



Splice

The Undergraduate Research Journal of the SDSU College of Arts and Letters



Splice

The Undergraduate Research Journal of the SDSU College of Arts and Letters

Fall 2019 Issue



San Diego State University Press



The 2019 issue of **Splice**, the Undergraduate Research Journal of the College of Arts and Letters at San Diego State University is managed, edited, and produced by undergraduates in the College of Arts and Letters, SDSU. All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including digital, except as maybe expressly permitted by the applicable copyright statutes or with written permission of the Publisher or Author.

Splice: Undergraduate Research Journal of the College of Arts and Letters is published by the journals division of San Diego State University Press, San Diego, CA 92182. Other SDSU Press journal titles include *Poetry International*, edited by Ilya Kaminsky, and *pacificREVIEW: A West Coast Arts Review Annual*, edited by Emily Buckley and Miles Reyes, 2020 issue.

Join *Splice* online here: cal.sdsu.edu/our-students/undergraduate-journal

©2020, The San Diego State University Press

The mission of Splice, the Undergraduate Research Journal (URJ) of the College of Arts and Letters (CAL), is to recognize existing undergraduate research in San Diego State University's College of Arts and Letters, to engage student agency in undertaking research, and to serve as an educational channel that actualizes undergraduate research as a pillar of higher education. Note that the first four volumes in this series were entitled URJCAL, an acronym for Undergraduate Research Journal of the College of Arts and Letters. Owing to the somewhat ungainly nature of that moniker, it has been updated by the 2019 student staff and advisors to broaden our readership.

FIRST EDITION

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN: 978-1-938537-14-1

Splice design by Guillermo Nericcio García—all images are from unsplash.com, morguefile.com, and [Wikipedia commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org). Full credits for images appear here: <https://sdsupress.sdsu.edu/splice/2019/imagecredits2019.html>



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Jana Jarvis

EDITORS

Miles Reyes

Indira Lofflin

Amber Reinhart

Chrystian Smith

Ali Schulz

Dylan Corliss

Editorial Board of College of Arts and Letters Faculty

Ronnee Schreiber

Associate Dean, CAL

Professor, Department of Political Science

William Nericcio

Director, SDSU Press

Professor, Department of English and Comparative Literature

Peter Atterton

Professor, Department of Philosophy

Steven Barbone

Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy

Cheryl O'Brien

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science

Kimberley Fletcher

Associate Professor, Department of Political Science

Anne-Marie Debbanè

Assistant Professor, Department of Geography

Ricardo Vasconcelos

Associate Professor, Department of Spanish and Portuguese





SPLICE: An Undergraduate Research Journal
The College of Arts and Letters, San Diego State University
Volume 5, Fall 2019

Contents

JANA JARVIS Editor's Note	7
ALIONA GALKINA Caging for Profits: Rethinking the Neoliberal State and the Rise of the Prison Industrial Complex	9
CALVIN FORSYTHE Watershed Management in the Eastern Sierra Region of California: Changes to Water Policies in the Long and Owens Valleys and Potential Effects on Dependent Communities	27
PRICILLA MORENO Capitães da Areia: Crianças ou Adultos?	36
LASHELE JACKSON Assessing Descartes' Ontological Argument: Dissecting Attributes and Clarifying the Idea of "God"	42
RODA SAOOR The Names of God	54
NAOMI MOORE The Rise of ISIS: Grievances Trump Religion	65
MILES REYES Waste and War	84



Editor's Note

JANA JARVIS

B.A., English and Comparative Literature | Class of 2020

In 2019, the student editors and I gathered to seek a completely different conceptual design for what had previously been called *URJCAL: The Undergraduate Research Journal of the College of Arts and Letters*. We worked towards a redesign that upholds our mission of engaging undergraduate students with the rigors of academic research and maintains our core values as a collaborative, multi-disciplinary text. After much deliberation, we are pleased to introduce you to *Splice*, an anthology of undergraduate research that captures the vibrant spirit of next-generation, emerging scholars. *Splice* recognizes the vast areas of research the College of Arts and Letters oversees and fosters and unifies these fields into a singular and cohesive journal situated in and between the humanities and social sciences. In this issue, you will find essays submitted by authors that come from a variety of different departments but are joined together by an overarching hunger for scholarly pursuit which *Splice* aims to satiate. This issue marks the beginning of a new stage for this journal and is thus dedicated to all authors, editors, and advisors who helped make it possible.



Caging for Profits: Rethinking the Neoliberal State and the Rise of the Prison Industrial Complex

ALIONA GALKINA

B.A., Human Geography and Global Studies | Class of 2019

In ‘the land of the free’ as we grew up knowing it, the United States incarcerates a greater number of its citizens than any other country in the world, surpassing even the repressive regimes of China and Russia. According to the 2010 United States Census, there were more jails and prisons than degree-granting universities in the U.S., with many parts of the country housing more people behind bars than on college campuses (Ingraham). Mass incarceration has led to what Angela Davis, renowned scholar and activist, has referred to as the “prison industrial complex” (PIC) (Davis and Shaylor). Moreover, the proportion of the African-American prison population is overwhelmingly high and is a legacy of deeply racist policies that in many cases have been traced to the times of slavery in the United States. The emergence of immigration detention can be seen as an extension and reworking of such racist policies in a country founded on white supremacy and racial violence. Beginning with the Clinton administration, immigration detention (aggressively targeted to migrants from Mexico and Central America) has evolved into yet another form of mass incarceration, further expanding the boundaries of the PIC. Today with anti-immigration rhetoric on the rise, asylum-seeking refugees are being treated as criminals posing a threat to the well-being and integrity of American society and also, importantly, as a source of profit in the capitalist economy. Indeed, the expansion and widespread privatization of prisons and immigration detention centers, along with lifted regulations on prison labor, has turned incarceration into a profitable industry in which human bodies are treated as a commodity.

In this paper, I analyze the role of the state in the emergence and expansion of the PIC in the U.S. through the perspective of economic geography. More specifically, I argue that the state plays an important role in turning prisons into a strategic arena for profit making (capital accumulation). In doing so, I seek to dismantle the notion of the state in the neoliberal age as an entity separate from the economy and the private sector. I will start by framing my argument in relation to the neoliberal ideology and the state's functions. An understanding of economic geography revolves around the idea that space is not an empty vessel detached from the historical, political, economic, and social environment. Drawing on this key concept, I will situate mass incarceration within the context of shifting capital dynamics and uneven development in the U.S. I will then move on to the discussion of racialized criminalization of human bodies and the role the state plays in this process. My findings were informed by the literary analysis of the secondary sources (predominantly the scholarly body and media outlets), along with the primary data obtained from the government and private organizations. This research was conducted under the mentorship of San Diego State University Assistant Professor of Geography Dr. Anne-Marie Debbané.

Capitalism, the Economy, and the Neoliberal State

One of the key works that can be used as an introduction to the complexities of the capitalist economy is *The Limits to Capital* in which celebrated geography scholar, David Harvey, delineates uneven development within the workings of the capitalist mode of production and accumulation. Drawing on Karl Marx's seminal analysis of the capitalist mode of production, Harvey specifically examines the notion that human labor or labor power becomes a commodity in capitalism, such that the workers exchange their ability to labor/work in return for wages. To begin with, labor is the necessary means in the transformation of raw material into a commodity that can be traded on the market. The capitalists use the labor of the workers to derive profits, or what Marx identifies as 'surplus value' (Harvey, 1982, 24). Such profits are made when the exchange value obtained by the capitalist is greater than the wages paid to the workers and other overhead expenditures. This dynamic creates class relationships uneven by nature, where in order to make profits, the capitalists must exploit the workers' labor.

Harvey reiterates the exploitation (or ‘class struggle’) aspect, asserting that “the accumulation of capital and misery go hand in hand, concentrated in space” (1982, 418). In other words, the system is so structured that the economic development within the capitalist class promotes underdevelopment within the working class. This facilitates the reproduction of uneven development both spatially and within the classes of the capitalist society.

The capitalist system does, however, encompass multiple crises tendencies and limitations. Since the production of both capital and labor surpluses is critical for capitalism to “continue on its expansionary path” Harvey argues, the question of how to absorb these surpluses requires constant attention (1985, 191). One of the inherent issues of capitalism is the over-exploitation of workers, which results in the latter not having the means to participate in the market transactions actively enough as to ensure uninterrupted circulation of capital. The blockage in capital circulation causes overaccumulation (surplus) manifested in idle labor (unemployment), land, and/or machinery, creating the conditions for an economic crisis. To prevent this from occurring, various mechanisms can be set in place in an attempt to temporarily remove the blockage. Two of the strategies particularly important to mention in conjunction with the PIC are the devaluation of labor and ‘spatial fix.’ The latter is a great example of the central role that geography plays in preventing or resolving an economic crisis under the capitalist regime. The solution presented by ‘spatial fix’ displaces the capital onto the new territories, thus expanding “the spatial horizons of the [capitalist] system. [...] This involves opening up new spaces for capitalist production, new markets, or new sources of raw materials ... [and] might mean the development of entirely new production sites ... or the re-creation or rejuvenation of old spaces” (Coe, Kelly, and Young, 64). Further in this paper, I shall demonstrate how the prison industry has potentially served as such ‘spatial fix.’

The emergence of neoliberalism as “a policy program, political project, or historical variation of capitalism” is often presented as a panacea to the capitalist crises of overaccumulation, unemployment, falling rates of profits, and economic stagnation (Mann 148). Neoliberalism can be understood as a direct attack on its historical predecessor, Keynesianism, which was defined by the strong welfare state and government’s involvement in regulating the economy (Kean and Mykhnenko, 4). Behind the neoliberal ideology is a

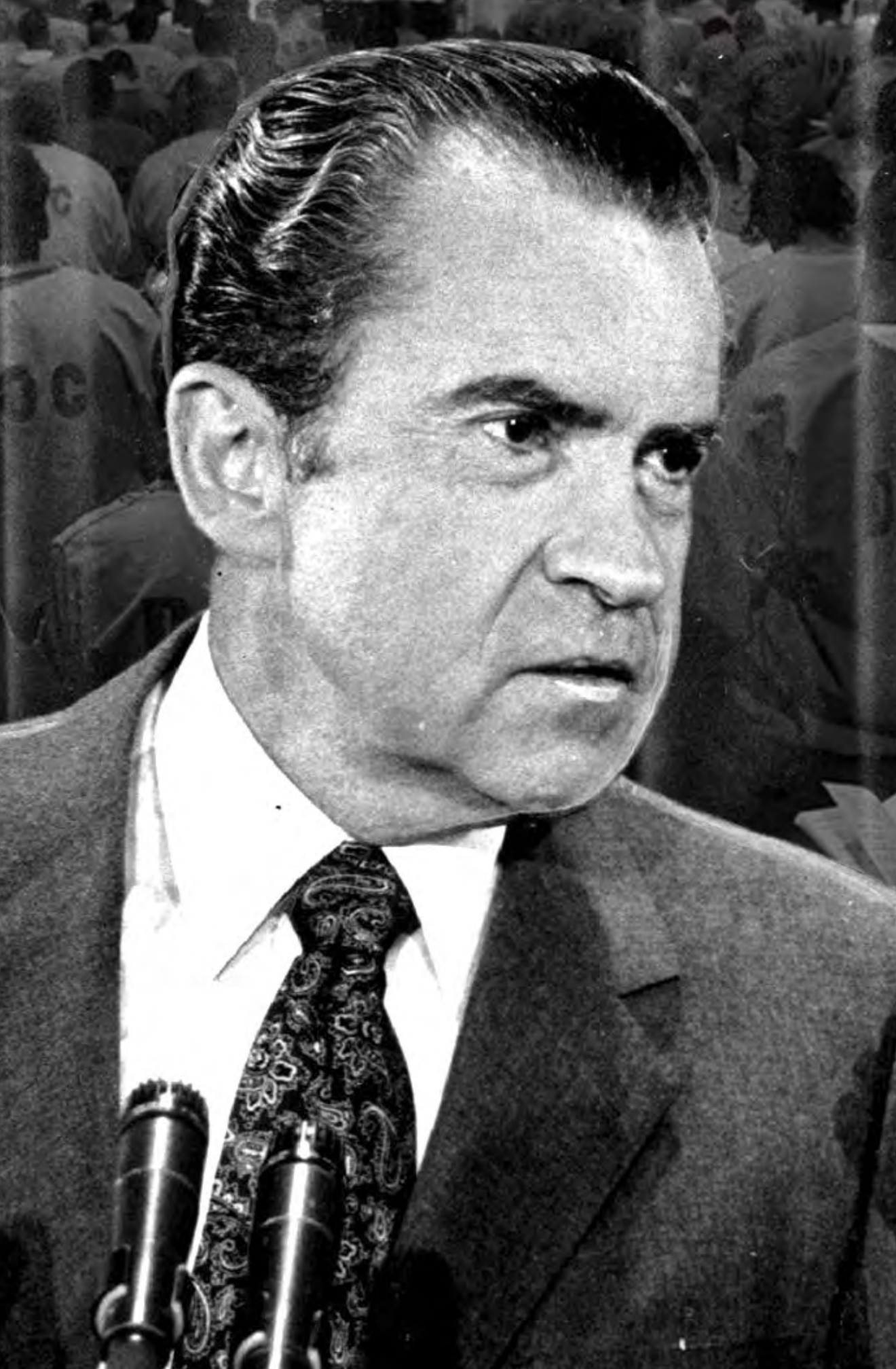
set of ideas and policies rooted in deregulation of trade, liberalization of finance, privatization of state-owned entities, devolution of trade and labor unions, and dismantling of the social welfare state—thus creating an arena for the utopian triumph of ‘free markets.’ In perhaps an overgeneralized view of orthodox economics, this implies overall withdrawal of the state from control of the economy, accompanied by the process of ‘hollowing-out’ in which “state functions [are] taken over by either public-private partnerships or private forms of regulation, thereby changing the nature of how state functions are delivered” (Coe, Kelly, and Young, 117). However, Harvey argues that in a setting where neoliberalism “proposes that human well-being can be best advanced by liberating entrepreneurial freedoms and skills,” it is in fact the very role of the state “to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices” and to “facilitate conditions for profitable capital accumulation” (2005, 2, 7). “Furthermore,” he continues, “if markets do not exist... then they must be created, by state action if necessary” (2005, 2). Mann refutes the common belief that the economy in a modern capitalist/neoliberal setting is an “independent realm, unaffected ... by the state,” calling it instead a “total and complete impossibility” (56). Therefore, drawing on the work of scholars such as Harvey and Mann, I argue that the state must be recognized as an active actor in the economy and is directly involved in the creation and reproduction of the conditions for capital accumulation within the PIC. Along with ‘de-regulation’ (in the form of removing tariffs, restrictions on foreign direct investment, and capital controls), the neoliberal state needs to create new rules—the process I will refer to as ‘re-regulation’ which is “imposing, extending, or deepening regulatory structures where they were previously underdeveloped or nonexistent” (Mann, 149). I will discuss both of these concepts in the following sections through an examination of the PIC.

Historical Context of Criminalization

Analyzing a phenomenon through the lens of economic geography allows us to understand a spectrum of historical, social, political, and economic dynamics, which can be linked to the emergence of the phenomenon of study. Geographical space shall not be seen as separate from the context in which it exists. Thus, when we look at the rise of the PIC, we shall examine the events that took place in the U.S. at the time when the prison boom occurred. In the 1970s

and 1980s alone, the U.S. state and federal prison population roughly tripled. It continued to grow exponentially all the way through the 1990s and 2000s (The Sentencing Project). The mid to late 1970s marked the beginning of a rapid transition from Fordism associated with its Keynesian monetary and fiscal policies (the welfare state and 'big government') toward neoliberalism in the Global North (most notably the U.S. and the U.K.) (Mann, 130; Harvey, 2005). This shift came with mass defunding of social welfare programs aimed at cutting government spending and the income tax. Simultaneously, thousands of manufacturing jobs were eliminated due to offshoring, which was widely implemented to reduce the costs of production and therefore increase the profit margins and rates of capital accumulation. The decline of the manufacturing sector resulted in idle land and unemployment, or in economic terms, oversaturation of the job market in which the supply of workers (the labor force) exceeded the demand. This created blockages in the circulation of capital leading to its overaccumulation and a rising potential of an economic crisis. In these very conditions, the prison boom has served as a 'spatial fix,' utilizing both idle labor and idle land—thus removing the barriers in capital circulation. In addition, as Cowen and Siciliano argue, a result of the "gendered shift in industrial restructuring" in certain groups, particularly young African-American males, were seen as 'surplus populations' (118). Therefore, devaluation of these 'surplus populations' through securitization and criminalization was then presented as a solution, removing these groups from competing on the job market (Cowen and Siciliano, 109). For example, in California, the prison boom took over 160,000 "low-wage workers off the streets" in the 1980s and 1990s, thus taking care of both the 'surplus populations' and idle land (Gilmore, 80).

The neoliberal shift of the 1970s has served as an arena for Richard Nixon's infamous federalized War on Drugs (for which taxpayers have paid over \$2.5 trillion to date). Using the process of 're-regulation' introduced earlier in this paper, the government has created and maintained policies in many instances highly biased toward the African-American population, heavily targeting the inner city areas and former manufacturing hubs. The goal of such 'tough on crime' laws was to ensure an "endless supply of criminal justice 'clients' and thus the need for the PIC on the market, securing the exchange (market) value of the incarceration industry (Cummings, 420). Discriminatory laws, such as disproportionate punishment for charges on crack vs. powder cocaine, mandatory



minimums for nonviolent offences, three-strikes law, and zero tolerance in schools (to name a few) come alongside the shift in political rhetoric from rehabilitation to punishment of the offenders (Cummings, 418; Silva and Samini, 156; Kontos, 575-576; Cowen and Siciliano). For example, California—the largest prison population state—in 1977 enacted the Uniform Determinate Sentencing Act which served to end the sixty years of state prisons serving as a “social and spatial remedy” to *rehabilitate* all but the most violent criminals into fit members of society, stating that from that date, “[t]he purpose of imprisonment for crime is *punishment*” (Gilmore 83, emphasis added). As a result, according to the predictions based on the data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics from 1971-2001 on the U.S. prison population, the lifetime likelihood of imprisonment of a U.S. resident born in 2001 is as follows: 1 in 17 chance for a White/Caucasian male, 1 in 3 chance for an African-American male, and 1 in 6 chance for a Hispanic/Latino male (with much lower chances, but similar racial proportion for females) (*The Sentencing Project*).

It is important to note that particularly in an urban environment, social segregation can be used effectively as a tool to maintain hierarchy and “serve interests of dominant groups, ... [and] at the same time restrict opportunities of the working class and reinforce its class position” (Sibley, 1981, 9). Portraying the American inner city as a place of crime has resulted in disinvestment of capital and continuation of ‘white flight’ (initially set off by the red-lining policies in the 1940s and 1950s and the mortgage system). This, in turn, has further eroded the job market in already economically disadvantaged communities. Moreover, the process has enforced *de facto* segregation, promoting the ‘othering’ of these communities of color based on the construction of difference and fear. Turning to David Sibley’s analysis of exclusion in a “nineteenth-century capitalist city,” we observe clear historical patterns of the manifestation of marginalization in “social and spatial distancing,” which contributes to “labeling of areas of poverty [and difference] as deviant and threatening” (1995, 55).

