Sylff Association

Voices

from the Sylff Community

June 2018 | Vol. 6 | www.sylff.org

About the Sylff Association Program

The Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund (Sylff) is a global fellowship program for graduate students in the humanities and social sciences at 69 universities in 44 countries aimed at nurturing leaders who will initiate action to transcend differences and address increasingly complex issues confronting contemporary society. The Sylff Association was launched in August 2017 to create a single, more closely identifiable community among all Sylff stakeholders. Its aims are to support academic advancement and leadership development among the more than 16,000 students who have received fellowships to date and to encourage networking and the sharing of knowledge within the Sylff community.

We Want to Hear Your "Voice"

Voices from the Sylff Community, containing articles written by Sylff fellows and other Sylff Association members and uploaded on the Sylff website, is published on a nonregular basis for distribution within and outside the Sylff community. We are eager to learn about the academic achievements and social initiatives of all fellows. Please send YOUR contributions to the Sylff Association secretariat (sylff@tkfd.or.jp) to be shared through the Sylff website and *Voices* booklet.

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Voices

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June 2018 | Vol. 6 | www.sylff.org

Preface

I am delighted to present our sixth *Voices* booklet containing articles about the research and social engagement activities of Sylff fellows around the world. Sylff is a fellowship program aimed at nurturing leaders who recognize and respect differences in culture and values and who work for the common good of humankind in the face of increasingly complex problems confronting modern society, such as those resulting from differences between states, religions, and ethnic groups.

The Sylff Association was launched in 2017 in commemoration of Sylff's thirtieth anniversary to bring closer together the over 16,000 current and graduated fellows, the steering committee members at 69 Sylff institutions, and the staff members of the Nippon Foundation (donor) and the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research (secretariat). The Association creates a single identify and vision for all Sylff stakeholders, facilitating face-to-face encounters and the sharing of knowledge and experience within the Sylff community.

The many "voices" in this special issue are articles that were uploaded on the Sylff website between the second half of 2016 and the first half of 2018. Of the 25 articles in this issue, 17 are the outgrowth of support programs offered through the Sylff Association; six programs are available today, and another is currently being developed. I hope that many more fellows will take advantage of the opportunities available for additional support and deepen their engagement with the Sylff community. Seven more articles are those submitted voluntarily by fellows—the highest number for a *Voices* booklet to date. I always enjoy hearing about fellows' achievements in academia and society, and I hope others will also actively share their insights so that we can all learn what is required of effective leadership in addressing society's many problems

The choice of what we do with our Association membership is up to each one of us. I hope you will make a commitment to enriching your Sylff experience and to working closely with fellow members to make the Sylff Association a truly dynamic movement facilitating positive change in society.

June 2018

Yohei Sasakawa
Chairman of the Sylff Association
Chairman of the Nippon Foundation

Voices from the

Sylff Community

June 2018
Vol.6

Contents

Sylff Leadership Initiatives

Sylff Research Abroad

Across the Community

2016–17 in Pictures

May 7, 2018

Building a Closer Network of Socially Engaged Leaders

Sanae Oda
Sylff Association Secretariat

The executive director of the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research–the Sylff Association secretariat–reaffirms the Sylff program's founding vision and urges all to become active members of the Sylff community.

* * *

This special issue of *Voices from the Sylff Community* (volume 6) highlights the many new initiatives that have been launched to commemorate Sylff's thirtieth anniversary in 2017. Having been closely involved in the program since its very inception, I am happy to see how Sylff has grown into an important fellowship program that has helped nurture leaders around the world.

Some of the most prestigious international fellowships three decades ago—such as the Fulbright and Rhodes Scholarships—were national-scale programs that offered outstanding foreign students an opportunity to spend time in the country of the fellowship provider and gain a deeper appreciation of the country's customs and values.

The guiding principles behind the launch of the Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund were similarly centered on supporting the development of future leaders. But rather than focusing on Japan—the country of the donor—Sylff sought to cultivate respect for diversity. Mr. Ryoichi Sasakawa, the late founder of the Nippon Foundation, was keen on nurturing leaders who would work for the common good of all humankind, transcending differences in religion, culture, ethnicity, political systems, and levels of economic development. So Sylff endowments were donated to universities marked by dynamic growth and a diverse, open-minded student body, regardless of the institution's country, size, or history. Sylff administrators were asked to select fellows not according to a uniform, global standard but on the basis who, in their minds, were most likely to bridge narrow differences and make a positive contribution to their respective communities, regions, and countries.

Nippon Foundation founder Ryoichi Sasakawa, right, with Sylff fellows at Leipzig University in May 1992.

The first institution to receive a Sylff endowment of US$1 million was the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. Today, 69 institutions in 44 countries have become members of the Sylff community, providing fellowships with income generated from investing their respective Sylff funds. The amount generated by investing $1 million may have been sizable 30 years ago, especially for developing countries, but as living standards rose with the growth of their economies, the fellowship amount, regrettably, is no longer regarded as being particularly generous. Some universities have been able to overcome this problem by skillfully retaining and reinvesting their Sylff income to expand their capital more than eightfold; they are now able to disburse hundreds of thousands of dollars in Sylff fellowships each year.

The difficulty of generating sufficient investment income has been compounded by the Lehman crisis and the low interest rates that have prevailed since then. As a result, the amount provided as fellowships has dropped markedly at around half of all Sylff institutions, further eroding Sylff's competitiveness. To break this vicious cycle, the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research (known as the Tokyo Foundation before spring 2018) has—in consultation and partnership with the Nippon Foundation—devised a means of disbursing a guaranteed amount each year to students at Sylff universities. Under this "new financial scheme," the Sylff funds of participating institutions will be pooled and invested by the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research, and fellowships will be provided directly to graduate students nominated by the steering committees.

When we surveyed the many fellowships available three decades ago, we found that while many government and corporate scholarships existed to support stu-

Sylff and NF-JLEP Association members at the April 2018 gathering in Tokyo to commemorate the launch of the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research.

dents in the natural sciences, few offered funding for students in the humanities and social sciences. This was another factor behind the decision to direct Sylff fellowships to graduate students in these fields, especially those undertaking research from an international, interdisciplinary perspective.

What qualities do we seek in a Sylff fellow? There is no single answer to this question, as the type of leader society needs will invariably change with the times. While academic excellence is an important asset, it alone is no guarantee of leadership potential. What we look for is an ability to navigate the increasingly complex and interconnected problems confronting modern society; to understand and respect differences in culture and values; and to work for the common good of humankind. We want each of the 69 Sylff institutions in 44 countries to identify future leaders best suited to addressing the issues faces by their respective communities and regions. We have, accordingly, asked some universities to adjust their selection policies in line with this basic aim. Sylff is not a needs-based scholarship, nor should it be turned into a tool to advance government policy. I hope that administrators will keep in mind Mr. Sasakawa's vision of nurturing leaders who will bridge differences and bring the world closer together as one family.

The Sylff Association was launched in August 2017 in commemoration of Sylff's thirtieth anniversary. Its members include the over 16,000 current and graduated fellows, the steering committee members at all 69 Sylff institutions, and the staff members of the Nippon Foundation (donor) and the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research (secretariat). The Association creates a single identify for all Sylff stakeholders, and I hope that we will forge even closer ties in the years ahead.

Being chosen a Sylff fellow therefore automatically confers membership in the Association and eligibility to apply for the many support programs the Association offers. The secretariat is now busy developing additional programs and inviting applications. I hope everyone will become an active member of our Association, and by this I mean not just as a recipient of support but—in keeping with Sylff's founding vision—also by offering to support others, either financially or in the area of their expertise.

I hope we can grow into a more closely knit Sylff community, sharing our knowledge and skills to build a world marked not by division but by understanding. I look forward to hearing about your research and social engagement activities through our online communication tools, as well as in person whenever you are in Tokyo, so that we can work together to make the Sylff Association a truly valuable network of socially engaged leaders.

Sylff Support Programs

The Sylff Association offers continuing support to promote fellows' academic advancement and development as leaders, as well as to encourage networking. These programs enable fellows to fully tap the resources of the global Sylff community, facilitating the realization of the Sylff mission. Upon completion of each project period, fellows are asked to submit reports summarizing their activities, some of which have been expanded into the articles found in this booklet. The articles about SPG, LANS, and SDRF are by the first recipients of those respective grants, and they are illustrative of the kind of projects the secretariat hopes to support in the future.

The Association secretariat is exploring ways to enhance these programs and develop new ones based on comments provided by fellows. Please visit the Sylff website (www.sylff.org) regularly and check for updates regarding Sylff support programs.

Sylff Project Grant (SPG)

The Sylff Project Grant is intended to support fellows who are actively and deeply committed to helping resolve issues confronting contemporary society. This grant supports innovative social-impact projects led by Sylff fellows on a larger scale than Sylff Leadership Initiatives (SLI) and that can be sustained, enhanced, and expanded over time.

Local Association Networking Support (LANS)

LANS facilitates the organization of gatherings and other activities by groups of Sylff alumni, including local Sylff associations. Groups of five or more fellows and/or alumni from the same institution can apply for a maximum of US$5,000 per gathering to cover the long-distance transportation costs of participating fellows.

Sylff Disaster Relief Fund (SDRF)

SDRF supports relief activities led by Sylff fellows in the wake of large-scale natu-

ral disasters occurring in the vicinity of Sylff institutions. The Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research donates US$50,000 per incident and pools donations from other Sylff Association members.

Sylff Leadership Initiatives (SLI)

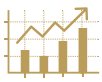
SLI supports Sylff fellows wishing to undertake social action projects or to organize a forum, conference, seminar, or workshop addressing social issues. Up to US$10,000 is awarded per project. Participation of nonfellows under the initiative of Sylff fellows is also welcomed.

Sylff Research Abroad (SRA)

SRA supports academic research related to a doctoral dissertation conducted in a foreign country at an institution of higher learning or equivalent organization. Applicants are limited to PhD students, and master's students are encouraged to apply when they have proceeded to a doctoral program.

Sylff Leaders Workshop

The Leaders Workshop provides opportunities for intensive intercultural group learning and leadership enhancement based on the scenario-planning approach. The workshop—intended for researchers and practitioners with substantial expertise and experience—will initially be held in Japan, with participants being invited to weeklong sessions in fall 2018 and spring 2019.



Post-Doctoral Fellowship (under development)

Those who recently earned doctoral degrees will be given an annual stipend to allow them to deepen and broaden their research and prepare for a career in academia or public policy.

May 9, 2018

Delivering 3D-Printed Prosthetic Solutions in the Philippines

An Interview with Keio Fellow Yutaka Tokushima

Keita Sugai
Sylff Association Secretariat

Sylff Project Grant (SPG) is a new support program launched in September 2017. The program awards grants of up to $100,000 to support projects led by Sylff fellows with the aim of contributing to the resolution of a social issue. Selection criteria favor projects that take an innovative, sustainable approach and have high potential for social impact. Grantees must personify the Sylff mission and demonstrate the kind of leadership and commitment needed to spearhead social change.

In March 2018, the first grant was awarded to Yutaka Tokushima, recipient of a 2016–17 Sylff fellowship at Keio University's Shonan Fujisawa Campus. In the following overview and interview, we profile the project's leader, his previous accomplishments as a Sylff fellow, and his plans for translating those achievements into an enterprise with sustained social impact.

* * *

Overview

Yutaka Tokushima is a doctoral student at Keio University specializing in fabrication design. Hoping to use his expertise for the good of society, Tokushima initiated a project aimed at leveraging digital technology to provide affordable prosthetic legs to low-income individuals in the Philippines.

Owing to dietary issues, diabetes is a growing problem among the poor in many developing countries, and when patients are poorly informed about their condition and its control, the complications can lead to amputation of the lower extremities. Unable to work, amputees typically sink deeper into poverty. A conventional artificial limb, which must be assembled by highly skilled artisans from multiple parts and a variety of materials, can cost anywhere between $3,000 and

$9,000 in the Philippines. For someone subsisting on less than $400 a year, such a purchase is unthinkable. Yet an artificial limb would allow many of these amputees to find work and support themselves.

In an effort to surmount these critical cost obstacles, Tokushima developed a system that uses 3D printing and machine learning to fabricate prosthetic legs entirely from plastic. The process yields dramatic savings, first of all, by eliminating the need for expensive materials. In addition, the application of a 3D printing system using software with machine-learning capabilities greatly reduces the need for advanced professional skills in the fabrication process. As a result, artificial legs can be created at a small fraction of the cost of conventional prostheses, putting them within reach of low-income amputees in developing countries.

A 3D-printed prosthetic leg prototype and 3D printer (right).

Next, Tokushima set up a company, Instalimb, which is currently conducting clinical trials of 3D-printed prosthetic legs in Metro Manila. If all goes well, he plans to launch a social business in the form of a joint venture and begin providing 3D-printed prosthetic solutions on a commercial basis in Manila sometime in 2019. The next step will be to explore ways of expanding that business model to sparsely populated areas and outlying islands, where cost and accessibility hurdles are particularly high.

Tokushima believes he has a mission to apply his expertise in fabrication design to help better the lives of people in the developing world. He also believes that, in order to ensure lasting social impact, assistance from the developed world must focus on giving local citizens the means to tackle their communities' issues themselves.

Interview

In the following interview, Yutaka Tokushima spoke with me about his goals and aspirations for the project recently awarded an SPG. (Interview conducted by Keita Sugai on March 26, 2018, at the offices of the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research.)

— What made you decide you to undertake the development of a 3D-printed prosthetic solution?

Yutaka Tokushima, left, with program officer Keita Sugai.

YUTAKA TOKUSHIMA It all started when I was working in Bohol, in the Philippines, with the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers [JOCV] under the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

The digital fabrication technology already existed. I was wondering if that technology could be used to help people in Bohol help themselves. I realized that 3D printing was a groundbreaking technology that could give low-income individuals access to powerful fabrication tools even on a tiny island like Bohol.

— *Why did you choose Metro Manila as your market?*

TOKUSHIMA I've always thought that I'd like to do something to contribute to development in Southeast Asia, and when I joined the JOCV, I was sent to Bohol. As an outgrowth of my work there, I had the idea of leveraging digital fabrication technology to help the poor via social entrepreneurship. I chose Metro Manila because it's a big city with a lot of poverty and inadequate access to urban services, and because there's a widespread feeling that something needs to be done about its social problems. In other words, it was the place that offered the best opportunities for this kind of social enterprise. For me, a key challenge is striking a balance between philanthropy and business viability, and Metro Manila seemed like the best location from that viewpoint.

— We know that you've already conducted some trials on a limited basis. What's been the response from your subjects?

TOKUSHIMA We've had a great response. I remember particularly an elderly man whose leg had been amputated seven years earlier. He couldn't wait to get back to his job as a cabinetmaker, and his wife was so happy she was crying. It was truly gratifying.

— So, what are your short-term, medium-term, and long-term objectives?

TOKUSHIMA This year I'm going to continue usability testing to perfect the product, while establishing a business model that can be applied to most third-world cities. I'm also going to make preparations for the launch of my venture business. And I'm going to conduct a feasibility study to gauge the possibility of developing a separate business model geared to remote areas and islands. Medium term, I want to begin offering prosthetic solutions throughout the Philippines within the next three years. Beyond that, I hope to use what I've learned in the Philippines to expand to other developing and semi-industrialized countries.

— Do you have any ideas about what you might do next?

TOKUSHIMA I know that I want to pursue this approach of using new technology to empower developing nations. The traditional model of development assistance was based on a vertical relationship. The donor countries brought in their own materials, equipment, and know-how, and when something broke down or wore out, it was often difficult to fix it. The trend in international cooperation nowadays is toward a horizontal relationship between donor and recipient. There's a growing emphasis on providing technology that empowers people in the developing world to solve their own problems. I'd like to be a part of that.

— Is there any message you'd like to convey to other Sylff Association members reading this interview?

TOKUSHIMA Sylff's goals are very consistent with the trend toward horizontal cooperation that I was talking about. The Sylff mission centers on transcending differences and joining together to address the issues confronting society. It's an honor to be selected for a Sylff Project Grant. For others around the world who are eager to pursue similar projects, I want to say that we're lucky to be living in a time

when there are people who will give us a chance. I want to make the most of that opportunity and provide an example for others by strengthening cooperative ties and making a real difference in the world.

May 10, 2018

JU-Sylff LANS Meet 2018

Report compiled by Sujaan Mukherjee, Sritama Chatterjee, and Shounak Adhikari
Jadavpur University

Local Association Networking Support (LANS) is a new support program intended to facilitate the organization of gatherings and other activities by groups of Sylff alumni, including local Sylff associations. Groups of five or more fellows and alumni from the same institution can apply to the Sylff Association for a maximum of US$5,000 per gathering to cover the long-distance transportation costs of participating fellows. This program was launched in September 2017, and the Jadavpur University Sylff Association (JU-Sylff Association) was the first to take advantage of it. In March 2018 the association organized a two-day event in Kolkata, India, inviting JU-Sylff fellows from Britain, Ireland, and other parts of India. The following is an introduction to the JU-Sylff Association and a report on the meeting organized by it.

* * *

INTRODUCTION

The JU-Sylff Association was delighted to learn about Local Association Networking Support (LANS), the newly introduced Sylff support program. We felt that the grant recognized and encouraged the strong spirit of group work that the JU-Sylff Association has always upheld. LANS offered an excellent opportunity to bring together fellows, graduated and current, to discuss their own individual research and brainstorm over collective goals to address social, cultural, and environmental issues that concern us all in different ways.

Activities of the JU-Sylff Association

It was in 2005 that the JU-Sylff Program launched its association with the generous support of the Tokyo Foundation's Sylff Network Program (SNP). For the first three years the JU-Sylff Association was reliant on the SNP for financial support, but for the last 10 years we have continued our activities unabated with contribu-

The LANS Meet in progress.

tions from Sylff fellows and financial support from the university and the Sylff Steering Committee.

Every week the researchers—current and, if they are in town, graduated fellows—come for Monday meetings to discuss research, activities of the association, and larger sociopolitical issues with Professor Joyashree Roy, the project director. Depending on our areas of research, we are often prompted to get in touch with a graduated fellow in some part of the world who can help us answer questions raised in our work or give us a lead as to how our work can be translated into some meaningful action within our society.

About once a month the association organizes the JU-Sylff Lecture Series, where academics and activists, under the JU-Sylff banner, engage with Sylff and non-Sylff students and researchers of the university. Intense and focused discussions follow, as the lectures bring together a small group of interested researchers. These lectures are frequently delivered by graduated Sylff fellows, further providing a platform to interact and exchange ideas. The JU-Sylff Annual Newsletter, Fellows, also provides a useful forum for current and graduated researchers to discuss their work.

Our Vision for LANS Meet 2018

When the LANS grant was announced, we saw an opportunity to bring together in the same physical space graduated and current fellows, as well as mentors, to discuss our work and imagine ways in which our and Sylff's larger goals can be achieved through teamwork and capacity building. Interaction with graduated fellows and mentors helps us develop our ideas and become better researchers, but it is largely limited to either email correspondence or personal meetings with those who happen to be in the city. The LANS Meet could also provide a platform for current and graduated fellows to showcase their extracurricular skills. JU-Sylff fellows who are currently working in different institutions across the world are doing outstanding work. We felt that the opportunity to bring them together, allowing to share their diverse and inspiring stories, could give us fresh energy to pursue our goals and ambitions and to think bigger.

The meet was conceptualized and organized by all participating Sylff fellows, but it would not have been possible without the special commitment of and team building done by Ritajyoti Bandyopadhyay, Payoshni Mitra, Purbasha Auddy, Sudeshna Dutta, Sujaan Mukherjee, and Sritama Chatterjee, with invaluable guidance from Professor Roy.

DAY ONE: PRESENCE AND CONFLUENCE

On March 21, graduated and current fellows began trickling into Jadavpur University well before the scheduled time of the inaugural LANS Meet. They greeted each other enthusiastically, reminiscing with old colleagues and making friends with new faces. We were honored to have with us Ms. Mari Suzuki, Sylff Association, director for leadership development of the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research, who came especially to be a part of this special event. Her presence offered great encouragement to the fellows, and we were able to understand clearly that the goals we had set for ourselves were indeed in harmony with the larger Sylff mission and goals: to identify and support leaders for the future.

Apart from the fellows, many mentors of the JU-Sylff Program were present for the meet, including Professor Emerita Supriya Chaudhuri, Professor Amlan Dasgupta, Professor Samantak Das, Professor Paromita Chakravarti, Professor Sibashish Chatterjee, and Professor Kavita Panjabi. Members of the JU-Sylff Steering Committee attending the meet were Mr. Gour Krishna Pattanayak and Dr. Sanjay Gopal Sarkar, finance officer and joint registrar of Jadavpur University, respectively. The mentors and members of the Steering Committee have been with

the Sylff community right from the program's inception in 2003, when Jadavpur University was awarded a Sylff endowment.

In the august company of the Sylff fraternity, the latest issue of *Fellows* was introduced by Ms. Suzuki. The eleventh issue of *Fellows* addresses questions of academics' role within and outside the walls of academia and their responsibility toward society at large. From this year, the newsletter will feature a guest editor from among graduated fellows, so as to increase the space for involvement and exchange.

Fellows' Presentations and Group Discussion

Events were set in motion by Professor Roy, JU-Sylff project director. With Professor Chaudhuri chairing the opening session, fellows made brief presentations about their work; they had encapsulated their work in one slide each. With the same passion that had driven the fellows during their research under Sylff—and stayed with them afterward—they spoke about their work: their goals, their challenges, and their successes. They were also encouraged to think beyond their completed projects and speak to the assembled gathering about their dreams. What more did they want to do, not just individually but through teamwork?

On the one hand, the fellows spoke about the benefits that the Sylff program at Jadavpur University had offered them: through Monday meetings, progress report workshops, and the lecture series, it helped them structure their research and think beyond their own disciplines, indeed beyond the walls of academia. Many of the JU-Sylff fellows have incorporated into their work a strong sense of activism, as they try to make a positive impact on the society of which they are a part. This has happened at both the macro and micro levels, but it becomes evident from each fellow's career that their leadership skills are growing from strength to strength.

As the discussion gathered momentum, new ideas and areas of common interest emerged. Among such areas are women's rights and gender studies; studies of marginalized castes and communities; urban studies; sports; documentation and archive building; and the performing arts. The fellows decided that the best way to map these idea clusters was to put them in visual form. This was achieved by writing down ideas on sticky notes and arranging them on a whiteboard. What it reflected was how, by putting the individual voices together, a holistic idea of social development automatically emerged. The next step, naturally, was how to put these into action.

Capacity Building

The dialogue on capacity building, which was one of the initial goals of LANS Meet 2018, began. In keeping with the theme of the latest issue of *Fellows*, the discussion evolved around the ways in which the research that is conducted under the Sylff program could be disseminated in an efficient way so as to positively impact society at large. It was suggested that the JU-Sylff Association should focus on outreach. A number of ideas were put forth: along with the existing lecture series, a new Capacity Building Workshop Series was proposed, where Sylff fellows and mentors could offer workshops for the Jadavpur University student community on various skill sets, such as text editing, the ethics of fieldwork, and the use of archives. Potential plans for JU-Sylff LANS Meet 2019 were discussed in the hope that LANS will become an annual event in the JU-Sylff Association's calendar.

Sylff fellows who are currently based in semi- or nonurban institutions suggested that the association could take upon itself a project to introduce students attending college in such areas to the idea of higher education and research as a viable career path. All fellows agreed that such dialogues are essential and should be the responsibility of fellows who are associated with a platform like Sylff.

Fellows who have worked with marginalized groups or with human subjects in the hope of finding solutions to the problems they face in society proposed that for the next LANS Meet (2019), a dialogue could be set up between other Sylff fellows and mentors and the individuals with whom they have interacted during the course of their research. This would not only allow researchers under the Sylff program to gain invaluable insights into the work done by their peers; it would also help give back to these communities some part of the knowledge generated through the addition of interpretive value by the researcher they have worked with.

Sylff Support Programs

Ms. Suzuki offered clarity in her description of the existing and new Sylff support programs, encouraging the JU-Sylff fellows to think big and plan ahead before applying for them. Fellows whose applications have been successful and those whose applications have not discussed how to write such proposals. Rimple Mehta spoke at length about her process. Sreerupa Sengupta remarked that what she found most valuable during the application process was that at each stage the reviewers at Sylff pushed her to think harder about the practicalities of her plan, while answering questions and informing her where her application could be improved. The Sylff Project Grant was mentioned, and ideas were exchanged about possible projects that might be supported by it.

Evening Gathering

Ms. Suzuki, Professor Roy, and the Sylff fellows made their way to the Global Change Program office on campus, where an informal cultural program took place. Fellows were able to showcase their extracurricular talents, as they conducted theater workshops, sang, and played music for everyone's enjoyment.

The first day's events ended on a note of great optimism. The fellows were energized, having connected with former peers and met new friends.

Informal evening session.

DAY TWO: SOCIAL ACTION PROGRAM

Visit to Premananda Memorial Leprosy Hospital

As part of the JU-Sylff Association's Social Action Program, current fellows visit Premananda Memorial Leprosy Hospital each year. While this is always a fulfilling experience for the fellows and for the resident patients at the hospital, this year was exceptional. Unlike other years, the association linked the Social Action Program with the LANS Meet. This meant that graduated fellows, who had organized and visited the hospital during their time under Sylff, were able to revisit in a large group. Adding to that, we were honored to have with us Ms. Suzuki. Shounak Adhikari (MA, 2017) coordinated this year's Social Action Program. Graduated and current fellows came forward enthusiastically to make this event a success.

The association bus reached the hospital at 11 am. After an opening address by Ms. Suzuki, Dr. Helen Roberts, who is superintendent of the hospital, gave a presentation on various aspects of leprosy and the activities of the Leprosy Mission Trust of India (TLMTI), whose history goes back 143 years. She informed us about how leprosy-affected people used to gather in the graveyard that now belongs to the hospital and, watching them in pain, Reverend Premananda Sen of the Oxford Mission started a dispensary for them. This eventually turned into a hospital.

Dr. Roberts spoke about recent advances in leprosy treatment and the ways in which the disease spreads. Twice a year healthcare workers go from house to house on behalf of the Leprosy Mission Trust to find persons showing symptoms of leprosy, and due to this initiative 30 percent more cases have been detected in the last two years compared to previous years. The hospital has started producing custom-made shoes for leprosy patients, which are now also delivered to other hospitals throughout the state. After the presentation, Ms. Roberts interacted with the fellows and answered their questions.

Serving lunch to the resident patients.

With the contributions from the JU-Sylff fraternity, the fellows planned different aspects of the visit, including offering medical supplies to augment the hospital's stock, presenting gifts (such as board games) to the patients, and decorating the hospital wards using stickers. A special lunch was also arranged for the patients.

Upon arriving, the fellows distributed the gifts and handed the medical supplies to the hospital. A popular film, *Tiger Zinda Hai*, was screened. The film is chosen

every year based on the preferences expressed by the patients. It is usually a popular Bollywood film that makes a positive impact on the morale of the residents. During an intermission, the special lunch was served by the fellows. The hospital staff took the fellows to the factory where the special shoes are made and demonstrated their craft.

While the patients were watching the movie, the fellows went to the wards and decorated the walls with floral stickers. All the participants, including Ms. Suzuki, joined in the decoration. When the patients came for lunch, they were delighted to find the decorations. All the fellows personally interacted and spoke with every patient. Some patients returned to watch the movie after lunch, while others stayed in their wards for routine checkup and physiotherapy. Meanwhile staff members, doctors, and Sylff fellows had their lunch together.

Graduated fellows decorating the hospital walls.

After the day's proceedings, the team departed from the hospital, looking forward to the next visit to Premananda Memorial Leprosy Hospital and hoping that, in the following years, the event will be as much a success as it was during LANS Meet 2018.

LOOKING AHEAD

It came as a happy, although not unexpected, surprise that fellows began writing their ideas for next year's LANS Meet shortly after the inaugural gathering on April 21 and 22, 2018. The JU-Sylff Association has created a space where such ideas are

Group photograph of LANS Meet participants.

to be stored for future reference, so that the planning for the next proposed LANS Meet can accommodate an even richer array of ideas.

After the success of the first LANS Meet at Jadavpur University, we feel that in subsequent such gatherings more ambitious plans may be brought to bear fruit, as we hope to involve not only a greater number of JU-Sylff fellows but also others who are involved with the research that is being conducted under the program at Jadavpur University and to take the mission of Sylff beyond the walls of the university, and indeed of academia, to ensure a sustainable future for society at large.

