon as a whole.

Because organizational cultures offer strategic advantages, it makes sense that institutions across public and private spheres would consider culture in strategic planning. In the private sector, a clear example of this may be to consider an institution whose vision is to provide a friendly customer-centered environment. This would not align with a stagnant culture and apathetic employees. Instead, it would be recommended that the institution hire and customer-oriented staff in order to provide an environment which rewards customer-friendly behavior.

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[283] *Koteen, J. (1989). Strategic management in public and nonprofit organizations: thinking and acting strategically on public concerns. New York, NY: Praeger Publishers.*

In the public sector on the other hand, one might wish to consider a government institution with a vision of providing the most efficient health care services in the country. This would not align well with a corrupt internal culture, a central leadership mentality, a mistreatment of employees, as well as unhealthy work conditions. In order to ensure this service, employees need to be treated with more progressive and cultivating work environments. In short, providing a public service needs to stem from an employee's wish to "help their community". The public service is particular because the services provided to citizens are intended to serve a greater purpose. If employees in the public sector are mistreated, their sense of civic duty will perish along with their morals.[284]

External and Internal Strategy: Can Culture Become a Burden?

When a strategic plan supports the influence of organizational culture it creates a necessary balance between external and internal strategic elements. As mentioned previously, strategic planning assists in carrying out missions and visions and in turn an organization's purpose and value system. Strategic planning is intended to act as a direction and guide for interactions between different institutions across the public sector, while maintaining internal strategies which benefit the institution. For this reason, when all cultural understanding is accounted for within a strategic plan, this balance between internal and external is created and maintained. It allows for feasibility inside the institution, as well as efficiency in its external interactions.

In order to grasp the concept more concretely, Theodore (2002) draws upon a contrast between the public and the private sector. In the private sector, a company that markets itself as an environmentally friendly organization (a green organization) in order to get ahead in its profit and business would likely also promote environmental responsibility on the internal level as well as incorporate it within the organizational culture among its staff. On the other hand, in the public sector a government institution wishes to work in coordination with other institutions which have visions that intersect with its own, without overlapping and without being exclusive in their strategy.

[284] *Nutt, Paul C., and Backoff, Robert W. (1992). Strategic management of public and third sector organizations: A handbook for leaders. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.*

In this case a government institution embeds its transparency in its internal affairs for instance, as well as in its image to other institutions and to the public.[285]

According to Theodore (2002), the content of culture acts as a valuable asset to an organization's strategic plan only if it eases communication, facilitates organizational decision-making and promotes control over internal and external efforts. In this case, the result is increased productivity. Moreover, just like absolutely any other double-edged sword, culture may become a liability when fundamental shared values and belief systems interfere with the organization's objectives. Because of the influence of the culture on behavior, and because of the fact that some strategic plans do not take culture into account when they are constructed, an individual or even an entire staff, may not want to behave as called upon by the strategic plan. They also may not comprehend how to behave efficiently and in compliance with the strategic plan in place. The above situations happen when cultural understandings are in conflict with what needs to be done in order to achieve the organization's vision. For this reason, a strong leadership is capable of constructing a plan which is able to build upon the existing culture without compromising the overall direction of the institution, administration, or organization across any sector.[286]

The closer actual behavior matches required behavior, the more productively and efficiently the individual and organization accomplishes its objectives. A successful grasp of culture permits for the support the organization's strategy. Furthermore, significant changes in the strategic plan must be made by modifications in culture if the plan wishes to comply with what it wants to achieve, as well as wishes to comply with the society it wishes to achieve it in.[287]

The Importance of the Budget in Strategic Planning

A budget is a comprehensive financial plan whose aim is to achieve the financial and operational goals of an organization across any sector, whether public or private. When used transparently and correctly, a budget is the road map of the strategic plan. Through the administration of the budget,

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[285] *Theodore, H. (2002). The use of strategic planning in municipal governments. The Municipal Year Book. Washington, DC: International City/County Management Association, 18—25.*
[286] *Ibid*
[287] *Olsen, J. & Eadie, D. (1982). The game plan: Governance with foresight. Washington, DC: Council of State Planning Agencies.*

an institution is capable of developing its objectives for the acquisition and use of the resources it currently possesses, as well as the resources the institution intends to obtain in the future. In the public sector, when the budget of a public administration is achieved comprehensively, it becomes a strategic benchmark which determines how well the steps taken by the leadership are ensuring the fulfillment of the objectives is accomplished.

The benefits derived from budgeting are several. Primarily, it formalizes the coordination of activities across different departments within an administration and makes sure that they are in alignment with the overall vision of the administration as well as the administration's strategic plan. It also provides the assignment of responsibilities on the decision-making levels and enhances the need for responsibility in administering tasks. In addition, the budget allows for improvement in performance evaluations through the provision of transparent discussion on the success or failure of the leadership or management within an institution, as well as whether or not he/she met his/her goals within the strategic plan. It also provides for reasoning a talking on why actual results steered away from the originally set budget should this take place for unforeseen reasons. A proper budget encourages each and every employee within the administration to become more transparent and efficient, which feeds into efficiency at all levels within an administration both internally and externally.[288] On a side note, for the success of the budget, just as in the strategic plan, it must be perceived to be fair, reasonable and justified by employees whose performance will be assessed in compliance to this budget.[289] Figure 14 illustrates exactly where the budget falls within the strategic planning spectrum.

[288] *Young, Richard D. (2001). Perspectives on budgeting: Budgets, reforms, performance based systems, politics and selected state experiences. Columbia, SC, University of South Carolina, Institute for Public Service and Policy Research.*
[289] *Ibid*

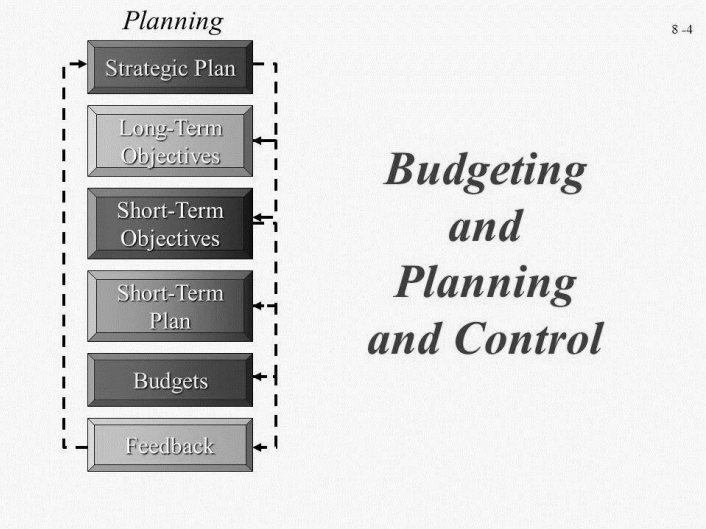

Figure 14: Budgeting, Planning and Control

An effective budget is created in the following manner:[290]

- Identifying the decision makers and leadership in the organization and involving them as strategic partners in the budget creation process, as well as in its subsequent evaluation once it is completed.
- Creating a budget which is a reflection of the organization's strategic plan, as well as one which is in compliance with the organizational culture the administration functions by.
- Engaging the team (and to an extent the stakeholders) in reviewing and comparing the budget to realities on the ground in order to highlight the gaps, strengths and weaknesses of the budget draft.

When going through the budget process, leadership must always keep in mind that the budget is a mere tool. Although it is a fundamental aspect of the strategic planning process, it needs to be complemented with a strong and clear vision as well as with a culture that is maintained and respected. The budget is the tool which translates the organization's goals and strategies into currency. It is a small aspect of the overall strategic plan which when developed properly, can lay the foundation for working closer with the staff of the entire administration in order to keep the administration functioning properly and feasibly.

[290] *Ibid*

Conclusion

Organizational culture's overall effect on strategic planning is one that is indispensable and pivotal. Its importance lies in its ability to focus attention on the human aspect of the public service life, as well as its ability to clarify the importance of creating tailored systems of shared learning which assist in harmoniously allowing people to work together towards desired visions, missions, objectives, and outcomes. Strategic planning requires leadership to acknowledge the impact of their own behavior upon organizational culture, and further encourages the realization that the relationship between the organization and its environment (internal or external) is affected by the organization's own assumptions, cultural understandings, and overall cultural lens. The content of culture whether visible or underlying, influences the direction of behavior of an administration as a whole, and affects its functioning at all levels.

Also worth mentioning, is the reality that culture affects not solely the manner in which leadership and employees behave with the administration itself, but that it also affects the decisions they take regarding the organization's relationship with its external/internal environment and its strategy development.

Fisher (1992) insists that a comprehension of the organizational culture of an administration is highly important in ensuring the organization's success within a rapidly shifting and unpredictable environment of administrative interdependency, and mandate overlapping. Keeping this statement in mind, one immediately identifies the evident link between strategic planning and culture. Sanders (1998) ensures that *"a strategic plan is the organization's basic path to the future."*[291]

[291] *Sanders, T. I. (1998). Strategic thinking and the new science: Planning in the midst of chaos, complexity, and change. New York, NY: The Free Press.*

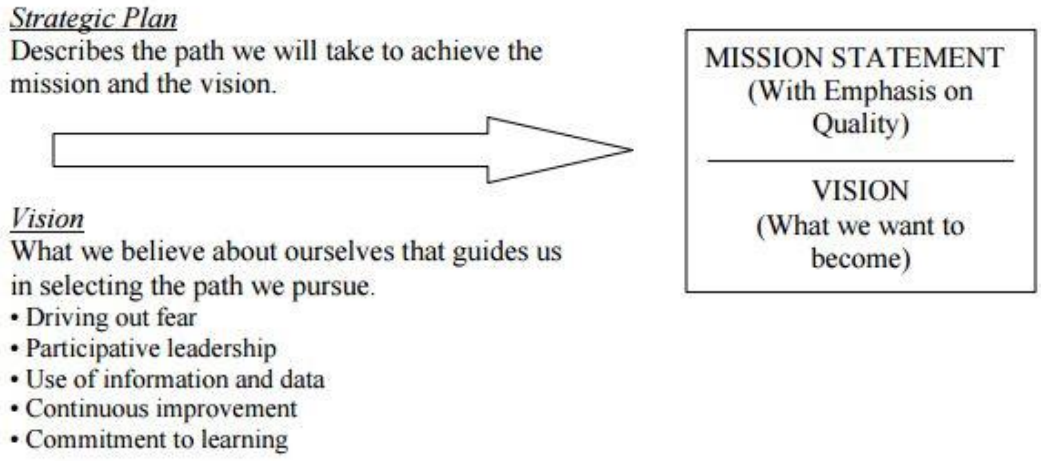

Figure 15: Strategic Plan vs. Vision

Acting as an administration's roadmap a strategic plan provides a sense of direction and fosters co-ordination from the top down. Strategic planning is therefore seen as the development of long-term plans for the effective and feasible management of an administration's environmental opportunities and threats. It does all of the above while taking into account the administration's strengths, gaps and weaknesses. When these three are identified, specific and oriented attention can be paid to the nature of an administration's culture and to the most effective and feasible manner to ensure the success of the public administration and the services it provides. In conclusion, organizational culture may hinder or assist the development or execution of the administration's goals and objectives.

Performing Gender, Performing Identity: Drag as a Tool for Human Rights Activism

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Abstract

On first blush, drag performances and human rights activism seem to escape attempts at being caught in the same breath – that the two are not mutually exclusive and can be, in fact, highly productive, will be exemplified by the following article. Drag, commonly known as the garishly camp performance of gender, is in its essence a performance of identity – a gendered identity, but an identity nonetheless.

As such, drag is the very example of Judith Butler's notion that gender is performative; drag very visibly puts its performativity on stage for everyone to see. This is achieved by the performance of specific (gendered) identity markers that performers extradite from socio-cultural context, embody, and re-iterate on stage. First the alienation and the then re-iteration of these codes in the very special context of a performance stage plays and breaks with socio-cultural norms. Most critically, drag performances expose and subvert the most potent lie of our Western culture: that there are two and only two genders that are diametrically opposed categories in a heteronormative matrix. The matrix is used to control, regulate, and police bodies and people, purporting the notion that (gender) identities are fixed entities. Norms and regulations to that effect are secured through embedding the binary system within the realm of the natural, activating a claim of 'naturalness.'