Similar patterns persist in the criminalization of migrants, including asylum seekers and refugees who are escaping war, armed conflict, political prosecution, and other forms of political violence. “Militarization [of the U.S. borders] and criminalization,” Huspek argues, “draw upon the rhetoric of legitimation. The imagery of *illegal* immigrants has been implanted in the public consciousness in

ways that instill fear, anger, and resentment among the U.S. citizens” (55, emphasis added). Justification of the state’s actions is a crucial part of the process of establishing legitimacy in the eyes of its constituents and is utilized in order to maintain coercive power. Thus, instilling the image of migrants as a “threatening force that must be stopped” and the border as the ‘Wild West,’ a melting point of “danger and mobility” sets the stage for a call for action, which comes in a form of harsh, punitive, highly discriminatory policies and laws (Huspek, 55; Mains, 43).

An incident that took place at the U.S./Mexico border at the San Diego port of entry in November of 2018 involving asylum seekers from the ‘Honduran caravan,’ as it was widely referred to in the media, is only one out of the myriad of examples. As the migrants who had traveled hundreds of miles (many by foot) were trying to cross the border wall in order to be able to legally claim asylum on U.S. soil, they were greeted with tear gas fired at them by U.S. Border Patrol agents. These actions were later backed by the current administration and justified as protecting the U.S. soil from the *invasion* of ‘criminals and terrorists.’ Akin to no tolerance policies of the War on Drugs, such discourse legitimizes the “siege mentality ... on an ‘us versus them’ plane,” dehumanizing the migrants and portraying them as the enemy, similar to the young men of color who need to be locked up to ensure the safety of ‘good citizens’ (Cummings 427). Under such conditions, the dominant society is “more inclined to distance itself from [what is labeled as] the outsider group” and support the laws that push these groups further away from the rest of the society (Sibley, 1981, 25-30). Such an alienation process further perpetuates the hegemony of the capitalist (predominantly white) class and contributes to the system of reproducing ‘criminals’ within the marginalized economically struggling communities of color.

Commodification of Prisoners

While employing harsh policies promoting criminalization of the ‘surplus bodies,’ the state has lifted certain regulations, paving the way to legitimizing prison labor while also allowing privatization of prisons and detention facilities. Both processes have contributed to amplifying the conditions for capital accumulation within the PIC, allowing the prisoners and detainees to be treated like a commodity as a biophysical resource that can be counted and priced. In reference to the high percentages of the Black prison population, such commodification of human bodies most certainly resonates with

African slavery. Indeed, those who oppose it, refer to prison labor as the “neo-slave labor via incarceration,” questioning the morality behind the fact that it is often involuntary (in practice) and is barely compensated (Brewer and Heitzeg, 626).

In 1979, the U.S. Congress passed the Justice System Improvement Act which established the Prison Industry Enhancement Certification Program (PIECP) (later expanded in 1984 and 1990). Under PIECP, private industry is allowed to “establish joint ventures with state and local correctional agencies to produce goods using inmate labor” (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 3). Among the anticipated benefits of this program are “providing a means of partial repayment for harm sustained” along with offering the inmates a “chance to work, meet financial obligations, increase job skills, and increase the likelihood of meaningful employment upon release from incarceration” (ibid). However, in reality, many industries in which prison labor is employed “are unlikely to hire people with a felony conviction” (Silva and Samini, 158). At the same time, the hourly wages paid to the prisoners range between 12-40 cents (Federal Bureau of Prisons) to “approximately \$1” (according to R.C. Greiser, chief of marketing, research, and corporate support for Federal Prisons Industries, qtd. in Silva and Samini, 155). Such wages are therefore unlikely to “meet[] financial obligations,” as claimed by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (3). Instead, Silvey points out in her analysis of the case of female migrant workers, yet another form of historically devalued labor, that the exploitation of racialized and gendered labor is tightly linked to the generation of capitalist value, both historically and at present. Building on Silvey’s argument, such exploitation shall be considered as not only a force of shaping lives of the individual bodies, but also, importantly, on a scale of the family and the community to which the imprisoned belong. Locking fathers, husbands, and brothers in cages not only places an extreme financial burden on the families and the communities but also further devalues these ‘surplus populations.’

In addition, the privatization of prisons provides yet another way of commodifying these human bodies. In this case, ‘hollowing out’ is manifested in a form of the state’s withdrawal from the responsibility of maintaining conditions of social reproduction of the prisoners and detainees, while private companies operating under the rule of the ‘free markets’ seek to maximize their profits. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) at present has almost entirely switched over to private prison operators and contracts with

state or local jails to take care of the detained populations (Sthanki, 456). A similar pattern can be seen with the federal and state prisons. When considering private entities (usually big corporations) managing correctional and detention facilities, it is crucial to recognize that the executives of these corporations are duty-bound to seek ways to increase shareholders' profits (Cummings, 435). This can be achieved directly through expenditure cuts employed by the private prison operators, which often have a direct impact on inmates' living conditions, quality of food, and healthcare. According to the testimony obtained by multiple non-profit organizations and the media from the detainees and inmates in the privately-operated facilities across the country, there have been numerous reported cases of "contaminated or insufficient food," "medical neglect," "lack of access to basic hygiene necessities," along with other violations, including "forced labor or wage theft," and "lack of access to legal representation." (Detainee Allies; Shenefelt; Robbins; Rizzo; Southern Poverty Law; Reutter).

Yet another way to maximize profits lies in increasing the supply of 'clients', thus ensuring higher demand for services, leading to higher exchange value (Cummings, 436). As seen in the case of Otay Mesa Detention Center, located in San Diego, owned and operated by a private corporation CoreCivic since 2015, greater need eventually results in expansion of the facilities and an increased number of beds. As stated in the California Attorney General Xavier Becerra recent report, the Otay Mesa Detention Center is contracted to receive \$2.75 million flat monthly fee from the government for up to 600 beds and \$138.29 for each additional bed (California Department of Justice, 30). According to the same source, between October 2015 and October 2018, the facility has housed 22,243 detainees with an average stay of 41 days, and the longest stay of 1,055 (just under 3 years) (ibid). In these conditions, human bodies are seen directly as an opportunity for business growth and expansion—not only for the private prison operators, but also for the numerous actors involved as service providers for the industry—transportation, commissary, phone services, healthcare, security, and many others.

Creating such lucrative business opportunities can be achieved in part through lobbying efforts by the private prison operators and service providers. Based on the public data available on *Open Secrets* website, CoreCivic, one of the largest players on the market of correctional facility management, has spent \$840,000 on government lobbying efforts in 2017 and over \$1 million in 2016. In return



DAY MESA DETENTION CENTER

 CoreCivic



ONE MISSION

ONE TEAM

for the generous contributions, the prison operator anticipates the politicians to support legislation and initiatives that are tough on crime and undocumented immigrants, thus reproducing the conditions for accumulation of capital. As an architect and immigration detention abolitionist, Tings Chak, points out in this multi-billion dollar industry, “there are a lot of hands involved [...], but there aren’t many faces” (2017). Similarities can most certainly be drawn between the human bodies put in cages, away from the public view, unseen and ‘undocumented,’ and the faces of those who enrich themselves on mass incarceration. They continue to remain anonymous and not be held accountable for the suffering of their fellow human beings. Chak depicts prisons and detention centers as “authorless spaces” that are being turned into sites of oppression utilized to “hide the casualties of poverty and displacement” (2014).

Conclusion

In this paper, I presented the case of the commodification of a human body as a biophysical resource through the process of mass incarceration. By situating the PIC within the framework of policies not exclusively driven by racism and discrimination, but also a broad range of geographic, historical, economic, political, and social processes, I sought to demonstrate the entanglement of the state with the private sector and most importantly—the state’s crucial role in creating and reproducing conditions of capital accumulation within the PIC. Rejecting the idea of the neoliberal state being separated from the economy, I argued that instead its role in the last half century has been transformed. By lifting regulations on prison labor and allowing privatization of prisons through the process of ‘de-regulation,’ the U.S. government has most certainly contributed to the profits made by the private sector from caging the ‘surplus populations.’ At the same time, implementation of the tough on crime and anti-immigration laws (‘re-regulation’) has secured the supply of the PIC ‘customers’ thus securing a guaranteed market and demand for services. It is through the rhetoric of fear of crime that the state, backed by the media, contributes to the reproduction of geographies of confinement and further deepens racial and class divides under the capitalist and neoliberal setting. This paper seeks to contribute to the existing discourse on the questions of racial marginalization in the U.S., the economic motifs

behind mass incarceration, and the immorality of the prison industrial complex. In addition, it aims to offer a broader understanding of the particular role the state plays in racial capitalism.

As geographers, we are concerned with the patterns of uneven development, trying to determine which specific parts of the country, the city, and communities are being isolated and targeted by punitive racist discriminatory laws. What landscapes are chosen to serve as sites of correctional and immigration detention facilities and for what strategic, economic, and political reasons? What regions are the asylum seekers and refugees coming from, and what is the involvement of the U.S. in those countries' economies and political regimes (see Frank)? On another stage, as citizens, we must seek to unveil the role of our government in creating and maintaining conditions for the emergence of the PIC and the capital accumulation within it. We must ask ourselves, how does the capital, whether via overall workings of the neoliberal 'free market' apparatus or directly through lobbying efforts, affect the decisions carried out by the state in the form of laws, which we as constituents are to abide and conform to? How is our income tax revenue being used to promote and support the PIC? And perhaps most importantly, what is to be done about it? What *can* be done?

At the time of this writing, the State of California Assembly Bill 32 was recently voted on 6-0 in the State House Assembly and referred to the Committee on Appropriations. If approved, the bill would ensure that after January 1, 2020, the department shall not enter into "a contract with a private, for-profit prison facility located in or outside of the state". After January 1, 2028, "a state prison inmate or other person under the jurisdiction of the department shall not be incarcerated in a private, for-profit prison facility" (Bonta et al.). While this is a huge step in the right direction, elimination of private prisons does not present by itself an overall solution for annihilating the PIC. Under neoliberal conditions, the line between private enterprise and the state is often fuzzy and thus the dismantling of the PIC would require defeating the industry of creating criminals as a whole. And this would be achieved by targeting its economic, political, and societal roots. In the words of one of the most celebrated political activists of our time, Angela Davis, "Prisons do not disappear social problems, they disappear human beings. Homelessness, unemployment, drug addiction, mental illness, and illiteracy are only a few of the problems that disappear from the public view when the human beings contending with them are relegated to cages. " Thus, the institution of

prison must be seen once again for its rehabilitative functions, instead of performing a role as the depository of ‘surplus populations’— communities of color, who have been dismissed by the markets and the stakeholders in capitalist society.

Works Cited

- Birch, Kean, and Vlad Mykhnenko. *The Rise and Fall of Neoliberalism: The Collapse of an Economic Order?* Zed Books, 2010, London.
- Bonta (A), Chiu (A), Gloria (A), Gonzalez (A), Kamlager-Dove (A), Santiago (A), Gipson (A), Levine (A), McCarty (A), Quirk (A), Stone (A), Bauer-Kahan (A), Friedman (A), Wiener (S). “AB-32 State prisons: private, for-profit administration services”. *California Legislature*, 2019, https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=2019202000AB32.
- Brewer, Rose M, and Nancy A Heitzeg. "The Racialization of Crime and Punishment: Criminal Justice, Color-Blind Racism, and the Political Economy of the Prison Industrial Complex." *American Behavioral Scientist* 51.5, 2008, pp. 625-44.
- Bureau of Justice Assistance. “Program brief: Prison Industry Enhancement Certification Program”. 2004, <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bja/203483.pdf>.
- California Department of Justice. “The California Department of Justice’s Review of Immigration Detention in California”. February 2019, <https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/publications/immigration-detention-2019.pdf>.
- Chak, Tings. *Undocumented: The Architecture of Migrant Detention*. Architecture Observer, 2014, Montreal.
- Creative Time Summit Toronto. YouTube, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=dXHog7NvT14.
- Coe, Neil, Philip Kelly, and Henry W.C. Yeung. *Economic Geography: A Contemporary Introduction*. 2nd ed., Wiley, 2013.
- Cowen, Deborah, and Amy Siciliano. “Schooled In/ Security. Surplus Subjects, Racialized Masculinity, and Citizenship.” *Accumulating Insecurity: Violence and Dispossession in the Making of Everyday Life*. Edited by Feldman, Shelley, Charles Geisler, and Gayatri Menon, University of Georgia Press, 2011, pp. 104-121.
- Cummings, Andre Douglas Pond. “‘All Eyez on Me’: America’s War on Drugs and the Prison-Industrial Complex.” *Journal of Gender, Race and Justice*, vol. 15, no. 2 3, 2012, pp. 417-448.
- Davis, Angela Y., and Cassandra Shaylor. “Race, Gender, and the Prison Industrial Complex: California and Beyond”. *Meridians*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2001, pp. 1-25.
- Detainee Allies. “Testimony from Migrants and Refugees in the Otay Mesa Detention Center”. 2019, http://www.detaineeallies.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/FINAL_Detainee-Allies-2019-0131b.pdf.

- Frank, Dana. *The Long Honduran Night: Resistance, Terror, and the United States in the Aftermath of the Coup*. Haymarket Books, 2018, Chicago.
- Gilmore, Ruth Wilson. *Golden Gulag : Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California*. University of California Press, 2007, Berkley.
- Harvey, David. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005, Oxford.
- The Limits to Capital*. The University of Chicago Press, 1982.
- The Urbanization of Capital: Studies in the History and Theory of Capitalist Urbanization*. The John Hopkins University Press, 1985, Baltimore.
- Huspek, Michael. "Production of state, capital, and citizenry: The case of operation gatekeeper". *Social Justice*, 28(2), 2001, pp. 51-68.
- Ingraham, Christopher. "The U.S. has more jails than colleges. Here's a map of where those prisoners live". *The Washington Post*, 2015, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/01/06/the-u-s-has-more-jails-than-colleges-heres-a-map-of-where-those-prisoners-live/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.41acda6f5d13.
- Kontos, Louis. "The irrationality of the prison-industrial complex". *Dialectical Anthropology*, 34(4), 2010, pp. 575-578.
- Mains, Susan P. "Statues of Liberty: Migration and Urbanism in the Borderlands". *Yearbook - Association of Pacific Coast Geographers*, 61, 1999, pp.42-66.
- Mann, Geoff. *Disassembly Required: A field guide to actually existing capitalism*. AK Press, 2013, Edinburgh.
- OpenSecrets.org Center for Responsive Politics. "Industry Profile: Summary, 2016." N.d., <https://www.opensecrets.org/lobby/industri-ent.php?id=N12&year=2016>.
- "Industry Profile: Summary, 2017." N.d., <https://www.opensecrets.org/lobby/industri-ent.php?id=N12&year=2017>.
- Reutter, David. "Michigan's New Prison Food Service Provider Failing to Meet Contract Terms". *Prison Legal News*, 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2018/jan/8/michigans-new-prison-food-service-provider-failing-meet-contract-terms>.
- Rizzo, Tony. "Inmate in Kansas jail says prisoners weren't allowed to vote, and now she's suing". *The Kansas City Star*, 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.kansascity.com/news/local/crime/article221346785.html>.
- Robbins, Liz. "'A Light for Me in the Darkness': For Migrant Detainees, a Bond Forged by Letter". *The New York Times*, 2019, <https://www.ny-times.com/2019/02/07/us/immigrant-detainee-letters.html>
- Shenefelt, Mark. "Maggots, mold and dirt reported in Weber jail food". *Standard-Examiner*, 2018, https://www.standard.net/police-fire/maggots- mold-and-dirt-reported-in-weber-jail-food/article_afb664ca-fa8b-57e6-ba4f-909ecc8d8b18.html.
- Sibley, David. *Geographies of Exclusion*. Routledge, 1995, New York.

Sibley, David. *Outsiders in Urban Societies*. St Martin's Press, 1981, New York.

Silva, Shannon M. and Ceema Samimi. "Social Work and Prison Labor: A Restorative Model". *Social Work*, 63(2), 2018, pp.153-160.

Silvey, Rachel. "Gender, Difference and Contestation: Economic Geography through the Lens of Transnational Migration". *The Wiley- Blackwell Companion to Economic Geography* edited by Trevor Barnes, Jamie Peck, Eric Sheppard, Blackwell, 2012, Oxford, pp. 421-430.

Southern Poverty Law Center . "SPLC sues private prison company that uses forced labor of detained immigrants in Georgia to boost profits". 2018, <https://www.splcenter.org/news/2018/04/17/splc-sues-private-prison-company-uses-forced-labor-detained-immigrants-georgia-boost>.

Sthanki, Maunica. "Deconstructing Detention: Structural Impunity and the Need for an Intervention". *Rutgers Law Review*, 65, 2013, pp.447-1041.

The Sentencing Project. "Criminal Justice Facts". 2017, <http://www.sentencingproject.org/criminal-justice-facts/>.



SPLC
Southern Poverty
Law Center



About Us

Press Center

WAYS TO GIVE

RESOURCES ▾

WHAT WE DO ▾

OUR ISSUES ▾

HATEWATCH

HATE MAP

FEATURES AND STORIES



SPLC sues private prison company that uses forced labor of detained immigrants in Georgia to boost profits

April 17, 2018

CoreCivic, Inc., a private prison company under contract with Stewart County, Georgia, to house individuals detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), is forcing detained immigrants to work for as little as \$1 a day





Bridgeport

Willow
Springs

Lundy

Mt Dana

Lee Vining

Mono Mills

June Lake
Junction

Inyo National
Forest

**Mammoth
Lakes**

Pizona

Benton

Mounta

Toms Place

Round Valley

erra National
Forest

Mono Hot
Springs

Lakeshore

Bish

Inyo National
Forest

North Palisade

Watershed Management in the Eastern Sierra Region of California: Changes to Water Policies in the Long and Owens Valleys and Potential Effects on Dependent Communities

CALVIN FORSYTHE

B.A. Department of Political Science | Class of 2020

Southern California is one of the United States' largest metropolitan areas and a major engine in the United States economy. The rapid urbanization and development of the arid chaparral landscape of Southern California into a lush, thriving megalopolis has only been possible with the complete restructuring and reallocation of California's precious water resources. Water management in California is a complex marvel of engineering. Numerous agencies, entities, and individuals all contribute to water management policy in the state. Concerns of population growth and climate change require careful, science-based water management policies coupled with technological innovations to reduce water consumption. A concern that often gets lost in the conversation about water is the maintenance of the ecological health and local economies from which the water supply is derived. These concerns are being voiced in response to the recent propositions by Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (hereafter referred to as LADWP) to change their water management policy in the Eastern Sierra region of California. The agency is proposing to divert thousands more acre-feet of water to the city of Los Angeles. This change could come at a large ecological and economic cost for the Mono and Inyo counties.