April 26, 2018

The Many Hands of Humanitarian Aid

September 2017 Mexico Earthquake Relief Activities

Fernanda Herrera Lopez
El Colegio de México

Fernanda Herrera Lopez is a Sylff fellow currently enrolled in a PhD program at El Colegio de México (Colmex). She was in Mexico City on the day of the magnitude 7.1 earthquake that struck on September 19, 2017. She is a member of the Colmex 19S Committee, which has led relief activities after the earthquake with support from the Sylff Disaster Relief Fund. Fernanda shares her experience and learnings.

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Up until last year, September 19 was a date that most Mexicans associated with the year 1985. In the early hours of that day in 1985, a magnitude 8.1 earthquake struck Mexico City, killing thousands of people and bringing together millions more. From that day on, citizens have conducted annual earthquake drills, both for safety preparedness and to remember and honor those who lost their lives.

September 19, 2017, was no exception. At exactly 11:00 am, students, professors, and workers of El Colegio de México (Colmex) heard the seismic alert and evacuated the facilities, as did all the other students and workers in neighboring areas. We then went back to our daily lives without knowing that the next couple of days would be spent away from the classrooms, scrabbling through rubble and helping people in improvised shelters.

The earthquake reached Mexico City at 1:14 pm. Most of us were having lunch in the school cafeteria when we felt the ground shake beneath us. Surprisingly, the alert did not go off right away; we later learned that our proximity to the epicenter in Morelos—just under 120 km away—meant that the warning system could not detect the seismic movement in advance, and it was only as we were leaving the building that the alarm was activated. Once outside Colmex, we heard rumors that some buildings had collapsed, that there were fires due to gas leaks, and that people were trapped inside their homes and offices. Later that day, we found out that the

rumors were true; more than 40 buildings had fallen to the ground, taking with them 225 human lives.

The help was immediate: People rushed to pharmacies and bought first aid supplies and water for the survivors. All construction retailing companies donated or sold out basic rescue equipment like shovels, carts, mallets, heavy-duty gloves, and hard hats. People who could not afford to buy medical or construction supplies donated their time and effort, helping remove rubble from rescue sites and preparing and delivering warm meals to volunteers and rescuers. Citizens fought day and night to rescue trapped people and animals. If someone got tired, there was always another volunteer willing to step in. If someone lost hope, there were words of encouragement.

International aid was also prompt, and Mexico welcomed rescuers from El Salvador, Israel, Japan, Panama, Spain, and the United States. Even though we knew that the chances of finding survivors grew slimmer with each passing day, we all kept despair at a distance and focused on assisting the rescue teams as much as we could. Finding people who did not survive discouraged all, but we soon learned from the Japanese that death was also to be met with respect, and we joined them whenever they bowed to the victims.

Sylff Colmex Earthquake Relief Fund

Two days after the earthquake, we received a very kind email from the Sylff Association secretariat asking if we were all right. We told them that the Colmex community had not been tragically affected and that we were working to help those who were less fortunate than us; in fact, students, professors, and staff had managed to collect and deliver more than 10 tons of supplies and daily necessities to communities in Mexico City and other neighboring states. The Sylff Association then offered to start a fund-raising campaign among its members to help with the relief activities. We were happy to hear this and, subsequently, to receive very generous donations from the Sylff Association, namely, the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research, the Jadavpur University Sylff Association, and Belgrade University Sylff fellow Marina Stetic. This reinforced our notion that the Sylff network has strong ties based on solidarity and brotherhood and that the interaction among its members goes beyond the mere generation of knowledge and the transmission of ideas.

The Relief Fund meant that we could widen our scope of help, but at the same time, it brought with it a greater responsibility to choose and direct the resources. Bearing this in mind, Colmex created the 19S Committee, composed of two full-

Some of the members of the 19S Committee.

time professors, Dr. Sandra Kuntz and Dr. Satomi Miura; Laura Valverde, director for Student Affairs; Colmex treasurer Hugo Ortega; Dr. Laura Flamand, vice president of Academic Affairs; and two Sylff members, Erick Serna and myself. Together, we agreed that we would target three underprivileged communities in Mexico City, Morelos, and Oaxaca. This unanimous decision was reached after reviewing several proposals and holding meetings with project representatives and locals. One of our main concerns was that the initially abundant help was slowly running out, yet the survivors had not even managed to make a partial recovery.

Our choice of relief items to purchase was based on the following reasoning: People needed medicine, because the precarious conditions in which they live promote gastrointestinal and eye diseases. Survivors also required winter items like jackets, warm sleeping bags, and tents to deal with the cold, since many of them still lived in temporary shelters.

Participant Accounts

Erick Serna, a 2016 Sylff fellow at El Colegio de México, traveled alongside five Colmex students and Professor Satomi Miura to San Mateo del Mar, Oaxaca, on February 10, 2018. The group delivered 850 food packages, 800 medicine kits, 44 tents, 46 sleeping bags, and 35 winter jackets for men, women, and children. The following is his account.

"We traveled all Friday night and Saturday morning. The truck with the relief items arrived first. By the time we got there, the women of the community—all of

The relief items reached San Gregorio.

them from indigenous groups—had unloaded most of the load. The language they spoke was Huave. Most of the women were accompanied by their children, some of whom were babies. CAMI, a center created by local women organized the delivery of the items. While traveling across San Mateo, we noticed the context of poverty in which the community lives. The town relies on fishing, yet such economic activity is not enough to fulfill the daily needs of its inhabitants.

"After visiting San Mateo del Mar, Huejotongo, and San Gregorio, I had many contradictory feelings. I felt grateful to the Sylff Association for allowing me to continue doing social labor. But I learned that sometimes it is very difficult to have a meaningful impact given the social and cultural context in which some communities live. Nevertheless, I found that a little help is better than none, and I hope that we can find more reasons to continue helping our brothers."

I (Fernanda Herrera Lopez), a 2016 fellow at El Colegio de México, accompanied two Colmex students and three staff members to San Gregorio, Mexico City, on February 5, 2018. We delivered 120 food packages and 32 winter jackets for men, women, and children.

Erick Serna in Huejotongo.

We arrived in San Gregorio early in the afternoon. Two locals guided us through narrow unpaved streets—so narrow, in fact, that we had to leave the vans behind and carry the food packages ourselves. The first community we visited had already begun the demolition of destroyed houses. We delivered daily necessities to villagers and then headed to other communities that were more difficult to reach.

My guide was a civil defense expert. He pointed to a sign painted on the front window of a house and explained its meaning to me: the "6" to the left indicated the number of people who used to live in the house, the "0" on top was the number of people who died on September 19, the "0" on the bottom was the number of

animals that lived there, and the "D" to the right indicated that the house was to be demolished. Once I learned this information, I could not help but feel a great sadness whenever we saw a number different than "0" marked on the upper part of a sign.

Since most of the houses in the area were deemed unsuitable for living, the local authorities had asked their inhabitants to relocate elsewhere, but some people continued living there. They explained that they had no money to pay rent elsewhere and that all they ever possessed was right there, even if it had been reduced to rubble. Families appeared to be in greater need than they were in September, because local businesses and factories had closed down due to the earthquake. This meant that the survivors had an extra adversity to face: unemployment. In spite all of this, people continue to have high hopes for the future. I think that, by easing their burdens in the short term, the aid that the Sylff Association kindly provided will allow them to recover.

The sign painted on the window.

Lessons

The lessons we have taken from the earthquake and the delivery of the relief items go well beyond anything we could have learned in the classrooms. In particular, we found that, despite Colmex's full commitment to improving the social, economic, and environmental conditions of Mexico through theoretical and applied research, there is still much to learn from people whose voices we had not heard before. We are indebted to the Sylff Association for providing invaluable help to the survivors of the earthquake and for bringing us closer to them. We hope that joint efforts like these will have lasting impacts on all the agents involved.

February 22, 2018

Workshops on the Socio-Analysis of Oppression

Melinda Kovai
Eötvös Loránd University

Melinda Kovai, a 2009 Sylff fellow at Eötvös Loránd University in Hungary, and her team members have recently completed their SLI project, which took them over one and a half years, to address the problem of social disparity strongly linked to negative notions toward the "Gypsy." The project incorporated the idea of reflection on one's own social position to encourage understanding of different social groups, which contributed to the uniqueness of the project. The training materials, the final project product, have been already integrated into two courses at universities in Hungary. The project members hope that the materials will be utilized in many educational settings not only in Hungary but also in neighboring countries faced with similar social challenges. They are determined to keep working on resolving the issue and extending the impact to society.

* * *

Background

In Hungary, primarily due to their disadvantaged social position, the Roma people are by far the greatest subjects to racism. In public discourse, the "Gypsy" is inseparably bound up with such negative notions as poverty, permanent unemployment, benefits, informal economy, and crime and, more generally, with fears related to existential insecurities. In most social domains, the "Gypsy" is intertwined with a certain inferior class position and social marginality, such as exclusion from or taking the most inferior realms of the formal labor market, with possibilities severely restricted by manifold exclusive processes. The Gypsy-Hungarian ethnic distinction is in many cases a manifestation of class difference, since class positions are heavily ethnicized in many areas of life, in villages and town districts, and in educational and other institutions. While the lower middle and middle classes are associated with majority Hungarians, marginalization from the labor market is associated with the Roma. Everyday social conflicts are hence often experienced as

confrontations between different ethnically interpreted class positions, where the "Gypsy" appears as a menace to the middle-class normativity of the majority.

A mother and son of the Roma people, commonly known as Gypsies.

Our team of trainers comprised social scientists whose academic work focuses on social inequalities, public education, and the Roma communities. The project idea arose from a shared urge to engage in activities that have a more direct and palpable impact on the lives of the communities we work with. Therefore, this project was also a way to experiment and to elaborate methods of intervention and ways of committed political engagement that feel right and adequate to us, to our habitus. We held four one-day and four two-day workshops for six groups of university students training to become public-sector professionals and for two groups of Roma university students. Half of the workshops took place in Budapest and the other half in other big cities. In the workshops, participants were invited to work with and reflect on their own social position, their social roles, and their class position. Our workshops are based on the idea that reflection on one's own social position can help to better understand the behavior of other social groups and encourage collective action and solidarity across groups. Recognizing the social interests and conflicts involved in encounters with the Roma helps to identify the source of negative emotions and reveals how racism veils the real causes of conflicts.

Potential Target Groups and Specific Objectives

The main target group of our workshops is professionals who regularly encounter Roma clients as part of their professional roles. According to the literature, street-level bureaucrats are public-service professionals who represent the state by their work and, on a daily basis, make numerous small decisions in relation to the lives of their clients.[1] Typical examples of such professions are social workers, health

[1] Lipsky, Michael. *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 1980.

care professionals, and the police. In this project, we offered the trainings to university students preparing to enter these professions; in the future, we plan to approach in-service professionals as well.

The workshops address the complexity and tensions of the professional roles related to social assistance, care, and support. We spend time discussing the typical sociological and recruitment characteristics of the professions. We had to bear in mind that university students do not yet have professional casework experience, so the workshops concentrated on their past "private" minority-majority encounters (which most often happened at school) on the one hand and the motivations, desires, and fears related to the caring relationship on the other.

When working with university students, school was often an important theme: we discussed the role of schooling in social mobility, the class-specific strategies related to schooling, as well as the inequalities of the Hungarian education system, and the school's role in mitigating or reproducing inequalities.

Our other important target group consisted of young intellectuals of Roma background. In these workshops, we discussed the situation of the Roma people within the Hungarian social structure, the typical Roma roles and social phenomena (e.g., ethnically framed poverty, entrepreneurship, and widening middle class), and the constraints of upward mobility. Subsequently, the workshops addressed the tensions of harmonizing the experience of deprived homes and middle-class intellectual roles. By sharing their stories and experiences, the workshops helped young Roma intellectuals recognize the similarities in their backgrounds and challenges and hence share the "weight" of upward mobility.

The Workshops

The first part of the workshops concentrated on the social positions of the participants; they shared their memories and their private and work experiences in relation to conflicts with the Roma people. We then explored these encounters in a dramatic form, wherein participants placed themselves in the shoes of both sides and collectively explored the social constraints from which behaviors (stereotypically) associated with the "Gypsy" derive. Ideally, the recognition of com-

Melinda Kovai, team members, and other sociologists discussing the contents of the training.

mon social constraints develops a sense of solidarity and recognition of the differences of the other.

It was important to constantly respond to the social differences among participants and the corresponding differences in career choices. On the final day of the workshops for university students, we set aside time to explore their career choices in the light of their social positions and experiences. While for first-generation young intellectuals our workshops shed light on the constraints and possibilities coming with their upward mobility, for young people coming from long-standing intellectual families the training provided an opportunity to reflect on their privileges.

The following training methods were employed in the workshops:

- warm-up and energizing games
- dramatic exercises, the adaptation of the "wall of success" in particular
- storytelling: sharing experiences, which then become materials for dramatic exercises
- sociodramatic exercises and action methods: the enactment of typical situations related to ethnosocial conflicts, exploring the motivations, positions, and interests of the participants through dramatic enactment
- sharing, reflection, and discussion

The overall aims were that, by the end of the workshops, participants

- understand that society is hierarchically organized along various dimensions and that the distribution of various forms of capital (economic, cultural, and social), based on which class positions form and encounter other social determinants such as housing, gender, and ethnicity, are decisive;
- have a comprehensive idea of the structure of Hungarian society and the perspectives of people in various positions;
- have a reflective understanding of their families' and their own social positions, their mobility pathways, their career choices, and their interests, needs, demands, beliefs, values, tastes, and so forth;
- understand how society shapes personal beliefs, interests, demands, and tastes and how habitus works;
- understand how social conflicts are sparked by the clash of different habitus and how actors in higher social positions generate such conflicts according to their interests with the aim of preventing the formation of antisystemic alliances; and

- in the light of their own social positions, recognize the opportunities for social action and possible alliances with groups in different but proximate positions to form antisystemic alliances despite the differences in their positions and habitus.

Participants' Voices

At the end of the workshops, as a closure, we asked all participants to share how they enjoyed the course and which elements they liked and disliked in particular. Two weeks after the workshops, we also invited participants to anonymously fill out a detailed online feedback form. In the questionnaire, they could assess group directing, the structure of the workshop, and the tasks and activities, and they were asked to describe their positive and negative experiences and to give us suggestions for improvement. The majority of the participants gave an overall positive feedback on the training and the trainers. They highlighted that, even though it was an emotionally shocking experience, recognizing their own social position and social differences in general were the most important lesson of the workshop. In the participants' own words:

> "I engaged both intellectually and emotionally—I was deeply touched in both respects. I thought a lot about these themes in the time between the workshops. The workshops were emotionally exhausting, but they were also extremely interesting intellectually."

> "I developed a sense of social remorse. . . . I could do so many things to be more responsible socially. . . . I used to see helpers as being in a great distance from me, as being much more clever, experienced, capable people. . . . Yet they just probably took the initiative, started something, and then became good at it. . . . Next year I will volunteer at a shelter for elderly or mentally disabled people."

> "The topics broke taboos. It is painful to realize how stereotypical our thinking is."

> "I grappled with multiple feelings over a short period of time."

Based on the feedback and our own experiences, we concluded that it would be more worthwhile to organize two- or even three-day workshops for each group. One-day workshops do not provide sufficient time to process such shattering and

difficult experiences. One-day workshops were less successful as participants did not have time to open up or, to the contrary, brought in very moving stories and experiences into the group that could not be processed sufficiently and reassuringly in the given time frame. This difficulty was the most striking in the workshops held for Roma colleges. Furthermore, in the cases of both one- and two-day workshops, participants signaled to us that they would welcome more factual knowledge as well as more emphasis on practical solutions for solving conflict situations.

Citing participants:

> "The dramatic enactments were great, but I think it would be good to focus on finding some optimal solutions for these situations. This would have helped us in applying what we learned in "real-life situations."

> "You should give us more factual knowledge on the second day. What is integrated education? How was it implemented and responded to? What is the situation with integrated education now? What are the main political claims about the Roma?"

> "I was missing some frontal knowledge, as I was interested in data and practices related to [Roma] educational integration in Hungary."

Training Material, Dissemination, and Future Plans

The final output of the project is a detailed set of training materials based on the workshops. The training materials were produced with two objectives in mind. On the one hand, we would like to provide our partners with an introduction to the workshops in advance. On the other, we are planning to disseminate our methodology among university and secondary school teachers who are using action methods or are trained in social sciences. The document explicates why we think that awareness and reflection on one's own social position can tackle racist attitudes and in what ways our approach is distinctively different from "traditional" an-

Working with the Roma schoolboys.

ti-discrimination and intercultural awareness raising trainings. We describe the structure and main elements of the workshops in detail.

It perhaps indicates the success of our project that two of our partners, the Faculty of Social Work at Eötvös Loránd University and the Faculty of Psychology at the Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, integrated our training in their curriculum from 2017–2018 under the title of "Meeting with the Other" as an optional course for social worker students at the former and "Socio-analysis for Psychologists" as a mandatory course for psychology students in the latter's Intercultural Psychology program. The trainings are led by two trainers: Melinda Kovai, who is a university lecturer at both universities, and another member of our team.

According to the participants' feedback and our own evaluation, the workshops had the most tangible impact among Roma and non-Roma students enrolled in universities outside the capital. These students predominantly come from working-class families or from families in extreme deprivation. The workshops have the potential to help them not to experience their background as a source of shame but, instead, to recognize the resources in their difficult experiences and thus become professionals deeply and proudly committed to their work with socially deprived children and adults. We plan to orient our future workshops to this target group by developing a longer training in close cooperation with our partner institutions. Furthermore, we would like to begin working with professional adults and adapt the training to their needs.

The training materials are available from the following. (Please note they are written all in Hungarian.)

Szocioanalízis tematika
https://www.sylff.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Training-material_Hungarian.pdf

January 5, 2018

Own Fate: Self-Managing the Future—How to Link Academic Knowledge and Local Practice

Loretta Huszak
University of Leipzig

On September 8 and 9, 2017, five Sylff fellows organized an event aimed at promoting sustainable development in Hungary: Professor Eva Kiss, Dr. Andrea Kunsagi, Dr. Viktoria Ferenc, Dr. Viktor Oliver Lorincz, and Dr. Loretta Huszak. Mari Suzuki, director for leadership development of the Tokyo Foundation, attended the two-day event as a representative of the Sylff Association secretariat to support the fellows' initiatives. The event was significant in that many participants as well as speakers consisted of past and current Sylff fellows. This opportunity served not only to encourage cooperation between academics and local practitioners in Hungary but also to strengthen the bonds among Sylff fellows in Hungary.

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The Role of Bottom-Up Local Initiatives in Sustainable Development

Economically and ecologically sustainable development has become a universal concern. It merits the attention and action of all of us. Hungarian fellows of the Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund (Sylff) have realized that efforts are needed on a variety of fronts to promote sustainable development. Local and bottom-up initiatives have significant impact and are indispensable for sustainable development. Accordingly, more attention should be paid to them.

Post-communist civil societies, like the one in Hungary, are characterized by a lower level of participation in bottom-up initiatives by ordinary citizens.[1] Nonetheless, recent academic literature indicates that an increasing number of municipalities in Hungary possess local strategies for sustainable development or support

[1] Marc Marje Howard, *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. i.

A round-table discussion during the event, titled "Sustainability Initiated 'Bottom-Up': Is It Possible?" The participants are (from left to right): Zsolt Molnar, Andras Jakab, Balazs Hamori, Eva Deak, and Andras Takacs-Santa.

initiatives related to sustainability.[2] These initiatives are designed to use and develop the municipalities' own resources and internal potential to change society for the better.

The focus of the two-day Sylff event was on analyzing how imperative local bottom-up initiatives are to the economic, social, cultural, political, and legal development of modern societies and understanding how their sustainable development can be ensured and observed in Hungary. The first day was dedicated to academic analysis of the above themes, and the second day was a field trip to Szigetmonostor—one of the most active municipalities in Hungary, where the local administration is very much engaged in cooperation with grassroots initiatives. The object of the initiative was to facilitate a bottom-up dialogue between academics and local leaders and initiators. The chief patron of the event was Laszlo Lovasz, president of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.[3]

Conference Day at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

The first day of the initiative was an interdisciplinary forum, which took place at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest. It was dedicated to the academic analysis of sustainability and to the scientific elaboration of the role of bottom-up local initiatives in sustainable development. After the opening addresses, Andras Takacs-Santa, program director at Eotvos Lorand University Budapest, gave an opening lecture on "The need for a protective science in the light of the ecological crisis."[4] He pointed out that the imperative of sustainable development is forcing

[2] Henrietta Nagy, Tamas Toth, and Izabella Olah, "The Role of Local Markets in the Sustainable Economic Development of Hungarian Rural Areas," *Visegrad Journal on Bioeconomy and Sustainable Development*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2012): pp. 27–31. https://vua.uniag.sk/sites/default/files/27-31.pdf

[3] For a list of elected chief officers of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences see: http://mta.hu/english/elected-chief-officers-of-mta-106110

[4] For further information on Andras Takacs-Santa visit: http://tatk.elte.hu/en/staff/TakacsSantaAndras

us to think in new ways but that the way to an ecologically sustainable future is not at all yet clear. Human ecology and the sustainable way of thinking about the Earth's resources should "run out in all directions" and find their path to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences too.

Section 1 of the forum focused on "the spatial dimensions of sustainable development" with five presentations. The well-prepared speakers approached sustainability from different aspects—environmental, economic, and social—and on diverse spatial levels. They dealt with different parts of the world, from the regional to micro level: China, the Carpathian Basin, Visegrad countries, the South-Bekes microregion, and underdeveloped regions of Hungary. Taken as a whole, the presentations significantly contributed to the success of the conference and to a better understanding of the processes of sustainability on different spatial levels. After the presentations, there was a lively discussion in which the audience raised several questions.

Section 2 analyzed "the successes and anomalies in communication and their role in community generating, business, and social life." These aspects were investigated from psychological, marketing, management, and human-ecological collateral perspectives. The impact of people on their environment also prevails by numerous forms of manifestation in communication. Making public property from successes and anomalies in communication may help initiate more constructive societal, business, and grassroots movements and give these movements sustainability.

"The human dimension of biodiversity" was studied in section 3. Biodiversity can be found in both nature and culture. Our world is a living network made up of the millions of species of plants and animals and thousands of human cultures and languages that have developed over time. Languages, cultures, and ecosystems are interdependent. For humanity at large, the loss of cultural and linguistic diversity represents a drastic reduction of our collective human heritage. In this section, Sylff fellows discussed human communities that have special attributes in ethnic, linguistic, and cultural respects and whose existence is endangered. The topic is highly relevant in Europe as well as in the Hungarian context. The objective of the panel was to shed light on the importance of maintaining these communities and to link the knowledge represented by Sylff fellows to the practice of local actors and decision makers in Hungary.

Topping off the presentation part of the forum was the legal section, which focused on "law and equity in a sustainable society." Beyond environmental law, the question of sustainability also emerges in other domains of legal studies and political sciences, such as constitutional law, the institutional background of the

protection of future generations, populism versus long-term policymaking, and the economic aspects of environmental damages and its legal consequences.

The conference day closed with a round-table discussion. Invited participants talked about the question of "sustainability initiated 'bottom-up': is it possible?" It was a valuable discussion, not only in that it summarized the main findings of the conference day but also because it brought together academia and municipalities with bottom-up local initiatives, as well as nongovernmental organizations, and raised expectations for the field trip that was to follow the next day.

A key point of the conference day was that the presentations went beyond the speakers' own research, adding aspects of sustainable economic development. They encouraged the audience to analyze the theme from broad perspectives and led to a successful forum, as audience members were able to understand the contents without specialized knowledge. The perspectives that were offered helped not only to identify research interests shared by the different disciplines but also to link academic knowledge with local practice.

Workshop Day in the Idyllic Village of Szigetmonostor

Discussion during the workshop in Szigetmonostor.

The field trip to Szigetmonostor was aimed at disseminating and applying academic knowledge to the field. To achieve these goals, academics—scientists employed by HAS (research institutions) and people employed by institutions of higher education—went to the field and experienced knowledge spillovers to the locals. Another aim was to heighten the awareness of local initiators about how academics can support and help their initiatives, thereby helping theoretical academic projects take on a more applied and realistic role; in other words, to help academic projects realize themselves in a more practical pragmatic environment.

The main reason for choosing Szigetmonostor was its isolation. Although the village is just 25 km from Budapest, it is difficult to access due to poor infrastructure; because there is no direct motorway, the only ways of reaching it are via a 50-km detour or by ferry.[5] This makes the village unique in its inhabitants' reliance

[5] Official website of the municipality: http://szigetmonostor.hu/ (in Hungarian)

on one another. Given the natural beauty and environment of the place, which has been underdeveloped to date, it is an ideal spot to develop tourism. There is a need to create job opportunities within Szigetmonostor, as its geographic location makes it difficult for the locals to seek job opportunities in central Budapest.

Activities provided by Sylff fellows included raising awareness of the historical background of Szigetmonostor among the academic participants. Mayor Zsolt Molnar of Szigetmonostor elaborated on the current situation that the half-island was facing.[6] He gave his account at the dam, with the Danube and the city of Budapest visible in the background. This setting enhanced and inspired the visitors' interest.

After this opening, the focus turned to local initiatives. Local initiators presented their activities and highlighted the key social challenges that they wanted to be tackled. A short group session followed, in which participants were divided into groups and had to identify possible solutions to local issues. These discussions were led by professional mediators as well as local experts. The idea was to find a common ground between the academics and locals to help with Szigetmonostor's advancement in terms of tourism, education, local job creation, and so forth.

The group work was then followed by participants presenting new ideas and possible solutions to existing difficulties. The group activities provided a great platform for initiating future collaboration between the academics and local initiators.

Discussion during the Workshop in Szigetmonostor.

To mark Sylff's contribution and its recognition for future collaboration, the group of workshop participants went out to a beautiful park built by the local volunteers, where they planted a South European flowering ash tree as a symbol for future collaboration. With the help of locals, the academics dug the ground and planted and watered the new tree.

Impact of the Initiative

The two-day event was well attended, which is an objective indicator of success. Eighty-one people attended the conference day, almost half of whom were Hungarian Sylff fellows. The workshop day in Szigetmonostor saw the participation of 45 academics and locals; the number of Sylff fellows was 12.

[6] For further information on Zsolt Molnar visit:
http://szigetmonostor.hu/index.php/onkormanyzat/polgarmester (in Hungarian)

Hungarian Sylff fellows and locals in Szigetmonstor, with the newly planted Sylff tree in the background. Holding the plaque for the tree at center are Mariann Tarnoczy, who has been working with Sylff at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences since the program's inception, and Mari Suzuki, director of leadership development at the Tokyo Foundation.

The initiative aspired to link academic knowledge and local practice. Analyzing sustainable local initiatives and their impact on society was a new activity field for most of the participants. The researchers who gave presentations had been invited to combine their actual research with this important topic. It was an experiment that made great demands of the presenters but led to unforeseen ties between researchers from different disciplines—to real-time interdisciplinary interactions.

The main organizers of the event (from left to right): Viktoria Ferenc, Andrea Kunsagi, Eva Kiss, Loretta Huszak, and Viktor Lorincz.

The initiative also had the aim of contributing to society. Understanding basic human ecology principles and the operation of local initiatives can help to map out and evaluate alternatives. The participants identified such principles and recognized new opportunities for cooperation between local initiators and academics. We hope that this future cooperation will lead to positive social change in such forms as increased citizens' participation in local initiatives, better understanding

of the significance of such initiatives among scholars, and more academic projects taking on advanced applied and realistic roles.

A well-informed public is crucial for sustainable development. The media can help reach a wider audience, inform local stakeholders, and direct attention to the role of local initiatives in Hungary's sustainable economic development. The first report of the initiative has already been published; an article appeared in the local online newspaper of Szigetmonostor, informing local stakeholders about the event.[7]

The organizers of the initiative have prepared a special edition for *Magyar Tudomany*, the periodical of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. All manuscripts are completed and should be published in the coming weeks. In addition, a seven-minute video on the initiative will be published soon on social media and Internet channels (YouTube and Facebook).

[7] Loretta Huszak, "Az MTA kutatóinak és ösztöndíjasainak látogatása Szigetmonostoron," U*jsagolo*, vol. 23, no. 10 (October 2017): pp. 1, 10. http://szigetmonostor.hu/images/dokumentumok/ujsagolo/ujsagolo_2017_10.pdf

September 28, 2017

Environmental Geopolitics in the Anthropocene

Understanding Causes, Managing Consequences, Finding Solutions

Corey Johnson
University of Oregon

An SLI forum organized by University of Oregon Sylff fellow Corey Johnson, currently associate professor and head of the Department of Geography at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, brought together a group of policy-minded academics on March 22–24 at Greensboro. Experts specializing in such fields as the economy, security, geography, and energy policy discussed the best governance for sustainable development under the current circumstances, where solutions remain uncertain to the environmental challenges of global warming and the drain of natural resources. The public symposium that was conducted as part of the forum also attracted many students and citizens. A copy of the panel poster for the public discussion can be downloaded at the following link: https://geo.uncg.edu/wp-content/themes/Geo/assets/Panel-Poster.pdf.