Bodies are, however, far from being solidly identifiable – they are fluid and constantly shifting spaces of identity struggles and they can only perform, not inhabit the gender(s) ascribed to them. Drag, through its performance of identity parades gender's performativity on stage, exposes the underlying *constructedness* and malleability of the heteronormative system. As such, drag performers have at their fingertips an enormous potential for transgressing and subverting socio-cultural norms. Their unique art form allows them to "toy" the line and open up a space for political commentary, criticism, even activism. Such a performer is Medulla Oblongata, embodied by Abrahm Nain, a queer refugee from the Maldives. Forced to seek asylum in New Zealand because of his sexuality and his art, Naim uses

his drag persona as an outlet for his human rights activism. As Medulla, Naim inhabits a queer diasporic identity, crossing borders both physically and figuratively. Utilizing the *transgressiveness* inherent in drag, Naim transforms his body into a canvas on which his multicultural identity is staged, united art and politics made flesh.

Keywords: gender, drag performance, identity, refugees, asylum, human rights activism

Introduction

Omnipresent, ubiquitous, unescapable – bodies are ever present spaces of identity formation. As such, they are an endlessly contested battleground on which meanings are projected; by far not as stable as it is purported to be, but rather a fluid and constantly shifting entity. The construction of such (bodily) meanings, being the life-long endeavor it is, is carried out by a variety of oftentimes opposing contractors. Socio-cultural norms and restrictions that are placed upon bodies stand in conflict with the perception of the self – the lived reality of the flesh tightly controlled and sanctioned. The heteronormative boundaries, so imbued in our Western culture that they become almost invisible, sanction bodies and people to confirm to strictly dichotomous systems of gender and sexuality by using well-honed forms of coercion and control. At intersections with other variables of discrimination such as race, ethnicity, class, age, and dis/ability, this hegemonic system has such a tight grip on the bodies of those it governs, that their existence, their essential *humanity* is dependent on conformity[292]. Bodies that refuse such conformity are deprived of their status as human beings and classified as deviant "others". The regulation and 'correction' of such 'deviant' bodies in one of its most extreme forms can manifest as medical interventions done without the consent or even knowledge of the persons concerned[293]. Frequently such forms of control range from verbal abuse, to physical violence, to legal penalties, to institutional barriers denying access to essential resources[294]. As insurmountable hurdle against all efforts of destabilizing the

[292] *Judith Butler, Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity, 2nd edition, Routledge classics (New York, London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2010), 151*
[293] *Katrina Alicia Karkazis, Fixing sex: Intersex, medical authority, and lived experience (Durham, N.C: Duke University Press, 2008), 268–69*
[294] *Peter Wagenknecht, "Was ist Heteronormativität? Zur Geschichte und Gehalt des Begriffs," in Heteronormativität: Empirische Studien zu Geschlecht, Sexualität und Macht, ed. Jutta Hartmann et al., Studien*

heteronormative system, its grounding in its supposed 'naturalness' is thrown into the ring. Claiming naturalness connects this system to the sacrosanct knowledge system of the natural sciences. These then provide a seemingly unshakable biological basis on which norms and stereotypes are built upon. Such a basis allows for any cracks in the system to be hidden behind a façade of scientific 'facts,' obscuring the underlying socio-cultural constructedness of the heteronormative system. Sex, as well as gender, binary categories used for the discrimination, classification, and regulation of bodies, function as productive practices, bringing about the very materiality they claim to be based on[295]. The constant reiteration of these categories, so embedded into our everyday practices, are aimed at concealing that that which they purport to be the most basic fact of all, is indeed a lie: that behind the veil of essentialism lurks not the core of a body's gendered identity but indeed nothing at all[296]. Rather, gender is a performance, is performative, a smoke screen that *"is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results"*[297].

The Conscious Performance of Gender Performativity

To disrupt this smoke screen, bodies need to be creative, ostentatiously performing their performativity. By heralding that which is used to conceal, by parading its constructedness, its *malleability*, the flaws in the system can be exposed. One such example is the art of drag – the conscious performance of gender performativity. As an art form, drag has the potential to both re-iterate and support[298] or transgress and subvert[299] heteronormative gender norms. It exposes the system's constructedness[300] by poaching its norms and alienating them from their naturalized claims of authenticity. Once detached, gender markers both of a bodily and non-bodily nature are exaggerated and donned as costumes, as personas, as *identities*. Drag, in its essence a performance of *identity* rather than *just* gender, works by picking up specific codes constituting identity markers, exaggerating them, and reiterating them on a stage in front of an audience. As such, drag is also

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interdisziplinäre Geschlechterforschung 10 (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften / GWV Fachverlage GmbH Wiesbaden, 2007), 17

[295] Judith Butler, Bodies that matter: On the discursive limits of "sex" (London: Routledge, 1993), 2

[296] Ibid., 234

[297] Judith Butler, Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity, 2nd edition, Routledge classics (New York, London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2010), 34

[298] Caitlin Greaf, "Drag queens and gender identity," Journal of Gender Studies 25, no. 6 (2016): 655, doi:10.1080/09589236.2015.1087308

[299] Judith Butler, Bodies that matter: On the discursive limits of "sex" (London: Routledge, 1993), 125

[300] Caitlin Greaf, "Drag queens and gender identity," Journal of Gender Studies 25, no. 6 (2016): 655, doi:10.1080/09589236.2015.1087308

always a racialized performance, not just a gendered one[301], working on an intersectional level of signifiers. Drag performers bring masculinity, femininity, *androgynity,* and *genderf*ck* gleefully into the spotlight and by doing so, they create a space in which the system itself can be fucked with. By stepping outside the system, the performers construct a realm for political commentary and even political action not imaginable within the system. They are uniquely able to comment on the system itself while loudly wearing it on their sleeves. Their queer bodies, classified by the heteronormative system as deviant, as "other", become both a site and a statement of resistance. Such actions, however, are only possible in spaces that are more liberal towards such transgressions – most often these are performance spaces within queer clubs[302]. The performers themselves are often part of the same queer subculture those clubs are based in – they are familiar with the repercussions of the heteronormative system, as many of them marginalized because of their gender, their sexuality, and/or their ethnicity. Performing in drag allows them to portray and process their marginalization on a stage as an open critique of the system. While not every drag performer views their performance as politically subversive, some consciously play with the status as 'deviants' that society has awarded them with[303]. By utilizing the potential for political action inherent in drag performances, they are able to reclaim agency and let their voices be heard.

Reclaiming Ownership of One's Self and Body

One such drag performer is Abrahm Naim. Naim, who performs the drag persona Medulla Oblongata, is a queer refugee from the Maldives who found asylum in New Zealand. Living as a gay man in a predominantly Muslim environment, Naim experienced alienation, isolation, and discrimination. In many Muslim communities, homosexuality is not tolerated and regarded as a deviance – as a result, queer people live under constant threat, even if they are closeted[304]. Struggling with not being able to live his true, authentic self and ostracized from his family, Naim applied for refugee status in New Zealand. As a recognized refugee Naim was able to start a new life and use his

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[301] Ragan Rhyne, "Racializing white drag," Journal of homosexuality 46, 3-4 (2004): 184, doi:10.1300/J082v46n03_11

[302] Justine Egner and Patricia Maloney, ""It has no color, it has no gender, it's gender bending": Gender and sexuality fluidity and subversiveness in drag performance," Journal of homosexuality 63, no. 7 (2016): 877, doi:10.1080/00918369.2015.1116345

[303] Justine Egner and Patricia Maloney, ""It has no color, it has no gender, it's gender bending": Gender and sexuality fluidity and subversiveness in drag performance," Journal of homosexuality 63, no. 7 (2016): 887, doi:10.1080/00918369.2015.1116345

[304] Anonymous, "Muslim and gay: Seeking identity coherence in New Zealand," Culture, health & sexuality 18, no. 3 (2016): 281, doi:10.1080/13691058.2015.1079927

position to aid other refugees like him. As a human rights activist, Naim traverses both his day to day world and the world of queer subculture, embodying and performing a shifting queer diasporic identity. Through his art, Naim recognizes the transgressiveness inherent in drag, its subversiveness, and its potential for serving as a political platform. He uses drag as a "vessel"[305] for his activism, citing his drag persona as an outlet that affords him the ability to speak about issues he could otherwise not thematise. To further his platform and give a voice to the experiences of queer refugees, he partnered with Amnesty International[306], taking his drag persona outside of the (somewhat) sheltered space of queer clubbing venues. Stepping outside of the queer space as Medulla Oblongata poses a different form of transgression, one that allows Naim to bring the political potential of a queer space into the realm of the public. It is an act of defiance, of liberation, enabling Medulla Oblongata to bring attention to the unique struggles queer refugees face while at the same time critiquing and subverting heteronormative binaries. Stepping into the spotlight in such a way has been interpreted as a provocation by some – Naim regularly receives hate mail[307] and prominent Maldivian newspapers have published articles condemning his actions. Naim faced especially vehement public backslash after winning the Miss Drag Wellington pageant in 2014, an event he has likened to 'coming out to the entire world.' [308] The Maldivian government even issued an official response after his win, reinforcing Naim's status as a deviant "other"[309]. The fact that the government felt compelled to issue a reaction only highlights the political power in Naim's form of activism – Medulla Oblongata and her performances clearly threaten the socio-cultural system to an extent that warrants an official repudiation.

In a documentary produced for *The Wireless NZ*, a New Zealand news website, Naim likens his arrival as a refugee in New Zealand to being re-born[310]. This is illustrated by the intercutting of Naim's voice-over with pictures of him as Medulla Oblongata posing akin to Venus in Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus*. Being portrayed as Venus emphasizes Medulla Oblongata's metaphorical 'birth:'

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[305] *"BOTH WORLDS | Medulla Oblongata," video, 22:17, August 21, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-xvf9LEsn0*
[306] *Ibid.*
[307] *Ibid.*
[308] *"Wireless Docs: Medulla Oblongata," video, 7:32, April 18, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqlhEq4K-hI&t=1s*
[309] *"Maldives ups anti-gay pressure after refugee wins New Zealand drag pageant," Gay Asia News, June 11, 2014, https://gayasianews.wordpress.com/2014/06/11/maldives-ups-anti-gay-pressure-after-refugee-wins-new-zealand-drag-pageant/*
[310] *"Wireless Docs: Medulla Oblongata," video, 7:32, April 18, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqlhEq4K-hI&t=1s*

Naim could not inhabit his drag persona in the Maldives but is able to now do so in New Zealand. Stepping out of the 'sea' is the new Medulla Oblongata, one that celebrates her sexuality and femininity on her own terms, expressively going against modest Muslim conventions. The scene is rejection of the rejection that Naim faced before being able to live out and proud.

Figure 16: Wireless Docs: Medulla Oblongata

This is highlighted by the juxtaposition of the 'New Zealand Medulla Oblongata' with the 'Maldivian Medulla Oblongata,' a powerful illustration of Naim's fluidly queer refugee identity. The 'Maldivian Medulla Oblongata' was shown earlier in the video when Naim recounted the oppression typically encountered in the Maldives by queer people through a voice-over that accompanies a performance of Medulla Oblongata's. Dressed in traditional clothing including a Bukhnuq, Medulla Oblongata performs the identity of a Maldivian Muslim woman while simultaneously embodying an abstract representation of the Maldivian culture she fled from. Inhabiting the culture that marginalized her is not only a way of visualizing her own oppression; it is an act of reclaiming agency over her own narrative and her history. She uses two queer men as surrogates of herself, bringing attention to and enacting the lived experiences of queer people in the Maldives on stage.