Water supply for the city of Los Angeles has been a major concern since the city's conception. The natural climate of the area is dry Mediterranean. As such, the city could not grow and develop

using only local water resources. The only solution to L.A.'s increasing water demands was importation of water from other locations. In order to satisfy water needs, L.A. filed for water rights to the Owens Valley in 1905. Shortly after, construction began on a 233-mile-long aqueduct capable of delivering 4 times the amount of water that the city demanded at the time. By 1920, the city was capable of growing in population to the size of San Francisco. In order to protect its water rights, the city began buying large quantities of the land in the Owens Valley. Currently, the city owns virtually all of the land on the valley floor, which amounts to over 250,000 acres (Meridian Consultants, 5.10-12). This "water rights grab" resulted in a large portion of the ranching and recreation industries being monopolized by LADWP. Currently, the agency controls virtually the entire eastern sierra ranching industry.

Through most of LADWP's ownership of the valley floor water rights, they held the virtually unbridled right to exploit water resources. A series of legal battles in the late 1980s and early 1990s led to court settlements that limited the amount of water able to be exported by LADWP. Prior to these court decisions, Owens Valley water alone supplied up to 75% of Los Angeles water demand. After 1991, an "environmental health" approach was adopted by Inyo county and LADWP. The two agencies now co-manage the water resources to "ensure that both local and Los Angeles interests are served" (Water Education Foundation, 1). On paper, this appears to be a sound plan; however, despite court mandates, the agency in practice has acted more like a greedy, reckless consumer than a responsible steward of resources. While LADWP has taken steps to ensure some level of environmental protection, their historic water consumption practices have had detrimental effects on the fragile ecology of the region. For example, Owens Lake has completely dried up due to diversion of water. The lake bed is 110 square miles, which is one fifth the size of Los Angeles. Once a large, thriving aquatic ecosystem, it is now a massive dry dust bed that has wreaked havoc on air quality. According to the EPA, it is the largest contributor of dust pollution in the nation (Water Education Foundation, 1). Not only is the dust pollution an aesthetic concern, but "Owens Lake has produced alkaline (of high pH) dust containing trace metals that can be picked up in windblown storms and cause respiratory distress in humans and otherwise contaminate its surroundings" (Water Education Foundation, 1). Irresponsible practices have both ecological and human effects, as clearly demonstrated by the mismanagement of Owens Lake. If the agency

wants to avoid another ecological disaster, they must not recklessly exploit their remaining resources like they did Owens Lake.

Mitigation efforts have been enacted by the city, but have only partially solved the dust problem. In response to persistent air quality concerns, the city has spent over \$1 billion dollars in the past century trying to deal with the problem, and costs are forecasted to exceed another \$1 billion to develop and implement a permanent dust control solution. The once healthy and free flowing Owens River system is now merely a trickle of what it was before damming and water diversion. The example of the poor management of Owen's lake is a clear display of the historic disregard for environmental health and local residents. If other areas of the Long and Owen's valleys are allowed to dry up in a similar fashion, current issues could compound exponentially.

The complex history of water rights in the Eastern Sierra has led to a delicate situation in which the health of the ecosystem and economy now rely on LADWP to maintain the status quo. In other words, the proposed changes to the policies in the region could disrupt the now reliant local economy and ecosystems. This unique interdependent relationship between the city and Owen's valley economy warrants a special approach to resource management. The city has proposed to dry up approximately 6,400 acres of agricultural lands in Mono county. Mono county officials claim that this would "[...] increase risk of wildfire, destroy wetlands and riparian habitats, [and] devastate the important habitat for sensitive species" (Mono County, 1). In March of 2018, LADWP proposed new leases to area ranchers that contained no irrigation or stock water. Historically, LADWP provided up to 5 acre-feet of water per acre, or up to 32,000 acre feet in total. The new leases would have eliminated this entire amount by the summer of 2018. In response to consultation with the mayor of Los Angeles, Eric Garcetti, the city has somewhat scaled back their dewatering. The city committed to providing 18% of historic allocations for this water year, but has not made any commitments for future years (Mono County, 1). This sends a clear message that the city does not care about fulfilling their responsibility to an industry which was plagued by their poor practices in the first place.

The local governments of Mono and Inyo counties rely heavily on the maintenance of historic water allocations to valley lands. The counties take the position that any less than restoration of historic allocation amounts is not an acceptable solution. Mono County has major concerns about the ecological impacts of the

new leases. For example, if historical allocations are not matched, the green meadows in the valley will soon dry up, riparian habitats will be destroyed, and the bi-state sage grouse will be listed as an endangered species.

The listing of the sage grouse is of particular concern because if that occurs, there will be major federally mandated restrictions on farming practices and water extraction in Mono and Inyo counties. Under the Endangered Species Act, far stricter environmental regulations will be put in place. This would put the local economy, as well as Los Angeles' water supply, in jeopardy. The county claims that the diversions would initiate a domino effect, thus resulting in a far larger problem than is already present. Their claim is warranted because there is precedent that the Endangered Species Act has disrupted industry in major ways across the country before. For example, the spotted owl and the logging industry in the Pacific Northwest. Similar mismanagement of ecosystems involved the federal government and prompted strict controls on industry as a direct result of the invocation of the Endangered Species Act. It is not in LADWP's interest to risk this kind of legal debacle. The cost benefit analysis of the action simply does not justify the policy changes, according to the counties.

The counties argued in correspondence with Eric Garcetti that this policy will ultimately end up hurting both parties. A study commissioned by the Inyo-Mono Agricultural Commissioner's Office found that the ranching industry contributed more than \$51 million and more than 250 jobs to the economy. Although this is a seemingly insignificant number, LADWP must keep in mind that the rural economy in Mono and Inyo counties could be decimated if they suffered a loss that large. In a jurisdiction that only employs 7,642 people (Data USA, 8), that is nearly 4% of the economic output. If these ranchers had no access to water, then the effects would be detrimental (Ross, et. Al., 7-11), claim the joint commissioners. Although the agency is doing what they would consider routine efficiency updates, the disproportionate impact of their decisions must be taken into account.

On the other side of the equation, the city of Los Angeles is facing major water supply concerns with population growth and climate change. In a five fiscal year average (2011-2015), 29% of Los Angeles' water supply came from the Los Angeles Aqueduct (Owens Valley), 57% was purchased from the Metropolitan Water District, 12% came from "sustainable groundwater," and 2% came from recycled water. Los Angeles has reduced its reliance on imported

water from 75% in 1991, to 29% in 2015 (Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, 24). This is a major accomplishment, but it is also important to note that only 2% of Los Angeles' water is currently recycled, which is perhaps the most reliable and environmentally sound method. Although efforts to increase the amount of recycled water in the city water supply are underway, it is not nearly enough to reach a point where sources of imported water are not significantly damaged. In correspondence with Mono County officials, Mayor Eric Garcetti said that "changing environmental circumstances require the re-evaluation of current water use" (Mono County, 1). He has also stated that the city plans to increase reliance on "sustainable sources" to 50% of total supply by 2035. According to a 2017-2018 briefing issued by the city, plans are in place to increase L.A. aqueduct dependence from 20% currently to 42% in "the future," while increasing recycled water use from 2% to 12% (Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, 24). Some have alluded to the possibility that LADWP's actions are at odds with their promises and another "water rights grab" is underway. This is quite alarming considering what the last water rights grab resulted in. On a positive note, the agency has taken some action to reduce residential water use, such as water education programs and rebates for more efficient appliances. However, despite these positive actions, many further steps need to be taken to properly address this issue.

An analysis of the arguments would not be complete without the perspective of local residents. The economy of Mono County is dwarfed by the large urban economy of Los Angeles. It is almost entirely reliant on ranching and recreation. Consequently, most residents work in one of these two industries. Changes to water policies would greatly affect the lives of many of these residents. Robert Creasy, a Mammoth Lakes resident, board member, and architect claims that "LADWP did not seem to inform local residents at all about policy changes and consequences" (Creasy). As someone who has technical knowledge about watershed management in the area, he offers an informed opinion that the LADWP does not care about local residents and ecosystems. He also feels that they are a somewhat "shady" agency that does not comply with environmental regulations if not ordered by a court to do so. He and other residents interviewed claim that their negative opinions of LADWP accurately reflect the opinions of most residents (Creasy, qtd. 15 November 2018). Many Mono County residents keep a close eye on water management practices in their region and are well educated

on such topics. In a small community with a fragile ecosystem and economy, residents have the motivation and resources to stay up to date on water policy. This provides a stark contrast in the attitudes towards water that many Los Angeles residents hold.

Los Angeles has somewhat of a reputation for being a city of excess. It is a wonder that its huge mansions, gigantic lawns, lush landscaping, and overflowing swimming pools are sustainable in such a dry environment. This is part of the appeal of southern California. One can have sunny, warm, beautiful weather all the time while still having lush surroundings. However, this has come at a cost. Los Angeles' water resources simply cannot sustain this kind of excess. Despite this fact, water is something that is viewed as extremely cheap, abundant, and invisible. Whether or not there is evidence that this is actually the case, it is an important part of water policy discourse in California and shapes public opinion and consumption practices greatly. If Los Angeles residents continue to hold this view of water, politicians will continue to work to satisfy the public's immense demand. The simple fact is, the less residents consume, the less the city will have to supply. Anecdotally, there is a burgeoning group of environmentally minded Los Angelenos that are working to spread awareness about where and how water is actually sourced; however, their impact is minimal.

Tourism agencies like Mammoth Lakes Recreation and Visit Mammoth are also very concerned about the dewatering policy L.A. wishes to adopt. LADWP owned lands are an integral part of the tourism draw of the area. Activities like hot springs, off road vehicles, fishing, running, and rock climbing take place largely on LADWP controlled lands. If Los Angeles follows through with their plan to divert water away from these lands, the result would be a dramatic decrease in the tourism draw to the area. It is estimated that the town of Mammoth Lakes alone received about 2.8 million visitors in 2003 (in comparison with a permanent population of about 8,000) and visitation has risen steadily since (Visit Mammoth, 1). The economy of the town and surrounding communities rely almost entirely on this industry. According to the United States Census Bureau, tourism makes up about 54% of the Mono County's economy. This figure only accounts for those who work directly in the tourism industry. If it were to include laborers working in industries indirectly related to tourism, the percentage would be far higher. Additionally, if the statistic included ranching, it would near 100% (United States Census Bureau, p.1, section 9).



LAKE GEORGE, MAMMOTH LAKES CA

times, but in abundant years. When the state receives a good water year, conservation measures are shirked off. If residents and industry take a more conservation-based approach to water use all of the time the water use would be less of an issue. Los Angeles must take note of this and promote conservation regardless of the water abundance.

Needless to say, it is far easier to save a gallon of water by not using it than it is to import or create a gallon of water. Some focus areas might be wasteful landscaping or outdated appliances. A survey of student water use in a San Diego State University class concluded that the most water was used for the least important reasons (Maloney, slide 2). Uses like lawn irrigation and washing one's car demand huge quantities of water and are simply unnecessary. Skeptics of conservation arguments must note that there are plenty of relatively easy ways to reduce one's water consumption by large quantities. In other words, reducing water use is not necessarily impactful on one's daily life.

In conclusion, if cities want to address the challenges we face in California, a diversified and responsibly managed approach to water will have to be adopted. This means that Los Angeles must invest in more diverse sources of water. Sustainable sources like desalination and wastewater recycling will need to compose a substantial percentage of their portfolio. In order to maintain the ecological and economic health of the Owens Valley, dependence on this source will need to be substantially reduced. At this point in time, LADWP is not on track to accomplish these goals. 42% dependence (Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, 24) on a climatically variable source is not responsible to the ecology of the region, nor to the residents of either region. The technology to address these problems does exist, but what is lacking is the education and political will to implement them.

Works Cited

- Creasy, Robert. *Personal Communications Via Email*. (2018).
Data USA. *Mono County, CA*. <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/mono-county-ca/#economy>. (2017)
Environmental Protection Agency. *Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District Rules and Regulations*. https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-01/documents/great_basin_rules_compilation_dec_2017.pdf (2016)
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. *Briefing Book: 2017-18*. <http://www.ladwpnews.com/2017-briefing-book/> (2017).

- Maloney, Jillian. "GEOL 305: Water and the Environment: California Water Distribution." Geology 305, 2018, San Diego State University. Microsoft PowerPoint presentation.
- McClain, Matthew. *Personal Communications Via Email*. (2018).
- Meridian Consultants. *Inyo County Land Use and Planning 5.10*. https://www.inyocounty.us/ab628/documents/e5_10_LandUse_071414.pdf (2014).
- Mono County Administrative Department. *Urge LADWP to Keep Long Valley Green*. <https://monocounty.ca.gov/cao/page/mono-supervisors-ask-ladwp-do-right-thing> (2018).
- Ross, Karen., Leahy, Brian., Totheroh, Dan., Gardner, Bob., Kingsley, Matt., Pucci, Rick., Griffiths, Jeff., Tillemans, Mark., Corless, Stacey., Peters, John., Stump, Fred., Johnston, Larry. *2017 Crop and Livestock Report*. http://www.inyomonoagriculture.com/uploads/3/4/2/1/34219567/crop_report_2017.pdf (2018).
- San Diego Public Utilities. *Pure Water San Diego*. <https://www.sandiego.gov/public-utilities/sustainability/pure-water-sd> (2018).
- United States Census Bureau: *Mono County Quick Facts*. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/monocountycalifornia/PST045217#qf-headnote-c> (2017).
- Visit Mammoth. *Mammoth Lakes Facts*. <https://www.visitmammoth.com/mammoth-lakes-facts> (2018).
- Water Education Foundation. *Los Angeles Aqueduct and Owens Valley*. <https://www.watereducation.org/aquapedia/los-angeles-aqueduct-and-owens-valley>. (date unknown).
- Water Education Foundation. *Owens Lake*. <https://www.watereducation.org/aquapedia-background/owens-lake>.



Capitães da Areia: Crianças ou Adultos?

PRICILLA MORENO

B.A. Department of English and Comparative Literature / Class of 2019

Em *Capitães da Areia*, os meninos lutam com suas identidades opostas de crianças e adultos. Uma vez que eles vivem nas ruas sem seus pais e em uma gangue, é impossível para eles ter uma infância descomplicada. Além disso, quase todos os adultos em torno deles fixam a sua atenção nas ações dos meninos como criminosos, mas eu penso neles tal como a personagem Pe. José Pedro, quando este pergunta: “Quem cuida deles? Quem os ensina? Que carinho eles têm?” (Amado 155). Os dois personagens que melhor representam essa luta com vista à definição de uma identidade são Pedro Bala e Gato. Neste ensaio, vou falar das experiências dos meninos que mais claramente demonstram como sua infância é definida por sua incapacidade de serem crianças ou adultos.

A situação dos capitães da areia é difícil por duas causas, a primeira sendo que eles precisam atuar como adultos para sobreviver, como já foi assinalado por Fábio Pestana Ramos: “Em meio ao mundo adulto, o universo infantil não tinha espaço: as crianças eram obrigadas a se adaptar ou perecer” (Ramos 48). O outro motivo, que está relacionado ao anterior, é que os meninos querem ser vistos como homens fortes por causa de sua reputação, mas sentem a dor de ser párias sociais. As pessoas desconsideram seu status como crianças, como se vê no livro: “Isso não são crianças, são ladrões. Velhacos, ladrões. Isso não são crianças. São capazes até de ser dos Capitães da Areia... Ladrões — repetiu com nojo” (Amado, 81). Isto é dito quando eles estão em uma posição relativamente vulnerável, porque eles baixaram a guarda para aproveitar uma noite de diversão infantil. Nós, nos Estados Unidos, temos nossos direitos inalienáveis, que são a vida, a liberdade e a busca da felicidade, então é chocante ouvir isso dito às crianças e sobre elas. Quando as pessoas reagem às crianças como na citação acima, elas estão basicamente implicando que essas crianças não têm o direito



de ser felizes por causa de seu estilo de vida, seu modo de sobrevivência! Mais adiante no livro há outro exemplo disso quando o Professor e Pedro Bala têm que fugir do parque: “Capitães da Areia? . . . Não são crianças abandonadas?” “Ladronas, isso são . . . Tenha cuidado, senhor, quando eles se aproximarem do senhor.

Veja se não lhe falta nada” (Amado, 141). Mesmo quando as pessoas querem lhes dar uma chance, é difícil porque sua reputação os precede. Esses momentos servem como lembretes de que os capitães não podem ter uma identidade sem ter a outra, são crianças mas também ladrões.

As crianças e a situação em torno de *Capitães da Areia* não são apenas uma invenção da imaginação de Amado, mas sim uma representação da realidade assustadora dos meninos abandonados do Brasil. Um artigo sobre crianças e adolescentes no Brasil diz que alguns “Romancistas brasileiros, como José Lins do Rego e Jorge Amado[,] mostraram em algumas de suas obras o desinteresse tanto do Estado quanto da família com o tratamento a ser dado à infância como fase preponderante para a formação do indivíduo” (Mantovani de Lima par.,29). Isso mostra que não só eram os cidadãos julgando e abandonando as crianças, mas também o próprio Estado. O Estado não fez nada para proteger essas crianças, deixando de vê-las como meninos por causa de suas atividades em gangues, o que permite invalidar seu status de crianças. Outro artigo, intitulado “Niños de la calle (meninos da rua): Literatura e História” afirma que Jorge Amado “representa o mundo da criança pobre sob o controle da instituição policial,” refletindo a realidade dos anos trinta no Brasil (Montenegro, 111). Nós vemos evidência disso no capítulo “Reformatório,” onde Pedro Bala é mantido fraco, apenas lhe sendo dada pouca água e comida que agravaria sua sede. Um exemplo do maltrato no reformatório é a parte em que os soldados lhe batem: “Pedro Bala sentiu duas chicotadas de uma vez . . . Agora davam-lhe de todos os lados. Chibatadas, socos e pontapes . . . Os soldados vibraram os chicotes” (Amado 201). Os soldados esperavam que a dor física levasse Pedro à submissão. Eles não tinham nenhum problema com o dano psicológico que infligiam, desde que resultasse em informações sobre mais de seus colegas. Os guardas bateram nele até ele desmaiar, e eles gostaram, em todos os momentos, dessa cruel tortura de uma criança. Através desta citação, vemos que o alegado reformatório não tem praticamente nenhuma distinção de uma prisão real. Essa tortura mostra as conseqüências perigosas e injustas dos capitães serem considerados como adultos mesmo sendo crianças.

Antes de ser forçado a sofrer de uma maneira tão terrível, Pedro teve um vislumbre de como é a vida de uma criança normal. No capítulo “As Luzes do Carrossel,” o lado infantil de Pedro Bala é revelado quando Sem-Pernas convida as crianças para o carrossel. Ele fica imediatamente entusiasmado, e o narrador nos diz que “Neste momento de música [os capitães] . . . se sentiram irmãos porque eram todos eles sem carinho e sem conforto e agora tinham o carinho e conforto da música. Pedro Bala não pensava em ser um dia o chefe de todos os malandros da cidade . . . Porque a música saía do bojo do velho carrossel só para eles” (Amado 68). Isso mostra que as crianças pensam no seu abandono e na falta de carinho, além de mostrar seu desejo por diversão descuidada, por uma infância comum, como a dos meninos que têm famílias.