* * *

Background

Johnson, speaker on the left.

In recent years, the international political community has come to take more seriously the challenges of global increases in resource consumption, climate change, and sustainable development. The adoption of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on climate change mark important milestones in multilateral commitments to making progress on these issues. However, as Brexit in Britain and the election of a populist-nationalist president in the United States suggest, the center of gravity of leadership on the most pressing global issues of the

day—foremost among them environmental change—is shifting, perhaps irrevocably, away from the transatlantic alliance. This is happening at a crucial moment in time when coordinated leadership, foresight, and evidence-based policy are required if the planet is to not only avert the profound impact that climate change will have but also manage the geopolitical upheavals that can increasingly be linked to environmental change.

The forum "Environmental Geopolitics in the Anthropocene: Understanding Causes, Managing Consequences, Finding Solutions" brought together a group of policy-minded academics to delve into the convergence of these momentous environmental and political trends. Our goal was to better understand the causes and consequences of, and possible solutions to, some of these mega-challenges in the face of much uncertainty in the spaces of governance where resolute decisions will be required.

Events Overtake Good Intentions

When I proposed this forum to the Sylff Leadership Initiatives grant program in spring 2016, the United States was in the midst of an unprecedented presidential race. It was growing clear that the nominees of the two major parties would be Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. Like many observers, I thought it highly unlikely that Trump—with his unorthodox views on the issues to be addressed by the forum—would actually be elected to the most powerful office in the land. My working assumption at the time was that by spring 2017, when the forum would take place, there would still be plenty of debate over the ambitions and technical details of the Paris Agreement but the United States would still be a party to it and would lead efforts to mitigate climate change as the country that has emitted more greenhouse gases to the earth's atmosphere since 1850 than any other.

Instead, when we met in March 2017, the forum participants were faced with a confusing and deeply unsettling landscape. President Trump campaigned on a platform that included very vocally dismissing international institutions and agreements including the United Nations and the Paris Agreement. Not surprisingly, given his dismissal of climate change as a "Chinese hoax," he has since announced the government's intention to withdraw from Paris, effectively ceding leadership on climate change to other countries, especially China.

In proposing the forum, I noted the huge gaps between the lofty rhetoric of multinational agreements, on the one hand, and our rather thin understanding of the best governance pathways to achieve sustainable development and climate change mitigation, on the other. I also noted that not only was environmental

change—which has always played a role in geopolitics—accelerating, but a number of important geopolitical developments in recent years could at least in part be tied to environmental events. The upheavals across North Africa and the Middle East since 2011 are just the most visible of what is a broader set of realities about global geopolitical dynamics, namely that there are feedback loops between human-caused environmental changes and political events, and these relationships are not particularly well understood.

The Time-Scale Problem of the Anthropocene

Even as political winds shift and policy priorities change in the short term, the longer-term challenges of the unbending curve of growing resource consumption, a hotter planet, and the unsustainability of how economic growth has historically been achieved remain as vexing as ever. It is abundantly clear that the very health of the planet and of humankind hinges on our ability to successfully address the problems of constrained natural resources in an epoch where humans are themselves a serious geophysical force. The forum was framed by considering geographic and temporal scales together, and the following assumptions informed and provided material for further discussion:

- Humans have the now-unmistakable ability to act as a destructive geophysical force, creating what many scholars have described as a new geological era called the Anthropocene. In terms of climate change, this new era was roughly two centuries in the making; many of those who contributed to it are no longer living, and many who will face its consequences have not yet been born. Due to the complexity of earth systems and the forces that affect them, there is often a considerable time lag between the human activities that create the problem and humans' ability to perceive the changes.
- There is a perennially vexing governance difficulty in making hard decisions in the short term about such issues as resource consumption and models of economic growth that might be required to reduce the potentially catastrophic long-term impacts of climate change, especially when the impacts are predicted rather than occurring. The same difficulty could be said to apply to

governance decisions around geo-engineered solutions, given the potential for massively screwing up earth systems through human intervention.
- There is considerable geographic variation in the type and intensity of the effects of climate change, as well as in the types of institutions, governments, nonstate actors, and so forth that can play a role in addressing the effects. The governance landscape is highly uneven, and global regimes continue to be fragile and ill equipped.

All Doom and Gloom?

As academics we are accustomed to identifying problems, lamenting how they came to be, bemoaning how not enough is being done to address them, and then moving on. While this forum and the contributed papers had their share of this, the participants were also able to think about possibilities for future developments that give at least some cause for optimism. The Anthropocene, as Simon Dalby pointed out in his paper, is at its root the result of the "fire species" of humans manipulating, managing, and, above all, burning available resources to such an extent that any assumption of "geographic and geological stability as the background to the human story" must be discarded. Shaping the Anthropocene, which is now reality, requires a set of political choices that more intelligently seeks not just to reduce carbon combustion but also to reconfigure land use, urbanization patterns, and other aspects of human existence with changed earth conditions as the new baseline. Understanding that the global economy is a geological phenomenon requires what many, but not nearly enough, states and corporations have recognized: how capital is invested a more proactive accounting for how it contributes to environmental change.

There were numerous synergies between Simon Dalby's intervention on the "geological turn" in Anthropocene geopolitics and Stacy VanDeveer's governance strategies and mechanisms for reducing the material throughput of our economies. The Anthropocene, as many observers have pointed out, is an era during which the material footprint of the human species on the planet is more than appreciable to the point of being system altering. VanDeveer suggests that governance responses should seek to effect long-term reductions in consumption patterns through a variety of tools, including tax and subsidy changes, binding policies, certification and labeling, research, and normative transformation. While recent history has shown that humans are not particularly adept at sacrificing in the short term for longer-term benefits, there are examples where—given the right incentives and framing—longer-term, enlightened thinking can prevail.

Indeed, being open to the types of thinking that can "make it otherwise," to cite participant Shannon O'Lear's paper, will be necessary. Part of the shift in thinking that is needed among policy makers involves moving away from the assumption that isolated case studies are somehow representative and instead incorporating multiscalar analysis of connections between and among places and processes. Land acquisitions, common in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as in Middle America and elsewhere, are not just local events but rather reflect global capital flows and consumption habits. Much in line with Simon Dalby's suggestion of laying out Anthropocene political choices much broader than simply in terms of how much CO_2 we emit, O'Lear argues that knowledge production needs to take more seriously what forms of new knowledge are required to deal with Anthropocene realities. The framing questions take on additional significance in this respect.

Even before the strange turn of politics in the United States, it was clear all along that transitions of the massive energy system that fuels economic activity and daily life in much of the world would be incremental, not sudden. The case of natural gas illustrates this element of environmental geopolitics in the Anthropocene: is there a role for the lesser of fossil-fuel evils moving forward? Tim Boersma walked us through the role of gas in energy transition pathways in various parts of the world and offered his thoughts on the oft-heard trope of gas as the "bridge" or "pathway" fuel. Undoubtedly, for a variety of reasons—fracking, perceived environmental benefits vis-à-vis coal and petroleum, easier mobility of gas thanks to liquefied natural gas—natural gas has assumed a greater share of the world's energy use in recent years, and that is expected to rise. But from an environmental perspective, the "bridge" needs policy in place for there to be an opposite side that is not simply burning more gas. In non-OECD countries, policy makers will seek a greater role for gas not only as a means of meeting climate goals but also for the shorter-term reason that gas is preferable in addressing atrocious air quality. Historically in Europe and North America, gas was first and foremost an urban fuel due to the infrastructure required to make it economically viable, and this can be expected to be the case in fast-growing places in the Global South as well.

As suggested by several authors, Anthropocene geopolitics requires an acknowledgment that change is already happening, and policy makers must incorporate adaptation strategies alongside well-intentioned efforts to mitigate further change. As a growing body of scholarship suggests, environmental governance happens in multilevel, polycentric fashion, with cities and subnational jurisdictions assuming an ever-increasing role. Eric Chu illustrates in his paper the ways in which cities can be more responsive and innovative as well as sensitive to local specificities related to the challenges of environmental change than can larger-scale

governments. Through transnational municipal networks, cities can also share best practices and raise awareness. At the same time, Chu reminds us that there are some pitfalls in what he calls "methodological cityism," in that there are substantial political, institutional, and scalar constraints to cities enacting progressive environmental policies. Facing such issues as sea level rise and climate-induced migration will require a multilevel set of responses that must include, but not be limited to, cities.

Conclusion

The Anthropocene is not an "environmental problem." It is a human problem. It requires that we think systematically about, in the words of O'Lear, the possibilities of "otherwise." This forum and what comes after represent a contribution to the rich debates happening in many places about what an "otherwise" might look like and how it might be achieved. This is not to understate the hurdles in the way of such change, which are substantial. But in this time of considerable political, economic, and social flux, it is entirely possible that the present is an opportunity to think outside the box and to shift our mindset into the Anthropocene.

Panelists of the Forum

Simon Dalby, CIGI Chair in the Political Economy of Climate Change and Professor of Geography and Environmental Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University

Stacy VanDeveer, Professor in the Department of Conflict Resolution, Human Security, and Global Governance, McCormack Graduate School, University of Massachusetts

Shannon O'Lear, Professor of Geography and Director of the Center for Global and International Studies, University of Kansas

Eric Chu, Assistant Professor of Urban Studies in the Department of Geography, Planning, and International Development Studies, University of Amsterdam

Tim Boersma, Senior Research Scholar and Director of Global Natural Gas Markets at the Center on Global Energy Policy, Columbia School of International and Public Affairs

The panel poster for the public discussion.

Michael Klare, Five College Professor of Peace and World Security Studies and Director of the Five College Program in Peace and World Security Studies, Hampshire College

Erika Weinthal, Lee Hill Snowdon Professor of Environmental Policy and Associate Dean for International Programs, Duke University

June 5, 2017

[Report] Environmental Geopolitics in the Anthropocene: Ominous Horizon or Breaks in the Clouds?

Hikaru Hiranuma
The Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research

Promoting the development and spread of renewable energy requires the balancing of policy tools and market inducements, notes Tokyo Foundation Research Fellow Hikaru Hiranuma, who participated in an SLI forum on climate change at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro as an expert from Japan. The March 22–24 forum was organized by University of Oregon Sylff fellow Corey Johnson and consisted of a closed session among international experts and a public symposium. Johnson is currently associate professor and Head of the Geography Department at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

* * *

The early ratification of the Paris Agreement has sparked renewed worldwide interest in climate change measures. It was in this context that a public symposium was held on March 23 on the issue of "Environmental Geopolitics in the Anthropocene: Ominous Horizon or Breaks in the Clouds?" at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG).


Corey Johnson, the organizer of the forum.

The Paris Agreement aims to keep the rise in the global average temperature to within two degrees of preindustrial levels. Achieving this goal will require more than the fulfillment of pledges made by the signatory countries. The US administration of President Donald Trump, though, has taken a skeptical position on climate change since taking office in January 2017, and the world's second-biggest carbon dioxide emitter seems to be shifting away from its pre-

vious commitments, putting the future of climate change countermeasures in doubt.

At the symposium, experts in such fields as environmental policy, energy, and national security came together to discuss the challenges ahead from the perspective of environmental geopolitics. This report summarizes some of the main points of interest that were raised during the discussions.

Stakeholders in Climate Change Issues

Various aspects of climate change were examined, but one recurring theme was the importance of identifying the key stakeholders. The title of the symposium itself suggested an answer. In the proposed geological era called the Anthropocene, surely every human being has a stake in finding a solution to climate change. This will require a fundamental break with existing lifestyles.

Over the course of human history, societies have developed by increasing consumption and placing an ever-heavier burden on the environment. There is a need to shift to a more sustainable model that will not place the same heavy burden on the natural environment. All of us living in the Anthropocene must first acknowledge that we ourselves are the ones who have brought about climate change and face up to the problems we have caused. Among the primary stakeholders, then, are the governments of the world that will need to enact and carry out concrete policy measures based on this shared awareness. One example of such action was the Paris Agreement, which came into force following ratification by countries around the world. Since trends and developments among the countries responsible for implementing concrete policies will have a direct impact on climate change, shifting attitudes in the United States have given rise to a sense of crisis and uncertainty regarding future climate measures.

The Influence of Major Powers

Given that countries are important stakeholders in the effort to address climate change, panelists from the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, and Japan agreed that relations between states are also extremely important—particularly those between such major emitters as China, Russia, and the United States. The United States and China alone are responsible for more than 40% of global emissions, and cooperation between them will be essential in any attempt to reduce total global emissions. A shift in US climate policy would have a huge impact on global efforts to address climate change and may require commensurate efforts by China to compensate for the change in US trajectory. Tensions between the two

countries over foreign policy and national security could easily stymie negotiations on climate change, however, and the symposium served as a reminder that progress on climate change is intimately connected with trends in international relations among the major powers.

Regional Stakeholders

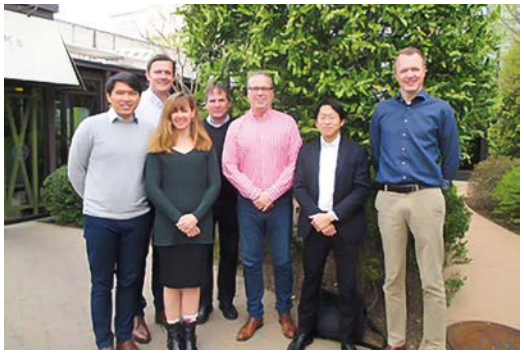
Other important stakeholders mentioned at the symposium included regional communities and other groups subject to common climate challenges, such as flooding and drought. Speakers suggested that such stakeholders cooperate with one another to address their concerns and to broadly share their experiences and preventive measures. Even as national policy in the United States undergoes a shift, many state governments are continuing to pursue their own measures to cope with climate change. These regional stakeholders (and others not affected by national policy) are expected to play an increasingly important role in climate change discussions in the future.

Policy and Market Receptivity

Another important point raised at the UNCG symposium was the balance between policy and the market in tackling climate change, such as in promoting the development and spread of renewable energy. One speaker mentioned that North Carolina has the second highest rate of solar power generation in the United States, a result of both market preferences and local legislative incentives known as the Renewable Portfolio Standard. When seeking to encourage private initiatives to address climate change, therefore, it is important to bear in mind that policy can crucially affect the receptivity of the market. The symposium offered important insights into how the relationship between policy and the market can have a large bearing on the effectiveness of concrete measures to address climate change.

Conclusion

The symposium was very timely, given the growing awareness of the Anthropocene concept and the shifting policies of the US administration. There is a tendency for climate change discussions to focus on isolated themes, such as energy mix, resource prices, and the policies of individual countries. But the UNCG symposium embraced a comprehensive perspective, viewing climate change through a broader temporal framework and the full range of the stakeholders involved, leading to



The author, second from right, with other experts attending the symposium.

many innovative suggestions for the future. Measures to address global climate change have only just begun, and it is important to maintain a broad perspective in identifying the best countermeasures through forums like the UNCG symposium. The stage where policy alone can induce market initiatives through reductions in the cost of renewable energy is drawing to an end, and there is a clear need to consider alternative approaches. It is to be hoped that this symposium will spawn may others like it to deepen future debate on climate change.

May 31, 2017

Finding a Lasting Solution

Insights From the Forum on Violent Extremism and Radicalization in East Africa

Jacinta Mwende Maweu, Socrates Kraido Majune, Stephen Muthusi Katembu, Alexina Nyaboke Marucha
University of Nairobi

Dr. Jacinta Mwende, Majune Socrates, Steve Muthusi, and Alexina Marucha, four Sylff fellows from the University of Nairobi, initiated and implemented a forum titled "Understanding the 'Push' and 'Pull' Factors Underlying Violent Extremism and Radicalization among the Youth in East Africa" on December 8 and 9, 2016, at the University of Nairobi's Chiromo Campus. The forum gathered 35 young leaders from African countries including 10 former and current Sylff fellows from Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The participants identified the fundamental causes of the grave problem of violent extremism and youth radicalization and suggested the importance of small but meaningful steps taken by individuals that will bring a major change in their community, country, and region.

* * *

The twenty-first century has experienced more rapid changes and crises than the previous ones. While the past centuries saw more interstate conflicts, recent crises have centered on intrastate dynamics. The challenge of violent extremism did not emerge yesterday; in earlier times, though, minimal attention was given to violent extremism and radicalization. The horrors of 9/11 set off a spate of violent extremism in various countries and led to the emergence of terror groups pursuing various agendas with political and social motives. Civilians have been the main victims, but members of security forces have also lost their lives in the struggle to protect their beloved countries.

Extremism in East Africa

With the recent development and growing pull of violent extremism and radical-

Photo session of all attendees on day two.

ization, a significant number of youths in East Africa have joined extremist groups. Kenya, for instance, has witnessed a sharp increase in individuals joining extremist groups since 2011, when attacks were launched on Kenyan soil. The government responded by "putting the boots" in Somalia. Since then, more troops have been added while extremist activities have escalated, resulting in the loss of lives and destruction of property. Furthermore, the government's move to target Muslims of Somali origin has led more youths, the majority of them being Muslims, to join these extremist groups in revolt against marginalization. Religious and tribal identity, which are most prevalent in Kenya, have highly accelerated the rate at which radicalization is spreading.

The states are therefore faced with a major problem that, if not curbed in good time, will claim their youths to violent extremism. The Sylff Peace Forum held on December 8 and 9, 2016, brought together 35 citizens of the African continent to not only better understand the problem but provide solutions and a way forward to countering radicalization and violent extremism. Ten of the participants were former and current Sylff fellows (from Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo), while the rest comprised nationals of Kenya, Uganda, Somaliland, Tanzania, Sudan, and Burundi. Coming from diverse backgrounds, they included members of civil society, academic institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and government, as well as students.

During the two-day forum, various speakers—among them were Professor Bruno Kaimwa, Barbra Natifu, Dr. Hassan Kinyua, Dr. Patrick Maluki, and Debarl

Inea—gave various insights, prompting heated discussions that delved into experiences of the individuals present and literature that they had read.

Presentations

To start off the discussions, Dr. Patrick Maluki gave a presentation on the "Political and Economic Perspectives of Radicalization" in which the definition of radicalization was deeply explored. According to Maluki, a radicalized person is one who is tricked, swayed, and seduced into taking radical beliefs. Hence, radicalization is a process whereby individuals adopt extreme political and religious beliefs once they join a certain group with radical ideologies. The group believes that change is necessary and that violence is the means by which this can be achieved.

Professor Bruno Kaimwa, a former Sylff fellow from the DRC, extended the discussion to the state of violence and radicalization in eastern DRC. Barbra Natifu outlined the role of historical injustice in perpetuating violent extremism, while Dr. Hassan Kinyua outlined the link between religion and radicalization. Lastly, the role of media in radicalization and extremism was reviewed by Debarl Inea.

Based on the discussions by current and former Sylff fellows and others, the following factors were identified as drivers of radicalization and extremism among youth: social networks, which are useful in the recruitment of new members; poverty and unemployment; corruption and favors in the public sector; and marginalization due to religious and ethnic affiliations, a big contributor where some communities have been sidelined not only by the government but also by parts of the private sector. Denial of political and civil rights by the government and lack of opportunities to be heard by the government or leaders in power have also fed radicalization. Selective application of the law to citizens, which is harsher on youth, is another one of the major reasons why radicalization has become rampant.

Conclusion

What can be done to solve the crisis at hand? That is the major question facing states. Although efforts are being made to curb extremism, the real challenge on the ground is complex and difficult. Fleeing of countries to places where the ideology is more profound is what is being experienced. One speaker noted that the marginalization of Muslims by governments is real. A refugee from the DRC shared an experience where, while crossing the border using the same pass as that of other refugees, his Muslim comrade faced tougher scrutiny than him.

The exploitation of religion and tribalism has led to the spread of violent ex-

tremism and radicalization. Remedies include holding peace forums, promoting education, addressing the challenge of youth unemployment, strengthening governance, and bringing the leaders on board as well as getting them to understand that ideological wars need to be fought using the mind and not physical force. Only when we have achieved this will we eventually see violent extremism and radicalization eradicated from society.

"Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred." —Martin Luther King Jr.

April 10, 2017

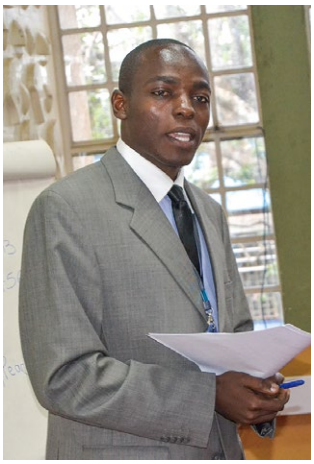
Report on the University of Nairobi Peace Forum

Xena Michelle Cupido
University of the Western Cape

Xena Cupido, a 2012 Sylff fellow from the University of the Western Cape, reports and reflects on the University of Nairobi Peace Forum held on December 8–9, 2016, which she was invited to attend.

* * *

Violent extremism and the radicalization of youth are phenomena that have captured the attention of the world. To deliberate on issues relating to violent extremism and youth radicalization, a peace forum was initiated by Socrates Majune (2013–15 Sylff fellow) and conducted with the help of an organizing committee consisting of Dr. Jacinta Mwende (2004–06 Sylff fellow), Alexian Marucha, and Steve Muthusi. The committee received the support of the University of Nairobi's Board of Postgraduate Studies, represented by Gachunga Joseph Kamau. The purpose of the forum was to provide high-level insights and solutions to violent extremism, drawing on the perspectives of various countries. The forum took place at the University of Nairobi on December 8 and 9, 2016. Sylff fellows from various countries in Africa were invited to participate in the peace forum. "If there is one thing I know for sure, it is that I know nothing for sure." This article reflects on the learning that took place at the peace forum.


Socrates Majune.

Background

It is clear that no country is immune from the effects of violent extremism and youth radicalization. The global phenomenon has no doubt affected a vast number of countries, Kenya being one of the countries most im-

Professor Henry Mutoro, Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Nairobi.

pacted by violent extremism in its recent past. At the start of the peace forum Professor Henry Mutoro, Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University of Nairobi, delivered an emotional tribute in honor of the 140 students who lost their lives at Garissa University.

The opening address by Professor Mutoro detailed the University of Nairobi's involvement in the post-extremism events at Garissa University. The story of the tragedy and the University of Nairobi's gracious response in dealing with bereaved parents, visitors, sponsors, and bereaved students sketched a vivid picture of the destruction and mayhem that occurred. The deputy vice chancellor highlighted that many people do not treat seriously the issue of youth extremism. The University of Nairobi dealt with parents in an ethical and responsible manner and has since been recognized as a Center of Excellence.

It was the events at Garissa that partly contributed to the peace forum initiative—hosting a conference that would make a difference in the county. The organizers noted that East Africa has witnessed a surge of violent extremism, characterized by an increased incidence of acts of terrorism, organized crime, trans-border crime, illicit trade, and trafficking (USAID, 2012). At the center of extremist activities are youth who have been recruited to perpetrate these crimes. The objective of the peace forum was to discuss the causes of violent extremism among young people and to propose nonviolent measures to overcome this trend.

Push-and-Pull Factors in Youth Violence and Extremism

The young generation represents hope. However, young people are increasingly turning to violent extremism due to social and economic factors. It should be noted that the choice to support violent extremism is driven by multiple factors. To understand and explore the reasons behind the sense of disengagement and marginalization that makes young people vulnerable to recruitment, we need to view it from a country perspective. It has become clear that young people join violent extremist groups for a variety of reasons, making generalization problematic. The peace forum provided the opportunity for scholars from various countries to reflect on the importance of networking and harness their knowledge, skills, and competencies to bring about solutions to violent extremism. It also served as a platform to gain new insights.

Dr. Patrick Maluki of the Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies at the University Nairobi gave a presentation titled "Understanding the 'push' and 'pull' factors underlying violent extremism and radicalization among the youth in East Africa," in which he reflected on the political and economic perspectives of radicalization. He started by focusing on who a radicalized person is, a controversial and emotional topic. Maluki suggested that "radicalized" indicates a kind of passivity, whereby the subjects are presented as victims. The driving forces are normally seen as external. The radicalized are often presented as being alienated from choice, tricked, swayed, lost, or stolen. They are objects of pity and fear, which shifts the focus of attention from the personal or political motivations of radical actors to the methods and processes of conversion or seduction through radicalization.

Dr. Patrick Maluki, Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies, University Nairobi.

Radicalization, never clearly defined according to Maluki, implies the violation of essentially passive individuals who are influenced by outside forces; it is an ordered, planned, and structured assault on those individuals. Underpinned by subjective and objective motivations, the phenomenon may be defined by exploring the common notions thereof. It is a process wherein people move away from dialogue and resort to confrontational tactics, such as violent acts of terror. Violence is often used to induce change, which is a fundamental belief of radical extremism.

Dr. Maluki presented a checklist for the radicalization of individuals. He identified five paths to radicalization, all of which are easy for radical groups to exploit: 1) young people from conservative societies and a closed, religious awakening, 2) feelings of marginalization and alienation, 3) grievances, 4) indignation, and 5) a sense of adventure.

Social contact and social networks play integral roles in extremist networks. Close friends and family have been known to be a powerful influencing factor. Radicalization, Dr. Maluki suggests, is an individual or collective social process by which people are brought to condone, legitimize, support, or carry out violence for political or religious objectives. Social bonds and group dynamics, as well as deeply held convictions or perceptions of unfair and unjust international systems, are recognized as strong drivers of radicalization.

Professor Kaimwa Maneno Bruno of the Institut National du Bâtiment et des Travaux Publics reflected on the Democratic Republic of Congo's experience of

violence and radicalization. He highlighted the push-and-pull factors as follows:

- More perpetrators of crime and violence are implicated in armed groups. The complexity and context of the conflict offer opportunities of linkages to criminals and organizations, e.g., local armed groups and trans-border armed groups.
- Child soldier phenomenon (pull factor)
- Governance of natural resources, arms trafficking, and poverty (push factors)

Professor Kaimwa Maneno Bruno, Institut National du Bâtiment et des Travaux Publics.

The forum discussed ways to overcome the problem of children being used in armed forces. Children who are left destitute are "given ammunition and told this is your mother and father." Participants of the forum agreed that these children need to be exposed to peace programs instead of violence programs. We need to build a sense of community and a supportive environment in which to care for children. The participants shared information about projects that they were involved in that target violent extremism: programs leading to the empowerment of youth through workshops and forums that allow for dialogue to take place. There are challenges, often related to stakeholder engagement, partnerships, and funding. Nonetheless, the passion and dedication helps to address some of these challenges.

Starting Meaningful Conversations in the Media

On day two a media representative, Debarl Inea, addressed the forum. According to Inea, who hosts a morning TV news show, there are no conversations happening about radicalization or violent extremism despite all the acts of violent extremism. The media remains reactive toward such events, and no continued conversation is occurring around these events. He reiterated that there were systemic failures in seeing to the needs of young people and urged the forum to start conversations that would guide individuals who work in the area of radicalization and youth extremism, which is one of his own objectives.

Inea shared the story of Mohammed Imwasi, a former IT student who came to be known as "Jihadi John." Why did ISIL select him? Inea also shared stories of other young people who were radicalized, whose profiles suggested that they came

from "well-to-do" families. This implies that the selection of young people stemmed from a strategic intent to recruit from the West, and it may further suggest that ISIL has the ability to infiltrate areas least expected using highly educated young people to spread radical ideologies over all kinds of media. Inea played a video in which Jihadi John spoke about his ideology and why they were taking the lives of the victims.

Forum participants.

A discussion ensued around the meaning of jihad and the misconceptions around its meaning. The debate centered on the distortion of religion to serve a particular purpose. Religion is used to spread a particular narrative, but there are no counter-narratives to challenge the current narratives. Mainstream media is being used to spread the narratives as news. Hassan Kinyua Omar, a lecturer in Religious Studies at the University of Nairobi, stated that violent extremism remains a global threat. As long as there is low political participation, feelings of detachment and misrepresentation, and governments that continue to ignore diversity, this threat will persist. He further warned that unchecked corruption can be referred to as a radicalizer.

Final Reflections

The peace forum, organized by the University Nairobi chapter with the support of Sylff Leadership Initiatives, provided the perfect opportunity for a meaningful conversation on the push-and-pull factors underlying violent extremism and the radicalization of youth in East Africa. Forum participants agreed that violent extremism needs to be countered intellectually. Acts of violence and terrorism stem from historical injustices. The question remains: Is the world being taken captive because of a lack of intellectual capacity?