Figure 17: Wireless Docs: Medulla Oblongata

Despite having rejected his Muslim upbringing and living as an atheist, Naim does not intend to offend or mock with his performance as Medulla Oblongata – rather he wants to use it as platform for human rights activism and social change. By illustrating his lived experiences as a queer refugee and encouraging an open discussion, Naim is actively facilitating change and creatively engaging with his own marginalization. As such, one of Medulla Oblongata's signature acts is a striptease that starts out with her dressed in a Niqaab and Batula and ends with her dressed in a short golden dress, illustrating the struggles of her multicultural identity. Her body functions as a canvas on which she projects her shifting self, it becomes a space in which societal norms are thermalized and propagated. Medulla Oblongata's striptease illustrates her own journey – starting with her struggle with being ostracized in the Maldives. By quite literally stripping away her oppression piece by piece, Medulla Oblongata reclaims ownership over herself and her body. She sheds the norms that used to restrict her and her body and lets them fall to the stage where they become nothing more than pieces of fabric – fabric that can hold no more power over her. In the end, the 'inner' Medulla Oblongata stands before the audience like a butterfly newly emerged from a cocoon. It is this self-empowered Medulla Oblongata that Naim is finally able to be and perform freely in New Zealand.

Figure 18: Wireless Docs: Medulla Oblongata

In his performance, Abrahm Naim as Medulla Oblongata embodies a shifting diasporic identity, crossing borders both physically and figuratively. He manages to portray a multicultural queer imagining of gender and sexuality through his art, destabilizing and even subverting the restrictive heteronormative norms that govern our society and our bodies. Naim's performance as Medulla Oblongata illustrates poignantly that gender itself is a vicious cycle of performativity, a cycle that demands constant reiteration to reaffirm itself – a cycle that is broken only through the exposure of this truth on stage. By carrying the performativity of gender on stage and donning it as a costume, Naim is able to de-mask the system's claim to naturalization and lay bare its underlying constructedness. Through this, Naim is able to step outside the system itself, a stepping aside that gives him the opportunity to criticize the system itself. He creates a unique space for himself through his art, one in which he is able to comment a multitude of issues within the system. A space in which he can combine his passion for drag with his passion for human rights activism because Naim not only performs gender, he also performs that which is so inextricably linked with gender, namely *identity* itself. The identity that Naim portrays is a fluid, a diasporic, an inherently *queer* one. Both he and his performance have crossed a multitude of borders – and he skillfully weaves his personal history into the story he is telling on stage as Medulla Oblongata. Advocating for human rights while physically stripping away the layers of oppression imposed on him in his previous home

country until he stands on stag in nothing but a short gold dress, his performance becomes an act, a symbol of self-empowerment. He uses his body as a canvas on which identity struggles are staged, it in itself becomes not only the site of political action, but a political statement itself.

Expression and Communication of Political Traumas on Canvas: Political Art and the Integration Process of Asylum Seekers

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to show the possibility of art as a tool for a political outcry for artists living in exile in order to be listened and understood better by the hosting society. While analysing the role of artistic self-expression of Syrians that are living in exile in Lebanon it was discovered that their art work is a political demand for a better integration into the local society. Moreover, it is a tool to raise the voice of these that remain unheard such as the Syrian working community that tries to restart a new life in the capital of Lebanon, Beirut. In general, there is insufficient research on the political demands that artists seek to achieve coming from conflict areas, while living in exile. This new art style can serve to inform local societies and politics. A number of art works of eight Syrian artists living in Beirut will be analysed in relation to their feeling of acceptance in a new society and the process of integration.

Keywords: Integration, Politics, Art, Syrian Refugee, Expression, Trauma

Introduction

Art has played an important role throughout human history, which contributes to our understanding of culture and societies. Paintings are an expression of art that contribute to the comprehension of historical happenings in our social and political environments, such as in war times for instance (Brocklehurst, 1999; Goodrich, 1965; Shannon, 2005; Tripp, 2013). Looking back at the history of art, several art movements have occurred during war times and conflicts. During World War II, surrealist artists participated in the revolution by responding to radical politics with radical art (Sylvester, 1999). Their main objective was to release thought-provoking impulses and revolve thought patterns and society customs (Etschmann et al., 2004). Just recently, a similar movement has been observed during the Arab Spring and the Syrian revolution. Artists regularly took over public

squares with revolutionary songs, *dabke* dance[311] and graffiti. As street artists, they challenged the dictatorial government by triggering off critical public education, contestation and democratic participation (Cooke, 2016). At the beginning of the revolution, *art* was a safe and effective way to mobilise the young Syrian population and to spread information to the rest of the world (Cooke, 2016). These movements are reactions of artists to certain political and social circumstances. In this sense, art is not only used as an aesthetical pleasure, but rather as a tool to inform and mobilise societies.

Since the situation in Syria became worse and was at risk to turn into a protracted conflict, many citizens and artists were forced to flee from their homes to neighbouring countries such, as Lebanon. With an estimated 1.5 million Syrian refugees, Lebanon has become the third most affected country by the Syrian refugee influx (UNICEF, 2017). Since Lebanon is not part of the 1951 Refugee convention it does not recognizes the status of refugees and asylum seeker, which might hinder the integration process. The challenges of the integration of different ethnic groups into Lebanese society and the fact that Lebanon does not see itself as a hosting country but rather as a transit country, lead to complexities in the integration process. The Syrian contemporary painters that have moved to Beirut to continue their artwork, face due to the severe regulations of the Lebanese government regarding residence permits several daily obstacles which delay their integration process. Since there is no sign for an end of the Syrian protracted conflict, a temporal integration of the Syrian community would be a solution for their precarious living situation (UNHCR, 2017).

The ongoing protracted conflict in Syria and the migration flow to Lebanon has influenced the Syrian contemporary paintings in which topics such as the misery of their own society living in exile, and their state of well-being are figuratively and symbolically portrayed. The paintings could arguably be an outcry for both a political demand and their personal emotional state. The experiences from the protracted conflict might have led to severe mental health issues to the artists. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that one in five Syrians have moderate mental health issues and one in thirteen is at risk of developing severe or acute mental health needs (WHO, 2017). The representation of their destroyed worldview could be a way to cope with their personal traumatic experiences. According to Van Lith (2015) artistic practice can remove internal barriers and achieve

[311] *Dabke dance is a popular Arabic folk dance throughout the Levant region of the Middle East (Cooke, 2016).*

posttraumatic growth. However, to be able to cope and overcome a trauma, a successful reintegration in society has to be ensured (Higson-Smith, 2013).

The thesis aims to investigate the role of this art made by Syrian artists in Lebanon during their integration process and what they would like to achieve with their artwork. Inadequate research has been conducted on both the hidden political demands of paintings made in exile and how the practice of painting can be a great support for their mental well-being as a coping mechanism for their trauma. This thesis aims to add to the literature by addressing this gap. What role does artistic self-expression play in the integration process of Syrian artists living in exile in Lebanon?

Syrian Contemporary Art

In the following section, the historical development of Syrian contemporary art and the regulations of culture heritage during both ruling Presidents Hafez al-Assad and Bashar al-Assad will be explained. This section is helpful to understand a possible change in the contemporary art that has been investigated in this thesis. Syrian contemporary art is known for its aesthetic beauty. In the last few decades, Syrian contemporary painters focused mainly on landscapes, cultural heritage such as the old cities Damascus and Aleppo, and on the Syrian identity. These subjects represent the remembrance what had once been and what has disappeared with processes of state-crafting and transnational discourses (Shannon, 2005). The discourse of emotions and sentiment is the basis of the Syrian authentic cultural identity in contemporary art (Shannon, 2005). Hereby, issues in the society and the political environment are common topics that are represented in symbolism. Within their artwork Syrian artists and intellectuals are showing their struggle between the past that criticise politics and aesthetics of memory in the present, and the future (Shannon, 2005).

The fact that Syrian contemporary art had not experienced different art movements in the last decades can be referred to the regulations of culture that had been implemented by the Baath party's accession to power in 1963 (Boëx, 2011). To implement 'a common vision of the essence and the future of the Arab nation' the State created production bodies, distribution and performance venues, and organizational structures that should guide and control cultural production (Boëx, 2011). The content and form of art was restricted rather than the diversity of art. These state bodies determined what is 'good and valuable' for their national heritage (Shannon, 2005). With the authorities' approval for certain art they wanted to protect their country from foreign cultural imperialism and

political upheavals. The former Syrian President Hafez al-Assad encouraged for cultural events but set clear limits which were related to the Islamic culture and Arabisation. Western culture was seen as an intruder in the Middle Eastern culture.

A strategy that many artists started to practice was to walk on a fine line between what is required of them by the cult and by using state's symbols that can be interpreted in both ways, for and against the government (Wedeen, 2015). Wedeen (2015) explains that in all authoritarian regimes artists use so-called *camouflage techniques,* which enables them to make use of certain *cracks* and *loopholes* in the system that allows avoiding censorship. These *camouflage techniques* are to be understood as symbolism. This explains the characteristic of symbolism in their contemporary art. This substantial difference between a loyalty-producing regime and its anxiety-inducing simulacrum is represented throughout Syrian art. The oppressive strategy of the government kept artists from spreading their voices for decades. For many years, the Syrians stretched the limits of freedom of expression using encrypted messages, while abiding the authoritarian system (Wedeen, 2015).

The transition from Syrian President Hafez al-Assad to his son Bashar al-Assad temporarily evoked hope for political loosening and more freedom. However, this hope disappeared soon after Bashar reasserted autocratic control that brought back repressive methods including torture (Kraidy, 2015). The Syrian authoritarian government exercises a level of power on their citizens that often leads them to adapt to the governance and obey their rules in order to be left in peace and develop a passive compliance (Wedeen, 2015). This was the case in Syria for several decades. Especially in 2011, the young generation formed an active group out of the long-lasting oppression that mobilised them to a revolution. Bashar's violent reaction of torture to some anti-government graffiti done by young boys in March 2011 triggered a political upheaval in the Syrian population that asked for the government's overthrow (Pearlman, 2016) – the authorities' tool of fear to silence subjects, such as politics in society, lead activist-artists to burst out in articulating and depicting their frustration, anger, and fear in an artistic way. In the turmoil of all the produced anti-government art in slogans, music, poems, paintings and graffiti, the government lost control of their regulations for censorship since the activist-artists were too many. Art became a political weapon in order to challenge politics by mobilising the society to take action. Some artists were lucky and were never caught; others were caught and tortured. Still, the political art activism against the Syrian President helped sustain the resistance of the society and the political hopes awakened by the Syrian uprisings (Kraidy, 2015). The term 'protracted conflict' will be used throughout this research to describe the Syrian conflict,

as it has been shaped by the large-scale escalation of violence and by the involvement of several world powers (ICRC, 2016). This protracted conflict has left approximately 13.500.000 people in need, 6,500,000 internally displaced Syrians and 4.8 million refugees in the neighbouring countries of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey (UNICEF, 2017; UNHCR, 2017).

Since the beginning of the revolution one can see a change in the paintings of Syrian artists. There is a noticeable transformation in the topics in a sense that they depict the political situation and the protracted conflict in their homeland which was before not possible with all the restrictions from the government. Art developed towards a storytelling technique, which strengthened the peoples' commitments to fight for justice and dignity (Cooke, 2016). Several painters and illustrators started to expose the cruelty and the massacres in a very straight way. It seems that the wall of fear had broken down. Cooke (2016) categorises in her book "Dancing in Damascus" this art movement as a *shared trauma* movement in Syrian contemporary art. After forty years of suffering from oppression, individual trauma had never been mentioned and discussed in public. During the conflict, this changed, and many artists encouraged people to talk about or express their traumatic experiences (Cooke, 2016). These traumas were depicted in paintings by dead bodies, weapons, blood stained rooms, and portraits with stitched up mouths. In the meantime, many artists left the country to pursue their work in a more secure environment, and exhibit their work worldwide.

The paintings of the interviewed Syrian artists do largely include symbolism. They are neither *activist-artists* by asking for a political change in the Syrian government in their paintings, nor do they portray beautiful cheerful stories. They are very figurative in their paintings in which they use a lot of repetitive symbols to represent rather the migration than the conflict. It is essential to understand what they aim to achieve with their art in their new hosting country. Since they portray largely individuals in their paintings, they might use artistic expression for their own state of well-being as a coping mechanism for their traumatic experiences. In the following sections, political art and its objectives will be outlined. Furthermore, trauma will be conceptualised and linked with political art.