Embora Pedro Bala tenha passado muito tempo sem experimentar amor e ternura, ele tem a oportunidade quando o personagem Dora é apresentado. Pedro Bala tem o privilégio de sentir amor e carinho quando Dora se junta com os capitães da areia, depois de ela ter perdido sua mãe para a bexiga, isto é, a varíola. A relação deles é um amor inocente de crianças, como vemos quando o romance nos diz que eles “Não se beijaram, não se abraçaram, o sexo não os chamava naquele momento . . . Riam inocentemente, felizes de estarem um ao lado do outro” (Amado, 195).

No entanto, temos que lembrar que Pedro Bala não é simplesmente uma criança inocente. Este doce amor entre ele e Dora contrasta dramaticamente com o abuso sexual que ele comete em um capítulo anterior. Pedro tornou-se mais adulto quando ganhou consciência política e consciência da história de seu pai. O abuso horrível é o resultado das lutas de Pedro com sua identidade, porque ele deseja ter o status de homem adulto, então ele sente que a atividade sexual vai ajudá-lo ser adulto. Por outro lado, ser adulto é aprender a controlar instintos, o que ele ainda não sabe fazer, mas vai aprender. Ele interpreta erroneamente sua necessidade de protestar pela necessidade de poder, o que não o absolve do seu comportamento. Pedro Bala está claramente frustrado por sua própria falta anterior de consciência política, frustrado por ter que crescer tão rapidamente sem qualquer apoio emocional real ou orientação da família, especificamente de seu pai. A razão pela qual Pedro e Gato, e também outros dos capitães da areia, confiam um no outro e também porque procuram parceiros sexuais é explicada por Bellini e Nogueira, que nos dizem que “Participar do grupo das ruas significa estabelecer a outra família e a sexualidade, aí, é vista

como prática de liberdade, afetividade e, talvez, até mesmo de poder” (Bellini e Nogueira, 616).

O outro personagem de cujos empreendimentos sexuais mais ouvimos é Gato, que na gíria brasileira significa um homem bonito. Sabemos que Gato tem relações sexuais com a prostituta Dalva, que, em contraste com Dora, “não cosia suas roupas, talvez nem soubesse enfiar uma linha no fundo de uma agulha” mas “gostava de se bater com ele na cama, arranhar suas costas, mas de propósito, pra o arrepiar e o excitar, para que o amor se fizesse ainda melhor” (Amado 179). Por um lado, a busca de Gato por uma mulher mais velha pode ser vista de maneira freudiana, à medida que ele procura uma substituta para sua própria mãe. No entanto, em termos de seu objetivo de parecer maduro, estar com uma mulher mais velha pode fazer com que ele se sinta um homem de verdade. Há um lado selvagem e animalesco em suas relações, mas quando Dalva e Gato falam pela primeira vez, ela lhe diz: “Tu não é um frangote que fica na esquina toda noite?” e ele responde “Quem fica na esquina sou eu. Agora essa coisa de frangote...” (Amado, 43). Um frangote é um rapaz que se dá ares de homem adulto, e essa palavra é perfeita para descrever aos capitães da areia. Gato não gosta de ser chamado de frangote, mas sabe que é a verdade. O fato de que ele usa seu dinheiro para vestir roupas bonitas como ternos, e que tem sexo selvagem e agressivo, faz parecer que ele está compensando por não ser um homem adulto.

Embora Gato seja conhecido em todo o livro como uma pessoa que está muito interessada em sexo, mais tarde nós podemos ver o seu lado mais gentil quando Dora está costurando sua camisa. Este ato simples e carinhoso lembra-lhe que ele é um menino, o que nos permite ver sua luta interna com sua identidade dupla de homem e criança. Gato “se recorda que é ainda uma criança. Mas só na idade, porque no mais é igual a um homem, furtando para viver, dormindo todas as noites com uma mulher de vida, tomando dinheiro dela. Mas nesta noite... é apenas um menino de catorze anos com uma mãezinha que remenda suas camisas” (180). Ele anseia, ou às vezes deseja, poder ser um menino normal, junto do conforto e da segurança de sua mãe. Dora o faz perceber que há coisas que ele não sabe fazer e coisas que ele precisa, ela dá a chance a muitos dos capitães de serem vulneráveis numa forma positiva. O artigo intitulado “Em Busca de Crianças de Rua: ‘Maloqueiros’ e Mães” fala de meninos como os capitães da areia, e afirma “Lar e rua não são conceitos ligados principalmente a espaços físicos; eles são noções que giram em grande parte em torno do relacionamento das crianças

para sua mãe” (Hecht, 61). Até conhecerem Dora, a maioria dessas crianças tinham um conceito incompleto do que é a casa porque elas não têm mães. O fato de que ela se torna a figura materna deles é tão bom para eles quanto é para ela, porque isso a ajuda a ela a se curar da morte recente de sua própria mãe.

Quando eu ouço a palavra "criança" eu penso em crianças da escola primária, mas na verdade a infância se estende por mais tempo do que isso, e adolescência vem antes de ser adulto. O papel das crianças é se divertir, brincar e têm o direito de serem cuidadas, enquanto os adultos podem ser vistos como pessoas que têm a liberdade de fazer o que eles querem, de ter relações sexuais, e como pessoas que se sustentam a si mesmas. Em *Capitães da Areia*, as definições de adulto e criança são combinadas e reformuladas através dos personagens Pedro Bala e Gato, tal como com outros personagens. Os dois meninos têm experiência em termos de relações sexuais, bem como momentos de inocência e ternura. A combinação dessas experiências com o fato de que os meninos vivem na rua sem pais e estão numa gangue resulta em sua própria versão distorcida da infância.

Obras Citadas

Amado, Jorge. *Capitães da Areia*. Livraria José Olympio Editora. 1937.

Bellini, Luzia Marta, e Nogueira, Luciana de Alcantara. “Sexualidade e Violência, O Que É Isso para Jovens que Vivem na Rua?.” *Texto Contexto Enfermagem*, Florianópolis, 2006 Out-Dez; 15(4): 610-6.

Hecht, Tobias. “In Search of Street Children: ‘Maloqueiros’ And Mothers.” *Cambridge*

Anthropology, vol. 18, no. 3, 1995, pp. 56–67. *JSTOR*.

Mantovani de Lima, Renata. “A Evolução Histórica dos Direitos da Criança e do Adolescente: da Insignificância Jurídica e Social ao Reconhecimento de Direitos e Garantias Fundamentais.” *Revista Brasileira de Políticas Públicas*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2017, pp. 314–330.

Montenegro, Antonio Torres, and Dante Hermo. “Niños De La Calle. Literatura e Historia.” *Historia, Antropología y Fuentes Orales*, no. 23, 2000, pp. 105–120. *JSTOR*.

Ramos, Fábio Pestana. “A história trágico-marítima das crianças nas embarcações portuguesas”.

In Priore, Mary Del (org.). *História das crianças no Brasil*. 7.^a ed. São Paulo: Contexto, 2010, pp.19-54.

Assessing Descartes' Ontological Argument: Dissecting Attributes and Clarifying the Idea of "God"

LASHELE N. JACKSON

B.A., *Department of Philosophy* | *Class of 2020*

René Descartes' ontological argument has caused a stir among readers regarding the concept of "God" by use of a geometric proof. The problem for commentators is not in the relationship between the concept and attributes of God's existence but in how one knows or understands this relationship. The problem faced in Descartes' *Meditations* is that of intuition versus demonstration. Could God's existence be known through intuition or is it possible to demonstrate the concept via the geometric proof?

There are a few positions on this matter—intuition, demonstration, intuition and demonstration (Dougherty, 36). To elaborate on the three interpretations, I refer to an article by M.V. Dougherty, "The Importance of Cartesian Triangles: A New Look at Descartes's Ontological Argument" and an article by Lawrence Nolan, "The Ontological Argument as an Exercise in Cartesian Therapy." The concept of "existence" in the ontological argument by means of intuition is simply the ability to immediately grasp a perception of "God" (Dougherty, 36). Nolan provides a better explanation of intuition by introducing Descartes' concept of philosophical prejudice—which in short is our education and ability to manufacture various ideas on a subject (Nolan, 522). The next position is the demonstration only, which Dougherty quickly mentions as just another position. Finally, the third position is a combination of intuition and demonstration; Dougherty's article is an exploration of this position where there are two categories of attributes that begin as intuitive, and by means of education, are then demonstrable.

I agree that there is what Dougherty calls a "missed opportunity" among readers and commentators regarding the demonstration of the ontological proof, but there is a necessary correction for the clarity of the concept of "God." Descartes' idea of "God" as



N. Habert sculpsit

Hactenus humanæ fuerat quæ impervia menti
se se illi totam exhibuit Natura videndam.

Natus Hagæ, apud Turones, 31^o Martii 1596. Obiit Stokholmi 11^o Feb. 1650.

Paris chez Masson rue du petit pont vis à vis la Rose Rouge à l'entre de la rue St Jacques

“possessing all perfections” may need to be strengthened to be declared an intuition under what Dougherty claims to be a first-order attribute. In this paper, I assess the Fifth Meditation (Section 1), provide an explanation of Dougherty’s perspective (Section 2), provide an objection to the combination of intuition and demonstration (Section 3), follow with a reply that presents a possible contradiction in Descartes’ idea of “God” (Section 4), and finally provide a summary of how my agreement with Dougherty’s position still presents an opportunity of clarification (Section 5).

1. Understanding Descartes’ God in Meditations on First Philosophy

I now focus on Descartes’ Fifth Meditation, particularly sections 1–16, which focus on his inquiry of the essence of the material world and the existence of God. His initial examination in the Fifth Meditation was the certainty of material objects. In order to begin answering this question, he first examined ideas within his consciousness to discover which aspects of nature are distinct—as in clear or easily distinguishable—or confused or puzzling. His second examination was to determine if certain material objects he conceived in his consciousness would have existed without his own existence. Descartes’ exploration of the material objects began with continuous quantities; these continuous quantities were known as an extension of length, breadth, and depth (Descartes). Each of these continuous quantities contained parts, each part contained certain attributes, which appear to be aspects of mathematics (sizes, figure, local motion, etc.) Descartes determines the nature of mathematics to be true and separate from his nature of existence, thus examining a distinct idea of consciousness.

Descartes continues to examine the nature of math in section 5 of the Fifth Meditation by presenting an example of a triangle. A triangle, no matter the length of each side, will always have angles that equate to 180° ; this triangle’s attributes are by nature unchangeable and eternal. He could conceive the nature of this figure, and his first thought of this figure was not created by him, thus the nature of the figure is independent of his existence. In this moment, he recognized the truth of mathematical properties. In section 7 of the Fifth Meditation, Descartes presents an argument for the existence of God by means of the truth of mathematics:

May I not from this derive an argument for the existence of God? It is certain that I no less find the idea of a God in my consciousness [...] the idea of a being supremely perfect, than that of any figure or number whatever: and I know with no less clearness and distinctness that an actual and eternal existence pertains to his nature than that all which is demonstrable of any figure or number really belongs to the nature of that figure or number; and, therefore [...] the existence of God would pass with me for a truth at least as certain as I ever judged any truth of mathematics to be. [Descartes]

This passage states Descartes' reasoning for the existence of God by the previous examination of a distinct idea in consciousness, i.e., the nature of mathematics. Descartes' "God" is a perfect supreme being, more perfect and more supreme than the truth of mathematics. Mathematics refers to the figures and numbers; the importance of mathematics is the distinct nature of its properties. Because mathematics is not an idea dependent upon consciousness and it is not an object that relies on the existence of humans, it has the essence of something greater. This *something greater* would be God. Another term within the text is "truth"; truth in this context is reality.

To show the connection between the truth of mathematics and the existence of God, an argument could be constructed from this passage as follows:

- P₁: If the truth of mathematics could be conceived, then a being supremely perfect is greater than the truth of mathematics.
- P₂: If a being supremely perfect is greater than the truth of mathematics, then God exists.
- C: If the truth of mathematics could be conceived, then God exists.

The conditional statements of the premises and conclusion stem from the relationship Descartes created between the truth of mathematics and the existence of God. This argument is a deductive argument — specifically one of the valid argument forms, hypothetical syllogism (HS). By viewing this argument as a basic deductive argument, if the premises are assumed true, the argument becomes valid and sound. Structurally the argument form is valid by rule of HS.

From Fifth Meditation sections 2-5, Descartes introduces the truth of mathematics, and the passage clearly states that a supreme being is superior to that truth on the basis of creation of such truths. Because Descartes could conceive this truth, P_1 is a true statement. The passage presented defines “God”; thus P_2 is a true statement. The examination of Descartes’ consciousness to determine a distinct idea and his connection to the existence of God makes the argument a sound argument. By definition of HS, the conclusion follows. In section 9, Descartes provides an objection to the idea of “God” in stating the possibility of conceiving a “God” without its actually existing (Descartes). This could possibly make P_2 false, thus making the argument unsound. But Descartes replies to his own objection as an obscure thought, once again using the truth of mathematics as reasoning. To suppose the idea of conceiving “God” without existence is as unnecessary as picturing a rhombus inside of a circle, which he declares to be a false attribute of mathematics; this connection between two unnecessary thoughts re-established the value of P_2 as true.

From this analysis, the truth of mathematics for Descartes provides a foundation in discussing the importance of this geometric proof when analyzing the ontological proof. In the next section, the perspective of Dougherty is presented, which introduces a layout of the geometric proof and how it progresses from a position of intuition to a position of demonstration. Though I agree with Dougherty’s position, the exploration of his article will reveal a concern regarding the idea of Descartes’ “God”—which will be explored.

2. Intuition and Demonstration

M. V. Dougherty’s “The Importance of Cartesian Triangles: A New Look at Descartes’ Ontological Argument,” explores key concepts of Descartes’ proof for the existence of God. As mentioned before, Dougherty makes a claim that most commentators view the ontological proof set forth by Descartes as an intuitive argument rather than a demonstrated argument. The method of how the ontological argument actually parallels the geometrical argument of triangles is by use of ordered attributes. The concept of ordered attributes would be applied to both argument forms to prove the ontological argument is in fact demonstrable as the geometrical argument was. Dougherty boils down the difference between himself

and other commentators as a problem of “intuition versus demonstration,” using the ordered attributes as evidence to differentiate between the controversial terms (Dougherty, 35).

The controversy begins with Dougherty’s dissection of the commentators’ claims of how Descartes’ ontological argument is simply an argument of intuition. They believe “Descartes’ final thought [...] resides wholly in the direct perception of a necessary relation included in an essence that is grasped immediately by intuition” (Dougherty, 36). There also exists two other claims, one by opposing commentators and a third interpretation. Commentators who oppose the intuition reading make a claim that Descartes’ ontological argument is in fact demonstrable on the grounds of a conclusion that God’s existence is an attribute. The third interpretation suggests that Descartes moves between an intuitive and demonstrative argument throughout his works on the existence of God (Dougherty, 36).

The argument of the parallel between Descartes’ ontological and geometrical arguments stems from all three interpretations; there is an intuitive aspect, there is a demonstrative aspect, and there is a relationship between the two methods when understanding Descartes’ argument for the existence of God. Dougherty divides his argument into six parts, in which the final part is the summary of his argument. To fully understand Dougherty’s argument, I introduce each part of his paper, addressing the missed the ideas of the commentators.

Part I examines the geometrical proof in which Dougherty introduces the attributes of a triangle. I use the same abbreviation as Dougherty when referring to one of the attributes: “having the interior angles of a triangle equal to two right angles”—IATETRA (Dougherty, 37). Dougherty stated that the attribute IATETRA parallels the existence of God, a discovery made by Descartes in the *Meditations on First Philosophy*, which provides the recognition of an attribute to its respective ideas. According to Dougherty, this similarity is built on an idea of certainty; by viewing each proof with respect to its attributes, the construction of the proof would be similar, and it then follows that the proofs would share the same certainty. The term “certainty” is not explicitly defined in Dougherty’s paper, but the implication suggests that to know the attributes of a triangle is to know the triangle and the geometric proof is a certainty (Dougherty, 38). Based on similar argument form, the demonstration of the ontological proof would have the

same certainty, or as mentioned in section 1 of this paper, Descartes' understanding of a truth in nature—the same ability to know the attributes is to be certain. By creating a sort of mirror image between two ideas with an attribute available to further dissect each argument type, Dougherty is able to re-assess Descartes' work in order to draw out further evidence to support the overarching relationship between the ontological and geometrical proofs for the existence of God.

Part II was a complete assessment of the geometrical proof in which the Cartesian triangles served as the foundation. Here, Dougherty introduces an interesting perspective of Descartes' geometrical proofs:

Descartes rejects the notion that mathematical entities are mental constructions that depend on the human mind [...] mathematical are intra-mental realities discovered by the human mind as divinely implanted innate ideas [...] it is necessary to have an idea of a triangle prior to the identification of material triangles. [Dougherty, 39]

The knowledge of the idea of a triangle is a Platonic ideal insofar as the triangle itself exists but was not brought to the material world until God willed it in the form of an idea in the human mind. This leads to the idea of the attribute IATETRA to be materialized because God willed it to be and human minds will conduct some sort of action to discover the attribute. Dougherty then expresses that IATETRA is a complex idea and it is actually the parts of the triangle itself that are “divinely innate” (Dougherty, 39-40). This is the point where Dougherty begins to explain what commentators missed when understanding the parallel between the ontological and geometrical proofs. Dougherty attached a term to the attribute IATETRA— “second-order attribute.” This sort of attribute is defined as an attribute that requires some level of investigation because we cannot break down this mathematical truth about the triangle into individual parts. The next term Dougherty uses to describe the “divinely innate” aspect that human minds receive about the idea of triangles is “first-order attributes.” First order attributes are defined as the simpler characteristics: shape, lines, visible angles, etc. (Dougherty, 41).

Part III is a very in-depth explanation of the first-order and second-order attributes, but I introduce the most important concept Dougherty provides, which ties into the construction of the proof

for the ontological argument. Those who know the idea of “triangle” and recognize the first-order attributes know this truth because of intuition (the ideas brought forth by God). These individuals are considered to be novices in the study of geometry.

Dougherty states that when one becomes a geometer, one enters a higher level of understanding in which one could know the truth of the second-order attribute. This hierarchy of the triangle’s attributes suggest an ordinary person would know first-order things while a more studious individual on the subject matter would become aware of second-order things (Dougherty, 44-46). This construct of the geometrical proof will now provide the connection to the ontological proof.

Part IV explores the ontological proof. As stated earlier, an interpretation exists that the ontological proof is in fact demonstrable on the grounds that God’s existence is an attribute of the idea of “God.” If the claim is true, Dougherty questions which order the existence is and what would be the complementary order for the proof. Dougherty states that Descartes identifies a first-order attribute as perfection; to possess all perfection would be intuitive, and by definition a first-order attribute contains an intuitive truth (Dougherty, 47). This would place the existence of God as a second-order truth. Provided with how one could know first-order versus second-order attributes, we could refer to the identifiers used in the geometrical proof; a novice would possess the knowledge of the first-order — meaning, if the idea of “God” exists in the mind, then she would know that God possesses all perfection. If this novice begins to study and meditate on the provided materials of the subject matter, she would become aware of the second attribute.