At the Global Youth Summit Against Violent Extremism held in 2015, it was suggested that military force is often the response to extremist violence. But this approach only seems to heighten tensions and trigger more support for violent ideologies; it fails to deal with the factors driving participation in violent extremism. This approach often adds to feelings of exclusion and fails to engage youth as key partners in building resilience against violent extremism.

To move beyond dealing with the symptoms of the problem, young people must be regarded as part of the solution. As young people around the world are working to build peace and prevent violent extremism, more than ever before, the response to violent extremism needs meaningful youth participation at all levels. Working collaboratively with young people to promote peace and to effectively address the drivers of violent extremism requires youth engagement as partners in the design and implementation of relevant programs and policies. Hopefully, by applying our intellectual capacity in this way, we can we start to deal with the challenge of violent extremism.

Group photo with all attendees.

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April 25, 2017

Nubian Women's Arts and Cultural Continuity

The Role of Civil Society in Promoting Nubian Women Art

Naglaa Fathi Mahmaoud-Hussein
Howard University

Naglaa Fathi Mahmoud-Hussein, a 2015 Sylff fellow at Howard University in the United States, implemented a social project for women handcraft artists in Nubia, Egypt, under the Sylff Leadership Initiatives (SLI) program from mid-June to September 2016. The three-month project, comprising field interviews, workshops, and a training program, helped these women get educated on financial knowledge and skills. More importantly, the women are now aware of the value of their artistic pieces and how they should be fairly evaluated.

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Motivation behind the Project

Women in the Middle East and Africa share a common history and cause. In both regions, women played active roles in resisting and recovering from the colonial trauma. In postcolonial times, however, the perceptions of African and Middle Eastern women and their role in development have often been underrepresented. Women handcrafters, for example, are considered merely producers of unsubstantial commodities—goods that add little to the economic empowerment of nations. The artistic production of those women is seldom acknowledged as art that should be nurtured and included in the art scene, which defines the scopes of cultural identities of these societies. As a case in point, Egyptian Nubian women handcrafters do not enjoy the ranking status of artists whose work is based in Cairo workshops, studios, and exhibitions. Hence, it is important to reach out to those women.

Nubian women handcrafters are now navigating different facets of their identity complexes. Already placed on the periphery and being darker skinned, residing mainly in the villages on the border between Egypt and Sudan, Nubian women are negotiating their blackness, their gender dynamics, and state policies toward their artistic productions.

During the time of Hosni Mubarak (1981–2011), Nubian women handcrafters

depended heavily on the trading of their artistic productions during seasons of high tourist influx in Egypt. However, the political unrest in recent years has greatly impacted the influx of tourists to Nubian villages. Moreover, new state legislations restricting civil society work have resulted in a shortage and even lack of funding to these women.

For example, on November 28, 2016, the Egyptian parliament approved a new restrictive draft law to govern civil society organizations. The draft includes provisions that require permission from the government before civil society organizations (CSOs) can accept foreign funding; require government permission before foreign CSOs can operate in Egypt; require government permission before CSOs can in any way work with foreign organizations or foreign experts; limit CSOs' activities by requiring government permission to conduct surveys or publish reports; raise the fee for CSO registration and give the government broad discretion to refuse to register a CSO; and heighten the penalties for violations of the law to include prison sentences and steep fines.

The main objective of my project was to contribute to the empowerment of rural Nubian women artists by helping women to run small businesses and providing them with the necessary skills needed to establish and effectively run their businesses. Secondly, I hoped to create a sustainable instrument that provides Nubian women with economic consultations and support. Finally, my project's overall endeavor was, and still is, to preserve and promote Nubian artistic handicrafts.

The Project

Field Interviews

In my field interviews, I focused on underscoring key challenges that face women running small businesses as articulated by the interviewees. Thirty women were interviewed.

Based on the field interviews, which were also documented on video, I found that women owning small businesses in Aswan suffered from several problems including the lack of marketing and promotion skills, inability to perform simple accounting tasks, and lack of knowledge on loans institutions, on how to carry out feasibility studies for their projects, and on the registration and taxation process. Most of the women whom I interviewed had never participated in art exhibitions, lacking the means to reach out to the exhibition organizers. Most interviewees welcomed the idea of establishing economic consultation centers (ECU) that provide economic consultation to women owning small businesses.

Training of Trainers Program

I then organized a Training of Trainers (TOT) program from July 26 to 28, 2016, in the Aswan governorate. The training brought together 15 young educated women with relevant university degrees to become economic consultants who can provide capacity building for women running small businesses. The target trainees were selected based on their education, their willingness to volunteer and continue to provide business consultation for women, and their geographic location. Participating women cadres gained TOT skills, consultation providing skills, small business accounting skills, and various outlets for obtaining small business loans. The training included practical exercises, such as simulations in which the trainees played the roles of a consultant and a woman seeking a specific business consultation. The trainees worked to design and produce a blueprint of the proposed training lessons, which they will be using to train women who run small businesses.

Ms. Mahmaoud-Hussein, center, wearing blue, with TOT trainers and participants.

Women Training Workshops

There is no question that the above-mentioned legislations will hinder efforts to reach out to women handcrafters through systematic work with grassroots or civil society. In an attempt to open up a way forward for these women artists, I traveled during the summer of 2016 with the support of a Sylff Leadership Initiatives (SLI) grant to conduct two workshops to help Nubian women handcrafters find a platform for economic support. The two workshops saw the participation of 30 women running small businesses and provided these women with small business skills such as identifying business opportunities, business development, administrative skills, basic accounting, managing credits, and loans skills. The women received training on how to develop and refine their products for better marketing and on how to identify wholesalers and develop a commercial network. They also learned about

how to outreach and participate in art exhibitions in and outside the governorate of Aswan.

Economic Consultation Units

Trainees who underwent the TOT program and those who have been trained in economic consultation skills work in coordination with partner NGOs in Aswan to provide free consultation. The contact information for the consultants were disseminated among women running small businesses during the training. The women regularly contact the consultants by phone, and in many instances they request a meeting, which then usually takes place either at the premises of a partner NGO or at the consultant's place.

Outcomes

Trainees participating in the workshops acquired new skills including project management and marketing skills. They learned about the role of the Ministry of Social Solidarity in supporting the small business sector, the various forms of technical and financial assistance provided by the ministry, and means of approaching the ministry. The Nubian women gained information about various financial and lending institutions and the necessary procedures to apply for loans with such institutions as Nasser Bank, the Social Fund for Development, and NGOs working in the field of small projects. In addition, they learned how to carry out bookkeeping and use simple accounting methods to manage the financial side of their projects.

In conclusion, the three-month project helped raise the aspirations of these women to develop, promote, and market their small businesses. The impact that workshops like these have on women handcrafters' businesses makes it essential to hold such trainings frequently.

Despite any difficulties that researchers and members of civil society may be stumbling across, they are looking at the future of social activism through artistic work with enthusiasm, devotion, and commitment.

Details can be found at http://tamkeen.webs.com.

Jul 28, 2016

Training for the Best and Brightest Students on Leadership and Character Building in Rwanda

Chika Ezeanya-Esiobu
Howard University

Chika Ezeanya, a Sylff fellow from Howard University in the United States, initiated and implemented a two-day "Workshop on Character Building and Preparing Young Rwandans for Leadership towards Societal Advancement" in May 2016 in Kigali, Rwanda, with the support of an SLI grant. The following article is her reflection on the workshop. The successful workshop greatly contributed to nurturing leadership in young Rwandans who will be leaders of the community, the country, and the world in the near future.

* * *

Motivation behind the Workshop

On May 25 and 26, 2016, the University of Rwanda College of Business and Economics gathered 30 of its brightest 300-level male and female students (according to GPA) at Nobleza Hotel in Kicukiro for a two-day intensive workshop on leadership and character building for societal advancement. The workshop was supported by a Sylff Leadership Initiatives grant.

The organizer, Ms. Chika Ezeanya, presents with passion at the workshop on character building and leadership development in Kigali, Rwanda.

The motivation behind the workshop is that the burden of national advancement rests on the shoulders of young people below the age of 25, who comprise 67% of Rwanda's population. The main objective of the leadership training was to introduce young Rwandans with leadership

potential to the need for building character toward effective leadership. The overall aim is to prepare these promising young people to become well-developed individuals and citizens and ensure that Rwanda as a nation is able to leverage its human resources to meet its economic growth and social advancement goals at all levels.

What Lacks in Rwanda

Education has been established as a veritable tool for training young people so that they will be equipped to hold leadership positions across sectors as older adults. Not many young Rwandans, however, are able to complete secondary education. According to the World Bank, Rwanda's secondary school gross enrollment rate stood at 33% in 2013. Even for the few Rwandans who are able to study up to the university level, the curricula are lacking in leadership training modules. Training on leadership therefore needs to be given to selected Western-educated and not-so-educated young people with leadership potential in Rwanda.

The leadership training endeavored to instruct young Rwandans with leadership potential on the concept of effective leadership and its role in ensuring economic growth and social advancement at all administrative levels. It is hoped that beneficiaries will be more capable of effectively discharging their present duties as youth leaders, in addition to being prepared for higher leadership responsibilities as older adults in Rwanda.

Rwandan students at the workshop.

Since the genocide, the government of Rwanda has placed emphasis on preventing a reoccurrence and has instituted several strategies for ensuring economic growth and social cohesion. Much has been achieved through numerous successful education policies, poverty alleviation programs, and agricultural and rural development projects. But these strategies lack adequate programs aimed at training the minds of young Rwandans on the need to imbibe certain character and behavioral traits necessary for effective leadership, which can firmly place the country on the path to economic growth and social advancement.

At the Workshop

Two international facilitators from the United States and Nigeria were present at the workshop to introduce certain concepts to participants and to assist them in individually and collectively thinking and working through the concepts over the course of two days. One local facilitator was also available.

Topics discussed during the workshop included "Character building as a prerequisite for societal advancement" and "Purpose-driven living, values, and principles: establishing a connection," presented by Olumide Omojuyigbe from Nigeria, and "From self-leadership to leading others" and "Ethics and leadership," presented by Edozie Esiobu. Meanwhile, I presented three courses including "Aligning personal goals with community development goals" and "Trust and economic development—a nexus."

Also present during the workshop were three representatives from Sylff who traveled all the way from Tokyo, Japan, to show support for the workshop. Mari Suzuki, who is Sylff director for leadership development, gave a speech on the vision of Sylff and the importance of workshops of this nature to the organization. Keita Sugai, a Sylff program officer, gave the closing speech and also presented certificates of participation to all participants. Ms. Aya Oyamada, also a program officer, was at hand to ensure the success of the event. The three representatives also met with Professor Nelson Ijumba, the Deputy Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and Research, who was acting on behalf of the Vice Chancellor Professor Phil Cotton, and with the Principal of the College of Business and Economics, Professor Satya Murty. During the meeting, areas for further collaboration between the University of Rwanda and Sylff were explored.

Feedback from the Participants

The audience participated actively in the question-and-answer segments as well as in the breakout sessions, where they were divided into groups and given questions to tackle related to the topics of the day. In an anonymous questionnaire at the end of the training sessions, student participants indicated their happiness and satisfaction with the workshop, citing the knowl-

A group photo of Mr. Edozie Esiobu, one of the speakers, Mr. Keita Sugai, Program Officer for Leadership Development for the Tokyo Foundation, and all participants, taken after the workshop.

edge they had gained, and expressed their hope of forming an association across the University of Rwanda to promote the truths they had learned from the workshop. Most participants noted that they were being trained on character building for the first time ever and stated that they left the training on the final day with a transformed mindset.

Jan 30, 2017

[Report] Leadership and Character Building for Youth in Rwanda

Aya Oyamada
Sylff Association Secretariat

Chika-Ezeanya-Esiobu, who received a Sylff fellowship at Howard University in 2010, organized an SLI workshop on youth leadership empowerment in May 2016. Attending the workshop in Kigali, Rwanda, as observers from the Tokyo Foundation were Mari Suzuki, director for leadership development, and two program officers: Keita Sugai and Aya Oyamada.

* * *

Twenty years after the genocide in which as many as 1 million people are thought to have lost their lives, Rwanda today is making great strides in its social and economic development. What is necessary for further development?

The answer, for Sylff fellow Chika Ezeanya-Esiobu, was clear: leadership. Each and every citizen needs to be aware of the obligation to make a positive contribution to society through their actions. To promote such awareness among university students, she organized a workshop on youth leadership empowerment as a Sylff Leadership Initiatives (SLI) project on May 25–26, 2016, at the University of Rwanda's College of Business and Economics in Kigali, Rwanda.


Ms. Chika Ezeanya-Esiobu, the organizer.

Ezeanya was one of three speakers at the event, titled "Workshop on Character Building and Preparing Young Rwandans for Leadership towards Societal Advancement." Over the two-day workshop, discussions were held on the importance of respect for social norms, setting of goals, and the development of self-motivated leadership to effec-

Mari Suzuki, director for leadership development.

tively manage one's strengths and weaknesses. Discussions on how individuals can contribute to the resolution of social issues focused on the imaginative power needed to pinpoint and address key problems.

During the Q&A session near the end of the workshop, one female student who had lost her parents during the genocide asked about reconciliation: "I myself am working to forgive. But how can we communicate these experiences to the next generation and carry on with the process of reconciliation?"

In response, Salomon Nshimiyimana, who teaches at the university as executive assistant, said that no clear-cut answers exist. But just as the antagonism between ethnic groups deepened over many years, "Reconciliation, too, is a process that will take time," he said.

Dealing directly with difficult issues that people tend to avoid is an important aspect of leadership, and individuals who can encourage people to speak their minds and bring about meaningful dialogue are likely to play a key role in demonstrating true leadership and moving society forward.

Julius Tumwesigye, one of the students attending the workshop, said, "It was a great contribution to Rwanda's future, as it provided us with various leadership skills and instilled in us the importance of self-leadership." Other students said the workshop had inspired them to spread the message of personal and social responsibility throughout the university. Such reactions from the country's future leaders were one of the positive results of the workshop.


Rwandan students after the workshop.

The organizers are to be congratulated for the success of this very important workshop. The Tokyo Foundation hopes that Dr. Ezeanya, through her work on solving the social problems she encounters in her daily life, will become one of the leaders who will help to build a brighter future for Africa.

Oct 23, 2017

Indigenous Technology and Rural Women's Economic Empowerment in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Report

Chika Ezeanya-Esiobu
Howard University

Chika Ezeanya-Esiobu is a Sylff fellow from Howard University in the United States. She was also awarded an SLI grant in 2016, with which she implemented a workshop on leadership training for future young leaders in Rwanda. Born and raised in Nigeria, Chika first visited Rwanda as a junior consultant for the World Bank during her PhD studies and was enchanted by the peaceful, welcoming, and hardworking nation. She joined the faculty of the University of Rwanda after completing her PhD at Howard and, since then, has been vigorously contributing to further economic and social improvement in the country. The following article is based on her recent research on indigenous technology and how it can empower rural women in Rwanda.

* * *

Need for Local Technology

Technology is more strategically positioned to trigger innovation and growth within a community when it is founded on the realities and lived experiences of a people; indigenous technology is that technology with roots in a community or group of people. Many industrially advanced societies commenced their journey with indigenous technology as the starting point, from where they have traveled to reach their present place. A dependence on imported technology often leads to stunted growth of the industrial system. As such, and because innovation and creative output arising from indigenous knowledge is a pertinent driver of economic growth, societies aiming toward unhindered industrial progression will need to seriously explore options available within the indigenous technological knowledge pool (Basu & Weil, 1998). Processes, products, services, and systems built in response to existing and projected challenges or even the realities of a particular

Drinking banana wine.

environment are essentially sustainable and hold potential for further enlargement by community members.

Role of Rural Women in Local Technology

Rural women are increasingly becoming the major custodians of indigenous technology. There are several reasons, including the traditional role of women in homesteads and the migration of men to urban areas in search of employment. Rural women apply indigenous technology to agriculture and food processing, family healthcare, livelihood management, and community development; even where they have access to employment in rural areas, women do not always have access to modern technology for use in the production process and still turn to traditional methods and techniques. Although many governments concerned with rural women's economic empowerment have made efforts to institute modern technology and make it more accessible, its adaptation and sustainability has been a major challenge. The high cost of importing modern technology pales in comparison to the needed investment of time and funds in continuous education, training, and maintenance of that technology.

In rural areas, women are often marginalized in the distribution of jobs, mostly due to traditional beliefs about men being breadwinners and women being homemakers. Women in rural areas often have to contend with social norms that limit their ability to combine work, family, and other social and personal respon-

sibilities. When they are engaged in meaningful employment, women tend to be clustered in fewer sectors than their male counterparts. In the field of agriculture, for instance, women tend to dominate the subsistence production sphere, even in situations where other nontraditional and commercial farming opportunities exist.

Despite the noted challenges, available empirical evidence across the world indicates that with women being increasingly in control of household resources, either through their own earnings or by cash transfers, the chances of overall economic advancement are remarkably improved. Indeed, at the family level, research outcomes from countries as varied as Brazil, China, India, South Africa, and the United Kingdom point to the fact that expenses on overall family well-being and children's education increase when women have greater access to household income (World Bank, 2011).

Rwanda and Rural Women's Advancement

Fifty-four percent of Rwanda's population is female, while 30 percent of rural households are headed by women. Many rural households are not entirely food secure, because they cannot depend on farming due mainly to environmental factors and their utilization of technology that requires intensive labor (IFAD, 2012). In rural areas, women often cultivate smaller plots of less than one hectare and depend on rain to irrigate grain crops, rear traditional livestock, and grow vegetables. Few female farmers compete with men in the cash crops production sector, which occupies only about 4 percent of total arable land. In essence, female-headed households in rural Rwanda are susceptible to poverty and malnutrition.

The government of Rwanda has shown an unwavering commitment to advancing women on several fronts. Economically speaking, the percentage of Rwandan women who are in paid employment is higher than ever in the history of the nation. The government of Rwanda is one of the few countries in the world that have a dedicated Gender Monitoring Office tasked with ensuring the mainstreaming of gender issues in policy making. Still, as in many other parts of the developing world, unemployment and underemployment remain prevalent in Rwanda, especially among poor rural women, who are mostly subsistence farmers. This is despite several pro-poor policies by the Rwandan government that attempt to accommodate the needs of rural women. Several factors account for this, including low financial literacy, poor information access, and weak bargaining power (Pozarny, 2016).

Rwanda: An Empirical Study

The need to find homegrown and grassroots approaches to the economic empowerment of rural women in Rwanda informed research on the role that indigenous technology can play in achieving this aim. The research was conducted by a group of researchers from the University of Rwanda led by the author and supported by the International Development Research Center of Canada. Studies were conducted on the possibility that products based on indigenous technology, such as indigenous beverages (banana wine and juice, sorghum beer and drink), indigenous vegetables, and traditional fermented beer, could contribute to the economic empowerment of rural women.

Indigenous Beverage Production

The results indicate that indigenous-technology-based beverages and fermented milk hold great potential for improving the livelihoods of rural women. We interviewed 100 rural women who produce or sell indigenous beverages and 100 rural producers of fermented milk, who said that they make profits of between 40 US cents and 1 dollar per 20-liter plastic container. Sales can range from a few jerry cans to as much as 40 per week. Female producers also employ a number of casual workers, sometimes as many as five. Many female producers of indigenous beverages note that they were unable to afford meals for their families prior to beginning the business but can now pay school fees, purchase health insurance, and secure decent living spaces. Although these women do not receive government support—as they have said themselves and government officials have confirmed—they do pay taxes. However, many of them note that tax preparation takes up a lot of time, and many have to shut down business during tax preparation. Women producers also find it difficult to obtain loans from financial institutions due to their inability to provide collateral. Women say that although they would like to package their drinks, the cost of packaging is prohibitive and the packaged product would be outside the reach of their current customers.

The study established that rural women can benefit much more economically when diverse beverage products are on offer, especially when basic hygienic and aesthetic standards are met. Rural tourism is receiving a boost in many countries around the world. In France, for instance, tourists travel from all over the world to rural France in order to have a taste of locally made French cheese, crafted using centuries-old indigenous technological know-how. Rwanda can tap into the rural tourism market by identifying local champions in various rural areas and supporting them with branding and marketing.

Indigenous Vegetables

Female rural producers say that indigenous vegetables like *urudega*, *ibidodoki*, *inyabutongo*, and *isogo* have healing properties and have been used to effectively treat such conditions as anemia, ulcers, constipation, diarrhea, oral candidiasis, abdominal pain, and more. They testify that demand for these vegetables in rural areas far outweigh supply, whereas in the urban areas only a few traditional vegetables, such as *dodoki*, are in high demand and are quite expensive, as demand far outweighs supply. Female rural indigenous vegetable farmers note the penchant of urban dwellers for imported vegetables, such as cucumber, cabbage, and tomatoes. They say they are unable to produce sufficient quantities of indigenous vegetables due to limited land, lack of manure, limited knowledge, diseases and pests, the damaging effects of climate change leading to droughts and heavy rains, and the perception that the youth and urban dwellers hold of certain traditional vegetables as being food reserved for poor rural dwellers.

Conclusion

The Rwandan government and development partners can play a key role in improving the production of indigenous products by rural women using indigenous technology. Rather than the previous emphasis on imported technology, which is expensive, difficult to maintain, and does not foster local technology, emphasis can be placed on supporting rural women through a variety of means, including training on processing, hygiene, aesthetics, customer service, financial literacy, branding and marketing, business management, and simple production methods. There is also a need to provide these women producers of indigenous beverages with expanded access to finances, as well as ensure that they have improved market access, infrastructure, and facilities. Moreover, the public needs to be enlightened on the nutritious content and health benefits of indigenous products. The government of Rwanda will then be more likely to achieve its vision of turning the country into a self-sustaining economy, not dependent on external funds or resources for advancement and growth, in record time.

(NB: The full article will be published in 2018 as a special issue of the journal *Indigenous Knowledge: Other Ways of Knowing*.)

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LIST OF SLI AWARDEES AND PROJECTS IN 2016–17

Name (Sylff institution & fellowship year), "project title," country implemented

Corey Johnson (University of Oregon, 2004),"Environmental Geopolitics in the Anthropocene: Understanding Causes, Managing Consequences, Finding Solutions," USA

Jacinta Mwende (University of Nairobi, 2004–06), Socrates Majune (2013–15), Steve Muthusi (2014–16), Alexina Marucha (2014–16), Understanding the 'Push' and 'Pull' Factors Underlying Violent Extremism and Radicalization among the Youth in East Africa," Kenya

Joe McCarter (Victoria University of Wellington, 2009–11),"Catalyzing Cultural Revitalization in Western Province, Solomon Islands,"Solomon Islands

Eva Kiss (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1992), Andrea Kunsagi (Corvinus University of Budapest, 1997), Loretta Huszak (University of Leipzig, 2004–07), Viktoria Ferenc (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 2011–12), Viktor Oliver Lorincz (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 2016), "Own Fate: Self-Managing the Future," Hungary

Rimple Mehta (Jadavpur University, 2010–13),"Carceral Logics and Social Justice: A Dialogue between Practitioners, Scholars and Activists," India

July 28, 2017

Jewish Religious Life in the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic

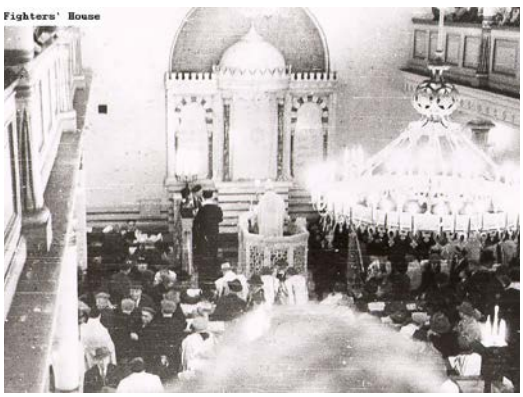
Karina Barkane
University of Latvia

Karina Barkane, a 2014 Sylff fellow from the University of Latvia, visited the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in the United States to reveal unexplored aspects of Jewish religious life in the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic (1944–90) using an SRA award. In this article she describes the challenge of preserving Jewish religious and cultural identity under the Soviet regime in the historical context of secularization and assimilation.

* * *

Introduction

My interest in Jewish history was sparked by my grandfather, who told me many fascinating stories about the Jewish people and their religion. I was captivated by its temporal and spatial breadth. Since its inception over several thousand years ago, Jewish religion has been influenced by other cultures. With a remarkable ability to adapt to changing circumstances, the Jewish people and religion have overcome persecution and flourished over the centuries, integrating cultural assumptions of the neighboring communities into their own social and religious systems and preserving a distinct identity.



A prayer service in the synagogue in Riga during Soviet times. Photo: The Ghetto Fighters' House Archives

Growing assimilation and integration with surrounding cultures have given rise to the fundamental question: What does it mean to be a Jew? Is it a religious identity, ethnic identity, or a combination of the two? Moreover, as Judaism encompasses a way of life, wherein the religious element

cannot be completely separated from the secular, the issue is made that much more complex and remains open to the present day.

Jews in Latvia

Diversity has also characterized the history of the Jewish community in Latvia. Jews who immigrated to Latvia came from different regions. The first Jews came from Prussia and settled in Courland (western Latvia) at the end of the sixteenth century. They were well-educated and influenced by German culture. Meanwhile, Jews in Latgale (eastern Latvia) first appeared in the mid-seventeenth century and were closer to the traditional Lithuanian and Russian Jewish communities. They were less educated than the Courland Jews but more strictly observed religion.

By the end of the nineteenth century Jews comprised a substantial part of Latvia's population. In some cities they accounted for around half of the entire population: 69.6% of the population in Jaunjelgava, 59.4% in Bauska, 54.5% in Ludza, 54.0% in Rēzekne, and 49.0% in Valdemārpils.[1] The majority of the synagogues in Latvia, which had a number of outstanding rabbis, were built during this period.

After the establishment of the independent Republic of Latvia (1918–40), Jews in Latvia were granted all the rights of citizenship and could freely express and develop their religion and identity. There numbered more than 200 Jewish religious communities formed by socially diverse people, from prominent manufacturers to ordinary craftsmen.

Fundamental changes occurred over the years, however. These changes were connected not only with the Holocaust but also with the shifting power structure. In 1944 Latvia was forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union. The Communist Party secured its monopoly on all spheres of public life and sought to transform society. This affected the cultural and social roles that Jews could play in Latvia and had a tremendous impact on Jewish religious life.

My Doctoral Dissertation Research

My doctoral dissertation is devoted to the challenging question of preserving Jewish religious identity under the Soviet regime in the context of secularization and assimilation. As the majority of studies on Jews in Latvia look at the period until the middle of the twentieth century, with the Holocaust as an end point, almost no

[1] Leo Dribins, *Ebreji Latvijā* [Jews in Latvia] (Rīga: Elpa, 2002), 43.

research has been carried out on the issue to this day and the history of Jews and Judaism during the Soviet era remains a blank page in the history of Latvia. Scientific publications on this topic cover only particular aspects and periods—primarily the issue of anti-Semitism and the Jews' struggle for the right to emigrate from the USSR—and are scattered across different journals and books that are focused on broader topics.

The main aim of the dissertation is to conduct an in-depth study on Jewish religious life in the Latvian SSR (1944–90) after the Holocaust. Specifically, it seeks to reveal the ideology of and legislation by Soviet power, as well as the local authority's attitude toward Jews and Judaism; analyze the activities of Jewish religious communities, focusing on their spiritual, social, and financial life; and characterize individual and family traditions among Jews during this period.

The preliminary results are summarized in the following sections.

The Soviet Attitude toward Judaism

The Soviet regime's attitude toward Judaism was determined to a certain extent by its religious policy, which was based on the assumption that religion in all its forms is a harmful relic of the past that needs to disappear. The Soviet Union was the first country in the twentieth century to commit to an antireligious policy from its very inception; yet, paradoxically, the religious communities maintained their legal status, albeit under constant pressure.[2] The state used a vast apparatus of education, propaganda, and repression to implement a fundamentally antireligious doctrine. Over the years this was adjusted according to the overall social and political context, including development of the state and international relations.