Theories and Conceptual Framework

Many studies analyse artistic objects and behaviours from a social, educational, psychological and humanitarian point of view (McNiff, 2011). Nevertheless, there is a lack of studies investigating the role of contemporary paintings in the context of a migration wave due to a protracted conflict. Since

contemporary art is dealing with the contemporary society and the issues related to it and the environment in which it is created, art movements in paintings might change parallel to political and social situations. This change is traceable in appearing and disappearing structures, symbols, subjects and messages. However, the most interesting question is what is the purpose of this new art movement by Syrian artists. What do the artists try to convey with their artwork while living in exile? In the subsequent sub-chapters theories and concepts of political art and its objectives will be explained. Additionally, the concept of trauma and how art can be a support for a coping mechanism will be enlightened.

Art as a Political Witness

In the contemporary art scene, the debate whether art is political or whether it is just an aesthetical pleasure, is ongoing. Benjamin Walter and Herbert Marcuse are pioneers of putting contemporary aesthetics in a political context. Benjamin (1976) argues that historical circumstances determine the medium of the artwork and the way humans will interpret it. In other words, since contemporary art deals with contemporary social issues of which the beholder is aware of or even affected by, he or she interprets the painting in relation to these historical circumstances. Furthermore, Benjamin (1976) explains that art is unique due to the temporal and spatial uniqueness of the influencing historical circumstances. According to him, art should use the available mediations and tools of its context to reflect the reality and to present it to the audience. Hereby, he argues that the external environment instantly influences the artist in his artwork. This presumes that art changes with the transformation of its social and political environment, such as during protracted conflicts and the involved immigration procedures.

Additionally, Marcuse (1978) sees potential in art of being political in the aesthetic form as such. He explains the aesthetics of art as being political and revolutionary as art can be radical (1) in the change of style and technique, and (2) in representing the fate of individuals, prevailing restrictions to freedom and rebelling forces by breaking social reality and opening the horizon of change. The presentation of revolutionary art depends on the social structure artists are confronted with. This can be the distribution of oppression among the population, the composition and power of ruling class, and the given opportunity for a radical social restructuring (Marcuse, 1978). In this sense, Marcuse argues that art is unfree and hereby political, because it exists to contradict the suppression

of the environment. This is applicable to artistic expression in societies that are experiencing long-lasting oppression whether by other societies or politics.

Peters (2015) notices that art is not imperatively political. According to him, the personal background of the beholder decides whether it triggers a social, political or purely aesthetic interpretation. Thus, it cannot be deduced from the lived context of the individual. Brocklehurst (1999) illustrates that it depends on both, the artist and the beholder, whether the artwork will be recognized as political or not. He states that aesthetics are about how the body senses the reality and how it is translated from the artist onto the canvas. Furthermore, aesthetical beauty refers to the personal experiences that result in an individual connection to the painting (Brocklehurst, 1999). Only if the beholder recognizes similar feelings in the canvas, he can get emotionally involved. If the beholder cannot establish a personal connection to a piece of art, it will not be political for him even if the artist intended the painting to be political. This implies that paintings directed to a certain society should be able to establish this personal connection.

The theories of Benjamin (1976) and Marcuse (1978) will be used as a concept for political art. They are adequate for the Syrian case because the Syrian art has experienced a change since the political upheaval in 2011 in terms of the style and subjects portrayed in the paintings. In this thesis, the paintings done by Syrian artists living in Lebanon diversify from these done in Syria during the protracted conflict since they are not showing terrifying war situations. Thus, the assumption is that the interviewed artists, might seek to make the Lebanese society aware of their precarious living situation and lack of integration as HRW (2016) has shown in their recent research.

The Objectives of Political Art

Recent literature has shown that political art is not about aesthetical beauty, it rather needs an intellectual reflection (Brocklehurst, 1999; Goodrich, 1965; Marcuse, 1978; Shannon, 2005; Tripp, 2013). Besides being an aesthetical pleasure, paintings can be thought-provoking regarding structures and issues in society and politics that the artist wants to point out. Objectives of political art can be to inform, mobilise and shape the way in which people see the world (Tripp, 2013). Hereby, art becomes a tool of expression. In other words, political painting and drawing is an efficient way to address taboos and long hidden conflicts. Art is valuable in the sense that it is a universal language that crosses national borders, which everyone can understand (Goodrich, 1965). In the following

sections, the current state in recent literature about addressing the unspoken political reality and achieving a change in the environment by doing political art will be provided.

Political Art to Uncover Taboos

Part of the literature has examined the role of political art. According to them political art should be thought-provoking and engage the audience to rethink and question contemporary issues in society and politics (Brocklehurst, 1999; Goodrich, 1965; Marcuse, 1978). Political art should engage the audience in rethinking certain values and structures that one understands as given and rigid. Goodrich (1965) explains that the artist's role is to uncover thoughts condemned by contemporary society, to re-examine taboos and to enlarge the boundaries of tolerance. In other words, it should make society aware about issues in their environment and motivate them to rethink these issues and mobilise them by taking passionate responses.

Marcuse (1978) has a similar opinion regarding the objectives of art. He states that art should not mirror reality; it should rather add something new which might trigger reflection. He (1978, p. 72) makes this point clear with the following statement: "The encounter with the truth of art happens in the estranging language and images which make perceptible, visible, and audible that which is no longer, or not yet, perceived, said and heard in everyday life". Hereby, he is asking for the unspoken taboos in society to be revealed in paintings. In his book 'One-Dimensional Man', Marcuse (1968) outlines two options how art can influence its environment by taking responsibility: (1) art has a responsibility to help society deal with its hidden conflicts and contradictions; (2) the work must embody hope, the human ability to imagine what does not exist and give it shape. In the Syrian and Lebanese relationship might be some hidden conflicts that have been suppressed during many years. Lebanon was occupied for many years by the Syrian military sent by Hafez al-Assad (Slomich, 1998). However, both countries had strong economic relations in the last years which lead to the open borders policy from which both sides were able to profit for many years (Slomich, 1998). This long-lasting occupation might have influenced the Lebanese in their public acknowledgement of the Syrians that are now fleeing from their own country and government. According to Marcuse (1968) art is able to rehabilitate such hidden conflicts and provide hope at the same moment for the suppressed society that things might change.

The role of being an artist is changing herewith from being an entertainer to a responsible eye-opener whose goal is to spread awareness, evoke attention and provoke action[312]. Marcuse (1968) states that by naming things in paintings that are absent in real life one breaks the spell of the things. Hereby, he puts things in a different way as they are in real life. Since Marcuse (1968) demonstrates in art what is seen as a taboo or a contradiction, he calls it subjecting the cruel reality. Hereby, it can be argued that political art helps human beings to understand whole structures of society and their related issues. By conveying different perspectives and ideas in paintings, artists can be supportive in understanding better certain events such as conflicts and associated issues such as migration waves. According to Brocklehurst (1999), paintings are an intellectual tool of communication by showing political and social issues in a different way. Painting can be seen as a communication tool that uses artistic expression as a universal language.

In this sense, the paintings elicit critical reflection with the aim to increase the awareness in the general public about the precarious living situation of Syrians living in Beirut. In other words, they are using art to receive public acknowledgment from the Lebanese society.

Art for the Personal Well-being

There is evidence in recent literature, that some well-known contemporary artists have used political art not only for the purpose to trigger critical reflection in public, but also for their own well-being. Marxen (2011) reveals that some artists do suffer from terrible effects of dictatorship and censorship, which affects creative potential, limiting their expression and capacity for symbolisation, with the consequences of mental health issues. Authorities which dictate "what and how" to artists is restricting their creative gift, which is the most vital contribution of an artist, since art is the expression of individual thoughts and emotions (Goodrich, 1965). Goodrich (1965) argues that art helps to better understand oneself and the surrounding world. In such cases artwork is used as a treatment for *political pain*. This can concern especially artists in states using censorship or during and after political conflicts. This political pain can evolve from the personal suffering of traumatic experiences during protracted conflicts and living in exile.

[312] *Provoking action does not refer here to mobilize a revolution. It is rather meant to change the perception and perspective of the hidden conflict.*

Marxen (2011) refers to several artists such as Eva Hesse who suffered from traumas of exile and family tragedies during the Holocaust. She used the artistic expression of pain in paintings for her own personal recovery. She stated that practicing art was rather a necessity to survive than a joyful activity (Marxen, 2011). Furthermore, Marxen (2011) suggests that life and art are completely interdependent. As previously mentioned the environment influences the artists' mental well-being and, thus influences the result of their artwork. There is the possibility that something is illustrated what might have been suppressed for a long time (Tripp, 2013). Nancy Spero was a war-affected artist who painted about abuse, torture, suffering, and pain of women in war (Marxen, 2011). In her paintings, the colours symbolised her state of feeling (for more explanations about colours see chapter: *Visualising colours*). Dark colours indicated her fatigue and anger.

Some of the Syrian contemporary artists communicated their individual traumas in their paintings and drawings in the last few years during the protracted conflict. After the start of the revolution, the individual trauma of the long-lasting oppressive Syrian government became a collective trauma (Cooke, 2016). By expressing this collective trauma by writing or painting it transformed the pain into resistance (Cooke, 2016). Together they created art to release their feelings and stay resistant against the political suffering. But it was not necessarily the representation of the horrific events such as massacres in the paintings that stimulated their pain. It was rather emotional and motivational intensity in artwork that compelled critical thought, since simple representation of horror risks indifference to the victim (Cooke, 2016). By translating the artists' lost world in a painting or drawing by putting its emotions and motivation inside, it creates an active art that sheds new light on the experience. According to Picasso, artistic work has the purpose to let the artist overcome his fears by imaging and expressing them (Appleton, 2001). Therefore, painting can represent a projection of the individual mental state of well-being in certain contexts. Nevertheless, Marxen (2009) suggests to clearly distinguishing between artwork in contemporary art and artwork for therapeutic purposes. While art therapy clients do artwork solely for themselves, artists do it for themselves too, but especially for their audience. In the next paragraph, the concepts of trauma and visualizing trauma will be explained to better understand the connection between the intentions of political art and art as a coping mechanism.

The Concept of Trauma

To be able to make a link between political art and trauma recovery, certain assumptions had to be taken. It is assumed that the interviewed Syrian artists in this thesis are suffering from traumatic experiences from the Syrian protracted conflict and their living situation in exile. Hereby, it is assumed that the artists' trauma goes beyond the concept of *political pain* which is triggered by oppressive governments who censor and ban art (Goodrich, 1965; Marxen, 2011). These assumptions are based on the countless war crimes and human rights violations that had been committed in the Syrian protracted conflict. Further, the reports of HRW and UNHCR evoked the assumption that living in exile in Lebanon might provoke trauma as well. Due to the limitations of time and space of this thesis, the concept of trauma will be simplified here. It is acknowledged that this topic has to be investigated more in detail in future research. This concept will help to understand the collected data in interviews and observations. In the following sections, symptoms of post-traumatic-stress-disorder, and a simplified concept of trauma will be outlined on which the analyses of the data will be based on.

Trauma and post-traumatic-stress-disorder (PTSD) is commonly measured among torture survivors, refugees and war-affected populations (Higson-Smith, 2013). Hereby, losses of functioning systems, safety, property, cultural, and community connections can be experienced as traumatic. Especially in conflict or war areas daily stress factors such as long-lasting poverty, unemployment, famine, crowded shelter and inadequate medical care can facilitate the development of severe traumas (Kira, 2001). Miller and Rasmussen (2010) illustrate that these also are daily stress factors for displaced ethnic groups in developed nations to which the Syrian asylum seeker in Lebanon could be counted in. Furthermore, traumatic events such as divisions within communities, forced displacement, and separation from family and friends lead to the destruction of trustful social networks (Miller and Rasmussen, 2010). Such traumatic experiences change the meaning and purpose of life for the affected individual. Since trauma is based on social foundations of the individual's worldview and on a meaning-making process (Matthies-Boon, 2017), the emotional experience endangers the individual to question the sense of his existence and his social foundations (Matthies-Boon, 2017; Stolorow, 2011). Experiencing traumatic events, such as not receiving adequate help in life threatening situations or facing human rights violation can result in a shattered worldview where fundamental beliefs and values vanish. According to Janoff-Bulman (1992), humans develop basic

concepts and assumptions during childhood which are crucial for orientation in the environment and which may be disturbed when traumatic events occur. These shattered assumptions make it difficult for victims to continue the daily life and routine they used to have before their traumatic experience.