To bring Parts I-IV together, Dougherty clearly provides how defining hierarchy attributes and stating how first-order intuitive attributes lead to demonstrative second-order attributes in order not only to disprove the three interpretations but to use each version to come to a conclusion in understanding Descartes’ ontological proof on existence of God.

3. Objection

Dougherty has revealed a demonstrable structure of the geometric proof — intuitive knowledge for the novice and demonstrable knowledge for the professional — the argument for intuition is that of Lawrence Nolan in his article, “The Ontological Argument

as an Exercise in Cartesian Therapy.” The claim that both Dougherty and I share could be challenged by Nolan’s idea of what “intuition” and “demonstration” mean. To begin with demonstrations, Nolan describes such events as “a series on intuitions $a \dots n$, where n is not immediately evident” (Nolan, 525). If an idea is immediately evident, it becomes an intuition, and the process of getting from one idea to the next is the process in which one is reminded of these self-evident intuitions; thus the final thought becomes the intuition and is not the inferred idea (Nolan, 524-525). “Intuition” itself is defined by Descartes as a clear and distinct perception. For this concept of “God’s existence” to be unambiguous, Nolan introduced another concept: a mind free from philosophical prejudice (Nolan, 526).

This concept of philosophical prejudice is a reader’s (or “mediator’s” in Nolan’s paper) inability to see the ontological proof as solely intuitive. This prejudice consists of two categories: philosophical training and the creation of fictitious thoughts (Nolan, 543). The fictitious thoughts lead to the invention of things that do not exist. Nolan raises awareness of a person’s inability to create the idea of “God’s existence” because it would make God a finite being. Nolan expresses Descartes’ concept as innate because a person’s finite mind is “stamped” with the knowledge of the infinite being (Nolan, 544). The philosophical training that Nolan introduces is that of Descartes’ predecessors who tackle the views of essence and existence. Nolan mentions that Descartes was not committed to tackling the issue, but he did provide some insight on the matter:

Descartes’ account of the distinction between essence and existence is part of a more general account of the nature and relation between what he termed the ‘attributes’ of a substance. In articulating his general theory of distinctions in the *Principles*, Descartes claims that there is merely a distinction of reason [...] between any two attributes of a single substance. [Nolan, 548-549]

The distinction Descartes was referring to was the essence and existence being two attributes of the same substance, meaning the finite and divine being (Nolan, 549).

4. Reply

The idea that one's mind is "stamped" with the idea of "God" is indeed an example of our having an innate concept. If the definition of the first-order attribute is revisited, the idea of intuition would be true for the case of the structure of the ontological argument as well. This would only be the case for the novice. When viewing the second order attribute, to study scriptures or commentary from other religious figures would provide the knowledge to become closer to the truth about the existence of God—just as knowing a triangle and studying to know its parts in depth to become a geometer is equivalent to knowing it as a mathematical truth. Nolan's suggestion of the demonstrated aspect as a series of intuitions becomes more of a method of obtaining more knowledge to know the truth of God's existence.

The excerpt above, from section 3, explicitly states the role of attributes in Descartes' philosophy. The two attributes of a substance are expressed in this paper's argument as well. The attributes Nolan refers to are that of being itself; one attribute is essence and the other existence. In exploring Dougherty's account, attributes have the status of being known regarding a substance. In sections 1-2, the geometric proof of a triangle has a set of attributes that align with the similar processes of the ontological proof. Though Nolan's exploration presented a clear interpretation of Descartes' ontological proof and how readers' judgment could be clouded, is it possible that the philosophical prejudices present a contradiction?

5. Conclusion

As I stated, my argument is the same as Dougherty's with one exception, the clarity of the idea of "God"; I would like to look at a specific part of argument in order to ensure its validity:

The attribute of the existence is held by Descartes to be a second-order attribute that adheres to the idea of God and is demonstrable on the basis of an intuited first-order attribute, namely 'possessing all perfections'. [Dougherty, 49]

For an attribute to be intuitive with respect to the idea of "God," we must first accept that "God" is that than which nothing greater can be conceived (this idea will be abbreviated as TTWNGCBC). Once

that is accepted, then the attribute of “possessing all perfections” must be attached to the idea TTWNGCBC by means of definition. To further reinforce TTWNGCBC, a refined version by one of Descartes’ predecessors, Duns Scotus, adds “without contradiction” to the concept of TTWNGCBC. One can’t truly *know* “God” because the essence of God is a concept. If one states the perfections of God, then one knows the essence, which would be impossible (Williams). One could know what some perfections are and some of these perfections will be understood through first order and second order, while other perfections would be considered intellectually unattainable. If “TTWNGCBC without contradiction” is defined as a being that possesses all perfections due to divine nature, then the first-order attribute becomes intuitive for the novice and later demonstrable by the professional. To further validate this idea, a deductive argument form could be presented as follows:

- P₁: If “TTWNGCBC without contradiction” is defined as “a being that possesses all perfections due to divine nature,” then the first-order attribute becomes intuitive.
- P₂: “TTWNGCBC without contradiction” is defined as “a being that possesses all perfections due to divine nature.”
- C: The first-order attribute becomes intuitive.

This argument form is a valid deductive argument because of the *modus ponens* structure. P₁ presents a conditional statement, while P₂ is a repetition of the antecedent of the conditional statement. If P₁ has a true value, then the antecedent (P₂) would also hold a true value, and the consequent would follow as a true conclusion. Because the argument form possesses true premises, the argument becomes a sound argument. Dougherty doesn’t express the acceptance of the idea of “God” as “TTWNGCBC without contradiction.” Dougherty does present the following argument:

- P₁: I have an idea of “God.”
- P₂: I cannot think that idea without attributing all perfections to God.
- P₃: Existence is a perfection.
- C: God exists.

Overall I agree with Dougherty’s argument, but my understanding of this specific argument presents an opportunity to leave room for

other entities to exist who could possess perfections. If TTWNGCBC without contradiction is intertwined with perfection, then the argument appears clearer by saying this perfection is *only* related to God. Thus, we confirm Descartes' connection between the geometrical proof, which utilizes intuition of particulars to arrive at a demonstration of a higher-level awareness, that could be translated to an ontological proof utilizing the same form in understanding the existence of God.

Works Cited

- Descartes, René. *Meditations on First Philosophy*. 2001, www.classicallibrary.org/descartes/meditations/8.htm.
- Dougherty, M. V. "The Importance of Cartesian Triangles: A New Look at Descartes's Ontological Argument." *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2002, pp. 35-62. ProQuest, <http://lib-proxy.sdsu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.lib-proxy.sdsu.edu/docview/43018564?accountid=13758>.
- Nolan, Lawrence. "The Ontological Argument as an Exercise in Cartesian Therapy," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 35, no. 4, December 2005, pp.521-562. ProQuest, <http://lib-proxy.sdsu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.lib-proxy.sdsu.edu/docview/195306332?accountid=13758>.
- Williams, Thomas, "John Duns Scotus," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/duns-scotus/>.



The Names of God

RODA SAORR

B.A. Departments of Humanities & Classics, and Philosophy | Class of 2021

Assuming that the Abrahamic God does exist, philosophers are always talking about Him. Different philosophers assign different natures, names, and attributes to God. In each case -- whether we are talking about the nature, the name, or an attribute of God -- philosophers are referring, in this case, to God's essence. However, how do they know about these names and natures? How do we attribute a name or a nature to a God that we have never seen? A lot of the names and natures that are attributed to God come from the Tanakh, Bible, or the Quran, and while religious people claim that the writers of these books were inspired and helped by God and angels when writing the books, at the end of the day, regular humans were the ones that wrote those books. To answer the question of how we come up with the names that we attribute to God, in this paper I look at Thomas Aquinas' answer in his *Summa Theologiae* and compare it to Maimonides' answer offered in the journal article, "Maimonides and Aquinas on the Names of God." However, when answering this question, many problems seem to come up. How can we ascribe affirmative names that have human characteristics to a divine God? How can God be one yet have many attributes, that is, how can God have more than one essence? How can God be simple and indivisible yet have many attributes and natures? How can these attributes be some varied yet really be the same -- e.g., mercy and justice?

In Thomas' *Summa Theologiae* part one, question 13, article 1 (ST I, q13, a1), Thomas Aquinas addresses the names of God and explains how we can ascribe names to Him. Thomas starts by asking whether God can be named by us, and for this question, his answer is simple and straightforward. To answer the question, Aquinas borrows ideas of the philosopher, Aristotle (from his work, *On Interpretation*). According to Aquinas, Aristotle claims that "words are signs of ideas, and ideas the similitude of things, it is evident that words relate to the meaning of things signified through the medium of the intellectual conception" (question 13, response on article 1). From this, Thomas explains that we therefore can give a



name to anything as long as we understand the thing named by that word. Aquinas follows this by saying that on this earth we cannot see the essence of God, but since Thomas believes that we can prove God's existence through everyday experience in nature and excellence, Aquinas claims that humans can recognize and name God through the experiences that they have.

All of ST I, q13 deals with the issue of the names of God. The argument of the thoughts, that was previously explained, is not the only argument that he introduces in this question; he also talks about looking at it through the *via negativa* (otherwise known as negative theology) and *via analogica* points of view, which I will explain through Alexander Broadie's article, "Maimonides and Aquinas on the Names of God."

In Broadie's "Maimonides and Aquinas on the Names of God," Broadie compares Maimonides' and Aquinas' views on "what is the correct way to interpret terms when they are used to signify divine attributes?" (Broadie, 157). Broadie starts by explaining Maimonides' views that were stated in Maimonides' *The Guide of the Perplexed*, but, according to Broadie, were misinterpreted by people. Broadie immediately starts discussing the issue of humans using creaturely language when referring to God, which he calls "a problem of central importance to theology and the philosophy of religion" (Broadie, 158). Broadie explains that although the Bible is filled with anthropomorphisms when referring to God, philosophy, especially Aristotelian philosophy, says that the attribution of human characteristics to God in the Bible must be reinterpreted, and Maimonides agrees with this as well. Broadie explains that Maimonides reminds us of the verse, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God the Lord is one," and when reading this verse, Broadie explains that Maimonides would interpret it in two ways. The first way would be that there's only one unique God, and the second one would be that God is not a "many-in-one" (Broadie, 158) but rather He is absolutely simple. According to Maimonides, to say that God is absolutely simple is to imply that he's not corporeal, as whatever is corporeal is extended and therefore can be divisible. Maimonides states that to be absolutely simple is to be indivisible and therefore to not have any corporeal parts. From this, Maimonides concludes that we must treat as non-literal all the expressions that imply corporeality to God in the Bible.

Broadie explains that there is a new argument that arises from this, which is the language that humans use was made to connect with each other, then would not given any term that we use imply

human characteristics to God? So should we not therefore only stay silent before God? Broadie explains that Maimonides was in fact sympathetic to this argument, and he, Maimonides, had quoted with approval King David when he said, “Silence is praise to Thee” (Maimonides qtd. in Broadie, 159). Broadie goes on to explain that silence is not the only response to our lack of language that would not be filled with creaturely entities. Here he introduces the negative theology, and to explain this from a Maimodean point of view, he talks about Maimonides’ concept of the absolute simplicity of God. Broadie explains that to affirm any characteristic to God is to imply that He’s complex. Broadie states, “to affirm an attribute of Him, even one attribute, is to imply a distinction between God, to whom the attribute is attributed, and the attribute He is said to have” (Broadie, 159). Broadie explains that we should not affirm any attributes to God, because that would make a distinction between the God with the attribute we’re giving and the God with the attributes he’s said to have; however, this is a little confusing because what attribute is God said to have? An example of this can be that if we think of God’s essence to be powerful, we would seem to be implying two things: God and power, i.e., God has power. Therefore, we are here making a distinction between the God that has power attributed to him, and God with the attributes he is said to have. The problem is further when we consider that if God is said to be all powerful, but we attribute to Him that He is a merciful God as well, then we are adding another characteristic to Him and therefore making Him a complex God. Broadie also adds that according to Maimonides, God’s actions are not His whole nature but they follow from His nature. However, Broadie questions Maimonides’ thesis that nothing can be truly affirmed of God, and to back this up, he brings up the argument that in the Bible, many things are affirmed of God that are not mere actions. These things include His “power, wisdom, justice, mercy, love” (Broadie 159). With that being said, Broadie explains that an affirmative name that is attributed to God indirectly contains a negative particle. An example that he gives is that to affirm God’s wisdom is to deny His ignorance or foolishness, or affirming His existence is denying that He’s dead. He continues by explaining that this does not mean that that is what all people mean when they make such claims, but it is what the Bible means (Broadie,159).

Broadie explains that the negative propositions approach to the understanding of the divine names has two advantages. The first advantage is that this approach avoids human characteristics being

attributed to God. The reason is that if we look at a previous example given, the Bible is not necessarily attributing wisdom to God but rather denying His ignorance. The second reason is by affirming God's simplicity, it avoids flirtation with polytheism, as Maimonides believes that to "believe in many Gods is not to believe in God at all. And hence the belief in divine attributes, Maimonides holds, to atheism" (Broadie, 159-160). However, Broadie explains that to not attribute anything to God is like saying God is nothing and therefore saying that God does not exist. In saying this, Broadie explains that Maimonides' position would be an atheist position as well. With that being said, Broadie goes on to stress that Maimonides is not supporting atheism and he's not claiming that we're unable to describe God. He explains that Maimonides' point in writing *The Guide of the Perplexed* is simply stating that God exists, but we cannot use affirmative terms when describing God, but we form a concept of "God" when we use these affirmative terms negatively. Maimonides claims that our knowledge of God increases as we purify Him and deny Him any human characteristics. To prove this, Broadie brings an example from the Bible of when Moses asks God Who He is so he could tell the Israelites who had sent him, and God responds, "I AM; that is Who I am. Tell them that I AM has sent you to them" (Ex. 3. 13-14, in Broadie, 160). Therefore, Broadie explains that even the name that God revealed to Moses has no creaturely existence. However, Broadie mentions that Maimonides takes this one step further to claim that even "existence as ascribed to Him must be understood negatively" (Broadie, 160). Therefore Maimonides is claiming that even God's existence must be understood negatively. Maimonides justifies this by claiming that existence, in the way that we understand it of bodies, has a creaturely understanding as well, and therefore shouldn't be ascribed to God. Therefore, Maimonides claims that to deny God's existence is better than affirming it. Broadie explains that Maimonides understands that saying this is the very brink of atheism, but what Maimonides means is not that God does not exist but He exists in His own unique way, not in a creaturely way (Broadie, 160).

After this, Broadie turns to explaining Aquinas' stand on this topic. Broadie states that the negative theology was found attractive by Aquinas, but he had a different stance on the topic as he was able to find the most influential middle way to think about the names of God without leading to anthropomorphism or atheism, which are the two extremes proposed by Maimonides. However, as

Broadie states, Aquinas still agrees with Maimonides on our not being able to know what God is but rather only what He is not. In Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*, Broadie explains that Thomas focuses on the absolute simplicity of God, which follows that God is not matter. However, it is important to mention that although Aquinas claims that we can only know what God is not, Broadie explains that Thomas did not entirely accept the negative theology but he admired the theology's "determination not to compromise the doctrine of divine absolute simplicity" (Broadie, 161).

To explain the reason why Aquinas would reject the negative theology at all, Broadie turns to the discussions of Aquinas. Broadie explains that Aquinas is concerned with "the problem of whether terms can be used to say anything about God's nature" (Broadie, 161). His views align with Maimonides' views that negative and rational terms either express what God is not or they are a relation in which things stand to God, but Broadie explains that "the problem arises specifically for the traditional names of God, good, wise, living, and so on" (Broadie, 162). Against this, Broadie explains that Aquinas brings two arguments. The first argument is that "no reason can be provided why some names rather than others should be assigned to God" (Broadie, 162). To this, Broadie explains that Maimonides has a direct answer, which is that:

[God] is perfect in every manner of perfection and that no deficiency whatever mars Him. Thus none of the things apprehended by the multitude as a deficiency or a privation are predicated of Him [...] everything that the multitude consider a perfection is predicated of Him, even if it is only a perfection in relation to ourselves – for in relation to Him [...] all things that we consider perfection are the very extreme of deficiency (Broadie, 162).

As an example, Broadie explains that it is just as false to ascribe wisdom to God as it is to ascribe foolishness to him. Here Broadie says that Aquinas is then right to wonder why some names rather than others should be assigned to God, however, what I find confusing is that to me it seems like Maimonides is saying no names that are made by humans can be used to describe God, so why is Aquinas still wondering why "some" can be used? Broadie goes on to explain that to answer Aquinas' question, Maimonides argues that "terms signifying perfection must be used if the faith of the faithful is to be protected" (Broadie, 162). To summarize Maimonides' words, Broadie goes on to explain that yes, names of perfection

are as falsely attributed to God as names of imperfection are, “and it is a practical consideration, rather than a theoretical one, that justifies the use of the names of perfection and rules our use of other names” (Broadie, 163). Here it sounds that this is not an answer to Aquinas’ question and Aquinas’ question is invalid. Why would Aquinas still ask why some names can be used when Maimonides is arguing that no names can be used to describe the above-humanly perfection of God?

For his second argument against the negative theology, Broadie explains that Aquinas thinks the negative theology is “contrary to the intention of those who speak about God. For when they say that God is alive they mean something other than that [...] He differs from inanimate bodies” (Broadie, 163). This argument is very valid; the faithful mean no harm when they attribute names to God, but Broadie makes a valid argument against this criticism when he reminds us that Maimonides already addresses this issue in the introduction of the *Guide* when he distinguishes two types of people, the philosophers and the multitude, and the ideas that the multitude holds are not always valid. Therefore, the argument that Aquinas is making is invalid, the negative theology, when Maimonides writes about it, is directed to the philosophers, not the multitude. Thus, although Maimonides does not make this clear as he’s addressing his writings to philosophers, he never claims that the multitude is attributing false characteristics to God when they apply them affirmatively.

Broadie also explains some of Aquinas’ theories and argues that his criticism might be a “double edged weapon” (Broadie, 163) because Aquinas argues that the understanding of anything negative is always based on something affirmative. For example, our understanding of the dark is based on our understanding of light. However, the reason why Broadie calls this a double-edged weapon is because Aquinas has previously been sympathetic to the negative theology when it is concerned with the doctrine of divine simplicity. So here Broadie argues that Aquinas has to show “how a theology which is not purely negative can maintain faith with [the doctrine of divine simplicity]” (Broadie, 163-164). To do this, Broadie explains that Aquinas borrows Aristotle’s dictum that “‘words are signs of thoughts, and thoughts are likenesses of things’ [On Interpretation] 16a3)” (Broadie, 164). Therefore, as Broadie explains, Aquinas is arguing that our spoken words signify things no less directly than do our thoughts, but without thoughts, we wouldn’t have the words to signify things. Therefore, for signification,

thoughts have priority, and to speak of God, we must first form a concept of Him.

Both Aquinas and Maimonides agree that the creators will put something of themselves in their creations. This applied to humans and to God as well. They agree that God put in us a small percentage of what He is, and what we know could be nothing compared to what there is out there.