Due to the strong connection between Jewish religion and nationality, which dictates that the only ethnic group practicing Judaism is the Jews, Soviet policies that affected the Jewish religion ipso facto affected the Jews and vice versa.[3]

According to the framework of Soviet policy on nationality, Jews did not conform to the "scientific" Marxist-Leninist definition of a nation and were targeted for assimilation into the dominant nation. For this reason, the existence of a "Jewish question" in the USSR was denied throughout the Soviet era, even though it

[2] Mordechai Altshuler, *Religion and Jewish Identity in the Soviet Union, 1941–1964* (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2012), 1.
[3] Zvi Gitelman, "Jewish Nationality and Religion," in *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics*, ed. Sabrina P. Ramet (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989), 59.

perpetually stood at the center of public discussion.[4] Soviet authorities did not permit the creation of Jewish educational and cultural institutions. Jews were deprived of even the minimal cultural autonomy: there were no Jewish schools, newspapers, or theaters, for instance. During the so-called campaign against cosmopolitanism[5] of 1949–53, moreover, a number of local Jewish intellectuals were arrested and accused of bourgeois nationalism.

Under these circumstances Jewish religious communities, as the only legitimate organs of Jewish autonomy, came to primarily and, in fact, single-handedly bear the role of cultural and social center of the Jews during this period. Even so, all of their activities were dependent on Soviet power. They were constrained by the operations of the Representative of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults[6] (which were carried out strictly within the politics of the CARC chairman) and by the local authority's attitude, as well as by antireligious propaganda, which was widely disseminated throughout society.

Jewish Religious Life

By April 1949, when the process of registering religious communities was completed,[7] seven Jewish religious communities were officially registered in the Latvian SSR.[8] Of these seven communities, three were subsequently closed by authorities due to Soviet policy.

Individuals who were familiar with Jewish religious customs and agreed to undertake leadership roles were essential to keeping the spirit of the communities alive, as there was a severe shortage of rabbis owing to the Holocaust and Soviet restrictions in rabbinic ordination. Because of their substantial role, however, au-

[4] Naomi Blank, "Redefining the Jewish Question from Lenin to Gorbachev: Terminology or Ideology?" in *Jews and Jewish Life in Russia and the Soviet Union*, ed. Yaacov Ro'I, (Portland: Frank Cass, 1995), 53.

[5] Anticosmopolitan Campaign was an anti-Semitic campaign in the Soviet Union. Cosmopolitans were Jewish intellectuals who were accused of expressing pro-Western feelings and lack of patriotism.

[6] The CARC, with representatives in the Union Republics, was established in 1944 to supervise the enforcement of Soviet legislation regarding religion and manage relations between the Soviet government and religious organizations.

[7] According to Soviet law, a religious group of believers could start its activities only after official registration with the CARC. The registration of a religious community involved many stages and prescriptions. Permission to organize a religious community was granted if the community had at least 20 persons (*dvadtsatka*), a prayer building, and a religious service provider (rabbi).

[8] State Archives of Latvia, coll. 1448, inv. 1, file 28, p. 3.

thorities repressed these individuals in a variety of ways: economic repression, so-called individual work, arrests, and so forth.

Maintaining a religious lifestyle was extremely difficult under the antireligious and anti-Semitic policies. The authorities tended to restrict the obtaining of ritual objects and the provision of kosher meat; attending the synagogue on Jewish holidays, when everyone was obligated to work, could call into question one's loyalty to the regime and trigger a confrontation with authorities. Most Jews had to negotiate between integration into Soviet society and Jewish identity.

Despite the oppression, many Jews strived to preserve their ties with the synagogue and tradition—some of them directly and others disguising it. For instance, almost all religious rites, such as burials and circumcision, were practiced in secret relatively broadly among the Jewish population, even by Jews who distanced themselves from religion.

Synagogue attendance was very high on Pesach, Simchat Torah (during which a significant proportion of visitors were youth), and High Holidays, as well as on the regularly organized days to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust.[9] In 1957, for instance, around 4,000 people attended the prayers on Yom Kippur in the Riga synagogue.[10] Even Jews who were members of the Communist Party and those from the cities, where no Jewish religious communities were reestablished, came to the nearest synagogue to celebrate these holidays.

Since legitimate ways to express Jewish identity had been so narrowed, for many Jews these ties with the synagogue were an opportunity to resolve their ambivalent status—they were highly acculturated but not assimilated and remained "Jews" socially and officially.[11]

Rabbi Gershon Gurevitch , left, performing the chuppah *(Jewish wedding canopy) ceremony for Shlomo Lensky, late 1980s. Photo: Riga synagogue, Peitav-shul (http://shul.lv).*

[9] Pesach is also known as Passover. Simchat Torah is the festival to celebrate and mark the conclusion of the annual cycle of public Torah readings. High Holidays refer to the two days of Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) and Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement).
[10] State Archives of Latvia, coll. 1448, inv. 1, file 257, p. 87.
[11] Zvi Gitelman, *A Century of Ambivalence: The Jews of Russia and the Soviet Union, 1881 to the Present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 178.

Many Jews expressed their ethnic identity by means of religious practice. The religious aspect of Jewish life thus underwent a radical transformation, increasingly moving away from normative Judaism and forming a new Jewish identity based on ethnicity.

In Closing

The SRA grant gave me an opportunity to conduct research at the YIVO Institute and expand the scope of historical sources for my doctoral dissertation. It allowed me to compare previously gathered sources on Soviet authorities with those from the other side of the Iron Curtain, created from different ideological viewpoints, not only revealing previously unknown or overlooked aspects but also posing many new questions for further research. I would like to greatly thank SRA for the invaluable support.

I hope that, in the long term, my research will go far beyond the local context, helping foster intercultural and interreligious understanding and encouraging sensitivity to the positions of minorities.

December 21, 2016

Resilience in the Context of Poverty

The Experiences of Low-Income Urban Filipino Parents

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What factors make parents resilient to the effects of poverty in urban Manila? Rosanne Jocson, a 2008–2010 Sylff fellow of Ateneo de Manila University, the Philippines, and a doctoral candidate at the University of Michigan when she received her SRA grant, investigates protective factors that buffer the negative effects of poverty and adverse living conditions on low-income urban Filipino mothers and fathers.

* * *

In the Philippines, little systematic research has been done to study the effects of economic strain on parents and children and the factors that buffer its negative effects. This is a cause for concern, given that poor and low-income families constitute more than half of the household population in the Philippines.[1] In Metro Manila, the urban capital, about 1.8 million households are considered poor and another 8.7 million households are low-income.[1] Poor and low-income families confront several stressors in their psychosocial and physical environment, such as residence in makeshift dwellings, inadequate sanitation and drainage, limited access to clean water, overcrowding, and other threats to physical health.[2] In fact, reports show that Metro Manila has the largest number and percentage of children experiencing shelter and water deprivation.[3] Residents in informal settlements also face stigma, housing insecurity, and eviction threats, along with violence and dangers due to crime, drug use, and neighborhood gangs.[2] How do parents and children manage risk and

A snapshot from a low-income neighborhood in Metro Manila.

function well despite these difficult conditions? Broadly, my research seeks to identify the factors that contribute to their resilience and positive development.

What Is Resilience?

In physics, resilience is the ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape after it has been pulled, stretched, or bent in some form. Applying this characteristic to people, resilience is typically viewed as "toughness," or the ability to "bounce back" from difficulty. In the field of psychology, resilience is defined as the achievement of relatively positive outcomes despite risk or adversity.[4, 5]

An important feature of resilience is that it is a *process* of overcoming the negative effects of risk exposure and not a static, individual trait.[4, 6] This is important to note because framing resilience as a trait that lies within the person could lead to some form of blame on the individual if it is not achieved. As such, the main question regarding resilience is, "What factors make some people succeed despite experiencing risk or adversity?" These factors are known as "protective factors."

Broadly speaking, protective factors are resources that buffer the negative effect of adverse conditions on an individual's functioning.[4, 6, 7] These could be family-level factors, such as support, cohesion, and quality of communication among family members. They could also be resources outside the family, such as friends, mentors, and other supportive relationships in the neighborhood and community. Finally, they may also include individual-level factors, such as resourcefulness, intelligence, optimism, self-regulation, and spirituality.

Taking these together, resilience is not just an individual achievement. Rather, it is a process that is achieved through protective factors that are derived from people and resources in the individual's context.

Investigating Resilience among Low-Income Filipino Parents

Given my research interest in poverty in the Philippine context, I used an SRA grant to investigate the individual-, family-, and community-level factors that promote resilience among Filipino parents living in low-income neighborhoods in Manila. I was specifically interested in the roles of religiosity and spirituality, family-oriented values and behaviors, and community cohesion in buffering the effects of poverty-related risks on Filipino mothers and fathers.

My focus on these three factors is based on their cultural relevance in the local context. First, the Philippines has the third largest Catholic population in the world,[8] and as such, religiosity and spirituality, especially beliefs and practices that

The author, center, with her research team at the host institution, Ateneo de Manila University.

are rooted in the Catholic faith, are deeply entrenched in Philippine society. Second, Filipinos are often described as having a strong adherence to family-oriented values emphasizing cohesiveness among immediate family members and extended relatives, respect for elders and parental authority, and mutual obligations.[9,10] Third, Filipino family-oriented values extend to people in local communities and neighborhoods, with close neighbors typically treated as extended family.[11]

I visited Manila from January to July 2016 to work on this research project. I was hosted by the Ateneo de Manila University Psychology Department and worked with mentors, colleagues, and students who provided invaluable support throughout the entire research process. I had the pleasure of working with a team of local graduate students in psychology, who assisted me in the translation and adaptation of survey measures, pilot testing, and data collection in three local communities. The research team worked closely with community leaders and coordinators from the recruitment sites to ensure smooth data collection with the 200 parents who participated in this study. This process highlighted the importance of establishing partnerships and strengthening ties with communities and local institutions for the success of a research project.

The main objectives of my dissertation are to (a) examine the ways in which poverty-related risks influence parents' psychological well-being and parenting behaviors, (b) identify culturally relevant individual, familial, and community-level protective factors against poverty-related risks, and (c) investigate similarities and differences between Filipino mothers and fathers.

Initial analyses showed, after controlling for family income, that several poverty-related risks were associated with higher levels of psychological distress among mothers and fathers. These include neighborhood disorder, lack of access to water and electricity, food insecurity, and exposure to community violence. Many poverty-related risks were also associated with lower levels of warmth, after controlling for family income. These include lack of neighborhood resources, neighborhood disorder, and lack of access to water.

Further analyses showed that certain individual- and family-level factors had protective relations with parenting behaviors. For example, mothers' spirituality

The research team with the barangay *chairman (the highest elected community leader) and other community coordinators of one of the research sites.*

was associated with higher levels of warmth and parent-adolescent communication quality. Maternal and paternal efficacy was also associated with higher levels of communication quality. Both mothers' and fathers' family-oriented behaviors were likewise associated with higher levels of communication quality and monitoring. These initial results highlight the importance of considering contextual risks when studying the impact of economic disadvantage on Filipino families and emphasize the roles of spirituality of mothers, as well as efficacy and family-oriented behaviors of both mothers and fathers, in enhancing their functioning.

Toward a More Global Perspective in Poverty Studies

The SRA grant has been instrumental in my goal to contribute international perspectives to the study of poverty and resilience. The need to adopt a more global perspective in this field is compelling, given the severe underrepresentation of developing countries in psychological research. As the nature and experience of poverty differ widely across contexts, it would be unwarranted to generalize findings derived from Western developed regions to the much larger population of children and families living in low- and middle-income countries. In the Philippines, for example, it is important to identify and highlight assets that are culturally and contextually relevant. These findings could then be incorporated to intervention projects, such as in the design and evaluation of parenting and child development

programs for low-income Filipino families. Along with larger-scale efforts toward reducing poverty and inequality, such initiatives could help facilitate healthy family functioning and child development even in disadvantaged contexts.

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November 10, 2016

Verbs and the History of Bantu Languages Near the Serengeti

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It is said that there are more than 6,000 languages spoken today in the world. The majority of them are so-called minority languages and are endangered. Timothy Roth, a 2014 Sylff fellow of the University of Helsinki, conducted fieldwork in Tanzania to examine four Mara Bantu languages–so-called minority languages–using an SRA award. His article, explaining the findings from his fieldwork, highlights the importance of "minority" languages.

* * *

The Mara Region of Tanzania is home to over 20 different language varieties in an area the size of the US state of Delaware.[1] Mara is situated between Lake Victoria to the west and Serengeti National Park to the east, with the nation of Kenya just to the north. As one might assume, the sheer density of languages and dialects in the region is quite remarkable. Although there are several Nilotic languages in the region, most of the varieties belong to the Bantu language family.

The area around Lake Victoria is extremely important for reconstructing the history of the Bantu peoples, specifically concerning the general routes taken across sub-Saharan Africa during what is called the "Bantu migration." There is consensus among scholars that the Bantu migration took place several thousand years ago from what is now

Mara Region, Tanzania.

[1] Hill, Dustin, Anna-Lena Lindfors, Louise Nagler, Mark Woodward, and Richard Yalonde. 2007. *A sociolinguistic survey of the Bantu languages in Mara Region, Tanzania*. Unpublished ms. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: SIL.

Acacia savanna inside Serengeti National Park, about 90 km from Musoma.

Cameroon.[2] What is in dispute among historians (and researchers from other disciplines) is the direction(s) in which the early Bantu communities moved. One major hypothesis places early Bantu communities to the west of Lake Victoria as the result of a primary migration from Cameroon. Some of these early Bantu communities would have soon spread to the east side of the lake. This hypothesis happens to correspond well with the paleoecological and archaeological evidence.[3]

Many of the languages in Mara are endangered to varying degrees and are linguistically underdescribed. There are many language endangerment issues here in terms of the need for language documentation, legitimacy, and the dynamic effects that language development and mother-tongue education can have on the communities themselves. There is an innate value to minority languages whereby language and cultural preservation result in a "mental" or "intellectual" wealth that belongs to humanity.[4]

Hale says, "At this point in the history of linguistics, at least, each language offering testimony for linguistic theory brings something important, and heretofore not known or not yet integrated into the theory. In many cases, data from a 'new' language forces changes in the developing theory, and in some cases, linguistic diversity sets an entirely new agenda."[5]

Thus, any additional linguistic understanding of the Mara languages could have ramifications not only for Bantu migration hypotheses but also for the advancement of current linguistic theory.

My research concerns four of these Mara Bantu languages: Ikoma, Nata, Is-

[2] Pakendorf, B., K. Bostoen, and C. de Filippo. 2011. Molecular perspectives on the Bantu expansion: A synthesis. *Language Dynamics and Change* 1: pp. 50–88.
[3] Nurse, Derek. 1999. Towards a Historical Classification of East African Bantu Languages."In Hombert, Jean-Marie and Larry M. Hyman (eds.), *Bantu Historical Linguistics: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives*, pp. 1–41. Stanford: CSLI. p. 9.
[4] Hale, Ken. 1998. "On endangered languages and the importance of linguistic diversity." In Grenoble, Lenore A. and Lindsay J. Whaley (eds.), *Endangered languages: Current issues and future prospects*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 193.
[5] *Ibid.* p. 194.

enye, and Ngoreme. These languages are closely related and form a subgroup called Western Serengeti. I am working on multiple languages rather than just one because the density of Bantu languages in the Mara region provides a unique opportunity to compare closely related languages. My research is focused on verbs, specifically the grammatical markers that encode tense, aspect, modality, and evidentiality (TAME). In Bantu languages—and many other languages around the world—differences in pitch can change the meaning of words and can also apply to these grammatical TAME markers; this concept is called "grammatical tone" and is a crucial part of any analysis of the verbal system. I am comparing the function and meaning of the TAME markers in Western Serengeti in order to understand how they developed and what that reveals about the history of these languages. As far as methodology is concerned, a focus on function and meaning (and not just forms) makes it necessary to combine any elicitation with the collection of natural texts.

View of Lake Victoria from Makoko, just outside of Musoma.

For the first phase of my research, I went to Musoma, Tanzania, in October 2014 as a Sylff fellow and collected initial data from each of the languages. This initial data mostly consisted of elicitation from lists of words and sentences but also included audio recordings of stories and conversations. Because the TAME systems were underdescribed, I needed to cast a wide net to see what I would find. (Bantu languages are known for having intricate TAME systems.[6]) The first phase was certainly a success, as I was able to figure out the general pattern of how the present-day TAME systems are organized. Surprisingly, I found that the systems are organized primarily around aspect (perfective versus imperfective) and not tense. This type of organization is more like some of the non-Bantu Niger-Congo languages of West Africa.[7]

These surprising facets of the initial research made the second phase that much more important, as I had many remaining questions as a result. For example:

[6] Botne, Robert and Tiffany L. Kershner. 2008. Tense and aspect in cognitive space: On the organization of tense/aspect systems in Bantu languages and beyond. *Cognitive Linguistics* 19 (2): pp. 145–218. p. 146. The *E* is left out here because African languages are not known for having evidentiality (see Aikhenvald 2004: p. 291).

[7] Nurse, Derek. 2008. *Tense and aspect in Bantu*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 281.

- If the systems are organized around aspect, how do speakers choose a particular aspect to communicate past, present, or future? Is it merely whether the event is viewed as complete or incomplete?
- Do the semantics of the verbs themselves (lexical aspect) influence the selection of certain grammatical aspects? Are there any restrictions on which verbs can take which grammatical aspects?
- Quite a bit of overlap exists in some of the aspects that cover (what would be) the immediate past and present. Does modality play any role in distinguishing between these?

With the SRA grant, I traveled again to Tanzania in June 2016 for the second phase of fieldwork. I worked on my research for two weeks at the SIL International Uganda-Tanzania Branch regional headquarters in Musoma. I brought in two mother-tongue speakers per language group as language informants for two to four days each and used Swahili to talk with them about their language(s) and conduct the research. Part of the research included transcription of previous audio data as well as word-for-word translation into Swahili. Additional research elements included further elicitation and recording (for lexical aspect and grammatical tone).

Ikoma language informants working on text transcription.

With the research that the SRA grant allowed me to undertake, not only did I gain some answers regarding the first two questions above, but the major finding came in relation to the third question: in three of the languages—Ikoma, Nata, and Isenye—the morpheme *-Vká-* combines inceptive aspect with what is called witness/non-witness evidentiality. Although not modality per se as initially expected, evidentiality is the "grammatical marking of information source."[8] In Ikoma, Nata, and Isenye the inceptive is used if the report comes from a witness to the event, while the perfective is used if the report comes from a non-witness to the event. Evidentiality has not been described for many African languages and is definitely an emerging area for research.

In addition, evidentiality has a clear relationship with episodic memory, or "the

[8] Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 2004. *Evidentiality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 392.

memory of past events that have been personally experienced and is thus based on sensory information."[9]

Tense and aspect also have clear relationships with storytelling and, more generally, how events are conceptualized by speakers. Using the cognitive linguistic concept of construal, for instance, tense and aspect can be explored in terms of how speakers perceive themselves and time in relation to events. The construals "TIME is a PATH" and "TIME is a STREAM" form the backbone for these relationships. In a PATH construal, the speaker views himself as moving while time remains unmoving. In a STREAM construal, however, time is moving and either the speaker or the event are seen as moving along with it.[10]

Remember that the systems in the Western Serengeti varieties are organized primarily around aspect without nearly as many tense distinctions as other Bantu languages. Aspect "denotes a particular temporal phase of the narrated event as the focal frame for viewing the event."[11] Think of different aspects in this sense as different video cameras set up around an event with one capturing the beginning, one the end, one the whole thing, and so forth. In Ngoreme, for example, there are at least four ways of communicating the "present tense" as shown immediately below. The underlined portions of the italicized Ngoreme verbs are the parts of the words that make their meanings different.

Ngoreme (Roth fieldnotes 2014, 2016)
a. Progressive
nkohíka bhaaní
b. Perfective
mbahíkire c. Imperfective
mbarahíka
d. Inceptive
bhaakáhika
"They [the tourists] (*arrive, are arriving*) [at the top of the mountain]."

If we begin to think about aspect in relation to the many verb forms involved in constructing a narrative, we can see how there are a multitude of choices available for the speakers of these languages to frame the story, and the events within

[9] Dahl, Östen. 2011. The structure of human memory and tense-aspect-mood-evidentiality (TAME). Abstract. Website: http://www.mpi.nl/events/mpi-colloquium-series/mpi-colloquium-series-2011/osten-dahl-february-15
[10] Botne and Kershner 2008: pp. 147–50.
[11] *Ibid*. p. 171.

that story. In analyzing narrative discourse, there is some scaffolding available to the speaker with some aspects used for foreground material (sequence of events) and others for background (e.g., flashbacks).[12] But in Western Serengeti these choices can also be affected by formal versus informal register considerations (e.g., Biblical text versus a folktale or story told over lunch).[13] In *Storytelling and the Sciences of Mind*, Herman says that there is an "inextricable interconnection between narrating and perspective taking" and, further, that "storytelling acts are grounded in the perceptual-conceptual abilities of embodied human minds."[14] Why then do speakers make the choices they do, and what does that tell us about the human mind and cognition? I hope that my research may help to widen our understanding of what is possible in terms of cognition and memory, storytelling, and the conceptualization of events.

Not only does my research play a role in these types of questions, but it also has implications across several academic disciplines in addition to linguistics (e.g., history, sociology, and archaeology). Specifically, I hope my investigation will, in coming from a linguistic perspective, build on the research of Jan Bender Shetler who has written two integral sociohistorical works on the ethnic groups in Mara, *Telling Our Own Stories* and *Imagining Serengeti*. The former is mostly a collection and analysis of oral histories from several ethnic groups in Mara, including origin stories. The latter focuses on spaces and landscape memory and draws on multidisciplinary evidence (including archaeology) to support the argument that the Western Serengeti peoples have deep historical roots in the Serengeti land itself. Comparative tense/aspect research here should shed further light on where these groups originally came from, how they are related to one another and to other Bantu languages in Tanzania, historical movements, and possible contact with Nilotic and Cushitic peoples. Like fingerprints, the somewhat unique set of similarities and differences in the tense/aspect paradigms may in this way allow for an advancement in our understanding of the sociohistory of these ethnic groups.

Finally, as I mentioned briefly above, my research also has a part to play regarding the innate value of minority languages. Even though minority languages in Tanzania are often treated as lesser, by doing linguistic research in these languages we are able to treat what is inherently valuable as worthy of study and with proper

[12] Nicolle, Steve. 2015. *Comparative Study of Eastern Bantu Narrative Texts*. SIL Electronic Working Papers 2015_003. Website: http://www.sil.org/resources/publications/entry/61479. pp. 36ff.
[13] *Ibid*. p. 45.
[14] Herman, David. 2013. *Storytelling and the Sciences of Mind.* Cambridge: The MIT Press. p. 169.

respect. My research and subsequent dissertation allow for additional features of these languages to not only be documented but also be shared with the academic community worldwide. This material includes recorded stories and conversations, transcriptions of those recordings, and their Swahili and English translations. This fits right in with the ethos of the Helsinki Area and Language Studies (HALS) initiative at the University of Helsinki, not to mention the language development work that SIL is doing in the area: developing orthographies, providing literacy programs, translation, and increasing language vitality in the process.

September 5, 2016

The Portrait Image of Emperor Akbar in the Akbarnama and Beyond

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Dipanwita Donde is a 2014–15 Sylff fellow from Jawaharlal Nehru University in India. Using an SRA award, she visited London and Dublin to see and study some of the original manuscripts of the Akbarnama, a beautiful illustrated book commissioned by a Mughal emperor. In this article, she explains how portraiture in the book is used to justify the sovereignty of the successors.

* * *

Abstract

In the closing years of the sixteenth century in India, there was an unexpected burst of portraits of medieval Indian men drawn from life that appeared in illustrated manuscripts, patronized by the third Mughal emperor[1] Akbar (r. 1556–1605). The portraits included Turko-Mongol ancestors of Akbar who ruled in central Asia during the Timurid dynasty (1350–1507);[2] Akbar's immediate ancestors, Babur

[1] The Mughals were the descendants of Turko-Mongol sultans of the Timurid dynasty who ruled in central Asia from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. The Mughals ruled in India from 1526, when Babur defeated the Lodhis and established the empire. The last emperor of the Mughal dynasty was Bahadur Shah II, who was exiled by the British empire in 1857.
[2] The Timurid dynasty began in 1370 under the reign of Shah Timur (r. 1370–1407) in central Asia. The Timurid princes were great patrons of Persian literature and patronized several brilliantly illustrated manuscripts during their reigns. Beatrice Forbes Manz notes that the cultural revival that began under Shahrukh (r. 1405–1447) reached its zenith under Sultan Husayn Bayqara (r. 1470–1506), who turned Herat into a "shining centre of cultural patronage" (Manz, "Temür and the Problem of a Conqueror's Legacy," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 8, iss. 1 [1998], p. 39). Also see Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (Los Angeles: Museum Associates, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1989) and Beatrice Forbes Manz, "Tamerlane's Career and Its Uses," *Journal of World History*, vol. 13, no. 1 (2002), pp. 1–25.

and Humayun;[3] the men of Akbar's court belonging to several different cultural and regional backgrounds;[4] and Emperor Akbar himself. During Akbar's reign, hundreds of thousands of folios were produced (for assembling into albums and manuscripts) in the imperial atelier by an estimated 100 artists working together as a team.[5] The subjects explored in the manuscripts were primarily Persian texts authored by medieval poets such as Firdausi, Nizami, and Jami. Along with Persian epics, Akbar had the reigns of his ancestors written and compiled into histories, several copies of which he ordered to be produced into magnificent manuscripts. These illustrated manuscripts contained portrait images of Timurid and Mughal ancestors based on textual descriptions available in the writings of Timurid princes, including Babur,[6] and made into stunning folios by the imperial artists. Akbar also ordered the history of his own reign to be chronicled, and Abul Fazl was chosen to write it. Abul Fazl took several years to complete it, finally presenting the Akbarnama (Book of Akbar) to the emperor in 1579.[7] The text written by Abul Fazl was further produced into illustrated manuscripts, documenting pictorially the important episodes in the life and reign of Emperor Akbar.

In this paper, I raise three questions about the portrait of Akbar in the *Akbarnama* and attempt to answer them through my research.

1. What was the significance of portraiture during the reign of Emperor Akbar?
2. Which transcultural prototypes helped shape the portrait image of Emperor Akbar in the painted folios of the *Akbarnama*?
3. Were there any differences between the portrait of Akbar illustrated during his reign and posthumous images illustrated during the reign of his son and successor, Jahangir (r. 1605–1627)?

These questions are relevant to my research on the portrait of Akbar, which occupies a significant position in the genre of portraiture, explored extensively during the reign of Akbar and his successors. By raising these questions, I wish to

[3] Babur was the first Mughal emperor in India. He conquered India in 1526 and reigned there until his death in 1530. Humayun, Babur's son and successor, ruled India in 1531–40 and again in 1555–56.
[4] The men of Akbar's court were Persian, Uzbeks, Afghans, Jesuits, and Rajputs belonging to Shia, Sunni, Christian, and Hindu faiths.
[5] Milo Cleveland Beach, *The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court* (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1981), p. 19.
[6] Babur was the author of *Baburnama*, the first autobiography written by a Timurid prince.
[7] The official history of Akbar's reign was begun in 1589 and completed in 1598, in the fifth and final decade of Akbar's rule.

trace how portraiture became a political tool for stating the ideology and sovereignty of Mughal emperors.

Significance of Portraiture in Mughal Manuscript Art

Portraiture—that is, images of persons drawn from life—was introduced into manuscript art[8] in India during the reign of Emperor Akbar. The hundreds of portrait images of Akbar that were illustrated during his reign and during the reigns of his successors Jahangir (r. 1605–1627), Shah Jahan (r. 1628–58), and Aurangzeb (r. 1658–1707) signify a preoccupation with portraiture in manuscript art.

Akbar ascended the throne in 1556 at the age of 13, after the untimely death of his father, Humayun (r. 1530–40, 1555–56). Humayun had reconquered India in 1555 with the help of the Shia ruler of Iran, Shah Tahmasp (r. 1524–76). In addition to military support, Humayun had also requested the services of two painters from the Shah's court to join him while he was in exile in Kabul. The two artists, Mir Sayyed Ali and Abd-ul Samad, joined Humayun's camp at Kabul and accompanied him to India during his reconquest. Trained in Persian manuscript art, they were two of the finest artists in the court of the Shah, having displayed their brilliance in the several manuscripts produced during the reign of Shah Tahmasp. The artists brought with them a knowledge of Persian painting, which included portraiture learnt from the great master artist Bihzad (1450–1535) himself. Thus, the Persian iconographic canon that was in vogue in central Asia became the foundation of Mughal art, which originated during the reign of Emperor Akbar.