Some victims develop post-traumatic-stress-disorder (PTSD) after having experienced trauma. Such symptoms are unspecific depression, emotional numbness, anxiety and isolation, and even sleep disturbances – especially re-experiencing the trauma through intrusive distressing recollections of the event (flashbacks) and nightmares (Janoff-Bulman, 1992). Furthermore, these PTSD symptoms create distress or functional impairment, such as social withdrawal (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Some victims are able to establish certain coping methods to overcome their traumatic experiences and to reduce their PTSD syndromes. A cognitive reorientation during which the negative beliefs induced by the trauma are overcame and reinterpreted, is one method (Overcash et al., 1996).

The initial assumption that had been destroyed will be re-established but in a different concept, since the old one seemed not to be truthful. It is a substantial cognitive-emotional task that translates terrible experiences into personal strength and new opportunities, so-called posttraumatic growth (PTG) (Harries et al., 2010; Tedeschi and Calhoun, 2004). PTG is neither a healing process, since healing is disputed in this subject, nor a process to return to the baseline. It is rather an improvement that the victim is experiencing due to his or her restructured worldview and assumptions. According to Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) posttraumatic growth goes beyond being resistant and adapting to the circumstances. Growth is defined as a process in which victims are trying to rebuild their shattered assumptions of the world and themselves in a different way and to be able to take something positive out of it. The concept of PTG is adequate for this thesis, since it is not possible to measure the artists' trauma and whether painting can heal them. This research focuses rather on whether the artist himself can understand better his living situation in Lebanon by portraying it. Furthermore, it will be focused on relaxing and calming effects that paintings might have.

Visualising Trauma

In literature, some concepts have been delineated how traumatic experiences can be visualised with specific symbols and colours. Marxen (2011) states: *"the environment influences the artists' mental well-being and, thus influences the result of their art"*. In previous literature, research has shown that art can be an additional support in the meaning-making process by expressing their experiences (Bergh and Sloboda, 2010; Stuckey and Nobel, 2010; Van Lith, 2015). According to Van Lith (2015) art activities have different positive effects on a person such as self-discovery and self-expression, along with social relationships and social identity. It is an ongoing process of exploration of oneself which triggers reflection on the art object and oneself (Van Lith, 2015). This allows to find new self-insights that had not been accessible before and to overcome internal barriers. These positive effects can be supportive for posttraumatic growth since it helps to visualise the issue and find through reflection new self-insights.

To be able to do so, the experienced trauma has to be visualised and expressed in symbols and colours on the canvas. Colours can be used as a tool to communicate different meanings and moods. Since there exist different theories about the *Figure 19: Colour meanings (Won and Westland, 2017)* specific meaning of colours one should be careful to write about colour meanings. This thesis will use the table about colour meanings that had been established by Won and Westland (2017). According to table I black can mean sadness (Madden et al., 2000), fear (Aslam, 2006) and power (Aslam, 2006). Green has as well different meanings such as peaceful, gentle or beautiful (Madden et al., 2000). According to Madden and colleagues (2000) red means active or hot. The Syrian artists might be careful in choosing colours to represent their emotional state. Since a trauma is referred to a negative experience in life, it can be argued that their used colours might be rather dark than bright. This will be discussed more in detail in the analysis.

Colour	Meanings	References
Beige	Kindness	Grieve, 1991
	Weakness	Grieve, 1991
	Sickness	Grieve, 1991
	Obedience	Grieve, 1991
	Expensive	Kerfoot *et al.*, 2003
Black	Sad	Madden *et al.*, 2000
	Stale	Madden *et al.*, 2000
	Fear	Aslam, 2006
	Anger	Aslam, 2006
	Expensive	Aslam, 2006
	Hi-tech	Grimes and Doole, 1998
	Death	Grieve, 1991
	Old	Grimes and Doole, 1998
	Power	Grieve, 1991; Aslam, 2006
	Dignity	Grimes and Doole, 1998
Blue	Calming	Madden *et al.*, 2000
	Thoughtful	Grimes & Doole, 1998
	Peaceful	Madden *et al.*, 2000
	Reliable	Grimes and Doole, 1998
	Expensive	Grimes and Doole, 1998
	Male	Grimes and Doole, 1998
	Warm	Paul and Okan, 2010
	Cold	Paul and Okan, 2010
	Death	Paul and Okan, 2010
	Purity	Paul and Okan, 2010
	Serious	Grimes and Doole, 1998
Green	Reliable	Grimes and Doole, 1998; Paul and Okan, 2010
	Peaceful	Madden *et al.*, 2000
	Gentle	Madden *et al.*, 2000
	Beautiful	Madden *et al.*, 2000
	Health	Kauppinen-Raisanen, 2014
	Traditional	Grimes and Doole, 1998
	Inexpensive	Grimes and Doole, 1998
	Safe	Grimes and Doole, 1998
	Environment	Grimes and Doole, 1998
	Fresh	Grimes and Doole, 1998
	Natural	Grimes and Doole, 1998
Red	Warm	Paul and Okan, 2010
	Excitement	Hynes, 2009
	Active	Madden *et al.*, 2000
	Hot	Madden *et al.*, 2000

Figure 19: Colour Meanings (Won and Westland, 2017)

Huss and colleagues (2010) state that it is possible to identify signs of stress and unwell-being in the content and in the form of a composition of an artwork. According to Huss and colleagues (2010) the symbolic characteristics for war-affected victims are the following five elements (Huss et al., 2010): (1) single objects taking up the whole page; (2) dissociation (e.g. drawing people without faces); (3) encapsulation of objects (as can be seen in divisions in the paintings); (4) fragmentation and flooding, and (5) jagged lines (expressing rigidity and aggression). The theories of Huss and

colleagues (2010) such as of Won and Westland (2017) will be helpful to understand and interpret better the meaning of the artists' paintings.

According to Appleton (2001) the creation of art and putting thoughts into comprehensible forms releases satisfaction and calmness in a person. Furthermore, art has similar effects like verbal narratives. Yet, in contrast to verbal narratives, visual art can express emotions which cannot be verbally expressed adequately (Appleton, 2001; Stuckey and Nobel, 2010). Hereby, the above-mentioned colours and symbols can be a support for the artist to express what he cannot express in words. The art producing process is a steadily challenging process of meaning-making and knowledge which leads to a natural unfolding healing (Allen, 2008).

Methodology

This study investigates the role of artistic self-expression in the integration process of refugees fleeing from a protracted conflict and living in exile. This thesis focuses more specifically on the artwork of Syrian artists living in Lebanon and what they seek to communicate through it. In the upcoming paragraph, the methodological approaches and research methods that have been applied to conduct the research and analyse the data will be outlined.

Definition of Terms

To be able to understand better the context of the thesis, the two terms 'protracted conflict' and 'integration process' should be explained.

Protracted Conflict

Since there is no commonly accepted international definition of a protracted conflict, the definition from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will be used because this one specifies the protracted conflict in Syria. 'Protracted conflict' represents in this thesis an intrastate conflict in which different parties have divided identity lines or have indivisible goals. The two main characteristics of a protracted conflict are their intractability and longevity (ICRC, 2016). Other than that, the fragmentation and mutating which represents the development of new armed groups within the conflict but as well the shifting of the interest in the conflict are common. According to ICRC (2016), a protracted conflict becomes often internationalised such as in Syria, where several other

States and international organisations enter the conflict in various forms. Additionally, the concentration of suffering is another essential characteristic, "the numbers and trends in protracted conflicts today are striking in terms of the concentration and new patterns of suffering" (ICRC, 2016; p. 12). This is one of the main characteristics in the Syrian protracted conflict. In 2013, 13.5m people out of a population of 22.3m needed humanitarian assistance and 6.6m people were internally displaced in Syria (ICRC, 2016).

Integration Process

Integration is a broad term with many definitions that vary with the location where integration should happen. Since Lebanon is not part of the 1951 Refugee Convention, it is not possible to take the definition for the integration process of the 1951 Refugee Convention. Due to the different minority groups involved in the refugee influx in Lebanon and resulting complexity, integration shows different shapes which are why a broad definition of integration is chosen in this thesis. According to UNHCR (2017) the integration process of refugees is a process with legal, economic, social and cultural dimensions. These dimensions reveal the complexity of an integration process. It demands both the arriving individual and the receiving society to work on these dimensions together to ensure a successful integration. In cases, where repatriation is not an option, acquiring the nationality of the hosting country would be a durable solution for the refugees to build a new life (UNHCR, 2017).

Context and Qualitative Research

The focus in this thesis is on artists doing political art by painting and drawing in the context of the integration process of refugees which is related to the Syrian protracted conflict. This context helps to understand better the applied theories of political art and painting as a coping mechanism for traumas. A case study will be used to focus only on the Syrian contemporary artists living in Lebanon that are painting about the related issues of the protracted conflict for the Syrian society living in exile.

There exists a lot of academic literature about activist art that lead to a change in society and politics by motivating society in a suppressed country for upheavals and demonstrations, such as during the start of the Syrian protracted conflict which started with a revolution (their focus is largely on graffiti art, music, poems and videos, but exclude paintings and drawings). There is limited research

conducted on the role of painters living in exile conflict and which intentions they have with their political paintings.

Since the research focuses on paintings of artists fleeing of a protracted conflict, a grounded qualitative research will be applied to be able to stay dynamic and interpretive throughout the process of the research. The qualitative research enables to do a fieldwork and collect the data by having interviews, doing observations and using paintings of the interviewed artists. Thus, the researcher is part in the research process (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). This method is adequate to explore the inner experiences of the interviewees and how the meanings of the paintings are formed and transformed. Conducting interviews allows the researcher to see the integration process from the view of the artists. But beforehand, a confidential relationship and the interviewees' trust has to be gained in order that they will share their personal stories with the interviewer. This is essential to discuss delicate topics such as trauma recovery with the individual participants. Furthermore, the combination of interviews and observations allows to get as close to a full picture as possible of the context and situation. Conducting interviews from distance might lead to miss some important points that are not possible to gain while being fare away from the field and out of the context. By doing a qualitative research including fieldwork, it allows to get a full objective insight into a phenomenon.

Data and Analysis

The findings will be analysed on the basis of the aforementioned theories and concepts. Which specific theories and concepts will be applied to the findings will be explained in the following paragraphs. The theories of Benjamin (1976) and Marcuse (1978) will be supportive to define the paintings as political art. These theories imply that the artwork will change with the artists' environment. Thus, they will help to describe how their artwork changed during their integration process in their hosting country Lebanon.

The theories mentioned in the section of the objectives of political art, will be applied to understand better the aims of continuing painting. The subjects portrayed in the paintings will be analysed whether they are linked to current taboos in the society in the hosting country and whether they are helpful to understand better the social environment of the Syrians in Lebanon. Theories of Grenee

(2004) and Tripp (2013) regarding censoring political art will be used to explain why Lebanon might ban professional artistic activities for Syrians. Furthermore, Wedeen's (2015) theory will explain how these paintings might affect the Lebanese society.

Last but not least, the concepts of trauma will be applied to be able to analyse the artists' state of well-being and how painting might be a coping mechanism for them. Hereby, the focus is mainly on the concept of PTG (Harries, 2010; Tedeschi and Calhoun, 2004). Furthermore, the analysis of the paintings is supportive in making assumptions of their state of mental well-being. Here for, the theories about the meaning of colours and symbols will be used.

Managing the data

A constant comparison analyses will be applied to study in depth the content of the data collected in the interviews and observations (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Hereby, the collected data will be broken down into manageable pieces for which a classification system (categories) will be applied. The interviews were analysed in five steps: First, the recorded interviews were transcribed. Due to the interviewees' anonymity, they had been labelled with numbers in the data analysis. The artists were labelled from A1 to A8. Second, the information was processed by categorising them in theme-groups. Important quotes that were supportive for themes were highlighted. Third, relationships between the themes had been emphasised to yield sub-categories. These subthemes are supportive for clarification and interpretation.