Aquinas argues that our perception of God is imperfect, but it is not necessarily incorrect. Broadie explains that to prove this, Aquinas uses an illustration of the sun. Aquinas' argument is that the sun warms a rock, but the rock is an imperfect illustration of the power of the sun (165). Warmth is not all that the sun is, but it is one of the things that the sun provides us with, which can be felt through the rock. Broadie explains that Maimonides presents a similar illustration, but his is about fire. Maimonides argues that a person that knows fire knows that it can do many things, which some can even contradict each other such as melting some objects and hardening others; one direct quality, which is heat, lets fire do all these things (Broadie, 165).

Therefore, as Broadie explains, Aquinas and Maimonides agree that our language is inadequate when it comes to speaking about God's simplicity, however, when it comes to the traditional names of God, Maimonides argues that they "fail entirely to signify God's nature," whereas Aquinas argues that they signify it though inadequately (Broadie, 165).

To defend his argument, Broadie explains that Aquinas makes a crucial distinction between *modus significandi* and *ratio significationis*. *Modus significandi* is a creaturely mode of signifying the divine perfection, which is the inadequate way to signify God. But Broadie explains that Aquinas's *ratio significationis* is more appropriate to be ascribed to God than to creatures as it refers to the "divine perfections themselves existing" (Broadie 165).

Broadie also asserts that to argue that affirmative terms signify God imperfectly, Aquinas brings up the *via analogica* argument and states that those terms are used analogically through *via media*, which Aquinas explains to be the middle way between the two extremes of becoming a polytheist or an atheist (166). To answer how multiple names can be attributed to God but still have Him be divinely simple, Broadie explains that Aquinas argues that all the different names to God are identical with each other and identical to the person of God. To comment on this, Broadie states that the idea of *via media* can be discomfoting to some as it makes the



claim that the power, knowledge, and mercy of God are one. Broadie explains that this is a problem because it leaves the reader wondering whether *via analogica*, which is what *via media* is based on, leaves us with a negative account of the names of God. Broadie explains that if it is, then it seems like we haven't made any progress since *via analogica* appears not to be a *via media* but a version of *via negativa*. However, Broadie argues that this should not be a surprise, because as stated before, Aquinas had already argued that "since we cannot know what God is but only what He is not, we cannot consider in what way He is. Rather we must consider in what way He is not' (*S.T. I. 3, Intro.*)" (cited in Broadie, 167).

After reading Aquinas' and Maimonides' perspectives on how names should be ascribed to God, I could not help but think, "Does it really matter if we use names that are meant to describe creatures when describing God?" and I argue that no, it does not, even if we are not regular people but philosophers. I agree with Aquinas that when describing God, our inner intention is what matters most, not whether we're using the term right or not. I would argue that this also applies to other things and not only when describing God. Let us assume that a poor man found a kitten in the streets and took it in and gave it a home and food. Being ignorant to what kittens are supposed to eat, he started feeding it cow milk every day. He took away from the budget he had set for his daily meals and made sure he bought the kitten cow milk every day. A couple weeks passed, and the kitten passed away from suffering being overweight. Is it okay to call the man ignorant? Yes, he was ignorant to what the kitten was supposed to be fed to stay healthy and alive. However, was his intention to take the kitten's life away from it? No, the man's intention was not to kill the kitten but to love it and accept it as a part of his life. So, when wisdom or mercy are ascribed to God, are people trying to ascribe to God the limited wisdom that humans have and take away from Him the unlimited heavenly wisdom that He has? No. Therefore, just like how we are ignorant to a lot of facts and concepts on this earth, we are also ignorant to a lot of things in relation to God. However, just because we are ignorant to how God should properly be addressed and named, this should not be a barrier between us and worshiping and showing love to God.

Maimonides argues that God is perfect in every manner of perfection, which is a valid conclusion if we are looking at it from the Abrahamic religions' point of view. However, we, humans, are not

capable of comprehending the amount of perfection that God possesses, which is another point that the Abrahamic religions share. It is true that we can think it, but we have never felt it, and therefore we do not, and cannot, completely understand it. Thus, to attribute names to God in an affirmative way is not to take away from His greatness but is to glorify Him in the humble humanly way that we know and understand.

Works Cited

Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologiae*. I, q13, a1.

<https://dhspritory.org/thomas/summa/FP/FP013.html#FPQ13A1THEP1>

Broadie, Alexander. "Maimonides and Aquinas on the Names of God." *Religious Studies*, vol. 23, no. 2, 1987, pp. 157–167. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/20019206.



The Rise of ISIS: Grievances Trump Religion

NAOMI MOORE

B.A. International Security and Conflict Resolution (ISCOR) | Class of 2020

Introduction

Since the World Trade Center attacks on September 11, 2001, there have been numerous questions and studies on whether there is a link between the Islamic faith and the rise of terrorism in the name of Islam. The rise and success of terrorist groups like the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and al-Qaeda have been a popular topic of discussion in contemporary politics. While some may suggest that ISIS's use of Islamic texts in its propaganda of violence reflects a problem with the religion of Islam (Ali, 2015), as if Islam itself explains the creation of ISIS, I agree with those who find that religion is simply misused as a tool by some terrorist groups for recruitment purposes (Williams, 2016; Callimachi, 2016). In other words, religion – in this case the religion of Islam – is not the explanatory factor behind the rise of ISIS. Instead, I contend that local socio-economic and political grievances in Iraq and Syria best explain the rise of ISIS as a major terrorist threat.

More specifically, I argue that: 1) authoritarian governments in Iraq and Syria have created local grievances through repression and a lack of service provision, and 2) the US military intervention in the region, especially in Iraq, has contributed to local grievances by not only exacerbating the problem of domestic state capacity through war, but also through US-run prisons. In combination, these local grievances best explain the rise of ISIS as a powerful terrorist force. Terrorist organizations like ISIS rely on grievances for recruitment, and war-torn Iraq and Syria's contexts offer many aggrieved persons, especially young men, who are vulnerable for recruitment due to a lack of government trust (related to local repression, corruption, and poverty), imprisonment, and negative types of bonding (or social capital).



The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. First, I provide some historical background on the contexts of Iraq and Syria that may be key to the success of ISIS. Second, I dive into evidence to support my two-fold argument that authoritarian (domestic) governments' repression and lack of services, and foreign government (i.e. US) intervention have contributed to local grievances. I show that multiple local grievances, whether created by domestic and/or foreign governments, combine to explain ISIS's rise in Iraq and Syria, and that religious identity, religion, or Islam itself is simply a tool used by ISIS in context with a Muslim-majority population. Before the conclusion, I provide a discussion of my findings, their policy implications, and policy proposals toward preventing the rise of terrorist organizations like ISIS.

Contextual Background of Iraq and Syria

The success of ISIS has been attributed in part to both ISIS being an extension of al-Qaeda (itself considered a creation of the United States invasion of Iraq) and the Syrian civil war (Gerges, 2017). In this section, I first provide some information on the US invasion of Iraq and its relation to the widening gap between the Sunni-Shia divide, which contributes to local grievances. I then give some background on the fall of Syria into civil war and its connection to the repression of Arab Spring activists, as this context also presents local grievances that enable ISIS to rise. Finally, I connect this section to my argument about grievances, which I later expound upon in more detail.

The US Invasion of Iraq

The creation of ISIS traces back to the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. The US (referring to the US government) wanted the president of Iraq, Saddam Hussein, to step down from power because the US believed he possessed weapons of mass destruction and had ties to al-Qaeda. The US invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq had very costly effects on Iraq because it led to the creation of a power vacuum and exposed the fragility of the Iraqi state structure and the lack of cohesion of a national Iraqi identity (Gerges, 2017). Saddam Hussein's regime was a minority Sunni government, comprised of Ba'ath Party members, ruling over a majority Shia population. However, after his fall, the Shias tried gaining power in the Iraqi government (Beauchamp, 2015).

After Saddam Hussein's regime ended, Nouri al-Maliki became prime minister from 2006 to 2014 and developed a Shia government that refused to work alongside disenfranchised Sunnis. His treatment of the Sunni minority played a large role in ISIS gaining recruits because ISIS was able to exploit the deepening divide in the Sunni versus Shia battle in Iraq. Mistreatment of the Sunni minority under Maliki's government included police killings of peaceful protestors and mass arrests of Sunni Iraqis, and this played "right into [ISIS's] hands" because ISIS would promise to remove threats like these (Beauchamp, 2015). Maliki's Shia regime implemented policies that led to the de-Baathification of the Iraqi government, resulting in the unemployment of tens of thousands of Sunnis who were former government workers for the Ba'ath party (Interview with Anthony Cordesman, 2006). Further marginalizing the Sunni minority, de-Baathification policies limited political participation of previous Ba'ath party members (Beauchamp, 2015).

Maliki's authoritarian regime was corrupt and committed many human rights violations, providing fuel for ISIS to politicize and gain power through the recruitment of Sunnis who felt threatened (Beauchamp, 2015). The deprivation and marginalization of Sunnis in Iraq have played an instrumental role in ISIS recruitment because it has made ISIS's propaganda appear valid and reliable. ISIS has framed Sunni grievances to fit an ISIS narrative and recruit fighters. The fragile environment in Iraq, where individuals were divided in a society with no stable government institutions, has provided an opportune context for groups like al-Qaeda and ISIS to gain strength and prominence.

A notable figure within this divisive socio-political climate was Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the founder of a group called al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), whose aim was to end the US occupation and bring Sunnis back to power. After al-Zarqawi's death, Abu Ayyub al-Masri became the new leader and changed the name of this militant group to the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI). After al-Masri's death, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi took over in 2011 (History.com Editors, 2017). The transition of power to al-Baghdadi is significant, because he sent members of ISI to Syria to fight against President Bashar al-Assad's regime in the Syrian Civil War, and as a result, ISI became known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

The Fall of Syria into Civil War

The spark of the Syrian Civil War traces back to the Arab Spring, a term used to refer to the many uprisings that called for democratization and more freedom and justice across the Arab world (beginning in December 2010). The protests started in Tunisia and spread to surrounding nations, including Syria in January 2011. However, not all governments responded in a positive manner to Arab Spring protests, and Syria is one country where the government's repressive and deadly responses to Arab Spring activism have had detrimental consequences.

The Arab Spring particularly affected Syrian youth as they watched the protests that occurred in Tunisia and Egypt and started to take action through acts like drawing graffiti about the demise of President Asaad and his regime (Junger, 2017). In response, the Assad regime heavily cracked down and tortured individuals who protested against the government. The state's suppressive tactics led to fatalities, which generated more protests and unrest. People tried appealing to the regime's head of security, who was President Assad's cousin, but nothing was done to stop the suppression of Syrians who were trying to exercise their political will. A dangerous cycle had been created of the government violently suppressing protests, and the resulting funerals turning into bigger protests (Junger, 2017).

Syrians have demanded political and civil liberties and the end of corruption within the Syrian government, but the Assad regime has continued to respond with tremendous violence in order to maintain power. As a result, Syria has fallen into anarchy, as some citizens have taken matters into their own hands and turned to violence and radicalism because they felt like all other outlets, such as protests, have been exhausted (Junger, 2017). Thus, the Syrian government's authoritarian practices, especially against Arab Spring activism, have contributed to the country's fall into a civil war and terrorist activity, which itself has exacerbated the Syrian Civil War.

Connecting the Backgrounds of Iraq and Syria: Grievances Set the Stage for the Rise of ISIS

Having discussed the US invasion of Iraq and its relation to the widening gap between the Sunni-Shia divide as well as the fall of Syria into civil war and its connection to the repression of Arab

Spring activists, I contend that the local grievances affiliated with these events set the stage for the rise of ISIS in both Iraq and Syria. After Saddam Hussein's regime toppled, any power AQI possessed had been severely reduced and members remained in the deserts of Iraq. Those remaining were considered a "collection of very hardened killers," who included men, such as Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who were once in Iraqi prisons or US-run prisons in Iraq (Smith, 2014). Baghdadi ordered some men from AQI to go to Syria and help fight against the Assad regime, and this proved to be instrumental in ISIS's success. Likewise, the Syrian Civil War was a gift to this terrorist organization because the breakdown of Syrian society provided large amounts of land and resources between Iraq and Syria for ISIS to take over (Junger, 2017). After years of being limited to the desert, AQI was able to begin operating again and start looking for recruits because they could reach out to the Sunnis of Syria and give them an opportunity to fight against Assad's Shia government. Thus, the invasion of Iraq and the fall of Syria provided conditions ripe for the rise of ISIS, because these events created grievances by disenfranchising and oppressing Sunnis (i.e. minority Sunnis in Iraq and the majority Sunnis in Syria). These grievances provide an incentive for potential recruits to join ISIS's cause (framed as a response to Sunni grievances). In addition, these events set the stage for more land and resources for ISIS to control.

Three years after the onset of the Syrian Civil War and 11 years after the 2003 invasion of Iraq, ISIS had another success when they defeated the Iraqi military and captured Mosul in 2014. The capture of Mosul was a major achievement for ISIS and helped in their rise to notoriety because it highlighted its ability to capture land and be one step closer to establishing a caliphate (an Islamic state ruled by a caliph) (Glenn, 2016). ISIS's siege of Mosul can be partly attributed to the US invasion of Iraq, because the invasion caused a deep rupture in Iraqi society and disenfranchised Iraqis began joining the Islamic State. With the exposed vulnerability of the Iraqi government, ISIS took advantage, captured Mosul, and proved they were a viable threat.

The rise of ISIS amidst the chaos that ensued in both Iraq and Syria reflects how these two contexts provided opportunities for ISIS to promote its plan to "implant, expand, and consolidate" (Gerges, 2017) itself across the Middle East and Western Asia. Baghdadi's claims of ISIS being the sole defender of the Sunni community has helped ISIS create a powerful base of supporters and recruits who believe in ISIS's messages of salvation, military triumph,

and power. They represent a new wave in jihadism because they have imperial ambitions to impose their will as a new major world player in the region and a de facto state (Gerges, 2017). Their revitalization in Syria and Iraq in 2013 and 2014 was a rude awakening for regional and global powers, because they gained control over the “Sunni Triangle” (the area between central Iraq, Baghdad, and Ebril), thus demonstrating how powerful they could be (Junger, 2017).

The Key Explanatory Factor for the Rise of ISIS: Local Grievances

In the previous section, I provided some background on the US invasion of Iraq and the fall of Syria into civil war, both of which created grievances that set the stage for the rise of ISIS. In this section, I expand on my argument that local grievances best explain the rise of ISIS. I provide evidence and draw on scholarly literature to support my argument, which is two-fold. First, I focus on the local grievances created by authoritarian governments’ repression and lack of service provision to its citizenry. Second, I elaborate on how US intervention, particularly US-run prisons, in the region adds fuel in the form of grievances that ISIS takes advantage of for its recruitment and building of negative social capital, which I define further below.

Authoritarian Regimes’ Repression and Weak Service Provisions Lead to Grievances

Governments in the Arab world have turned to autocratic and tyrannical ways of rule and widespread corruption, which has led to the degradation of the relationship between the government and its people (Junger, 2017). ISIS has exploited the breakdown of trust in government by positioning themselves as the one and only alternative for the people. The local appeal of ISIS’s extremist ideas stems from the lack of credible alternatives where doors to peaceful means of political change have been closed by governments that have not prioritized the interests of their citizens (Junger, 2017). In other words, ISIS claims to be the solution for local grievances against corrupt and repressive regimes.

Grievances are an important factor in the rise of ISIS. Krueger (2007) finds that countries with fewer civil and political liberties

are more likely to produce terrorists as individuals are highly motivated by geopolitical grievances and a desire to influence politics. In Syria, Assad's regime implemented various economic and social policies that resulted in people living in impoverished conditions with low standards of living and little to no civil or political rights (Gerges, 2017). People protested these policies, but the Syrian government violently cracked down on those who spoke out against the government and imprisoned Arab Spring activists in dreadful and violent jail conditions (Junger, 2017). This exhibits how Syrians sought political and civil liberties through peaceful means, but being met with repression, some Syrians would likely respond with terrorist participation as per Krueger's (2007) findings noted above. Assad has been responding with an ultimatum of "me or nothing," which has played a role in people feeling desperate and joining terrorist organizations in order to influence politics in Syria.

Participation in terrorist activities is fueled by feelings of desperation regarding grievances and feelings of wanting revenge against a repressive regime, and ISIS has capitalized on such emotions. Many terrorists have claimed that such feelings play an instrumental role in why they participate in rebellion and uprising. For example, those involved in militant Palestinian groups point to "humiliation, revenge, and despair" as leading to their involvement in militancy (Newman, 2006). Such feelings are tied to terrorist goals of gaining political and civil liberties by fighting against an "enemy" who repeatedly oppresses and humiliates them. People who take part in terrorist organizations are aware of the unjust treatment they are facing and rebel through terrorism as way to seek revenge, overcome a cycle of oppression, and achieve their social and political objectives.

Grievances from unfulfilled government services or provisions lead to feelings of resentment, and ISIS's calls for jihad against President Assad resonate with fighters due in part to their resentment against the Assad regime. Capitalizing on people's resentment against the state and promising to fill gaps in service provision, ISIS has financially benefited, received recruits, and appeared more legitimate as a non-state actor to local communities. Providing services to the people is important to gain their trust and loyalty. One study in Sierra Leone found that young men were susceptible to joining gangs and taking part in violent crime because the gangs were able to provide them with a sense of belonging and a way to make a living (Kunekler, 2011). Further, Bhatia (2017) finds

that a lack of economic opportunities (evidenced by unemployment) has links to individuals joining extremist groups like ISIS. These findings could be extended to impoverished fighters taking up arms for ISIS, because ISIS gives them a sense of purpose, promises a salary, and provides extra monetary support to individuals who join their cause. Indeed, Junger (2017) notes that ISIS has provided services to the poor as a way to secure their power in Syria.

Even if one does not take up arms to fight for ISIS, ISIS's provision of services to those who do not receive benefits from corrupt or failed states should increase local support for ISIS and ISIS's goals (Flanigan and O'Brien, 2015). When a state fails to meet the needs of its citizenry, groups that provide services "can have substantial influence on service recipients" because those who are desperate to have their needs met generally will not be "overly concerned with whether or not their service provider is...engaged in political violence" (Flanigan and O'Brien, 2015). If ISIS offers people what they have been struggling to provide for themselves and their family, then they may feel more inclined to support ISIS because they are not in a position to decline such services where government has failed. Individuals seeking to have their economic and social conditions improved may comply with ISIS because they are the only group supporting their basic needs. In conflict-torn contexts, such as Iraq and Syria, ISIS has gained support and recruits in large part because many citizens live in dire socio-economic conditions and ISIS provides much-needed services to buttress their claims of legitimacy in contrast to the people's grievances against government's failure to provide such services.

Foreign Intervention's Impact on Local Grievances and Negative Social Capital

In addition to domestic governments' contributions to local grievances in Iraq and Syria, the US military intervention in the region has added to local grievances by not only compounding the problem of weak service provision by the states, as war itself has hindered government services in Iraq and Syria, but US-run prisons have created grievances that play into the hands of ISIS recruitment tactics. In this section, I further expand on my argument by discussing negative social capital in relation to grievances and foreign intervention. I explain the concept of social capital and how negative social capital – related to US intervention, especially US-run prisons -- has served ISIS recruitment.