Soon after ascending the throne, Akbar launched a massive imperial manuscript art project, recruiting hundreds of artists from regional centers in the sub-continent. The two Persian artists who accompanied Akbar's father to India became *ustads* (masters) under whom the Indian artists began illustrating episodes from Persian classics as well as the histories of the Timurid-Mughal dynasties. Under Akbar's orders and his personal supervision, the histories of the reign of his ancestors as well as his own history were first documented textually and then illustrated into fabulous manuscripts, displaying the mature Akbari style.[9] These illus-

[8] Manuscript art, also known as miniature painting, originated in Persia during the reign of Mongol conquerors in the fourteenth century. Illustrations made on paper were accompanied by Persian calligraphy written in text boxes within the composition. They were usually assembled into albums and bound with a leather cover, decorated with gold inscriptions and intricate designs.

[9] J. Losty, *The Art of the Book in India* (London: The British Library Publishing Division, 1982).

trated histories carried portrait images of Akbar's ancestors, some drawn posthumously, based on textual descriptions; some were copies of portraits of Babur and Humayun that had been drawn from life. Akbar also ordered portrait images of his courtiers to be drawn from life and assembled into an album for his perusal. He further showed keen interest in Sufis and Indian holy men living in his realm and ordered their portraits to be illustrated. These portraits of Timurid sultans, Mughal emperors, Rajput nobility, and other ordinary men displayed in the albums produced for Akbar, along with his own portraits represented in the *Akbarnama*, must have been the largest collection of portraits of medieval men in India in the sixteenth century.

My research, however, focuses on the portrait image of Akbar in the *Akbarnama*, tracing the different transcultural strains that were sourced and transferred from Persian, Indic, and European prototypes to shape the emperor's portrait image.

Portraits of Akbar in the *Akbarnama*

During my research, I studied the portraits of Akbar in the *Akbarnama* published in art history books and read essays written by Mughal scholars about portraiture in Mughal art. I was deeply influenced by the writings of Dr. Susan Stronge, especially her essay in which she categorized the images of the emperor shown in one codex into different genres, which helped shape the personality of Emperor Akbar. Dr. Stronge further divided the illustrations into separate categories and placed groups of images under these subcategories. This exercise was very useful in that it enabled future scholars to study and compare the genres defined by Dr. Stronge.

The portrait of Akbar, right, indexing his particular characteristics, was used like a stencil in multiple compositions. Portraits of Akbar from the Victoria and Albert Museum's Akbarnama*, Mughal c. 1586–89.*
© Victoria and Albert Museum, London (visited January 14–30, 2016)

Dr. Stronge argued that the paintings fell under five identifiable categories: the royal hunt, the depiction of treachery, scenes of prestige, battles, and the life of the king.[10] This categorization, however, limits any further study of Akbar's portrait, as the imperial image is repeatedly represented without

[10] Susan Stronge, *Painting for the Mughal Emperor: The Art of the Book, 1560–1660* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2002), pp. 68–84.

much variation to his form, despite occupying a prime location within carefully composed narratives. If we were to expand the concept of portraiture by including the emperor's personality and attempt to trace prototypes that could have served as models, we should be able to identify ideologies and identities absorbed from transcultural sources that defined the portrait image of the emperor.

After studying the portrait images of Akbar illustrated in the *Akbarnama*, I realized that these categories needed further research. I questioned where these ideas originated from. In other words, were there any textual sources that informed the construction of Akbar's personality in the *Akbarnama*?

My research led me to medieval Persian texts, imbued with tales of epic heroes and kings that were used as models for Timurid rulers of central Asia. The sultans of central Asia fashioned their biographies upon the lives and reigns of ancient heroes and kings narrated in Persian literature. Painted codices with portraits of Timurid sultans often had ruling sultans emulate figures of protagonists from ancient and medieval Persian texts.[11] The circulation of these ideas in the wider Persian-speaking world during the 1500s ensured that all kings who conquered and ruled over local or foreign territories were informed by ideas of kingship from ancient classical and epic tales written by great poets of Persian literature. Hence, I was able to connect several pieces of texts composed during medieval times with images painted during the Mughal dynasty, in which, like their Timurid ancestors, the Mughal emperors displayed themselves as heroes of ancient and medieval epics. The image of Akbar, categorized into different genres within one codex, was an amalgamation of several transcultural prototypes drawn from Persian, Indic, and European sources.[12]

Two manuscripts of the original illustrated *Akbarnamas*, one illustrated in

[11] See Eleanor Sims, "The Illustrated Manuscripts of Firdausī's *Shāhnamā* Commissioned by Princes of the House of Tīmūr," Ars Orientalis, vol. 22 (1992), pp. 43–68. Discussing three illustrated manuscripts of the *Shahnama* produced for the three Timurid princes—Ibrahim Sultan (1435), Baysangur (1433), and Mohammad Juki (1444)—Sims notes that each contains at least one illustration that could be interpreted as a "portrait" of the prince who commissioned it (p. 44); as cited in Linda T. Darling, "'Do Justice, Do Justice, For That Is Paradise': Middle Eastern Advice for Muslim Rulers in India," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, vol. 22, nos. 1 and 2 (2002).

[12] See Catherine Asher, "Ray from the Sun: Mughal Ideology and the Visual Construction of the Divine," in *The Presence of Light: Divine Radiance and Religious Experience*, ed. Matthew T. Kapstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Milo C. Beach, *The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court*; and A. Azfar Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

1590–95 and the second painted in 1600–05, are now preserved in institutions outside India; the main bulk of the folios are preserved in the UK. Hence, I was very keen to avail myself of the Sylff Research Abroad fellowship to travel to the UK and study the original manuscripts.

Summary of Major Findings

The Sylff Research Abroad award allowed me to realize a dream: to see and study sixteenth-century Persian manuscript illustrations produced during the reign of Akbar in India. The original manuscripts of the *Akbarnama*, of which 116 illustrations are preserved at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and 66 illustrations at the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, Ireland, contain several minute details that can only be gauged with the naked eye. The fellowship allowed me to travel to the UK and research primary material. In addition, I met several scholars of Mughal art, who shared their knowledge with me and discussed what is being currently researched on the subject.

Along with the original folios of the *Akbarnama*, I studied more than 400 illustrations painted during the Mughal period that are preserved in the archives of the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Library, and the Chester Beatty Library. I also researched Persian manuscripts illustrated during the Timurid and the Safavid periods in central Asia, which were the precursor to Mughal painting, and studied stylistic commonalities and differences between the Persian and Mughal manuscripts.

Directly accessing primary material containing portrait images of Emperor Akbar helped me analyze how the portrait of Akbar functioned differently for each emperor. For Akbar, his own portrait imitated the model of Hero-King, Just-Ruler, Prophet-King, and God-King from Persian, Indic, and European sources. During the reign of Jahangir, however, Akbar's portrait image underwent changes to suit the role of a divine Mughal ancestor on which Jahangir chose to shape his own portrait image.

According to my research of the primary material preserved at the Chester Beatty Library and the Victoria and Albert Museum, functions of portraiture differed between father and son, due to three factors.

Firstly, the portrait image of Akbar developed during the emperor's rule was carefully constructed to address a polity that would recognize and be familiar with the symbols of kingship that was in circulation. Thus, the portrait of Akbar as depicted in illustrated folios addressed his audience with the visual lexicon developed by his ancestors, the Timurids of central Asia. They relied heavily on Persian

Akbar wearing a halo.
An Equestrian Portrait of Akbar
The Late Shah Jahan Album
c. 1650, India
In 07B.21b
The Chester Beatty Library (visited February 1–11, 2016)

Akbar without a halo.
The Elderly Akbar Receives Murtaza Khan
Shuja' al-Dawla Album
Manohar
c. 1600, India, In 34.2
The Chester Beatty Library (visited February 1–11, 2016)

literary sources, which were in circulation throughout the Persian-speaking world.

Secondly, in the Persian tradition, the king had to display certain characteristics to project himself as a suitable ruler for his subjects. These characteristics were:

i) a great hero-king based on the personality of Rustam, the hero of Shahnama (Book of Kings) written by Firdausi in the tenth century;
ii) a humanist king based on Sufi literature developed by great poets like Jami writing in the Timurid courts during the fifteenth century;
iii) a prophet-king emulating the character of Iskander, Alexander the Great, in the *Iskandernama* (Romance of Alexander) written by Nizami in the twelfth century; and
iv) in Akbar's case, a god-king based on Sanskrit texts that discussed several avatars of Lord Vishnu and considered the king, including a Muslim emperor like Akbar, to be an avatar of the Hindu god Vishnu.

Akbar's personality as depicted in the *Akbarnama* displayed all these characteristics of an ideal ruler, gathered from several literary and transcultural sources.

Thirdly, when Akbar's son and successor Jahangir ascended the throne, he needed to reimagine Akbar's portrait to suit his own demand for an ancestral hero-king imbued with divine qualities. The reimagining of Akbar's portrait was necessary to articulate an alternative politics that suited the newly announced emperor and help Jahangir project an image of himself as a world conqueror with divine attributes.

During my visit to the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, I was able to match

Akbar as a brave hero (left), and Akbar as a just ruler (right).
Portraits of Akbar from the Victoria and Albert Museum's Akbarnama
Mughal c. 1586–89
© Victoria and Albert Museum, London (visited January 14–30, 2016)

text with image, which helped me locate certain alterations in Akbar's portraits[13] that were illustrated during the reign of his son. This finding helps me prove my argument that the portrait image of Akbar was remapped by Jahangir to suit a dynastic-ancestral image to legitimize his own rule.

Transcultural Distinctiveness at Akbar's Court

Illustrated manuscripts can tell us many aspects of human societies and how social relations were hinged upon a keen understanding between a ruler and his subjects. During the reign of Akbar in India, the emperor followed a structure of protocol that included systems taken from many cultural sources and applied universally at the royal court. This transcultural homogeneity was the most unique aspect of Akbar's reign that transferred traditional courtly culture informed by Persianate tradition, as well as shaping a new courtly culture based upon systems absorbed from Hindu traditions.

The medium of portraiture, which formed the bulk of the images in Mughal art during the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan, allows us a window by which we can not only study the physiognomic particularities of men belonging to a particular region, but also glimpse the popular models that were in vogue and which helped shape the portrait images of Mughal emperors, their coterie, and their subjects. Furthermore, by studying the changes in the visual lexicon between

[13] The use of the halo, a heavily jeweled Emperor Akbar, an older monarch than seen imaged in the first *Akbarnama* with gray hair and a slightly stooped body—these were some of the alterations in Akbar's image made during the reign of Jahangir.

Akbar as a Sufi (left), and Akbar in a spiritual trance (right)
Portraits of Akbar from the Victoria and Albert Museum's Akbarnama
Mughal c. 1586–89
© Victoria and Albert Museum, London (visited January 14–30, 2016)

portraits of emperors depicted during their lifetimes and those re-created during the reigns of their successors, we can trace the politics and ideology articulated by the ruling emperor through the medium of manuscript art.

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Soucek, Priscilla, "Persian Artists in Mughal India: Influences and Transformations," *Muqarnas*, vol. 4 (1987), pp. 166–181

LIST OF SRA AWARDEES AND RESEARCH TOPICS IN 2016–17

Name (Sylff institution & fellowship year; university during SRA if other than fellowship-awarding school), "dissertation title," SRA host institution (country)

Awards in Fiscal 2016 (First Round)

Karina Barkane (University of Latvia, 2014), "Jewish Religious Life in Latvian SSR," YIVO Institute for Jewish Research (USA)

Sebanti Chatterjee (Jadavpur University, 2009; Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi), "Western Classical Music in Goa and Shillong: Exploring the Indigenous," Royal Holloway, University of London (UK)

Nikolay Gudkov (UNSW Business School, 2015–17), "Pricing of Financial Derivatives under Stochastic Interest Rates, Stochastic Volatility and Stochastic Mortality," University of Oxford (UK)

Masahiko Haraguchi (Columbia University, 2011–12, 2014), "Modelling the Impact of Floods on Supply Chains Using a Bayesian Network," Chuo University (Japan)

Emanuela Koskimies (University of Helsinki, 2016), "Renegotiating 'Polis' and 'Cosmopolis' at the International Criminal Court," CePTL, University of Amsterdam and International Criminal Court (Netherlands)

Agnieszka Krol (Jagiellonian University, 2015), "Disability, Motherhood, Care, Reproductive Autonomy and Motherhood Experiences of Women with Disabilities in Poland," University of Iceland (Iceland)

Peiyao Li (Jilin University, 2014), "Collective Enterprises Established by State-Owned Industrial Firms and the Transformation of 'Danwei Community,'" Stanford University (USA)

Elisabeth Liddle (Otago University, 2013; University of Cambridge), "Increasing the Understanding of the Factors that Affect Rural Water Point Functionality and Use in Malawi: A Network Based Analysis," Makerere University (Uganda)

Elisabet Prudant (University of Chile, 2009; University of Saõ Paulo), "Urban Modernity and Mobility: Tram's Itineraries in Santiago of Chile, 1858–1934," Lateinamerika-Institut, Freie Universität Berlin (Germany)

Ivana Rajkovic (University of Belgrade, 2016), "Monetary and Exchange Rate Policy Challenges in Small Open Dual Currency Economy," GIIDS (Switzerland)

Adriane Sanctis de Brito (University of Saõ Paulo, 2014), "Colonialism in International Law Language: Race and Civilization in the 19th-century Brazilian-British Relations on Slavery Abolition," University of Helsinki (Finland)

Xianqiang Wang (Jilin University, 2013), "Modal Parameter Identification and Damage Detection of Bridge Structure under the Influence of Environmental Factors," Korea Advanced Institute Science and Tech (South Korea)

Awards in Fiscal 2016 (Second Round)

Purbasha Auddy (Jadavpur University, 2014–17), "A Narrative of Shifting Objectives: The Development of Content in Bengali Periodicals (1818–1867)," SOAS, University of London (UK)

Julieta Bengochea (El Colegio de México, 2015–17), "South–South Migration Movements of Population in South Latin America," Georgetown University (USA)

Amrita Goswami (Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2014–17), "Recasting the Hindi Film Industry: Exploring New Bollywood," George Eastman Museum (USA)

Evan K. Kirigia (Utrecht University, 2012; McGill University), "On the Venal Path to Primitive Accumulation in the Postcolony: Land Subdivision Challenges and Everyday Forms of Resistance among the Maasai of Narok County, Kenya," Narok County (Kenya)

Marta Kralikova (Comenius University in Bratislava, 2017), "Locally Conditioned Effectiveness of the European Union as the Normative Power in Its Eastern Neighbourhood," European Union in Brussels and other institutions in Kyiv (Belgium and Ukraine)

Giovanna Mode Magalhaes (University of Saõ Paulo, 2009), "Immigrants, Refugees and Education: Understanding Current Global Discourse," University of Lisbon (Portugal)

Sandra Poveda Galeano (University of Deusto, 2012–14; University of Valencia), "Territory and Peasants in Colombia: Local Peace in a Society in Transition," field research (Columbia)

Supitcha Punya (Chiang Mai University, 2009–10; Humbolt University of Berlin), "Restructuring Domestic Institution: Democratization and Development in Laos," Chiang Mai University (Thailand)

Anna Rataj (Jagiellonian University, 2013), "Jewish Ritual Slaughter in Poland and USA in 20th Century," The Yeshiva University Center for Jewish Law & Contemporary Civilization (USA)

Barbara Szczekala (Jagiellonian University, 2016), "Narrative Games and Cinematic Reception in Contemporary Cinema: The Case of the Mind-Game Films," University of Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Aleksandar Zlatanov (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski," 2016), "The Ottoman Cossacks Regiment (Kazak alay) of Michail Czajkowski: Between Europe and Ottoman Empire," Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Empire and three other institutions (Russia)

Awards in Fiscal 2017 (First Round)

Aleksandra Anic (University of Belgrade, 2016), "Gender Pay Gap in Serbia: Evidence from the LFS Data," Department of Economics, Pavillon de Sève, Université Laval, Québec (Canada)

Marta Antosz (Jagiellonian University, 2015), "Somali Refugees in Kenya and Ethiopia and Their Influence on the Security in the Greater Horn of Africa," Georgetown University (USA)

Saul Espino Armendariz (El Colegio de México, 2016–17), "Catholic Feminism in Mexico, c. 1959–1994," Harvard University, Schlesinger Library (USA)

Tess Bartlett (Massey University, 2008), "The Experiences of Imprisoned Primary Care Fathers in Victoria, at the Point of Arrest, Imprisonment and Post–Release," Rutgers University Camden, University of California Irvine, and the Beat Within (USA)

Paula Beger (Leipzig University, 2016–17), "The Asylum and Refugee Policy of the Visegrad States in the Process of Institutional Change," University of Jan Evangelista Purkyně (Czech Republic)

Laura Boudreau (University of California, Berkeley, 2016–18), "Demand–Driven Enforcement of Labor Law in Bangladesh," fieldwork (Bangladesh)

Chiara Digrandi (Institute of Political Education "Pedro Arrupe," 2017), "Audiovisual Narrative as a Means of Expression and Empowerment: The Imaginary as a Resource in the Integration of Adverse Experiences with Migrant Population," Sueños Film Colombia (Columbia)

Fernanda Herrera Lopez (El Colegio de México, 2016–17), "Party Alternation with Incumbency Factor," Stanford University (USA)

Jan Maloch (Comenius University in Bratislava, 2016), "Investigative Journalism as a Tool to Protect the Public Interest," National University of La Plata (Argentina)

Emma McDaid (UNSW Business School, 2017), "Accountability and Control in

the Sharing Economy: Modes of Self–Regulation and Governance in a Semi–Regulated Marketplace," Copenhagen Business School and interviews at respective areas (Denmark, UK, France, Germany)

James Miller (University of Oregon, 2017), "The Continuity of Deep Cultural Patterns in the Face of Climate Change: A Case Study of Three Marshallese Communities," Ministry of Culture, Social Services and Outer Islands Affairs (Republic of the Marshall Islands)

Sergi Vidal Parra (University of Deusto, 2017), "Hydroelectricity and Water Rights of the Mapuche People: Towards a Sustainable Resolution of Social and Environmental Conflicts in Southern Chile," University of Chile (Chile)

Dutta Sudeshna (Jadavpur University, 2014–17), "Adivasi and Mulvasi Women's Subjectivity and Resistance: Testimonies from Jharkhand and Odisha," University of Hawaii, Manoa (USA)

Ganbadrakh Tsend-Ayush (National Academy of Governance, 2012), "Comparative Analysis of Hungarian Prison System with Mongolian Prison System," University of California, San Diego (USA)

Awards in Fiscal 2017 (Second Round)

Jessica Currier (Portland State University, 2017), "Migrant Health Policies in the European Union: A Comparative Policy Analysis," fieldwork (Germany, Ireland, Portugal, and Sweden)

Justin K. Canfil (Columbia University, 2017), "Old Laws, New Techs: The Effect of Military Technological Shocks on Arms Control Regimes," Peking University (China)

Moara Assis Alves Salzedas Crivelente (University of Coimbra, 2017), "The Use of International Law by Civil Society in Armed Conflicts: The Cases of Saharawi and Palestinian Civil Society Actors at the International Level," University of Warwick (UK)

Joanna Durlik-Marcinowska (Jagiellonian University, 2017), "How Does Language Proficiency and Immersion Experience Modulate Interference between Languages? Mechanisms Underlying Language Processing in Multilinguals," University of Granada (Spain)

Erick Serna Luna (El Colegio de México, 2016), "Ruling Below the City: An Ethnographic Study about Political Economy of Popular Commerce in CTS of Mexico City," Freie Universitat Berlin, ZI Lateinamerika-Institut (Germany)

Angela Mendes Freitas (University of Coimbra, 2013), "Place, Policies, and Popu-

lation Health: The Spatial Equity Dimension and the Role of Local Government and Place-Based Approaches on Improving Health—Lisbon, Portugal," UC Berkeley's Institute of Urban & Regional Development (USA)

Melek Mutioglu Ozkesen (Ankara University, 2017), "Agrifood Production and New Imperialism: The Case of Turkey," International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam (Netherlands)

Sujaan Mukherjee (Jadavpur University, 2016–18), "Death in Kolkata: Memory and History in a Post-Colonial City (tentative)," Birkbeck, Birkbeck, University of London (UK)

Bonnie Ruder (Oregon State University, 2017), "Urinary Incontinence Following Surgical Repair of Obstetric Vesicovaginal Fistula: Assessing the Etiology, Severity and Quality of Life in East African Women," Terrewode (Uganda)

Ivo Emilov Strahilov (Sofia University, 2017), "The "Thracian" Narrative in Contemporary Bulgaria: Old Legitimation Strategies or a Quest for European Belonging," Centre de recherches sur les liens sociaux (France)

Marina Stetic (University of Belgrade, 2017–18), "Viticulture in Medieval Serbia," The State Archives in Dubrovnik (Croatia)

Madeline Woker (Columbia University, 2016), "Empire of Inequality: the Politics of Taxation in the French Colonial Empire, 1918–39," Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, Hanoi Center (Vietnam)

Hubert Zieba (Jagiellonian University, 2017), "Representations of HIV and AIDS in American Cinema and Television since 1981," San Francisco State University (USA)

Dongxin Zou (Columbia University, 2013), "Revolutionary Humanitarianism: Chinese Medical Missions in North Africa since 1963," Le Centre d'etudes diocesain "Les Glycines" (Algeria)

April 3, 2018

To Unmake a Victim

Criteria for the Successful Social Reintegration of Human Trafficking Victims

Rui Caria
University of Coimbra

Rui Caria is a Sylff fellow currently enrolled in a master's program at the University of Coimbra in Portugal. He is currently addressing research in the field of criminology, specifically victimization and social reintegration of human trafficking victims, which should be a legitimate policy to protect victims and prevent retrafficking.

* * *

Introduction

I am currently doing my dissertation for a master's in criminal law. The title is "The social reintegration of human trafficking victims," a theme that deals not only with international and European criminal law, criminology, and victimology, but also shines the light on how criminal policy should be carried out in order to find a balance between victim protection and criminal prosecution.

The goal of my research is to advance a criminal law policy oriented by the idea of social reintegration of the victims, capable of harmonizing and bettering the different mechanisms of victim protection, while at the same time helping the fight against trafficking.

To reach this goal, I explore the current international legislation on human trafficking and compare policies from various countries to see which are most effective and which to avoid. I also explore the real circumstances of the victims to paint a clear picture of their vulnerability, followed by an examination of the different concepts of vulnerability in various legislations to see which one is the most suitable for policy making. To conclude, a proposal of a concept of social reintegration is advanced, as well as an attempt to justify its purpose in criminal policy, and a study of the various criteria that in my understanding contribute to its success.

What Is Human Trafficking?

The isolation of the victim. (Photo courtesy of Pexels.com)

Human trafficking is one of the most devastating crimes occurring in the international landscape, not only for the gravity of its offenses but also for the way it exploits the victims through their vulnerability. It is considered a crime against personal liberty, transforming human beings into things and using them as such.

According to international and European law—Article 3 of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Protocol) of 2000, and Article 2 of the Directive 2011/36/EU—trafficking in human beings refers to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power, or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation.

This exploitation includes the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, including begging, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, exploitation of criminal activities, or the removal of organs.

The definition of what constitutes human trafficking is important to determine what actions fall under the scope of the crime, as well as which victims.

Victims and Their Vulnerability

The despair of the victim. (Photo courtesy of Pexels.com)

According to the European directive and the Palermo Protocol, a position of vulnerability means a situation in which the person concerned has no real or acceptable alternative but to submit to the abuse involved. What, then, are some of the factors that contribute to the special vulnerability of human trafficking victims?

A brief criminological analysis will help us reach an understanding. By and large, human trafficking victims are people in situations of great economic struggle and social unbalance, originating from countries or regions that are both economically and socially debilitated. In the face of these circumstances, these people seek countries with better conditions where they might improve their lives, and it is with this idea that they fall in the trap of human trafficking.

Their being in a strange country or region is another factor of their vulnerability, for they lack knowledge of this new territory and suffer from geographical disorientation. Also, traffickers make them afraid of violence on themselves and their families. Another fear is that their community might find out about their activities in prostitution. Finally, a distrust of the local police and judicial authorities is fed by the traffickers that, along with the previous factors, leaves these people extremely dependent on them, which helps reinforce the control of their captors.

Various personal circumstances can contribute to the acceptance of their situation. Victims might have developed drug dependency during their stay in a foreign country, which makes them crave income so that they can satisfy their needs. They

might also be economically indebted to their traffickers for having brought them to a new country, so that they need to work and suffer the exploitation to pay off that debt; this is a common stratagem among traffickers. Studies have shown that there are very reduced percentages of voluntary exercise of prostitution, indicating dark figures of exploitation in this area.

In light of these factors, Article 3 of the Palermo Protocol deems the consent of the victims irrelevant to excuse the criminal action when it is used in the context of this special vulnerability.

Social Reintegration as a Criminal Policy Goal

The shame of the victim. (Photo courtesy of Pexels.com)

It is this special vulnerability of the victims of human trafficking that, in our understanding, justifies the need for social reintegration, given the potential for prevention through this process. Before developing these justifications, we must define social reintegration: it is a process by which secondary victimization is maximally reduced throughout the victim's journey before, during, and after criminal procedure, with the goal that they are not further victimized and, especially, that they are not retrafficked.

Secondary victimization, which social reintegration works to avoid, is a process by which, through complex selection and stigmatization by—but not only by—the judicial process and its entities, a person assumes the stereotype of a victim, suffering further victimization as a consequence of the way she regards her own identity. Human trafficking victims are very susceptible to this kind of process due to the

stigmatization they suffer from their sexual work, the constant abuse from their traffickers, and their placement in the illegal market.

So, to sum up, the special vulnerability of the victims, whose factors we previously referred to, make victims more prone to stigmatization and mistreatment, which results in secondary victimization, therefore justifying the need for social reintegration. This is the humanistic or human rights approach aspect present in this process. The criminal law approach aspect, on the other hand, may manifest itself by justifying this minimization of secondary victimization as a form of prevention of future crimes. The logic we put behind this is the following: if social reintegration prevents secondary victimization, it prevents victims from being revictimized, mainly and ideally in the form of retrafficking; if it prevents them from being retrafficked, it prevents the crime of trafficking, for the object of this crime is the person itself.

We made the effort of emphasizing the two aspects of the process—the human rights approach and the criminal law approach—because these are the two opposing approaches represented in the policy making of human trafficking today: the first oriented towards the protection of victims and the recognition of their rights and the second towards border or migration control and criminal prosecution of the traffickers. We believe that by incorporating both these approaches in its goals, social reintegration can be a balanced criminal policy, taking into account the protection of vulnerable victims and the fight against the crime that exploits them.

We perceive this social reintegration not as a mere post-interventive response to crime, as it is often thought, but as a holistic process that is present before, during, and after criminal procedure and therefore dependent on various criteria for its success. For it to be successful, we believe there must be: a well-defined and useful concept of trafficking of human beings, mainly with regard to the position of vulnerability; a successful identification of the victims so they can benefit from the protection allowed to them by criminal procedure; mechanisms of protection integrated into criminal procedure that reduce the degrading effect it tends to have on the victims, allowing for their protection, legal assistance, and support, without demanding their cooperation in the prosecution; realistic and well-adjusted criteria in regard to the return, or not, of the victims to their country of origin, as well as defined obligations for the states regarding the matter of repatriation.

It is a difficult process, with many variables dependent on making it successful and many in need of improvement. However, I believe that through a good understanding of the real circumstances of the victims and effort on the improvement of international criminal policy to humanistic ideas of protection, there is way to unmake trafficking by unmaking the victims.

March 30, 2018

Rural Restructuring in the Visegrad Group after the Political and Economic Transition

József Lennert
Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Specializing in rural geography and socioeconomic modeling, József Lennert, a 2017 Sylff fellow at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, shares highlights of his doctoral dissertation concerning the process and trends of counterurbanization after the fall of socialism in the Visegrad countries: Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. Lennert made a comparison with the experiences of Western countries as well as among those of the four Visegrad countries, which pose both similar and distinctive aspects.

* * *

Introduction

Thanks to the long-lasting influence of the romanticized Anglo-Saxon narrative of rural idyll, rural areas are still often perceived as stagnant, untouched by modernity, and resistant to any change. However, this is far from the truth: change never avoided rural areas, its rate simply varied during the course of history. From the 1970s a fast-paced rural transformation process started in the first world, bringing about fundamental changes in many aspects of rurality. These intertwining change processes are often summarized with the umbrella term "rural restructuring."