Data analysis of the observations is divided into three different themes (see above): (1) Artist's behaviour; (2) Artistic work; (3) Interaction between artist and the author. Similarly, to the analysis of the interviews, the observations were put into families of themes. Then, the data was interpreted. Finally, the observed artwork was analysed and compared with the data collected by the interviews. A table with two sections was used in order to illustrate ambiguous information collected in observations of the paintings vs. information collected in discussions of the paintings. These observations were based on the colors and symbols used in the paintings and their meanings.

Additionally, the outcomes of the paintings from different artists were compared with each other and analysed focusing on possible similarities between the eight interviewed Syrian artists. This enabled to identify relations between the different themes and to compare similar symbols and colours that they used. The paintings are attached in Appendix 2 and are labelled from C1 to C15. This allows the reader to better understand the argumentation throughout the thesis.

Limitations

Several limitations had to be acknowledged during the data collection. This research acknowledges that the limited number of eight interviews with artists is not sufficient to make any generalisations on this specific research topic. This thesis does not talk in the name of all Syrian artists living in exile, but does rather refer to a small minority that has been interviewed. However, the snow ball method helped to gather different artists with different perspectives. Furthermore, a fieldwork in which the researcher is part of the process can bias the data because of the emotional involvement in the narratives. However, the presence of the researcher can add a positive effect as well as, in this case the interviewees felt more confident to talk to a stranger who is neither Syrian nor Lebanese. The language was sometimes an obstacle, because the researcher did not speak Arabic. The paintings were hereby a significant help. By discussing and interpreting their paintings a new communication tool was created that simplified the language obstacle. In order to ensure the reliability of the results of this research an additional quantitative research with a higher sample is necessary. During fieldwork, to fully understand a situation, attention to character and circumstances as well as empathy and knowledge of cultural context are demanded (Beatty, 2010). It becomes clear that such approaches are very time-consuming. Since the present study took place during a single month, analyses were limited.

Research Findings and Discussion

This chapter will outline some key findings from the field research and an in-depth analysis. To ensure a coherent overview the chapter is divided into five sub-chapters. The first one provides background information on the interviewed artists to be able to put their narratives into the greater context. The second part shows commonalities in the responses of the artists, which are mainly focused on the purpose and objectives of doing political art. In the third part, the effects on the personal well-being of artistic practice will be outlined. In the fourth part, it will be critical discussion in how far their political demand is visible in their paintings. Last but not least, some theoretical implications and limitations will be outlined.

Background of the Artists

As mentioned before, the interviewed artists carry the Syrian nationality and are living or have recently lived in Lebanon. The interviewed artists are in the age group of 25-43 years old. The

majority of the artists have started painting before the revolution. Five out of eight artists have studied art at a University before. Only two respondents (A7 and A8) started painting during the Syrian conflict. A5 started painting during the Lebanese civil war in 1988 and left Syria in the same year due to prosecution of his family by the government. Aside from this painter, all others have experienced at least the first two years of the Syrian revolution, beginning of March 2011. The artists immigrated to Beirut between the end of 2012 and 2016, and most of them arrived in 2013. One artist, A6 has recently moved to New York where he was able to receive a visa for artists, which is currently not possible to receive in Lebanon. Apart from this artist, all the others are holding a temporary residency permit. Seven out of eight respondents mentioned as the reason for their immigration to Lebanon the protracted conflict in Syria. Two (A4 and A8) stated that they had to escape due to fear of being sent to the army and fear of prosecution. Young men that have finished University are sent to the army after their graduation. Thus, especially young men try to escape to neighboring countries to avoid deployment in the military.

None of the artists considers themselves as a political activist. They consider themselves as neutral artists that mainly try to install the idea of peace. Three artists (A2, A4, A6) stated that their artwork is political and that they deal with certain political issues in their paintings. The rest said that their art is not necessarily political. On a later stage, it will be discussed to what extent their art is in fact political.

Commonalities and Differences in the Artists' Narratives

Artists are sharing several commonalities in their purpose of painting such as documenting and/or reflecting their situation in order to spread a message to achieve a change in society. Half of the respondents mentioned that they document, and the other half mentioned that they reflect their environment which would influence them. *"While painting you are documenting a certain time and a certain moment (A5)."* This concurs with Benjamin's (1976) theory, which assumes that historical circumstances influence the artist and its work, which then becomes unique due to the temporal and spatial uniqueness of the events. One artist (A6) explained that when he saw that Syrians are desperately about being heard, he felt that it was about time to document the despair of the Syrian society. A1 described that the artist captures the moment with all its senses, which makes the painting become more profound. "*My art changed by time. Before I painted the good life and with many colors. But in times of war, you cannot paint with colors. Everything is black and white. (..) Since the revolution, my art*

became deeper. (..) The artist catches the moment and therefore, it is so deep. He puts all his feelings inside like sadness, anger and therefore, it is so deep." Hereby A1 meant that the paintings hold stronger expressions in the representation of subjects with severe living conditions over the past years. Three more artists (A3, A4 and A6) explained that they feel that their paintings became as well more profound in their expression.

By stating that art only becomes stronger in its expression, because the artist is putting all his emotions and feelings in it, it could be argued that it is rather a reflection than a documentation of a moment. Brocklehurst (1999) supports this statement by arguing that it depends on how the artist senses the reality and translates it on canvas. In other words, it is an individual interpretation of a situation that is linked to subjective experiences and observations rather than reproducing the reality as a documentation of a moment. Thus, it can be argued that art changes simultaneously with certain events in the social and political environment in which the artists feel emotionally involved, as they try to capture the moment.

A2 explained that he can feel a difference in his paintings since he moved to Lebanon but that he cannot see it yet, since he is currently working on a new exhibition which is not yet finished. Looking at the paintings (Appendix 2), the artists are reflecting mainly issues that are related to their integration process in a largely figurative way in their paintings. Even though only five out of eight clearly stated that they are painting about the Syrian migration, it could be argued that they all do so in different, perhaps in subconscious ways.

Portraying Obstacles of the Integration Process

Immigrating to a foreign country implies several obstacles that are related to the integration process, which might be even more difficult in the case of temporary integration for refugees. Besides experiencing forced displacement, separation from family and friends, and losses of property, refugees can face issues by being repelled by the host society, leading to a lack of integration. Every artist portrays another obstacle in its paintings. Obstacles that had been mentioned during interviews were related to the following issues: the question of belonging, the involuntary separation from home and family, the internal division, the division in society, isolation, cultural exchange, and geographical borders. These subjects refer to legal, social and cultural dimension, that according to UNHCR (2017) are integral to the integration process. Thus, it can be concluded that the main

subject of all these artists is the integration process of Syrians in the Lebanese society. The paintings will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

A1 portrays isolation in his paintings, which he represents in a theatrical setting (C1 and C2) with people that are disguised like in a carnival. He paints daily situations such as sitting in a bar or restaurant, in which a person (often himself) is sitting in front of the scene alone on a desk. The other people that are surrounding the person are portrayed as clowns or odd people. Hereby, the isolated person is not part of the events, even though it is part of the scene. This person is excluded from the social activity of having dinner or a drink together in a group and enjoying life (C2). A1 explained: "*My style is carnival. The show must go on. It makes me furious that many people are dying and suffering while fleeing from the conflict in Syria. (..) We are continuing to live in a new culture, which is difficult. It might be an illusion this dream of having a better life outside Syria."* He refers to the continuous suffering of the Syrian society even though they fled from the protracted conflict to find safety and stability. They hoped for a better life, which they do not have.

In another painting (C3), a society is pictured on four different canvases that are put next to each other. The artist (A2) explained that every canvas represents a different society, but when put next to each other, they represent a united society. The message here is to show that the society should be unified and not divided into several smaller communities:

> "*In general, when you are in a society or community, people are gathering together around a political idea. I can see these people gathering around it here. This is why some of the old paintings were painted separated into several parts, but they produce one painting in the end [...] I mean originally, we are from the same origin but some ideas divide us*" (A2).

It is a reference to the division in the Lebanese society in which several smaller communities are settled. Besides, the 1 million registered Syrian refugees, Lebanon is hosting another 6000 Iraqi and 280 000 Palestinian refugees (EC, 2017). This is not only for the Lebanese government but as well for the society a burden, and lead to differentiation of the Lebanese society from the refugees. This division becomes clearer in the newer paintings (C4). Whereas C3 depicts whole societies, C4 only portrays a few individuals, which look silly and proportionally obese:

> "*These fat persons are my landlords, three Lebanese brothers. Every month, they pass by to pick up the expensive rent. They are always looking happy. But I will not have any money left to buy some food and other basic needs after having paid the rent. They do not need the money to survive; they have enough to eat. Still, they take whatever they can, even though they do not need it.*"

Syrians often face exploitation in Lebanon, which then might lead them into poverty. This is related to the visa requirements to receive a residence permit. Besides the biannual 200 USD for their residency renewal fee, the sponsorship they need for an individual work permit is often requesting additional money as a service in return. Since Syrians do not receive protection from the Lebanese authorities, they are often exposed to exploitation of the locals (HRW, 2016). Syrians often have no choice but to accept these conditions since going back to Syria would put them into serious life danger (Janmyr, 2016). These precarious conditions are difficult for several artists to accept since they are aware of the history of their host country, as A4 stated:

> *"[...] For example, the paintings with the luggage, I started to draw them very high and put the person on top of them. He is careless. He does not care if he is going to fall or not. You are so high and you may fall but you do not feel afraid. [...]It is a new feeling. I started to feel like this when I came to Lebanon. I heard about the Lebanese history and their civil wars, and now they are treating Syrians really bad. After four years, I still feel not settled. They can stop giving us visa at any time. There are pages now on Facebook that are against Syrians. They are starting now to close all the Syrian shops. They close even shops with only Syrian workers. […] My paintings are about balance, like if you put a glass on your head, how will you walk? You cannot do anything. You have to walk straight and without making noises. If you want to live here you have to be like this. Be silent, do not attract attention."*

In his paintings (C5 and C6) A4 expresses the suppression of the environment that is referred here to both, society and politics. The insecurity and fear about their visas being withdrawn at any moment is referred to the laws and political situation. In one of the paintings (C5), the artists portrayed a person caught in a bottle with a string around the neck that is attached to the cork of a bottle. He explained that the cork could be pulled out at any moment, which would mean his "death". The respondent meant by saying "death" that he would have to go back to Syria where he is prosecuted if he will not get a renewed visa. But the feeling of not having been able to settle yet is related to the unwelcoming behavior of the Lebanese towards the Syrians that he feels. He explained

that he could not move around freely in Lebanon. He always feels being observed and in danger and thus tries not to attract any attention. The only solution for him is isolation to protect himself. This feeling of instability is shared by three others (A1, A2 and A5). A2 explained that he lost his social protection since he is in Lebanon. While migrating to a different place one loses the social protection of friends and family that one knows. In a foreign country, it is difficult at the beginning to trust the people, since they are all strangers. This can be referred to the feeling of being unsettled and not feeling at home. Three artists (A1, A4 and A7) have admitted that the feeling of having a home has vanished completely since they are in Lebanon.

Instability and lack of integration can lead to further issues such as internal division. A4 and A8 depict in their paintings (C5, C15 and C16) as well the internal division that they experience. A8 explained*: "It is an expression of the inner chaos. The reason for this inner chaos is that we experienced a civil war, which put us in this situation. We are not here because it is our choice."* In some paintings, he paints his inner chaos in mandala style, in which many small pieces create one bigger piece. The paintings of A4 are largely separated by a fine line (C5). He described that this line separates his former life from the new one. Since he cannot go back to Syria he feels to have lost the connection to his family and the culture there. These inner divisions that some of the artists face often lead to further isolation within the society which can be referred to a lack of integration and their unstable life condition, which in turn can affect negatively their mental well-being.

Linking Political Art to Coping Mechanism for Traumas

According to the theories, art as a tool of expression can have positive impacts on the emotional state and well-being for artists (Bergh & Sloboda, 2010; Marxen, 2011; Stuckey and Nobel, 2010; Van Lith, 2015). In this sense, art helps to better understand oneself and one's environment. War-affected populations and refugees that are facing forced displacement, divisions in societies, insecurity, and instability, do largely have traumatic experiences (Higson-Smith, 2013; Kira, 2001; Miller and Rasmussen, 2010). As the majority of the interviewed artists have lived in Syria during the protracted conflict and are now living in precarious living conditions (HRW, 2016; UNHCR, 2017), it was assumed that the artists would suffer from traumatic experiences. Even though they were not asked to share their war experiences in the interviews, several artists started to share terrible experiences, as for example A1 did:

"Time was so hard, it was black and white. Someday, I was in Damascus and a bomb exploded next to me. I saw people dying on the street. I feel it, I feel the smell of the war. The war changes you. It let you feel that the life you have now is just for a short moment. Therefore, many things in your mind, and background changed. You live your life as if it would be your last day."