Social capital can be defined as the networks and connections an individual has with other people, and it can “promote coordination, cooperation, and cohesion” for people to band together and utilize collective action (McDoom, 2013). This collective action can lend itself to the use of peaceful means of action or violent forces. In other words, social capital can be positive or negative; it can lead to beneficial or harmful consequences depending on how individuals use such social networks. Specifically, I contend that the rise of ISIS can be traced in part to the grievances arising from the aforementioned Iraqi War and Syrian Civil War, because the prisons in these wars have created a negative social capital fueled by grievances. By negative social capital, I mean that there is a negative reason for bonding (e.g. a grievance) and a negative shared desire (e.g. vengeance) between people, such as prisoners bonding over perceived or actual grievances and a desire for revenge. For example, young men who are imprisoned or tortured in war could network in prison or afterwards, and they may share desires for vengeance with each other. Another example of negative social capital or negative bonding over grievances could be young men who feel persecuted for being from a particular religious or other social group, and they may bond with someone who calls upon them to seek revenge or enact violence against the perceived or actual persecutors.

In the cases of Iraq and Syria, the US-led intervention and US-run prisons have played into an ISIS recruitment narrative, which claims that “the West” is at war with Islam and that Muslims should fight against “enemies” for their Islamic faith (Chapter 2: Recruitment, 2018; Callimachi, 2016; Islamic Networks Group, 2016). As such, grievances against governments (whether domestic or foreign) can lead vulnerable persons into the rhetorical traps of ISIS recruiters, who convince them to commit acts of terrorism through the building of negative social capital or negative bonding over a “persecuted” group identity, such as a religious identity. In prisons, there could be numerous negative social capital bonds made among prisoners, and each ISIS recruit is encouraged to spread ISIS propaganda and radicalize more people. A coupling of grievances with a negative social capital built among prisoners of war could contribute to a network of targeted recruits, who due to shared grievances and identities may become convinced to join a terrorist organization like ISIS.

Important institutions that built negative social capital and played a heavy role in terrorist recruitment, are US-run prisons in

Iraq. Prisons appear to be “[factories] of terrorism” because individuals “go inside as an ordinary person and leave as a terrorist” due to how vulnerable and violent the jail environment can be (Junger, 2017). For example, individuals in places like Abu Ghraib reported being abused by US soldiers, as well as meeting “like-minded” individuals when it came to the notion of wanting vengeance for their treatment by the Western world (Gerges, 2017). Terrorist organizations capitalize on these prison-created bonds of “like-minded” people by promising to help them achieve their goals in exchange for their support when they are released from prison.

Another major prison is Camp Bucca. This prison was significant in influencing Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the creator of ISIS, because those close to al-Baghdadi claim he left Camp Bucca “more extreme” and with a desire for revenge against the United States (Gerges, 2017). al-Baghdadi is one of the many cases in which experiences of oppression at the hands of a government coupled with negative social capital (and the traumatic experiences) from prison has influenced an individual to become more radical. Feelings of humiliation and exploitation in US-run prisons were key radicalizing elements, and such feelings have also been expressed by suicide bombers elsewhere in the region (Newman, 2006). Prisons have supported ISIS by bringing together individuals who experienced socio-political oppression at the hands of the various states, and ISIS presented themselves as a savior to these people (Gerges, 2017). Prisons have also united some Muslims who suffered at the hands of the US government, thereby contributing to an ISIS narrative of the Western world as being against Islam. In sum, prison experiences and grievances gave prisoners something to bond over and created a unique network (of negative social capital) with their circumstances framed by ISIS to encourage participation in terrorism.

An Alternative Explanation of Islam and Violence

Some scholars and others claim that Islam itself explains the rise of ISIS. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) notes that individuals who experience socio-economic issues and perceived inequality do not become radicalized based on these issues alone, but that an ideology to frame grievances is crucial in the radicalization process. For example, ISIS recruiters have used the Islamic idea of jihad coupled with a so-called “Western war on Islam” to spread ideas on how Muslims worldwide can implement jihad in

their everyday life and push back against Western powers (Chapter 2: Recruitment, 2018). In the pledge they take to ISIS is the idea of jihad, which means struggle or effort. Within the context of religion, jihad can refer to the “human struggle to promote what is right and to prevent what is wrong” (Afsaruddin, 2015). For groups like ISIS, this can mean promoting Islam as if their (i.e. ISIS’s) claims are “right” and others’ claims are “wrong.” Jihad and a commitment to an Ummah and caliphate are important, because most fighters for Boko Haram, an Islamic State offshoot in Western Africa, claimed to have joined because of religious ideology or their belief in having a religious leader and an Islamic state (Bukarti, 2017). Thus, some members take up arms with Islamic extremists like ISIS to fight non-believers and establish their “right” way to live according to their version of the Islamic faith.

Some scholars believe Islam itself promotes violence because parts of the Quran explicitly mention waging jihad and war against nonbelievers. There are several instances in the Quran where “armed jihad in the name of Allah” is cited as justified. For example, Muslims ought to “strike terror into [the hearts of] the enemies, of Allah and your enemies, and others besides, whom ye may not know, but whom Allah doth know” and to “fight those who believe not in Allah ...until... submission, and feel themselves subdued” (Ali, 2015). Both of these passages contribute to a narrative that ISIS uses to justify their violence. There are also parts in the Hadith collections about how Mohammed dealt with non-believers, such as the Banu Qurayza, a Jewish tribe, whom Mohammed executed and sold into slavery. These stories and passages have been used by some scholars in their claims of Muslims using violence against non-Muslims as written into the foundation of Islam (Ali, 2015).

Religious figures are also referenced when trying to explain why some people take part in terrorism. For example, leaders like Anwar al-Awlaki have played a prominent role in the recruitment of individuals joining ISIS. Anwar al-Awlaki was a Muslim man who promoted peace and nonviolence, but after the US invasion of Iraq, he turned to violent Islamism because the invasion and his perceived “continued US aggression against Muslims” meant “jihad against America is binding upon [himself], just as it is binding on every other able Muslim” (Chapter 2: Recruitment, 2018). It appears that Awlaki viewed America’s use of power against Muslim-majority nation-states as an attack on Islam itself, so he claimed it was the duty of Muslims to defend Islam and fight. If any Muslims are



joining terrorist groups to defend Islam, then some argue that this implies that Islam and religious-cultural differences motivate people to take part in violent jihad, especially if religious leaders who are well-versed in the Quran use Islam to justify it. However, I have argued and find support in other works that religion is an easily accessible tool for ISIS to manipulate for its cause. Terrorist organizations can misuse religion to give people hope and provide a sense of assurance of better lives through following the terrorist organization's interpretation of religious texts.

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), most people become violent extremists because they are trying to fill a "deep personal need." Violent extremists politicize these needs by getting individuals to become angry or upset and present themselves as the ones who can help them attain a better life in exchange for support. (FBI.gov, 2015). Essentially, "anyone can potentially sympathize with a terrorist organization if the conditions are right" (Williams, 2016) because it is not religion alone that makes terrorism appealing, but rather an environment where individuals feel vulnerable and under some sort of existential threat. In ISIS's case, existential threats could refer to a lack of socio-political rights, suppression when participating politically, and living in impoverished conditions.

Most ISIS fighters profess their socio-economic conditions, revenge, or other factors as to why they join (Krueger, 2007). The real causes of so-called Islamic violence are the cycles of oppression people face in Muslim-majority countries under authoritarian regimes and Western intervention (Karakaya, 2015). Religion itself does not make these countries less or more prone to conflict, but rather socioeconomic and political conditions play a heavy role in the occurrence of violence. The presence of a youth bulge, which refers to a nation with a quickly increasing youth population, is also important under oppressive regimes as this increase can lead to "rampant unemployment" (Beehner, 2007). The interaction between state repression and a youth bulge in Muslim-majority nations positively affects the probability of intrastate conflict because frustrated youth have a higher likelihood for recruitment into violent organizations as a way to fight back against issues they face (Karakaya, 2015). Research has disproved the idea of violence and terrorism in the name of Islam being a result of religion or militant Islamic ideology alone, but rather a result of the culmination of decades of historical and political grievances in Muslim-majority countries (Esposito, 2015). In the midst of the fall of Syria, Assad

continued to use brutal military tactics to suppress the threat of protests and uprisings for democratization. The socio-economic and political conditions of the country were very poor due to little to no civil and political liberties, thus paving a path for ISIS to recruit individuals based on my argument about grievances. In sum, I argue that it is not religion, but other conditions that contribute to grievances, which lay the foundation for terrorist recruitment and the rise of organizations like ISIS.

Discussion and Policy Implications: Decreasing Grievances through Democratization, Human Rights, and Positive Social Capital

I have argued that grievances are the key explanatory factor for explaining the rise of ISIS. In this section, I aim to elaborate on the implications of this argument for those interested in preventing the rise of terrorist organizations like ISIS through sound research and government policies (both domestic and foreign). Here I propose that it is critical to decrease grievances and their related tools for terrorist recruitment by working toward democratization, human rights, and positive social capital. I then provide some policy proposals in light of my argument.

A lack of democracy coupled with fewer civil and political liberties for citizens are important contributors to grievances, because countries in these circumstances tend to be more likely to produce terrorists (Kreuger, 2007). Suppressive actions by states combined with violent and traumatic experiences when trying to exercise one's political will are significant motivators for participation in violent, extremist behavior (Barber, 2001). The socio-political climate of one's environment, especially for younger people, can take a significant toll on one's mental state and lead to one's desire for revenge (Newman, 2006). These negative outcomes can decrease the likelihood of individuals taking part in positive social interactions, and a lack of positive social integration can lead to the creation of negative social capital, which can manifest into radicalism and terrorism (Barber, 2001). If social capital is negative, then terrorist organizations can capitalize on negative bonds that people share by promising glory and purpose in exchange for their support. They can also provide people with a sense of belonging and social identity in order to compensate for what they are not receiving from their state (Kunekler, 2011; FBI.gov, 2015) and unite them under one grand cause through negative social capital.

Bringing people together through social bonds is significant, because the single best predictor of whether or not someone joins a terrorist organization is peer involvement (The Psychology of Radicalization, 2015). Groups like ISIS can persuade one individual to join their cause and have that person tell their community about how ISIS would be able to help them out of their adverse circumstances. Through negative social capital, ISIS can potentially gain a whole group of recruits after they successfully recruit one individual. Collective action becomes relevant because if an individual has the assurance that their peers are all working together for the same purpose, then they are more likely to take part as well (The Psychology of Radicalization, 2015). Therefore, radicalization of one individual lends itself to a group of recruits because of the role negative social capital plays in further generating a sense of collective action for others to join.

In light of my argument, I propose the following for scholars, policymakers, and practitioners seeking to combat and prevent the rise of a terrorist organization, such as ISIS:

- More research (funding) on how governments and non-government actors can increase positive forms of social capital (Merari, 2009) to make communities more resilient even in the contexts of crises and weak state capacity.
- More research (funding) on how governments and non-government actors can decrease negative forms of social capital, including those formed through prisons (whether during war or not).
- More funding and support for civil society organizations that promote democratization, human rights, and positive forms of social capital.
- More awareness-raising, networking, and support for progressive religious leaders and organizations across religions, so that they may more widely educate and translate the non-violent and pro-human rights interpretations of religious texts across all faiths. By countering the cherry-picking of violent-prone texts of any religion, progressive religious leaders/organizations could help to decrease the misuse of religious texts for terrorist or other harmful causes. Inter-faith dialogue and communication of ways to counter calls to violence in the name of any faith should also be a component of this, so

that there is religious unity and collaboration toward peace across faiths.

¹While the above proposals are especially important in less democratic contexts where state capacity is weak, I recommend them worldwide for human security, national security, and international security.

Conclusion

In this paper, after introducing my argument about local grievances as best explaining the rise of ISIS, I presented some background on the politics of the US invasion of Iraq and the fall of Syria into civil war, as these contexts helped to set the stage for ISIS. Following, evidence showed that both authoritarian, domestic regimes as well as foreign—in this case US—military intervention contributed to multiple local grievances that explain the rise of ISIS. First, I showed that authoritarian governments in Iraq and Syria have created local grievances through repression and a lack of service provision. Second, I discussed how foreign intervention, namely US-run prisons, contribute to grievances and negative social capital, which fuel ISIS recruitment. Third, I provided an alternative argument about religion, which I dispute. In sum, I have argued that multiple socio-economic and political grievances – and not Islam or religion – created fertile ground for the growth of a terrorist organization like ISIS. Finally, I provided a discussion and policy implications, along with proposals, regarding the need to decrease grievances through democratization, human rights, and positive social capital.

Works Cited

- Afsaruddin, A. (2019, January 15). Jihad. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/jihad>
- Ali, A. H. (2015, November 09). Islam Is a Religion of Violence. Retrieved from <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/11/09/islam-is-a-religion-of-violence-ayaan-hirsi-ali-debate-islamic-state/>
- Barber, B. K. (2001). Political violence, social integration, and youth functioning: Palestinian youth from the Intifada. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 29(3), 259-280. doi:10.1002/jcop.1017.abs

¹ I would like to thank Dr. Cheryl O'Brien who provided guidance and editorial support that improved this article.

- Beauchamp, Z. (2015, November 17). Iraq's former prime minister made the ISIS problem worse. Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/2018/11/20/17995852/iraqs-former-prime-minister-made-the-isis-problem-worse>
- Beehner, L. (2007, April 13). The Effects of 'Youth Bulge' on Civil Conflicts. Retrieved from <https://www.cfr.org/background/effects-youth-bulge-civil-conflicts>
- Bhatia, K., & Ghanem, H. (2017, March 24). How do education and unemployment affect support for violent extremism? Retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-do-education-and-unemployment-affect-support-for-violent-extremism/>
- Bukarti, A. (2017, September 13). Islam Is Both a Sword and a Shield to Violent Extremism. Retrieved from <https://institute.global/insight/co-existence/islam-both-sword-and-shield-violent-extremism>
- Callimachi, R. (2016, August 29). Once a Qaeda Recruiter, Now a Voice Against Jihad. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/30/us/al-qaeda-islamic-state-jihad-fbi.html>
- Chapter 2: Recruitment [Audio blog interview]. (2018, April 26). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/podcasts/caliphate-transcript-chapter-two-recruitment.html>
- Esposito, J. (2015). Islam and political violence. *Religions*, 6(3), 1067-1081.
- FBI.gov. (2015, October 23). Why Do People Become Violent Extremists? Retrieved from <https://www.fbi.gov/cve508/teen-website/why-do-people-become-violent-extremists>
- Flanigan, S. T., & O'Brien, C. (2015). Service-Seeking Behavior, Perceptions of Armed Actors, and Preferences Regarding Governance: Evidence from the Palestinian Territories. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 38(8), 622-651. doi:10.1080/1057610X.2015.1030194
- Gerges, F. A. (2017). *ISIS: A history*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Glenn, C., Rowan, M., Caves, J., & Nada, G. (2016). Timeline: The Rise, Spread, and Fall of the Islamic State. Retrieved from <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/timeline-the-rise-spread-and-fall-the-islamic-state>
- History.com Editors. (2017, July 10). ISIS. Retrieved from <https://www.history.com/topics/21st-century/isis>
- Interview with Anthony Cordesman [Interview by FRONTLINE]. (2006, July 18). Retrieved from <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/yearini-raq/interviews/cordesman.html>
- Islamic Networks Group. (2016). An Overview of ISIS. Retrieved from <https://ing.org/an-overview-of-isis/>
- Junger, S., & Quested, N. (Directors). (2017). *The Fall of Syria and the Rise of ISIS* [Video file]. Retrieved April, 2017, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjndGwcTuFU>
- Karakaya, S. (2015). Religion and conflict: Explaining the puzzling case of "Islamic violence". *International Interactions*, 41(3), 509-538.
- Krueger, A. (2007). What Makes a Terrorist. Retrieved April 4, 2018, from <http://www.aei.org/publication/what-makes-a-terrorist/>

- Kunekler, J. (2011). This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives License. ISSN: 1864-1385 "The Boys Are Coming to Town": Youth, Armed Conflict and Urban Violence in Developing Countries. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, 5(2), 277-291. doi:10.4119/UNIBI/ijcv.155
- Mcdoom, O. S. (2013). Antisocial Capital: A Profile of Rwandan Genocide Perpetrators' Social Networks. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 58(5), 865-893. doi:10.1177/0022002713484282
- Merari, A. (2009). Personality Characteristics of "Self Martyrs"/"Suicide Bombers" and Organizers of Suicide Attacks. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 22(1), 87-101. doi:10.1080/09546550903409312
- Newman, E. (2006). Exploring the "Root Causes" of Terrorism. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 29(8), 749-772. Retrieved April 4, 2018.
- Smith, M. (2014, October 27). The Rise of ISIS. Retrieved from <https://www.pbs.org/video/frontline-rise-isis-repack-003/>
- The Psychology of Radicalization: How Terrorist Groups Attract Young Followers [Audio blog interview]. (2015, December 15). Retrieved April 4, 2018, from <https://www.npr.org/2015/12/15/459697926/the-psychology-of-radicalization-how-terrorist-groups-attract-young-followers>
- Williams, J. (2016, June 14). Why average people decide to become terrorists. Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/2016/6/14/11923514/terrorist-radicalization-orlando>



Raqqa, Syria

WAR AGAINST ISIS

CNN ON THE STREETS OF RAQQA

Waste and War

MILES REYES

B.A., Department of English and Comparative Literature | Class of 2020

Charles Darwin once wrote, “A man who dares to waste one hour of time has not discovered the value of life” (“Charles”). Waste is a relative concept, yet many people enlist it to speak about a universal binary of good and bad. The despicable misuse of time is waste according to Darwin’s values; however, another definition of “waste” could be the innocent lives lost in war and the resources stripped from the earth to slaughter people. Many authors have tried to define “waste” through the relationship between war and the human condition. Though a discussion on morality and a critical analysis of literary works, this essay will explore the relationships and definitions authors have found (Reyes). In these explorations, “waste” is defined by each author. The works examined will be by authors who have experienced the turmoil of war, its impact on the human condition, and the suffering it creates. Wilfred Owen fought in World War I; Kurt Vonnegut experienced World War II and wrote to protest the Vietnam War; Tim O’Brien fought in the Vietnam War. These authors have analyzed the ethics of waste and how human lives interact with the many perceptions of waste. Waste is a nuanced idea, containing multiple levels of complexity due to its differing meanings for individuals. In morally strenuous activities, such as war, definitions are attempted to encapsulate the elusive concept of waste.

A Brief Discussion on Morality

The question of waste and the attempt to define it unearths other questions of morality. Waste is a highly subjective term and calls people to examine their deeply personal values and ethics. These concepts may be influenced and partially inherited by the values prevalent in an individual’s upbringing. However, an individual will form his or her own moral code in individualistic societies, such as the United States and England. These societies will be highlighted in this essay to narrow the focus of this analysis.