Some of these changes included shifts in migration processes. Before rural restructuring, rural areas had been suffering for a long time from rural out-migration (with the exception of some settlements in the vicinity of an urban center, which were affected by suburbanization). Around the 1970s, a new migration trend called counterurbanization appeared in many first-world countries. Counterurbanization meant the (partial) reverse of previous trends, and migration surpluses appeared even in some previously depopulating remote rural areas. One of the driving forces of these new migratory movements was the increasing appreciation of natural and cultural amenities of rural areas—amenity migration. Rural restructuring also had an impact on land use. Instead of a landscape dominated by monocultural, produc-

tivist agriculture, a more diverse, multifunctional countryside is now preferred. These changes also opened up new future prospects and development possibilities for many previously neglected rural areas.

While the first world underwent rural restructuring, political and economic transition brought different changes and challenges to rural areas of the former socialist bloc. Realizing this, I set the main goals of my research as follows:

- to analyze the transformation of rural areas of the Visegrad Group after the political and economic transition;
- to distinguish those processes similar to Western rural restructuring from those processes derived from the political and economic transition;
- to identify the similarities and differences between the four countries and explore the role of historical backgrounds;
- to map the spatial structure of rural areas in the light of the aforementioned processes; and
- to determine whether the development policies in place are capable of addressing the ongoing transformation processes and territorial differences.

To achieve these aims, I conducted my research in the following manner:

- I analyzed trends in migration processes and changes in land cover in the Visegrad Group after the political and economic transition;
- I created a typology of the rural areas of the Visegrad Group; and
- through a case study, I examined how the allocation of European Union funds varied between different types of settlements.

In the following sections, I would like to share some of the most important findings of this research.

Material and Methods

To examine the processes at the lowest possible level, I conducted my analysis in the spatial level of local administrative units (LAU 2). While my units of analysis are not completely analogous with the municipalities and settlements of the four countries, I will refer to them as such for the sake of a more straightforward discussion.

To achieve the goals stated above, I used a two-step delimitation method. I considered all units of analysis with less than 5,000 inhabitants, as well as those

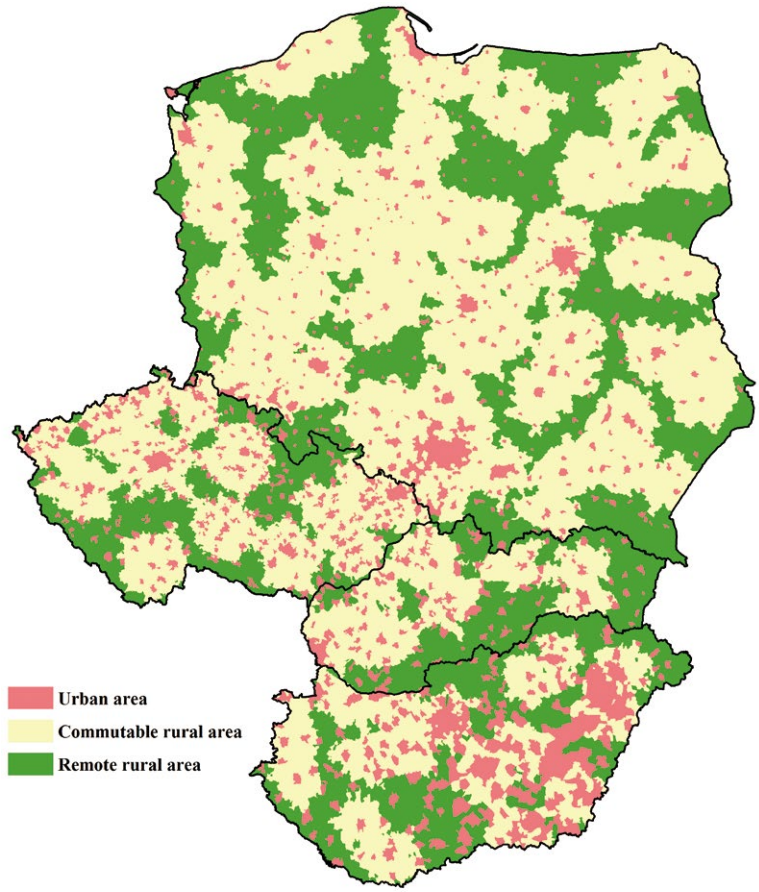


Figure 1. Urban areas, commutable rural areas, and remote rural areas of the Visegrad Group. Own elaboration.

municipalities that have higher populations but do not possess city rights, to be rural (regardless of administrative status). Based on the Western experiences of rural restructuring, I made a further distinction between commutable rural and remote rural areas. I defined remote rural areas as rural areas that require 45 minutes or more of driving to reach the nearest city with at least 50,000 inhabitants; the remaining rural settlements are considered commutable rural (Figure 1).

According to this definition, even though most units of analysis can be considered rural, only 28.9% of the population of the Visegrad Group lives in commutable rural areas and another 11.5% in remote rural areas. Among the Visegrad countries, Slovakia was characterized with the highest and Hungary with the lowest share of rural residents.

For the purposes of analyzing migration trends, I used data from the statistical offices of the four countries: Központi Statisztikai Hivatal (KSH) in Hungary, Główny Urząd Statystyczny (GUS) in Poland, Český Statistický Úřad (ČSÚ) in the Czech Republic, and Štatistický úrad (ŠÚ) in Slovakia.

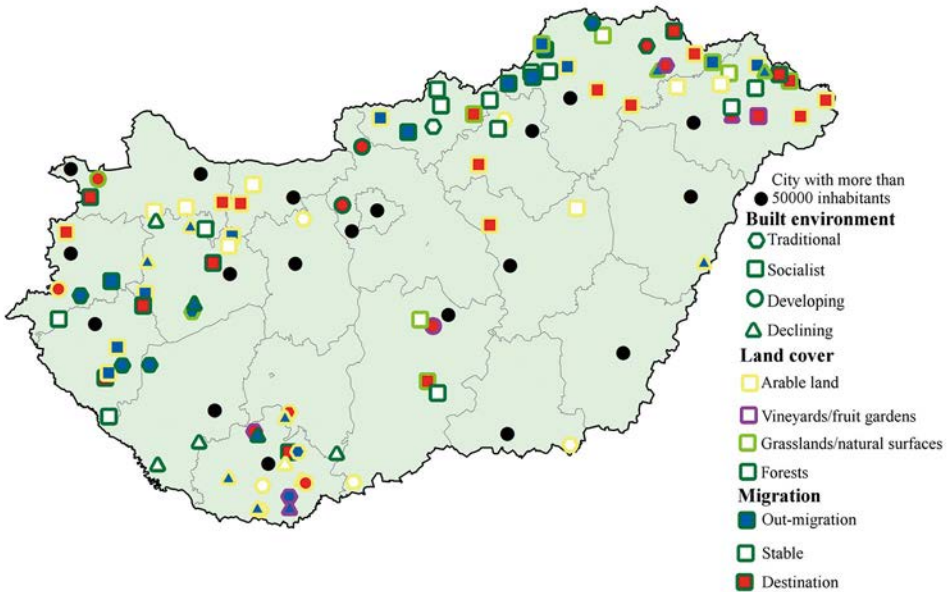


Figure 2. The typology of the selected rural settlements. Own elaboration.

The Corine Land Cover database was used to analyze land cover changes of the Visegrad Group. From the original 44 land cover categories, I created 8 aggregated categories: artificial surfaces, arable land, vineyards and fruit cultivations, grasslands, heterogeneous agricultural areas, forests, wetlands and other natural areas, and water bodies.

To analyze the allocation of funds from the European Union, I used Hungary as a case study. I randomly selected 50 commutable rural and 50 remote rural municipalities. Based on the results of the previous analysis, I classified them into groups with distinguishable migration and land use characteristics. I also took into account the state of the built environment, which is a good indicator of ongoing social changes (Figure 2). Finally, I analyzed EU-supported projects from the 2007–2013 programming period for the selected 100 municipalities.

Results

The results indicate that the transition brought about drastic changes in the rural

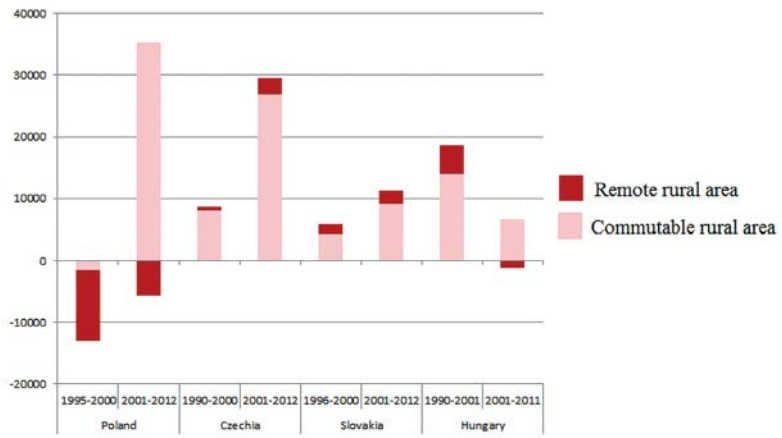


Figure 3. Rural migration trends in the Visegrad Group after the political and economic transition. Own elaboration based on data from KSH, GUS, ČSÚ, and ŠÚ.

migration trends of the Visegrad Group. While rural out-migration dominated in the decades of state socialism, after 1990 the rural areas can be characterized with an increasingly positive balance (Figure 3). However, this surplus was mostly limited to the commutable rural areas. These results indicate the widespread emergence of suburbanization: the concentration of the population in suburban settlements around the central city of an urban agglomeration (Figure 4). Whereas in Western Europe and North America this process had already begun to take wings in the early twentieth century, it was restrained to a great extent in the centrally planned economies until the transition. After the fall of socialism, however, the former constraints lifted, and a rapid urban sprawl took place. This partially controlled process also had an impact on land cover change.

Counterurbanization had a central role in the rural turnaround of the first world, but the appearance of this process in the research region is limited to a few destinations. Rural depopulation still persists in a large part of the remote rural areas of the Visegrad Group. Also, some remote rural locations became migration destinations for the socioeconomically disadvantaged. This unfavorable process is driven by economic necessities: those who are excluded from the work market are sometimes left with only one solution—to sell their former residence for a less valuable location and use up the difference for day-to-day expenses. Ultimately, this movement reduces their chances of reintegration into the labor market and leads to their further deprivation.

The increase of artificial surfaces and forests and the decrease of arable land were already present during the decades of state socialism, and the results of the

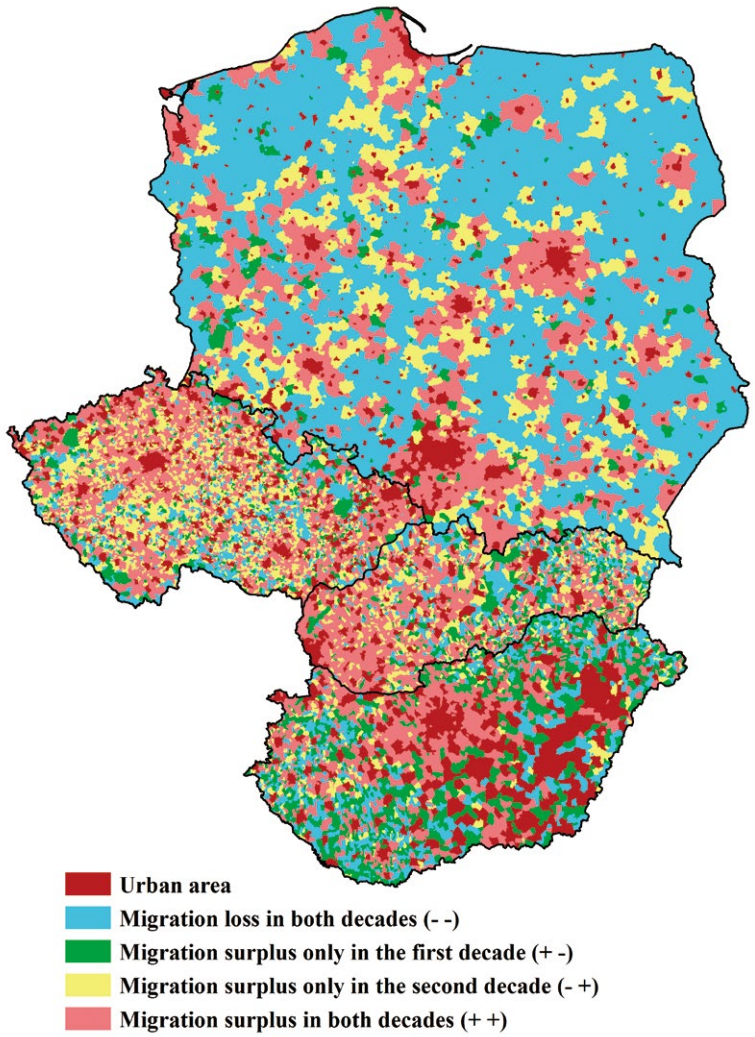


Figure 4. Rural migration trends in the Visegrad Group at the municipality level. Own elaboration based on data from KSH, GUS, ČSÚ, and ŠÚ.

analysis show that the political and economic transition did not alter these long-term trends in land cover change (Figure 5). After the political and economic transition, however, the loosely controlled urban sprawl led to more chaotic expansion of artificial surfaces than in previous decades.

While some general trends are common for each country, we can still observe significant differences in the rate of change and in the spatial patterns. For example, despite the general shrinkage in the acreage of arable land, we can still identify areas of increase in the eastern regions of Poland (Figure 6). In these areas small-

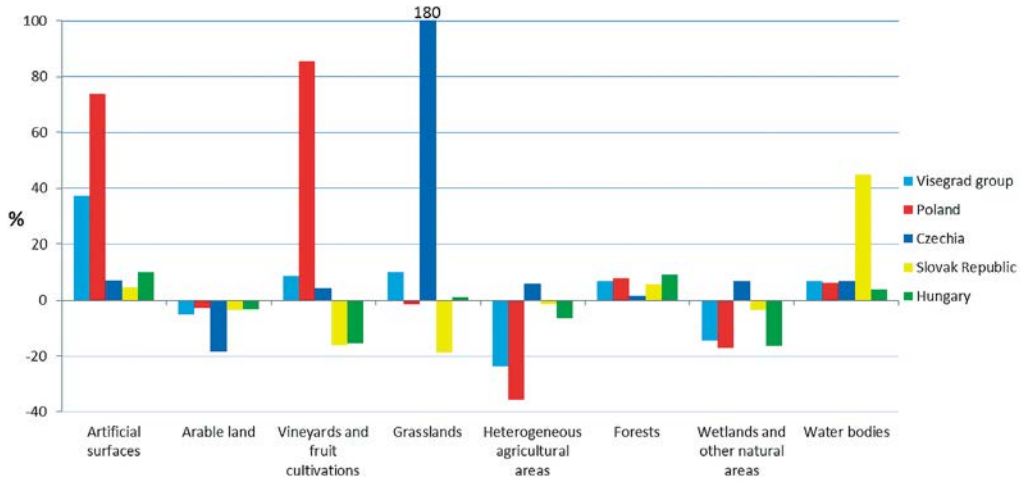


Figure 5. Land cover change trends in the Visegrad Group between 1990 and 2012. Own elaboration based on Corine Land Cover data.

scale family farming persisted during the socialist era. The relatively low unemployment of these regions indicates that many former industrial workers returned to subsistence farming. This safety net function explains why market-controlled land abandonment did not reach the region.

The significant transformation from arable land to grassland in the Czech peripheries stands in stark contrast to the trends in Eastern Poland. Behind this, we can once again find region-specific reasons. This area was inhabited by Sudeten Germans since the Middle Ages, but after World War II the Czechoslovak government expelled the vast majority of them. This event was shortly followed by the reorganization of agricultural land into state farms and cooperatives, thus preventing the new residents from forming emotional ties with their land before the socialist transformation of agriculture. After the restitution, this lack of attachment led to land abandonment in the changing market environment, where farming was no longer profitable.

These two examples reveal that in regions with divergent socioeconomic and historical backgrounds, even similar challenges can induce radically different changes, leading to further differences in the socioeconomic circumstances of the localities.

The results discussed above pose the question of whether the allocation of EU funds takes into account the differences between rural communities. In order to close the development gap, disadvantaged settlements should be favored, and the implemented projects should reflect the unique needs of these settlements. Fund

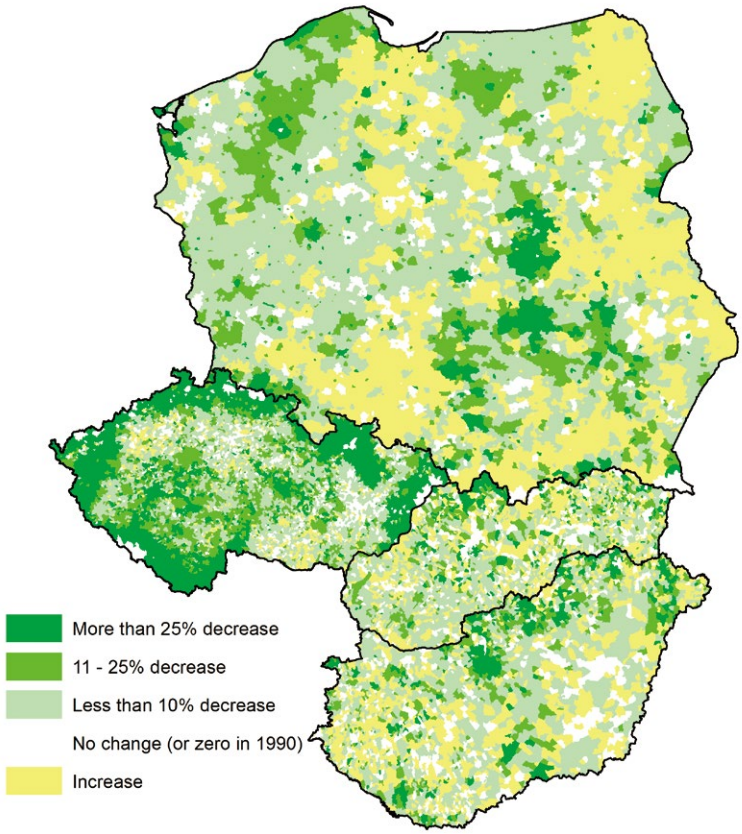


Figure 6. Changes in the area of arable land between 1990 and 2012. Own elaboration based on Corine Land Cover data.

allocation in the 100 municipalities selected for the case study shows us a mixed picture. Generally, the per capita fund allocation favors the disadvantaged (e.g., remote rural) municipalities. However, the combination of several socioeconomic challenges (e.g., small population coupled with rural out-migration) can lead to insufficient human capital and completely prevent the absorption of the EU funds.

Moreover, disadvantaged settlements that receive a sufficient amount of resources may nonetheless not use them in the most efficient way. In socially and economically balanced settlements, a significant percentage of the resources are spent on increasing the competitiveness of local business. But this is not true for the disadvantaged settlements; there the emphasis is shifted to investments in settlement infrastructure and local services. While these are important aims, without a more dynamic local economy, there is little to stop the decline and decay of these settlements.

November 16, 2017

An Almost Forgotten Legacy

Non-Aligned Yugoslavia in the United Nations and in the Making of Contemporary International Law

Arno Trültzsch
University of Leipzig

Arno Trültzsch is a Sylff fellow from the University of Leipzig. He is working on a dissertation to explore the former Yugoslavia's non-alignment policy and movement and its impact on international norms, including international laws and major UN resolutions for humanitarian and peace-building efforts, between 1948 and 1980. In this article, Trültzsch discusses the essence of his findings and arguments.

* * *

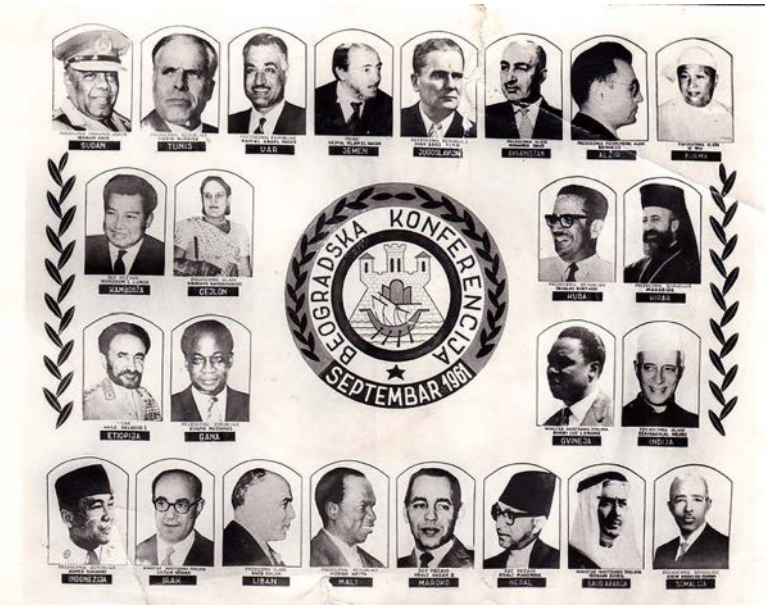
Introduction

The title of my PhD project, "Non-Alignment Revisited: Yugoslavia's Impact on International Law 1948–1980," already indicates that the project is set on the crossroads of different disciplines and methods: global and local (i.e., Southeast European) history, international law, international relations, and intellectual history. My starting point was the rather well-known fact that, after its dismissal from the socialist camp in 1948, Yugoslavia became one of the instigators, main drivers, and pioneers of the so-called Non-Aligned Movement. Research on this global phenomenon of the second half of the twentieth century is still scarce and scattered along single issues, such as decolonization, economic history, and postcolonial topics. General accounts of non-alignment are either contemporary assessments from the 1960s to 1980s or standout research endeavors done in recent years.[1]

[1] Significant recent publications on the general history of the Non-Aligned Movement are: Jürgen Dinkel, *Die Bewegung Bündnisfreier Staaten: Genese, Organisation und Politik (1927–1992)*, first ed. (München: DeGruyter Oldenbourg, 2015) (in German); Nataša Mišković, Harald Fischer-Tiné, and Nada Boškovska, eds., *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War: Delhi–Bandung–Belgrade* (London, New York: Routledge, 2014); Guy Arnold, *The A to Z of the Non-Aligned Movement and Third World* (Lanham: Scarecrow

I want to contribute to this strain of research with a study of Yugoslavia's role and impact on international law through its non-aligned policies. I therefore focus on the historicity of international law and its doctrines as expressions of specific social and political contexts, tied together by the discipline's normativity and claim to provide a universal set of rules to international problems. I have drawn on important thinkers like Martti Koskenniemi, Bhupinder Chimni, and Hersch Lauterpacht. I also address (early) Marxist and Soviet theories of international law, as both are crucial for understanding the Yugoslav socialist perspective on international affairs and their law.

Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned Movement



Commemorative poster for the first conference of non-aligned states held in Belgrade in 1961. Josip Broz Tito is fourth from right on the top row.

The Non-Aligned Movement first started as a loose dialogue platform and public forum of diverse smaller countries, especially former colonies from the Global South (Africa, Asia, and later also Latin America), who wanted to raise their voices against global inequalities and injustices and the ongoing nuclear arms race in the Cold War. Hence the name "non-alignment," coined by India's first prime minister,

Press, 2010); and, with a focus on Finland and Yugoslavia during the 1950s, Rinna Kullaa, *Non-Alignment and Its Origins in Cold War Europe: Yugoslavia, Finland and the Soviet Challenge* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012).

Jawaharlal Nehru, to describe the country's independent foreign policy outside the forming camps of the northern hemisphere—the United States and its allies versus Soviet Union and its satellites.

After 1948, Yugoslavia was mostly isolated in a divided Europe, so the Yugoslavs looked for new allies, which they found among former colonies and mandate territories that had just gained their independence. During the 1950s and 1960s, therefore, Yugoslavian President Josip Broz Tito engaged in lengthy travels around the globe to build personal alliances with the leaders of these "new" countries. Tito's personal diplomacy was widely publicized and praised, gaining Yugoslavia worldwide prestige. After an overture in 1956, during which he built a personal alliance with Prime Minister Nehru of India and President Nasser of Egypt, the first conference of the non-aligned countries was held in Yugoslavia's capital of Belgrade in 1961.

Besides this high-level public diplomacy, Yugoslavia sought to strengthen the United Nations' system for solving international conflicts, particularly through binding norms of international law, mostly to secure its delicate position in a divided Europe and globe. To that end, Yugoslav protagonists initiated an increasing number of draft resolutions within the organs of the United Nations, together with their new non-aligned partners—especially India and Egypt. Although many of these moves were connected with the complexities of Yugoslav foreign policy, they deserve thorough analysis and reassessment.

Evaluating the Legacy

I am about to explore and question whether these initiatives contributed to an increasing legal certainty in international affairs and how they fitted Yugoslav foreign policy interests, especially in the controversial fields of human rights, peace and security, state responsibility, and disarmament. All these issues were discussed and redefined in the course of the Cold War, during which the non-aligned sought to be a "third" option of independent but cooperating countries outside the political camps and military alliances epitomized by the Warsaw Pact and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

In this vein, I am examining and evaluating specific Yugoslav approaches to and interpretations of international law, focusing on the triad of political actors, legal experts, and diplomacy. I combine this actor-based approach with the analysis of foreign policy documents—especially diplomatic correspondence and political reports between Belgrade and the UN delegations—and the critical examination of Yugoslav publications on international law. Another group of important sources

Milan Šahović, a legal expert of the Yugoslav delegation, speaking at the Fifth and Sixth Committees on legal matters of the UN General Assembly.

are Yugoslav textbooks and studies dealing with different aspects and doctrines of international law and the UN system.

Likewise, a set of ideological and political treatises on non-alignment and Yugoslav socialism have caught my attention, as I try to highlight the connection between Yugoslav socialist ideology, legal expertise, and foreign policy initiatives in the United Nations. After 1948, Yugoslavia remained a socialist country (much to the surprise of the West) but outside the Soviet camp, soon developing a particular socioeconomic system and variant of Marxist ideology called "worker's self-management," which Yugoslav foreign policy even tried to popularize in some non-aligned developing countries, though to little avail.

Many of the pushes for a further juridification[2] of international relations did not necessarily result in so-called "hard" or codified international law. But I argue that these ideas still had a wider impact both on Yugoslavia's international and self-image, especially in legitimating the authoritarian rule of its leader Josip Broz Tito and the League of Communists (the ruling party), and on the inner dynamics of the Non-Aligned Movement until the early 1980s. In my further research and writing process, I want to delineate whether these "image politics" were the primary purpose of Yugoslavia's UN activities, or if they really had a tangible impact on international law.

I have therefore analyzed archive materials from the Serbian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (which still keeps the Yugoslav records) and the Historical Archives of Yugoslavia, both of which are in Belgrade, for the period from 1948 to 1980. In

[2] *Juridification*: turning moral ideas and political demands into written law; a wider term for *codification*, which more narrowly describes the written consolidation of laws that have formed out of custom or sheer practice, particularly in international affairs between two or more states.

the textbooks and in the archive files, I was able to specify a number of significant UN initiatives and their wider impact. Among these are important contributions for defining acts of aggression against other states that resulted in General Assembly Resolution 3314 (XXIX) in 1974 and the codification and elaboration of diplomatic and consular intercourse, leading to the 1964 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Law. Furthermore, Yugoslavia helped establish a general Magna Carta of international legal conduct in line with the political doctrine of "active peaceful coexistence": the Friendly Relations Declaration of 1970, or Resolution 2625 (XXV). Likewise significant are Yugoslav drafts on counterterrorism measures (specifically, aircraft hijacking and protection of diplomats), leading to important conventions in 1972 and 1973.

Drawing on legal language, while seeking political solutions, Yugoslav UN diplomats and law experts repeatedly requested serious steps on disarmament, calling for a halt to the nuclear arms race, and supported the decolonization process as well as providing direct support for various postcolonial liberation movements, such as those in Algeria, Palestine, and South Africa. These actions led to the criminalization of apartheid and racism under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (adopted in 1965, entered into force in 1969) and the Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (1973 and 1976). In the disarmament debate, meanwhile, only single issues could be tackled, and Yugoslav experts codrafted the conventions on prohibiting biological and chemical weapons. The former was opened for signature in 1972 and entered into force in 1975, while the latter reached these milestones in 1992 and 1993, respectively.

On the European scale, Yugoslav politicians, together with their colleagues from neutral Finland and Austria, mediated between the power blocs to establish a dialogue on peace, disarmament, and civil rights—the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Belgrade was the host city of the second summit in 1977. The Yugoslav drafts on national minority protection were incorporated into the CSCE framework and are still valid for the CSCE's successor organization, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Minority rights were also an important field of action in the United Nations, but without the impact that Yugoslav proposals and concepts had on a European scale. Altogether, the country's openness and affirmation of human rights stood in contrast to the country's record at home; human rights were nominally intact but were focused on social and workers' rights, and Yugoslav citizens could not enjoy the civil rights and freedoms that their country had officially recognized on an international scale.