Three artists have mentioned that they have witnessed bombings and shootings during their time in Syria. Such experiences can have severe impacts on the mental well-being of the affected person. According to (WHO), it can be estimated that one in five Syrians has moderate mental health issues and one in thirteen is at risk of developing severe or acute mental health needs (WHO, 2017). Another artist (A4) shared his memories from the time he lived in Damascus:

"I saw many things. I saw bombings. I saw both sides, fighting each other, the helicopters and shootings. And the biggest explosion in Damascus, it was horrible. My room was shacking. It was early in the morning. I was awake because we did not sleep in the night. It was so big. Once, my window was broken due to the pressure of the explosion. And once, I was with a friend, he is an artist also, he was watching a movie and I was on the bed. So, there was again many bombings, and one was really close. It felt like it was in our house. We were afraid that it would fall on us. I had a big toll like a bear. And my friend wanted to go to his room. I told him do not go to your room, stay with me. And we started to smell the smoke from the explosion. It was so close. So, we were hiding us both under the bear. And we tried to figure out what was going on. You know on Facebook there are many groups that kept us updated where the bomb was exploding and what happened. We were so afraid that the ceiling would fall onto our head. And then there was another bomb. You felt it. There were many explosions."

Another artist (A8) explained that he does not use the color red anymore because all he saw in Syria was blood. In addition, several artists mentioned that they suffer from emotional numbness, isolation, sleeping disorders, and nightmares. As we have seen before, most of them are isolated which they represent as well in their paintings. Two artists (A1 and A5) explained that they are suffering from sleeping disorders and nightmares. Two other artists (A4 and A7) mentioned that they feel emotional numbness:

"If I am watching now the news and the killings, I do not feel anything anymore. It is maybe to avoid feelings. Before, when we saw that one person was killed we were shocked, but now if we see that there are

100 people killed, we do not care anymore. It is so weird. It is affecting you and you feel that you are dying from inside. You feel you have no feelings anymore." (A4)

A7 described that she started to practice the feeling of emotional numbness as a defense mechanism from feeling pain:

"[...] when I went out of Syria I thought I would go back after a few months. But I did not go back to Syria. I left many things there, all my furniture, the most important thing my photo album when I was a kid. Many things I had to leave there. It is really the feeling of losing. It makes you to feel that you have to practice more to set things free. Like you should not feel too much attached with things and people. I do not know. I feel I cannot even be attached with anyone. In my head I have this scenario, maybe one day I will lose this person, you know. It is easier when you practice to set everything free. […] It is sad because you feel there is no value like before. You are not afraid anymore of losing. It is a very weird feeling. I cannot explain this."

According to the theory, these are symptoms of post-traumatic-stress-disorder (PTSD) (Janoff-Bulman, 1992). From the narratives and the supporting theories, it can be argued that the respondents are suffering from traumatic experiences that have led to PTSD. The American Psychiatric Association (2013) argues that these symptoms can create functional impairment such as social withdrawal. The traumatic experiences can shatter the victim's worldview on general values and structures in their environment; therefore, they have to re-establish it. However, the structural on-going impacts of an environment in which reinterpretation of fundamental assumptions and reintegration in a society is not possible, can influence the victims in recovering from their traumas (Higson-Smith, 2013). As discussed before, the Syrian artists do not feel integrated well in the Lebanese society. This is problematic because reinterpretation and reintegration are fundamental to be able to cope with traumatic experiences.

Art as a Coping Mechanism

From the statements of the artists, it can be argued that art is a great support for them to better cope with their situation and their traumatic experiences. Theories state that painting is a way of self-expression to let out what is not possible to be put in words (Appleton, 2001; Stuckey and Nobel, 2010; Van Lith, 2015). All eight artists have mentioned that painting helps them express their

feelings. Four artists even mentioned that painting is their way of speaking. A8 clarified that his paintings show his inner truth, *"it is only a form of expression. It allows me to express my feelings that I cannot express in words."* Another artist (A5), explained that through painting he found his voice back. A4 stated that it is easier for him to paint than to talk, because talking is too exhausting for him, *"it is a long time that I did not talk. I draw, I do usually not talk. Usually the artists do not like to talk. It is a long time that I talked. It is exhausting to remember and to talk about it. It is tiring. It is so bad. But therefore, I am drawing now these."* This artist clearly stated how difficult it is for him to talk about his traumatic experiences. Appleton (2001), and Stuckey and Nobel (2010) argue that visual art can express emotions which cannot be verbally expressed. A7 stated: *"I felt like in a cage and I wanted to talk in a loud voice by drawing things."* Art is a way to visualize one's feelings and emotions that is an on-going process of exploring oneself, which triggers reflection on the artwork and the person itself. Four artists (A1, A3, A5 and A8) mentioned that painting is a steady process of exploring themselves, which can be supported with the theories. *"For me painting is my self-reflection about how I see certain things in life. I try to understand myself, and my choices I took. Art is there to make you free. (...) It is about growing. To grow with time and understand what is going on in the conflict" (A3).* Thus, art can be supportive in the process of posttraumatic growth (PTG).

The concept of PTG does not assume that the victim overcomes the trauma, but that it can take something positive out of the experience while restructuring the assumptions and the worldview. This can be seen in the respondents' narratives.

> *"[...] it is so bad to see life with less making-sense. You draw to survive and stay yourself. You do not draw because you like colors. […] The art is so deep, and it helps to understand better. It tries to speak about humanity and not about death. The art speaks about the life. I guess the war was so bad and at the same time it was such a good experience. I know myself better now and can see things clearer. If you have a safe life, maybe you forget yourself. You cannot see what you really want when you have everything. When you do not know if you are alive or not, you know exactly what is good for you. Drawing helps to release me from all these bad feelings, to let them out."*

A1 is able to see his experiences from a different angle now. Due to his traumatic experience, he was able to find out what he really wants to achieve in life. Even the name of the exhibition with the paintings about the theatrical setting was called "The Show Must Go On". Hereby, he underlines

that he has to move forward even though he is still concerned about the situation. It could be argued that he tried to grow out of his traumatic experiences by establishing new assumptions. Picasso has once mentioned that the artist has to paint his fear and anger to overcome his feelings (Allen, 2008). This is reflective in the concept of PTG which tries to re-establish the shattered assumption, but in a way that the victim can grow out of its experiences (Harries et al., 2010; Tedeschi and Calhoun, 2004). Cooke (2016) explains that by translating the shattered world in paintings, it sheds new light on the experiences. This helped some artists during the revolution to stimulate the pain and to remain resilient. Even though the artists did not mention that they use art to stay resilient it could be argued that stimulating their pain by expressing their feelings and emotions is as well a strategy to be resilient.

One artist (A7) mentioned that for her painting is like a therapy:

> *"To be honest, it is a therapy for us painters. It makes me feel so much better. The first time in Lebanon, I felt useless. I had an easy life there. Everything was nice and it was scary for me because you can feel the inner contradictions. You hear the bad news back in Syria and you have a great time somewhere else. You see people that are happy and smiling. And they have a normal life. It is a big contradiction you are living in. If you are more involved it is way better. It feels like you are not living anymore in a different planet."*

For A7, it is a way to stay active by saying the unspoken words. This can also be supported with the theories by explaining that visualizing thoughts release satisfaction and calmness in a person (Appleton, 2001). It might not be a coincidence that A7 uses painting as a kind of therapy for herself. Van Lith (2015) explains that art is often used in therapy for traumatized people. It helps the victim release what they are not able to express in words. Recently, many refugee camps provided children with colors to paint. Brocklehurst (1999), explains that children can better express themselves about their experiences by painting. One artist clarified that painting is like medicine for him and represents an escape from life:

> *"Art is like medicine. It is like your medicine to understand better your environment. It is so important that art can be as well an escape. You do not want to reflect about life, you just want to run away from it. You do not want to talk about politics, you want to turn around. It is like a window to escape. You can maybe look at the paintings and forget war and think about something else."*

From the artists' statements and the supporting theories, it can be argued that seven out of eight artists are using art to overcome their traumatic experiences. Painting has proven to be relaxing to them as it releases their feelings and emotions.

Expressing Traumatic Experiences

These traumatic experiences are visible in their paintings, when analyzing them more in depth and comparing them to the statements of the artists. Certain colors and symbols can be essential indicators for traumatic experiences as researchers in the area of art therapies have revealed (Bergh and Sloboda, 2010; Huss et al., 2010; Stuckey and Nobel, 2010; Van Lith, 2015).

Color Meanings

Colors can be an essential indicator for their mental well-being, as some theories argue (Aslam, 2006; Madden et al., 2000; Won and Westland, 2017). In addition, some artists explained the meaning of certain colors in their paintings. As previously mentioned, one artist (A8) does not use the color red anymore, because it reminds him of the blood he saw in Syria. *"[…] The only color we were seeing was red and that was blood. Therefore, I do not use it at all."* This is a new meaning that has not been revealed in the mentioned theories. A8 explained that he mainly uses black and white to represent the opposing sides in the protracted conflict. A1 explained that he only uses black and white in his paintings but for a different reason.

> *"You cannot speak about death with colors. Death is black or white. For that, after I arrived in Lebanon I needed the color, because my soul needed colors. Life back in Syria was dark because of all the destructions. The idea was not yet clear, so I just put many colors. But look you cannot be colorful when children are dying, when people are losing their houses. Therefore, my paintings now are not colorful anymore. They are just black and white."*

The artists' meaning of black and white is similar to the argumentation in the theories of color meaning. Black is often put in relation to emotions, such as sadness, fear and anger, but also to death and power (Aslam, 2006; Madden et al., 2000; Won and Westland, 2017). Four artists stated that they mainly use black and white in their paintings, whereas two others (A3 and A6) are mainly

using dark contrast colors in their paintings. A5 mainly uses black for his birds, as a symbol that they are all dead birds coming from Syria (C9). A4 explained that a black person portrayed in his paintings is the expression for the devil. *"Someone really bad, who is not good."* Therefore, it can be argued that they are all expressing their sadness and anger about what they have experienced.

Another artist (A7) uses certain colors such as red and yellow in order to grow more attention (C14). A7 explained that red is the symbolic color for Aleppo and yellow for the chemical attack. According to this artist, these colors were largely used on social media as a sign for the chemical attacks and happenings in Aleppo. Whereas these artists are using colors with a specific idea about their meaning, A2 does not give colors any meaning. *"I use all kind of colors. You draw with these colors because you like this color, they do not have to be backed by an idea. It is about an experience. (…) Some are doing abstract art, with colors and beauty. It is not necessary that every artist has a case in his mind, because it is so important that art can be as well an escape."* The artists barely use colors in their paintings, especially bright colors.

Symbols

But not only colors can help estimate and understand the state of well-being, theories state that certain symbols are also indicators for the artists' emotional state (Huss et al., 2010). From the analysis of the paintings it has been observed that one commonality is that all the artists are portraying individuals, whether portrayed as a society, a group of people, or only single faces. The way the artists portray the individuals is also explained in a theory by Huss and colleagues (2010).

Whereas in some paintings faces are not painted in detail (C3, C4, C10 and C11), others are portrayed unhappy. The eyes or the mouth is often missing or are closed. In a few paintings (C6, C9 and C13), the mouth has been stitched together or something is held in front of it to keep the portrayed person from speaking. C13 shows a woman with several hands keeping her from speaking. A7 explained that Syrians do not express as much anymore, since their government oppressed them from talking in public. With the revolution, they felt that they could finally speak up, though for women it became worse. The protracted conflict and the migration changed their life style and made their lives more complicated. *"Even before we thought that there are no rights, but now it gets even worse and more dangerous."* Another artist (A5), explained that he barely paints a face with a mouth, because he feels restricted from talking in public in Lebanon. *"No, you are not free. Part of the freedom is to let people express their mind."* Marxen (2011) refers this lack of freedom of expression by experiencing

censorship as an artist to political pain. He states that censorship limits the artist to express himself in symbolism that could have severe effects on their mental well-being. Goodrich (1965), agrees on that by stating that freedom of expression is so important for the artist because art is the expression of individual thoughts and emotions. As explained in the history of the Syrian contemporary art, Syrian art has always been very symbolic which can be referred to the long-lasting oppressive regulations of cultural heritage in Syria. At a later stage, it will be discussed why they might still continue the symbolic painting in Lebanon.