Some people find peace and their moral code in religion, by developing a faith based from a religious text. Many religions are prominent and loved throughout the world; however, I will focus on Christianity due to its popularity in the United States and England. The definition of “waste,” in the context of Christianity, is not following the laws of God. Mamo explains that human suffering (which can be perceived as waste) is not evil if it is mandated by God (Mamo, 14). This careful selection of what is wasteful is proved through the near murder of Isaac by his father Abraham. This tale appears in Genesis 22 and details Abraham preparing to follow out his God’s orders to offer his child as a sacrifice (*The Bible*, Genesis, 22). Even though Isaac is not murdered by his father, the early death that nearly occurred would have not been considered a waste. This death would have been just because it would have followed God’s commandments and proved Abraham’s steadfast loyalty to his God. While much love and goodwill can arise from this religion, its baseline definition of “waste” remains at rejecting God’s commandments. Human suffering is not always seen as waste in this religion and offers a different way of contextualizing waste apart from a pleasure-pain principle. In Christianity, God’s commandments define what goodness is, leaving all else to be waste.

Some people find peace in an existentialist perspective, where there is an acceptance of no inherent meaning to life—instead individuals must create their own meaning. There are many diverging paths within existentialist thought, but many of them focus on attempting to find a universal concrete (Flynn, 248). In Albert Camus’ case, who defines “waste” as injustice, this search for the concrete is tied to the imagination as a way of further developing a concept. This practice is displayed in his works *The Stranger* and *The Plague* (Flynn, 249). Currently, the movement of existentialist thought is moving towards moral responsibility (Flynn, 253). This moral responsibility brings with it a newer definition of “waste.” Camus “rarely uses theological language to name suffering. He uses ethical terms such as ‘injustice,’ ‘wickedness,’ and the rather vague expression ‘the irrational’” (Hoskins 148, note 33). In his work *The Fall*, while Camus satirizes an idea of absolute evil, he also seeks to deal with wickedness in “an ethically and politically responsible manner” (Hoskins, 149). Even within existentialist thinkers, there is a belief that suffering should be corrected. They recognize the

wastes present in life and wish to end injustice as part of the movement toward moral responsibility.

Each person may have a varying ethical code and moral compass derived from similar experiences. Individuals find what ethics work to support their emotional wellbeing in times of crisis. Albert Camus further solidifies this idea of needing personal ethical support in his essay “The Myth of Sisyphus.” He claims, “We must imagine Sisyphus happy” (O'Brien, 123). In his essay, Camus explains that the Greek mythological character Sisyphus can determine his own values while participating in the dreary, monotonous task of pushing a rock up a mountain for eternity. This rock will eventually fall back down the mountain, and Sisyphus will then begin pushing the boulder back up until it inevitably falls back down again. This perceived waste of eternity does not need to be interpreted as unfulfilling if Sisyphus himself puts value in his task. This mythological tale does not have a definition of “waste” tied to it because it is dependent on the outlook of both Sisyphus and the reader. The waste occurring is dependent on mindset and perception, therefore, the concept of waste is individual for each person and his or her ethical code. In different faiths—such as Christianity—and different ethical perspectives—such as existentialism—individuals choose their moral codes. These codes include a basis on how the concept of waste will be breached. After this introspective discussion on waste and ethics, I would like to extend this conversation to an even broader and more complicated subject matter: war. The concept of waste becomes complex when it is intertwined with the forced participation of mass slaughter as seen in war.

When the ethics of waste is applied to war, the moral dilemma becomes larger than personal life choices and an individual's mindset. There are many people engaging in actions that will bring about the deaths of others. Instead of analyzing the mindset of one Sisyphus, in war, many Sisyphus-like people are trapped in an ethical dilemma. Each participant has a different experience of the waste of life he or she is creating. In the remainder of this essay, I will focus on how some writers have defined the “waste” they experienced. Philosophers tend to be introspective, often examining their place in society whereas discussing the ethics of war analyzes global change and looks beyond the self. Therefore, intersecting these two tactics (both an introspective and a social philosophical approach) results in an interesting dive into the philosophy of waste.

The Mishaps of "The Great War"

The extreme level of futility in war is expressed by a poet who fought in the First World War. Wilfred Owen's definition of "waste" in war is unneeded suffering. He died while fighting in the so-called "Great War." The lie of the glory of war is discussed in "Dulce et Decorum Est." Owen's discussion-starting poem scrutinizes the uselessness in war's lies. Illustrated in this poem is a desolate, marching crowd of soldiers trying to survive while poisonous gas is thrown at them. One person is caught in the gas and dies from his exposure to the toxic chemicals. The unnecessary violence of this war disturbs the speaker of the poem. The speaker denounces the glory of war in the conclusion to this anti-war poem calling the romanticization of war a "Lie" (Owen). The ideals that glorified participation in war acted as a veil, promoting the waste of lives.

Owen's perspective of the glorification of war creates room for his personal definition of "waste." Waste is a relative concept that is dependent on morals. However, when war is planned, deaths are expected. Planning a war is the equivalent of planning the death of young people. Many die because of a romanticized version of war that is propagated throughout American culture. Propaganda on opposing sides paints the opponent country to be devilish and monstrous. In WWI, the US had widespread yellow journalism to spread hysteria about the explosion of the *Lusitania*, the event that eventually led the US to enter the war (Kaminski, 68). Furthermore, filmmakers were encouraged to demonize Germany (Kaminski, 68). Civilians were also persuaded to do their patriotic duty by either joining the war or economically supporting the war by gardening and volunteering (Kaminski, 69). This widespread glorification and societal pressure of supporting the war effort created many young people willing to be placed in deadly situations. For the US, who entered WWI late, the total number of casualties was 323,018, or about 8.1% of the amount of the mobilized forces. The British Empire, who joined the war several years prior to the US, had a total number of 3,190,235 casualties, which was 35.8% of their mobilized forces (Royde-Smith et al.). An extreme amount of death is expected when war is planned. In some cases, like WWII, these deaths help stop the suffering of harassed people. However, in this case, many lives were unnecessarily wasted due to political futility. This is Owen's definition of absolute "waste": unnecessary pain.

In the time that Owen was alive, and during the “Great” War, war was still perceived as noble, yet this romantic idealization of war deteriorated in the long, cold time spent in the trenches that accompanied this war. This war took many lives and resulted in lukewarm peacetime which created the political climate for a second world war, which also took many lives. Some wars are important and are fought to stop suffering, such as World War II, which stopped the further spread of Nazi ideology and hatred. Other wars, such as the Vietnam War and World War I had less ideological backing. The First World War was hoped to be the war to end all wars, yet this obviously is not the case. Not only has the world suffered another world war but has also experienced numerous conflicts such as the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the present conflict in Afghanistan. The planning and expectation of hideous, painful deaths are normally going to be in vain. Under Wilfred Owen’s concept, this unnecessary pain in war is clearly defined as “waste.”

Vietnam Troubles

As opposed to the hidden opposition during World War I, during the

Vietnam War, extensive publicized resistance was expressed. At the time, many people believed that all war was bad. Protests were commonplace in this era as the Civil Rights movement spurred young adults to stand up for what they believed in. The culture was brewing a rebellious spirit in people. This caused individuals, especially students, to loudly question the norms of their culture. Many students found authors who shared their ideas. Kurt Vonnegut was popularized during this time due to the radical ideologies found in his novels that corresponded with the ideas that were displayed in protests—namely the protesting of the Vietnam War.

Vonnegut applies ethics to the perceived waste of war in his novel *Slaughterhouse-Five*. In this novel, Vonnegut discusses his personal beliefs of the ridiculousness of war and predetermination. This novel was published in 1970 and was written about World War II for the purpose of protesting the Vietnam War. Billy Pilgrim, the main character of this anti-war novel, visits aliens that are called Tralfamadorians. They often use the phrase, “so it goes” (Vonnegut

20, 30, 68, 131, 177). This phrase highlights the Tralfamadorian concept of ambers of time—the idea that beings are trapped in moments of time just like bugs in amber (Vonnegut, 63). Conscious beings such as humans and the Tralfamadorians are trapped in times and situations for no reason. Nothing can be changed at any moment of time. Everything that has happened always will have happened. Billy Pilgrim is Vonnegut’s human example of the ridiculousness of a predeterminate perspective. Pilgrim learns to focus on the good parts of his life from the Tralfamadorians. One such good moment in his life is riding in the back of a horse-drawn wagon. At its basic concept, this appears to be a happy, good moment that is devoid of any definition of “waste.” However, the wagon is going back to Dresden to dig out corpses from a city that has turned to rubble. Pilgrim is sitting in the wagon, driving over rubble, propelled by two suffering horses who are bleeding and dehydrated (Vonnegut, 159-161). This is waste: the loss of life in Dresden, the architectural ruin of the city, Pilgrim’s ignorance of the horses’ suffering, and Pilgrim’s personal trip to “aid” in cleaning Dresden.

In *Slaughterhouse-Five*, “waste” is defined as absolute suffering that does not assist in any positivity. One example of waste (as seen by Vonnegut) is the destruction of Dresden. It was a small town that did not need to be destroyed. It did little to aid in the war effort other than housing prisoners of war—who were on the side of those who did the bombing. Another example arises from Billy Pilgrim’s trek to help clear the bombed city. Pilgrim will likely not be helpful in cleaning the rubble of the city. Although there are descriptions of his digging with a partner at Dresden, working to repair “the ruins,” the deceptions of the genuine work of recovering and disposing of bodies is passive, making it appear that Pilgrim did not do this work (Vonnegut, 174-175). Pilgrim is an awkward, clumsy person who is generally not helpful. Instead of actively helping and participating in events, Billy Pilgrim gives up. When in a battlefield, his fellow soldiers need to force Pilgrim to move because he wants to give up and will not physically move by himself (Vonnegut, 28). Pilgrim’s personal journey back to the bombed city will not be helpful due to his lack of initiative. The absolute suffering of the horses that transport Pilgrim will not hasten the rebuilding of Dresden. The bombing of Dresden and the use of the horse-drawn carriage are wasteful actions.

SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE

OR

the children's
crusade

KURT VONNEGUT, JR.

SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE

OR

The
Children's
Crusade

A NEW NOVEL BY

KURT VONNEGUT, JR.

 DOUBLEDAY
PRESS

The novel continually undermines Billy Pilgrim's experiences and ideology. Pilgrim's perception of his wagon ride being enjoyable is further undercut by the narrator's accusations of Billy's unreliability. The active, narrative voice in the novel continually demands the readers to "listen" as if the readers are not fully convinced that paying attention to Pilgrim is worthwhile (Vonnegut, 19, 112). The narrator also uses the phrase "Billy Pilgrim says," making the experiences Pilgrim shares appear to be tall tales (Vonnegut, 71, 112, 116). These repeated expressions question Billy Pilgrim's mental state and experiences which together, foster mistrust of Pilgrim. The reader does not have reason to believe Pilgrim's accounts and ideas after being exposed to the narrator's skepticism of Pilgrim. The narrator's mistrust in Pilgrim is further supported by Billy Pilgrim's mental state. He may be experiencing PTSD from the trauma he faced in war and has experienced brain trauma from an airplane accident (Vonnegut, 20). With this coupled unreliability of both the narrator's opinion and Pilgrim's mental health, the happy mindset Pilgrim adopts from the Tralfamadorians is ridiculed. The book directly correlates Pilgrim's unreliability with lack of action surrounding protests to the Vietnam War. In the novel, "Billy was not moved to protest the bombing of North Vietnam, did not shudder about the hideous things he himself had seen bombing do" (Vonnegut, 49). Pilgrim is depicted as weak, unthinking, and ridiculous because of his "so it goes" mentality (Vonnegut, 20). The narrator is rightfully outraged, whereas Pilgrim blunderingly accepts the unspeakable horrors he witnesses. In the conclusion of the novel, it is surmised that there is nothing to say about war but the sound a bird makes: "Poo-tee-weet" (Vonnegut, 177) ². War is an atrocious experience that robs people of language to talk about the brutal events that occurred. It is comforting to think that an individual cannot do anything in cataclysmic events but shrug, recite a phrase of complacency ("so it goes") and enjoy his or her momentary pleasures (Vonnegut, 20). However, this idea simply perpetuates the problem of ignoring dilemmas until another generation is made to deal with the effects of these cataclysmic situations. Through the narrator's undercutting of Billy Pilgrim, the complacency in a senseless war is also ridiculed. While the response to atrocious actions is simply silence and birdsongs, a "so-it-goes" reaction revels in complacency. The horrors of war must be seen as unspeakable to instill a need to end future frivolous wars. The

² This idea was shared by my instructor John Hall. See citation under Hall.

waste of unnecessary war is depicted as horrible in Vonnegut's novel.

To add to Vonnegut's mentality concerning war, Tim O'Brien displays that humans are inherently wasteful creatures as shown in the historical fiction piece, *How to Tell a True War Story*. O'Brien writes about an atrocity in Vietnam that is beyond words. A soldier lost a friend who died for no understandable reason. His response to this abject pain is torturing a buffalo (O'Brien, 2009, 75). Much like the conclusion of Vonnegut's novel, Tim O'Brien contextualizes this experience by concluding this violence is beyond words. There is so much raw pain and amorality that there is nothing to be said (O'Brien, 2009, 74). O'Brien captures the desolate lack of purpose that war creates. "Waste," in this narrative, is defined as disorderly emptiness. This disorder and pain that is afflicted on the buffalo can represent the same war-time ridden chaos inflicted on the environment. War not only creates emotional chaos for individuals but also environmental chaos. Humans are slowly destroying the environment. There are increasing amounts of panic surrounding rising water levels, droughts, and the corresponding financial effects on countries due to the changing climate. The massive production that occurs in war helps deteriorate the environment. This is just a physical aspect of the disordered waste that war creates.

The true terror in witnessing someone torture an innocent animal for no reason is the exposure to waste. Instead of simply being a concept, waste can become a tangible product that humans are easily able to create. Humans create wars, kill people, and torture animals. We become the reason for unhappiness and suffering due to different actions and choices in our lives. A dismal silence, drenched with the concept of waste, occurs after a horrific event such as an animal's being tortured, a shooting, or another tragedy. This kind of silence is all-consuming and sends terror into the hearts of people who actively notice it.

How To Tell a True War Story shows the personal, physical act of waste: torturing an animal. This action emphasizes the larger waste that happened in the Vietnam War. Because of its multiplicity of waste, the action has an intensified emotional reaction. A soldier is committing an atrocity out of spite. And yet, this malice towards the buffalo was created due to the planning of war for political reasons. An intersection takes place of waste, war, and the human condition. War is causing an increased amount of waste, yet

an individual is further perpetuating waste by acting on his impulsive nature that compose the basis of his human condition.

Waste Redefined

This essay, thus far, has largely discussed varying definitions of “waste” regarding war. However, waste also must be analyzed on a personal level. On this level of waste, people suffer as independent individuals but not as part of a whole in a widespread experience. People can distract themselves but are left with the painful wastes that occur in life. This definition of “waste” can include abandoned hopes, failed futures, and the pain of loved ones. Ultimately, regardless of the personal struggle between the joys of distraction and the reality of pain, most people will likely not be remembered after they die. An individual’s life will not be remembered as fond memories but as part of a wasteful society, if he or she is remembered at all. Humans have the potential to be wasteful in this way; we consume and create momentary positives in a frantic hope of offsetting the emptiness of life. There is a very human trade-off: exchanging painful, disappointing truths for happiness through the means of selfish consumption.

Waste is everywhere. It is intrinsically part of the human condition. People make mistakes. They are not efficient. They harm others. Waste becomes more terrifying when this aspect of humanity is exaggerated on a global stage, such as in wartime. These larger scales of waste make people face the reality of the ugly parts of the human condition. It is easier to support lies that romanticize war. It is easier to believe inaction is the only way to survive. It is easier to tell a grand war story instead of one that cannot be described with words.

The individual creation of waste is daunting. People can easily become creators of waste. Morals and ethics are challenging to apply to war as these authors have done. However, an individual may develop a desire to understand the complexities of life as these authors have demonstrated. After developing society and war, the next steps in self-awareness are to analyze actions and compare them to one’s moral code. Individuals create perceptions about right, wrong, good, bad, waste, and the opposite of their unique definition of waste. Waste can become horrific. Suffering must be stopped. But, the first step in that is understanding that we need to do everything in our power to make as few harmful incidents as we

can. Our collective misuse of resources will be less if we do not create unnecessary waste through violence, war, and planned deaths.

People find different values in different perspectives on life. Religion can provide people an ethical solace. With an existentialist perspective, peace can be found. These writers may have found peace in the knowledge that they have tried to stop wars and have pushed forward the anti-war movement. The authors analyzed call individuals to not buy into the “lie” of war, to reject complacency, and to be intentional in actions that can cause waste. Each person must find his or her own definition of “waste” and form his or her own dialogue concerning the relationship between war and waste. Everyone has their differing definitions of “waste” and they form different boundaries of how involved he or she is creating what is perceived to be waste. Although this ethical self-questioning is challenging, we need it to continue performing our daily trudge of life. And, like Sisyphus, in our own journeys of pushing a rock up a mountain, we must find our own ethical code that can prepare us for when the rock will inevitably fall back down.

Works Cited

- The Bible: Authorized King James Version*. Oxford University Press, 1997.
- “Charles Darwin Quotes.” *Goodreads*, Goodreads, www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/12793.Charles_Darwin.
- Flynn, Thomas R. “Toward the Concrete.” *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, vol. 26, no. 2, May 2012, pp. 247–255. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=82115263&site=ehost-live&scope=site.
- Hall, John. San Diego State University, RWS 200, 28 Nov. 2017, San Diego. Lecture.
- Hoskins, Gregory. “Elements of a Post-Metaphysical and Post-Secular Ethics and Politics: Albert Camus on Human Nature and the Problem of Evil.” *International Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 47, no. 2, 2007, pp. 141–152.
- “How to Tell a True War Story.” *The Things They Carried*, by Tim O'Brien, Mariner Books/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009, pp. 64–81.
- Kaminski, Joseph Jon. “World War I and Propaganda Poster Art: Comparing the United States and German Cases.” *Epiphany*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2015, pp. 64–81. Accessed 6 May 2019. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21533/epiphany.v7i2.104.g104>
- Mamo, Plato. “On Evil...” *Humanist Perspectives*, Autumn 2018, p. 13+. *Academic OneFile*, <http://link.galegroup.com.lib-proxy.sdsu.edu/apps/doc/A561590904/AONE?u=san96005&sid=AONE&xid=f698b3bd>. Accessed 20 June 2019.

- O'Brien, Justin, translator. "The Myth of Sisyphus." *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*, by Albert Camus, Vintage Books, 1991, pp. 1-124.
- Owen, Wilfred. "Dulce Et Decorum Est." *Poetry Foundation*, Poetry Foundation, www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46560/dulce-et-decorum-est.
- Reyes, Miles. (2017). *Waste and War*. Unpublished manuscript, San Diego State University.
- Royde-Smith, John Graham, and Dennis E. Showalter. "World War I." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 7 June 2019, www.britannica.com/event/World-War-I/Killed-wounded-and-missing.
- Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse-Five*. London, Vintage, 1969.









Splice

The Undergraduate Research Journal of the SDSU College of Arts and Letters



ISBN: 978-1-938537-14-1
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY
PRESS JOURNALS DIVISION
\$14.95