In one of the paintings (C2), apart from the person sitting in front of the table, all the others seem to wear a mask and thus, their eyes are not visible. A1 explained that whereas those without eyes do ignore the reality and try to forget the issues they are facing, those with open eyes try to continue to live by facing reality. Huss and colleagues (2010) explain this isolation as a sign for dissociation; the artist portrays himself in the painting by being isolated and disconnected from the society. A4 also stated the temptation to express his isolation in portraying a person in a bottle, which can be interpreted as being encapsulated. According to Huss and colleagues (2010) encapsulations in painting are an additional sign of instability and insecurity of the person.

The same artist (A4) largely uses a fine line that separates his paintings in two parts. Huss and colleagues (2010) explain that this could be a sign of expressing rigidity and aggression. However, these explanations contradict to the explanations of the artists. A4 explained that it is a sign that his life is split into two parts: the life he had before in Syria and the life he has now, far away from his family, stuck in Lebanon where he is not able to leave. A2 likes to paint on several canvases that are put together in the end, explained that it represents the division in society. One artist (A8), always paints fragmentations and holes in faces. He explained that the person is incomplete and confused:

> *"In the war, there are many different political sides: left one and right ones. Every face does represent a specific political orientation. The face that does not understand anything is symbolic to my confusion with what is going on, because I do not understand what is happening. The sad face is representing the people that are suffering due to the destruction that is happening in Syria. Whereas the happy faces are symbolic for the people that are in power. Who are fighting for a cause that they believe is right, but in the end, they are the reason why the other ones are sad. They both coexist together and there is a reason why."*

Besides these five signs (1.) single objects taking up the whole page; (2) dissociation; (3) encapsulation of objects; (4) fragmentation, and (5) jagged lines that should be indicators for the artists' shattered worldview, several artists have mentioned other objects which are meaningful symbols for them. As previously mentioned, A4 portrays a glass with water on heads in his paintings. This symbolizes how careful he is with moving around in Lebanon to not lose the balance and break the glass. Two artists (A1 and A5) explained that they often portray a desk and a chair in their paintings, since these objects symbolize for them insomnia. The desk and the chair are a place where they spend most of their time, awake and waiting for fatigue. *"[…] because this is what I live with every day. I have a chair and I have a table. I have insomnia so most of the time I am sitting there. My chair my table. This is more of self-portraits" (A5).* However, the chair and table can have a different meaning as well. For A2, the chair means waiting to be able to work and receive permanent residence in Lebanon. A3 explained that the chair is a symbol of being stuck, because it keeps you from moving. The human beings have two legs and are meant to move, but the chair keeps them from moving.

Animals are used as symbols for different things. A1 explained that the fish is a symbol of freedom; he does not need visa since the ocean has no physical borders. However, both A1 and A5 mentioned that the fish dies when he leaves his home, the ocean. Something died inside the Syrians when they had to leave their home country, as A4 mentioned previously. The snail in C1 and C2 symbolizes the time that passes very slowly for A1. He has the feeling that it is very difficult at the moment to progress in life, because there are so many obstacles that hinder him from achieving his aims. Three artists (A1, A5 and A7) use the birds as a sign for freedom. For them the bird represents free traveling without considering borders. For A5 the bird can symbolize both hope and despair. His hope is to feel freedom again. The despair is that freedom will never happen, and that life consumes him. *"It is a dying person and the birds are eating it. The birds are again representing here hope and despair. It is a metaphor. Sometimes they bring life and sometimes they bring the death."* Artists represent hope in different ways; A8 found inspiration in the Indian culture and represents hope by drawing an elephant. A7 uses colorful flowers to represent hope for having peace in Syria. In her illustrations, she depicts someone bringing out all the soldiers from Syria by playing with a pipe (C12).

After having discussed the symbolic representation of the lack of integration and shattered worldviews in their paintings, it can be argued that their political demand is intertwined with their highly symbolic way of painting. They all mentioned that their only motivation to paint is to create

awareness and ask for change in the Lebanese society, it is questionable why they are painting their political demand in an indirect way that is difficult to interpret for outsiders who are unfamiliar with the stories.

Camouflage Technique

To the question whether their paintings contain a political message, six out of eight have responded that their political demand is indirect. One artist (A2) explained: *"Not everyone understands the message necessarily. However, every art has a message. Even, if you are painting only an apple, it has a message. But it is not necessary that everyone understands it*." Another one (A6) clarified:

> "*My paintings are always political. I do not want to say it just because I want to say it. Everything I do I consider it as political, but it is hidden - underneath the layer. It is not on the top. It is indirect. I do not know if you noticed this in my works. It is maybe because it is like poetry. I am saying it because I want to say it like in a poem. I do not want to say it in a harsh way. And that comes across that it is part of all of us. It creates slowly attention and it gets part of everyone. If this is the case, people could understand it, I think."*

This is contradictory to their aim of what they want to achieve. Only two (A5, A7) mentioned that their art is direct. However, even the outcry in the paintings (C8, C9, C12, C13) of these two artists might be difficult to understand if one does not know the context.

According to Shannon (2005), symbolism has always been a character of the Syrian contemporary art. Only by using symbolism, artists were able to show their struggles about their cultural identity in which emotions were always playing a big role. Since the Syrian government had clear and strict regulations for the content and form of art, symbolism was their only way to continue painting (Boëx, 2011). Wedeen (2015) calls this technique of symbolism *camouflage technique,* which according to her should be a way to find cracks and loopholes in the system to avoid censorship. This is in accordance with one of the narratives of the artists: "*Back in history the artist was not able to draw what he wanted. But now it is different. Now you can always put your idea in the painting. If you feel scared of a person you can just symbolize it. Due to the symbols, there is more freedom in painting than in anything else. Painting is freer than anything else*." A5 who is living for several years already in Lebanon gave the following explanation for their continuous symbolism:

> *"They got more freedom when they left their country. If they would have stayed they could have not really say what they want. Now they came to Beirut and they did a lot of exhibitions – exhibitions against and with the revolution. But often there is a hidden message because many of them are still afraid. These two countries are too connected, they are too close. The further they got away from the border the freer they became."*

One artist (A8) agrees that he feels more freedom in Lebanon to express himself in his paintings:

> "*I feel like that I am exposing work more, my technique has developed, the ideas that I represent through my art have developed due to the fact that I am not longer afraid of the censorship that we have in Syria. I am able to express more the inner chaos in myself. Now that I am here there is somebody that is listening to me and looking at my art – whereas in Syria I could not show my art. You have to take in consideration that when it comes to a civil war you could have a neighbor who is with the one party and you self are in the opposition. I did not know anymore who to trust in this conflict."*

Another artist (A1) explained: "*Beirut is very famous at the moment for artists. At that time when I arrived, it felt like freedom for me. I felt this freedom as well in Sweida (city in Syria) before. As an artist, you need freedom. You cannot be an artist with a closed mind and roles. Beirut is good*." It could be argued that after a while having lived in Lebanon, the artist feels again a certain lack of freedom by the regulations for refugees and asylum seekers. It could be argued that the reason for their camouflage technique in their paintings for their political demand is related to their political demand for integration. Since they do not feel welcomed and integrated, they have the feeling that they have to hide as mentioned by artists several times. In addition, the fact that Lebanon does not give visas to artists can be a sign of censorship as well. This might influence the artists after a while. A5 is contradictory in his statement when he explained that coming to Lebanon during the Lebanese civil war would have been better than staying in a country where freedom of expression is not available. In another statement he stressed how much pressure he feels from the Lebanese censorship:

> *"[…] I know that my art will not change the system, but at least I am telling you the mistakes in it. It is my job to tell them what they are doing wrong in this country and in this system. Make a change by creating civic and political awareness. The city needs more of political action – activate the civilians. […] I concentrate on children because they are the next hope. A painting cannot safe a child from bullets. It can make a change in*

small steps by creating awareness. Awareness is the most important things for me. There are so many people walking around blindly. Some people rely on artists to become their voice. Through exhibition you can spread the message. In Europe, many countries were interested in Syrian artists and helped them to exhibit. If you can bring awareness and a social or political message, that is great! Many people in Palermo at my last exhibition were surprised about my political message because they did not know or did not want to know. But again, if one person saw my exhibition and I could change his heart, my job is done. This is what I believe (A5)."

Regarding the other Syrian artists, it can be argued that due to their instability and insecurity they feel in the Lebanese society, they are afraid of getting too much attention by stating a clear political demand in their paintings.

Conclusion

The role of political art in the integration process remains an under-researched phenomenon, which is difficult to understand due to the versatility of the art's purpose. Art, often seen as an aesthetical pleasure for the beholder, can clearly have a deeper meaning for the artist himself. Whereas the majority of the theories concentrate on the role of revolutionary and activist art, this thesis adds a new contribution to existing research by concluding that contemporary art is used as well to ask for a political demand. This research focused on the art, which is perceived as a tool for the artists to express their desire for a better integration, which could help them to re-establish their shattered worldviews that they suffer from. These shattered worldviews came partly from the personal experiences during the protracted conflict, but as well while immigrating to Lebanon.

From the analysis, it can be concluded that the paintings changed simultaneously with the artists moving from Syria to Lebanon, in terms of the subjects that were portrayed. From the interviews and the paintings, it became clear that the artists portrayed their precarious living situation which leaves them in instability, insecurity, isolation and unhappiness. They wish to create awareness with their paintings in order to influence the public non-existent acknowledgement of the Syrian community in the Lebanese society. However, the analysis shows that it is difficult for a person who does not know the background of the painter to understand the meaning and the context of the paintings. The paintings are showing the lack of integration in a highly figurative and symbolic way,

which makes it difficult to understand the political demand. Since the majority is aware that the message that they would like to share with the Lebanese society is not clearly visible in the paintings, it can be concluded that they are afraid of creating too much awareness in public.

Besides the political outcry, depicting their environment and living situation has a positive effect on their mental well-being. Supported by theories, it can be concluded that the majority of artists suffer from traumatic experiences, for which they try to find a coping mechanism. Painting has a positive impact to them by releasing them from their feelings that they are not able to formulate into words. The chosen colors and symbols that are used in their paintings are an indicator for their unhappiness, instability and isolation. It keeps them resilient from the daily obstacles, which they face in the Lebanese society, by releasing these feelings. However, the lack of integration becomes part of the stagnation of the artists' process to cope with their traumatic experiences, since a successful reintegration in society has to be fully ensured (Higson-Smith, 2013). Thus, it is highly significant to foster a better integration for the Syrian community.

Using a detailed analysis of the interviews and paintings of the Syrian artists living in exile in Lebanon, this research aims to provide an academic account on art as being a significant indicator for the integration process of a small community in a society. Last but not least, many other elements need to be studied, such as both the reactions from politics and society to political art done by artists living in exile.

ABOUT THE EDITOR

Jasmin Lilian Diab, MA, Ms. Diab is a Canadian-Lebanese researcher based in Beirut, Lebanon. She holds a BA in International Affairs and Diplomacy, an MA in International Law from Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) in Lebanon, and is currently pursuing a Master of Advanced Study in Democracy and Human Rights at the Saint Joseph University of Beirut (USJ). The positions she holds include: Office Manager, Researcher and Project Coordinator at the Lebanese Emigration Research Center at the Faculty of Law and Political Science at NDU, Operations Manager and Youth Coordinator at the Lebanon Dialogue Initiative, as well as Research Assistant and Assistant Project Manager at the Lebanese Development Network. She is a former Direct Dialogue Team Leader at Greenpeace International, and is currently a Research Affiliate at the Middle East Institute for Research and Strategic Studies, as well as at the Carthage Center for Research and Information.

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