While Yugoslavia is today remembered largely for the wars that resulted from the country's dissolution eventually into seven states (if one counts Kosovo), which led to new legal problems on an international scale, the contribution of this socialist, non-aligned country to international matters and their law is largely forgotten—often even inside the successor states. I am about to change that, pending the completion of my dissertation (in German) hopefully by next year.

Further reading

For general information on and English abstracts and presentations by the author, see: https://uni-leipzig.academia.edu/ArnoTrultzsch

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May 9, 2017

Living with Wildfire: Voices from the Local Community

Apirada Cha-emjan, Rapipun Maoyot, Kedsirin Thammachai
Chiang Mai University

Three Sylff fellows from Chiang Mai University, Thailand, organized a volunteer initiative between April and August 2016 in response to smog pollution in Northern Thailand. They led a group of local residents and students in the construction of a check dam to function as a wet firebreak minimizing fire danger and to help slow down the fast flow of the stream during the storm season. They also conducted a focus group discussion with community leaders to learn how to deal with wildfire and haze.

* * *

Introduction

For more than 10 years, the residents of Chiang Mai and other provinces in Northern Thailand have been experiencing smog that regularly blankets the region during the dry season from February to April. The haze crisis not only reduces visibility but also causes negative health impacts and obstructs tourism activities. The sources of haze are varied, ranging from geographic features, wind direction, and wildfires to burning of agricultural waste and industrial emissions.

As smog pollution has come to affect larger communities, the government has pointed to the burning of fields and brush by local people in rural areas as a major cause. It launched an official "60-day no-burning" rule, banning burning from March to April in the hope of controlling the "serious smog situation." Enforcing the rule is difficult, however, because people consider burning to be a "way of life."

Target site for check dam construction

Brainstorming and Project Planning

In response to the smog problem, three Sylff fellows from Chiang Mai University, Thailand, initiated a community service project aimed at reducing smog pollution and developing an understanding of the ways of life of local people as it relates to myths and facts about forest fire. The project took place in Ban Huy Jo village, Chom Thong District, Chiang Mai, an area where hotspots have been occurring repeatedly. The three authors chose to work on building the ability to reduce hotspots, which is key to mitigating smog. We exchanged ideas and discussion within our working team, and we also asked for suggestions from an experienced researcher who has previously studied the problem of wildfire in this area.

The project was started in April 2016. We agreed to focus on activities that would help reduce the chances of wildfire hotspots forming. The first step was conducting a field survey in Ban Huy Jo village, the results of which suggested that check dams to serve as wet firebreaks should help in minimizing fire danger and help slow down the fast flow of streams during storm season. Check dams give the water time to soak into the dry soil and bring humidity to forests throughout the year, thereby functioning as natural firebreaks. After consulting with the community's leaders, we decided to raise funds and solicit volunteers with the goal of building a permanent concrete check dam, as well as to conduct a focus meeting with community leaders to learn how local people cope with wildfire issues. The event was set to be held in the middle of August 2016.

The volunteers were divided into many groups. Some helped collect rocks from the ground, while others helped pass the rocks into the check dam.

Fundraising and Dam Construction

While temporary check dams made of such materials as sandbags, logs, and rocks may require lower budgets, their life spans are limited. We therefore chose to build a permanent concrete check dam that would last longer, which called for the need to raise decent funds to budget the construction. Fundraising activities included planning and preparing to ask for support (including money and in-kind dona-

tions), as well as related activities such as campaigning through social networks and personal connections. Generous supporters made donations worth a total of 16,000 baht (USD 500). All of the money has been used in the interests of the local community.

Community volunteers provided the labor and local materials for dam construction.

Early in the morning on Saturday, August 20, 2016, 25 villagers and students gathered at the foothills of Doi Inthanon National Park, located next to Ban Huy Jo village. After a brief introduction, everyone was assigned a duty; this helped us finish the construction within a day. The construction method used was simple: suitably sized rocks were collected near the stream to fill in the check dam structure, and sand was dug from a dry creek to mix with cement. These were then passed along in buckets toward the dam. The volunteers kept hard at work, undeterred by the hot weather.

After half a day, we had a quick lunch together with the support of The Opium Serviced Apartment and Hotel, Drill Drop, and Lactasoy. The students and local volunteers had a chance to get to know one another over lunch. Construction was done at 3 pm.

The authors would like to thank all the donors and supporters who funded the project, and, above all, we wish to thank all the volunteers who contributed their labor to constructing the dam. The check dam was functioning in time three weeks later.

Voices from the Community

After construction, the three Sylff fellows and community leaders held a focus group meeting to exchange insights on how the local community lives with wildfires and how they manage this issue in response to the haze crisis.

Changing life of people neighboring the forest

We asked Po Long Plern, the community leader, to share with us the history and local life of people in Ban Huy Jo village. "We have lived here for eighty or ninety years, and the forest was already there," Po Long Plern said. "Our ways of life have relied on the forest.

"This village used to be an elephant camp catering to logging concessions. The majority of our men worked in activities related to the forest industry. When the Thai government banned logging concessions, the villagers lost their jobs. Above all, logging activities adversely impacted the natural environment, leaving only small trees. The villagers cut those small trees to make charcoal for family income, further aggravating the situation and making recovery even harder. Most of the villagers then changed their careers to become rice farmers and longan gardeners. When the rainy season comes, though, flash floods damage the paddy fields and longan gardens every year."

Community volunteers provided the labor and local materials for dam construction.

Fires are set to protect local safety

Next, we moved to the topic of how the community engages in forest conservation. In the past, the community leaders told us, the villagers did not know how to care for the forest. But the Thai authorities came 10–15 years ago and instructed them on what they should do. The leaders had the chance to visit the King's project at Huy Hong Krai and learned how local people can manage natural resources on their own, such as by making firebreaks and check dams.

"Wildfire is a part of village life, and some fires naturally occur in the decidu-

We did it at last!

ous dipterocarp forest," Po Long Plern added. "We want people in the city to understand this truth. Since the smog problem became a serious issue about ten years ago, we have been blamed for setting fires on purpose for our personal benefit. But that is only a small part of the whole story. Our local people need to maintain and use traditional fire knowledge so that they can preemptively burn forest landscapes for our personal safety. Otherwise, the fires will damage our houses and farms."

Conservation must begin with mindset adjustments for both authorities and villagers

"None of the villagers want to see a dry forest; the forest is our food security." The local community explained to the Sylff fellows that they already had fire management knowledge but lacked a management system. Three years ago a researcher came to the village and helped them deal with wildfire problems by using management procedures. "Since then, we have learned about setting planned fires to reduce leaves and waste in the forest in a proper manner. We make plans together about when to set a fire and who will be involved."

The check dam after rainfall.

Although the villagers may be willing to participate in fire control activities, these activities would not be sustainable if the villagers have nothing to gain from protecting the forest. Making profits from national conservation forests is illegal under Thai law, but local authorities have pragmatically asked the villagers to make a commitment that they will collect only enough vegetables and wild foods for family meals and not for business purposes. This is why the local community agrees to protect the forest. In some cases the authorities may allow poor villagers to cut trees for house construction, but only with restrictions. Thanks to this agreement, the villagers are happy to be forest guards and working together with the authorities.

Don't blame us, please help us: Reflections from the local community

When talking about smog pollution, the community accepted that some of its members used to set fires for the purpose of vegetation regeneration but noted that

they have since changed their beliefs. But this image still endures in people's minds, especially among those who live in the city. "We would like the general public to hear our voices and to understand that the forests belong to every single person. Why don't they come and help instead of blaming and leave all the problem solving on our shoulders?"

In Closing

Through the meeting, the authors learned that the enforcement of legal measures alone may be insufficient in alleviating the haze crisis. Successful efforts to control smog from forest burning requires that we understand the context surrounding this issue, how it happens, and why it has not been under control for years. We also learned that blaming does not help in dealing with wildfire and smog problems. On the contrary, it could destroy the will of local communities to protect the forest. In summary, we suggest that outsiders who have expressed their desire to see an end to this problem offer their helping hands to local communities to let them know that they are not fighting alone.

March 14, 2017

Supporting Two Families

Remittance-Sending and the Integration of Immigrants in the United States

David D. Sussman
The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy

David D. Sussman, a 2003 Sylff fellow of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, reengages the findings from his master's thesis, which analyzed how remittance-sending affected the integration (self-sufficiency) of immigrants in Boston, and interprets them given the current political environment in the United States. This article was written in early January 2017.

* * *

Introduction


Boston

During the recent presidential election in the United States, the topic of immigration was once again brought to the forefront of political discussions. One candidate, Donald Trump—now president-elect—called for building an impregnable wall on the country's southern border, limitations on refugee admissions, the deportation of millions of immigrants, and a registry of all Muslims. Putting aside debates over the sensibility (not to mention the legality) of these propositions, we might focus on the lives of refugees and immigrants who already reside in the United States and thereby test the critique that they are not integrating into society quickly enough.

Do we fully appreciate the difficult financial situation of immigrants in the United States? How might our perspectives shift if we better understand the double

bind that some of them face, to improve their local situation while also caring for family members overseas? Despite ideological differences between liberals and conservatives on the positives and negatives of migration, each side can agree in hoping that new arrivals improve professionally and educationally. Notwithstanding the passage of time, the research presented here, from my Sylff-supported master's degree, remains relevant. This article provides relevant background explanation, an overview of my approach, and a summary of findings and briefly reflects on the implications, given present-day political and economic circumstances.

An investigation of this topic was inspired by previous work as a resettlement case manager with the International Rescue Committee in Boston. During my time working with refugees from Africa and Latin America, I was moved by their ongoing struggles. Beyond needing to learn about a new city and culture, and often burdened by traumatic past experiences, US government protocol required them to quickly find any possible job, often at the minimum wage. They worked long hours in such positions as grocery baggers, hotel bellhops, or, if fortunate, as nursing assistants. Their expenses for rent, food, and other basic necessities stretched them to their limits, as Boston was and remains to this day one of the most expensive places to live in the United States. At the same time, nearly all of the refugees sent weekly or monthly remittances to loved ones they had left behind. Often, they received phone calls at all hours of the day and night, from friends and family pleading for further support. The financial challenges faced by these resilient and hard-working refugees was readily apparent, and I knew that, if given the chance one day, I wanted to further study and better understand their circumstances.

Background

For millions of persons who cross borders to seek a new and better life, the memories of and commitment to friends and family back home lead them to maintain connections with their place of origin. In many situations, remittances (financial resources that migrants wire back to their country) serve as the primary purpose of migration, while for those coming from conflict-affected countries, it is primarily safety and freedom that they seek, with remittances as a significant secondary objective. My research examined the potential impact of sending money on immigrants' integration, as measured through financial and educational "self-sufficiency."

Immigration remains part and parcel of the United States. As a nation founded by immigrants (at the expense of indigenous populations), new waves of arrivals to the United States over the past two centuries led to continual processes of ad-

justment and varied degrees of inclusion in the country's social and economic fabric. As of 2010, more than one in eight persons in the country had been born abroad.[1] The foreign-born population remains quite diverse today (53.6% from Latin America, 28.2% from Asia, 12.1% from Europe, and 6.5% from elsewhere),[2] though among new entrants, Asians now outnumber Latin Americans.[3] The historic role of Massachusetts and the Greater Boston region as host to immigrant populations continues to the present day. The state's number of immigrants nearly doubled to 1,046,155 between 1990 and 2013,[4,5] such that it now has the eighth highest percentage of foreign-born residents, rising from 9.5% in 1990 to 15.6% in 2013.[6] In the state's urban areas, such as Boston (Suffolk County), 27.4% of persons were foreign born as of 2013.[7]

Globally, remittance amounts have risen dramatically over recent decades—from less than $2 billion in 1970 to $70 billion in 1995,[8] and despite a brief slowdown during the global financial crisis, to more than $430 billion in 2015.[9] Sending remittances is a high priority among the financial decisions that immigrants face.

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[1] U.S. Census Bureau. 2012. "The Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2010," p. 4.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Pew Research Center. 2015. "Asians Projected to Become the Largest Immigrant Group, Surpassing Hispanics," accessed at: http://www.pewhispanic.org/2015/09/28/modern-immigration-wave-brings-59-million-to-u-s-driving-population-growth-and-change-through-2065/ph_2015-09-28_immigration-through-2065-05/.
[4] Uriarte, http://www.pewhispanic.org/2015/09/28/modern-immigration-wave-brings-59-million-to-u-s-driving-population-growth-and-change-through-2065/ph_2015-09-28_immigration-through-2065-05/Miren et al. 2003. "Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans and Colombians: A Scan of Needs of Recent Latin American Immigrants to the Boston Area," edited draft, May 12, 2003, final report of the 2003 Practicum in Applied Research of the PhD Program in Public Policy at the John W. McCormack School of Policy Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston, p. 3.
[5] American Immigration Council. 2015. "New Americans in Massachusetts: The Political and Economic Power of Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians in the Bay State," accessed at: https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/new-americans-massachusetts.
[6] Index Mundi. N.D. "United States—Foreign-Born Population Percentage by State," accessed at: http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/united-states/quick-facts/all-states/foreign-born-population-percent#chart. American Immigration Council. 2015.
[7] Index Mundi. N.D. "Massachusetts Foreign-Born Population Percentage by County," accessed at: http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/united-states/quick-facts/massachusetts/foreign-born-population-percent#chart.
[8] Taylor, J. Edward. 2000. "Do Government Programs 'Crowd In' Remittances?" Inter-American Dialogue and Tomas Rivera Policy Institute.
[9] World Bank. 2016. "Remittances to Developing Countries Edge Up Slightly in 2015," accessed at: http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2016/04/13/remittances-to-developing-countries-edge-up-slightly-in-2015.

The 2003 National Survey of Latinos in the United States found that many respondents remitted before taking care of their bills, others paid for their household expenses first, and only a few did not consider sending funds to be important.[10] According to one Mexican interviewed, "Before anything, I send them the money because they count on it. Then afterwards I pay my bills, my rent, but the first thing I do is send it."[11]

Economic self-sufficiency is often defined simply, as when immigrants' wages attain levels similar to those of native populations.[12] In reality, it can also be measured in various other ways, particularly education and social achievement. For example, the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development's assessment form to determine self-sufficiency demonstrates the complexity of factors influencing the measure; areas of focus include employment, education, health, childcare, family development, housing, income management, transportation, resident participation, and nutrition.[13]

Methodology

Centro Presente.

For my research I focused on studying Somali refugees and Salvadoran economic migrants (among a broader range of Latin Americans) living in Boston due to their significance as immigrant groups and, with preliminary evidence showing that they remitted at high levels, the potential for differential findings between them. To connect with potential respondents, I volunteered in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at two community organizations supporting immigrants, Centro Presente and the Somali Development Center. In this way, it was possible to meet clients who felt comfortable agreeing to qualitative interviews (16 Somalis

[10] Suro, Roberto et al. 2002. "Billions in Motion: Latino Immigrants, Remittances, and Banking," Pew Hispanic Center and Multilateral Investment Fund, p. 7.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Borjas, George. 1999. "The Economic Analysis of Immigration," accessed at: http://www.ppge.ufrgs.br/giacomo/arquivos/eco02268/borjas-1999.pdf, p. 22.
[13] Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. "Massachusetts Family Self-Sufficiency Scales and Ladders Assessment Form."

and 19 Central Americans, 6 of them Salvadoran). Notably, those who visited the agencies were probably both a) poorer and more in need of support than more wealthy families and yet b) better connected and more successful than other persons in that community who did not have knowledge of or the ability to attend a social service agency.

The thesis research was unique because it 1) conducted extensive one-on-one interviews, using qualitative as opposed to quantitative analysis, 2) focused on the economic and educational self-sufficiency of the immigrants, which was a narrower approach than the multiple factors that other authors had investigated, and 3) considered the impact of remittance sending by both refugees and economic migrants.

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The Boston Globe

Living | Arts

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2008

A home away from home

Somali Development Center helps refugees forge a new life in Boston

By Omar Sacirbey
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Mariam Kashin Ahmed came home one day in 1991 and found her husband dead. He wasn't a soldier, but Ahmed suspects he was killed in one of the many random acts of violence that plagued Mogadishu as the once-prosperous capital of Somalia, and the rest of the country, descended into civil war.

Rival groups shelled each other without regard to civilians, recalled Ahmed, who now lives in Jamaica Plain. She fled Mogadishu with her four children, aged 3 to 15 at the time, and for the next few years they wandered from town to town, trying to go where the war wasn't. The trek took them to Ethiopia in 1998 and Egypt in 1999, where each time they stayed with other Somali refugees they knew. In Cairo, Ahmed applied to immigrate to the United States, citing her refugee status, was interviewed, and accepted. Her children decided to stay, she said; today two are in Kenya and two in Somalia.

Arriving in Boston March 30, 2000, Ahmed already knew some Somalis she could stay with until finding more permanent housing. Within a few weeks, she was taking weekly citizenship classes at the Somali Development Center in Jamaica Plain that taught English, US history, government, and civics, and would eventually prepare her for her citizenship test.

Ahmed doesn't dwell on the past and dismisses her troubles to "destiny" while crediting her survival to "faith in God." When asked about her husband, Ahmed lets out a short, tired laugh and points to a headline in the Metro newspaper: "Teen shot three times on crowded Orange Line."

Sahra Eisi (above) attends a class taught by Naima Hashi (top right) at the center in Jamaica Plain.

PHOTOS BY PAT GREENHOUSE/GLOBE STAFF

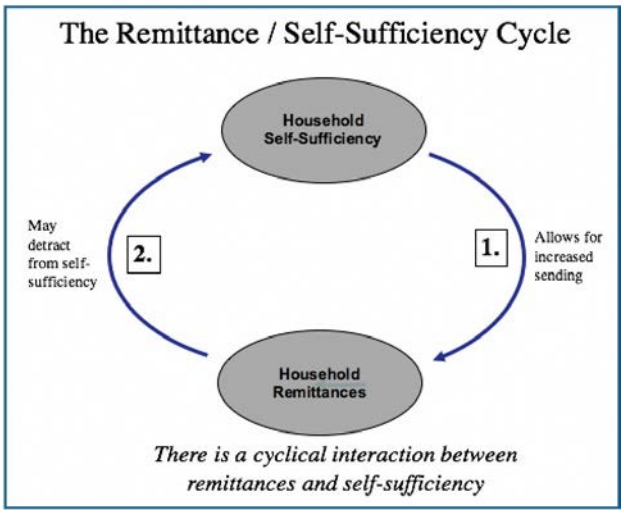
Somali Development Center.

Findings

Overall, the study found that sending remittances could be correlated with a difference in the self-sufficiency of migrants. In short, sending money abroad reduced immigrants' available resources for advancing their careers and pursuing education, thereby making them less likely to become self-sufficient. In a number of cases, interviewees directly noted that they saw how their lives were impacted by remitting, potentially reducing opportunities.

The interaction between individual household characteristics and remitting is depicted in the figure I created below, which I refer to as the "Remittance/Self-Sufficiency Cycle." A combination of financial, educational, and social factors lead to the attainment of household self-sufficiency and influence the amount of money that immigrants have available to remit if they wish to do so (see no. 1 in the figure). The sending of money to friends and family overseas can affect the ability of a family to achieve self-sufficiency; the monies that would have otherwise been invested in such areas as education, housing, and job skills are instead remitted (see no. 2).

Interestingly, there also appeared to be an important distinction in the approach to self-sufficiency. While Somali refugees hoped to get jobs and thought about the long-term, a significant number of the Central Americans wanted to re-



main in the United States long enough to earn money and then return to their country of origin. The Latin Americans pursued education to improve their job prospects but seemed less focused on aspects of permanent relocation. It is possible that differences in the economic situation of the two groups existed because, as refugees, Somalis qualified for a period of government assistance, whereas many Latinos (particularly those who entered illegally), as economic migrants, did not.

As such, the impact of remittances can be studied at two points: at "basic self-sufficiency" and at "long-term self-sufficiency." The majority of the immigrants interviewed made sure that they addressed some but not all basic needs before sending remittances. Considering the elements of basic self-sufficiency, food and housing were priorities. Education and language abilities, however, often came second to sending monies overseas. Looking at long-term self-sufficiency, few immigrants were able to consider these needs. For most of them, if not all, the purchase of a house was beyond the realm of possibility, as was buying items like cars and computers. While a number improved their education level and advanced in their employment, they remained at relatively low wages. Nevertheless, when immigrants reflected on their life in the United States, they often made a comparison to their country of origin and so, despite their present difficulties, considered themselves fortunate to be in the United States.

Implications

We live in a mobile world, and the long-term prognosis is that migration pressures will continue. The significance of this study's findings is that they show how, given

economic obligation to family members, migrants are doubly responsible for both their relatives' livelihood and their own well-being.

In light of the recent transfer of power from a Democratic to a Republican administration, this deeper understanding of immigrants and their self-sufficiency remains particularly important. On the one hand, liberals can look at the struggles of immigrants as evidence that more (e.g., legal protection and social services) is needed to support their successful adjustment to life in the United States. There are challenges, however, and with deepening inequality as a broader societal concern, one question is whether some immigrants, burdened by caring for families across borders, may become trapped as an underclass.

On the other hand, conservatives may point to difficulties in achieving self-sufficiency as evidence of the need to restrict certain types of immigration to the United States. They may believe that when many immigrants have a hard time attaining a middle-class lifestyle, it exemplifies their failure to work hard and succeed in the US economy. This misconception may lead to anti-migrant policies under the Trump administration, but even if there are limitations on immigrant entry, millions of foreign-born residents will still possess a legal right to remain in the United States.

Under these circumstances, what is in citizens' control—regardless of government policy—is their support and welcoming attitudes toward newcomers, and a steady pressure placed on policymakers. In this way, their individual or collectively organized actions can make a positive difference in the lives of new arrivals, and society at large.

February 10, 2017

Tackling Humanitarian Challenges—A Global Responsibility

Gosia Pearson
Jagiellonian University

Dr. Gosia Pearson, who received a 2004 Sylff fellowship at Jagiellonian University to study at Oxford University, currently works in the European Commission's department for humanitarian aid and civil protection (ECHO). She reports on the challenges of the humanitarian sector and outlines solutions to overcome them.

* * *

Working for the leading humanitarian donor—the European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (ECHO)—is an exceptional privilege. Each year, ECHO provides over 1 billion euros to help around 120 million victims of natural and man-made disasters in over 80 countries worldwide; these include not only major crises that are high on the international agenda but also those that escape media attention. But the job also carries an enormous responsibility to exert all efforts possible to save lives and give hope to disaster-affected populations. This is particularly difficult in current times, which witness challenges not seen in recent history.

The Changing Humanitarian Reality

Current humanitarian catastrophes are more devastating than ever before due to political, socio-economic, and environmental factors. There are numerous endemic internal conflicts, many of which are ideologically highly charged, involving elements of conventional war and terrorism, and resulting in dramatic regional consequences. Last year alone, there were over 400 political conflicts, including tens of wars, which affected lives of 50 million people. These crises often last for years because of lengthy negotiations and lack of political solutions and happen more frequently in poor and fragile states, adding up to the vulnerabilities of the local populations.

Climate change, environmental degradation, urbanization, and population growth increase possible hazards and lead to a global rise in disasters. The number of climate-related events worldwide has doubled in the last 25 years. Every year natural disasters impact the lives of nearly 100 million people, and in the last 15 years they have led to direct economic losses of an estimated 2 trillion euros. There is a growing interdependence among these factors, making crises more complex and unpredictable.

Haiti after Hurricane Matthew, ®EU/ECHO.

These drivers have led to unprecedented human suffering and record-high humanitarian needs. In the last decade the UN humanitarian appeals grew by 640%. At the beginning of 2016, 87.6 million people in 37 countries around the world were in need of humanitarian assistance, and about 60 million people were displaced. These numbers represent nearly a doubling of people affected by humanitarian crises in the last decade. This year the UN requested over 20 billion US dollars to meet the needs of the affected populations, which is the highest appeal in history.

The ongoing pressure on humanitarians to provide assistance that goes far beyond saving lives and alleviating suffering makes humanitarian work ever more challenging. The financial and operational capacities are stretched to the limits, hindering adequate response. Last year, donors provided over 10 billion US dollars to help victims of conflict and disaster. This was the highest contribution in history; still, it covered only half of the estimated needed help. Funds are most constrained in protracted crises, which absorb nearly 80% of humanitarian funding. In addition, the operating environment has become increasingly complex, politicized, and insecure. The humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence are often challenged, and international humanitarian law is bluntly violated, resulting in arbitrary denial of access and lack of protection. Civilians are directly attacked, sexual based violence is used as a weapon of war, and children are recruited as child soldiers. Humanitarian personnel are also victims of direct attacks and kidnappings.

Partnerships as a Basis for Principled and Effective Humanitarian Action

The response to these challenges should be based, first and foremost, on genuine

partnerships between the various actors engaged in humanitarian action. No single actor has the capacity and resources to face these challenges alone. It is only through linked and coordinated action that the global community can respond to the escalating and multifaceted crises and disasters that demand humanitarian assistance. Such partnerships should be fostered for two purposes in particular. The first is to reaffirm the very basic humanitarian values: the values of dignity, integrity, and solidarity; humanitarian principles; the respect of obligations under international law; and the commitment to keep humanitarian work distinct from political agendas. This will help ensure access to assistance, protection, and security. The second objective is to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian action. This should include risk-informed response based on needs; closer cooperation with local actors, where possible; efficient and sufficient funding; and closer cooperation with the development community.

EU delegation to the World Humanitarian Summit Global Consultation, ®EU/ECHO.

To build a more inclusive and diverse humanitarian system committed to humanitarian principles, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for the convening of a World Humanitarian Summit, which took place for the first time in May 2016 in Istanbul. This multi-stakeholder event aimed to set a forward-looking and collective agenda for humanitarian action. At the event, 50 world leaders and 9,000 humanitarian, development, and political stakeholders from around the world made altogether 3,000 commitments to support a new shared Agenda for Humanity and take action to prevent and reduce human suffering.

EU solutions to humanitarian challenges, ®EU/ECHO.

My most recent task was to prepare and coordinate the EU's position for the Summit, where the EU pledged over 100 commitments on its own policies, programs, and funds. Some examples of its commitments include adopting new guidelines on protection of civilians, signing the Grand Bargain on Humanitarian Financing, funding for the Education Cannot Wait initiative, adopting a new policy on forced displacement, signing up

to the Charter on Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, and signing the Urban Crises Charter. The EU also signed the Political Communique, which was supported by over 70 countries. Like the EU, other countries and organizations made commitments for a better functioning humanitarian system.

What Next?

While the World Humanitarian Summit was an important milestone, the work toward a new global partnership linking political action to prevent crises, development assistance, and more effective and principled humanitarian aid has only just begun. The challenges we are facing are complex, and there is no simple solution. The European Union confirmed that it would play its full part in reshaping aid to better serve people in need and called on all world leaders to do the same.

September 29, 2016

Mr. Sasakawa Conferred Highest Honor by Most Prestigious Institution in Bulgaria

Evgeny Gerchev Kandilarov
Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

Evgeny Kandilarov, a 2003 Sylff fellow of Sofia University in Bulgaria, reports on the day that Chairman Yohei Sasakawa of the Nippon Foundation, the endowment donor of the Sylff Program, visited his university to receive an honorary doctoral degree in June 2016.

* * *

Conferral of a Doctor Honoris Causa

On June 6, 2016, Professor Habil Anastas Gerdzhikov, rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski," conferred a doctor honoris causa degree on Mr. Yohei Sasakawa, chairman of the Nippon Foundation, at a solemn ceremony held at the university's Aula Magna (great hall).

Rector Habil Anastas Gerdzhikov (center) awards a doctor honoris causa degree to Mr. Yohei Sasakawa (right).

The Nippon Foundation has supported education at Sofia University since 1992, when the two institutions signed an Agreement to establish an endowment for supporting the continued education of promising young graduate students in PhD programs in the fields of humanities and social sciences. Since the 1990s, with the support of the Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund (Sylff), every year around 10 students at the university have been selected to receive three-year PhD fellowships in the fields of international relations, market economy, multicultural studies, and Japanese studies. Additionally, the Sylff program now supports overseas research activities by outstanding PhD students in Asian studies, cultural studies, history, philosophy, sociology, political studies, and psychology.

The Faculty of Classical and Contemporary Philology of Sofia University pro-

posed the conferral of an honorary degree by the oldest and most prestigious academic institution in Bulgaria to honor Mr. Sasakawa's longstanding support for the education of young talented students at the university.

Mr. Sasakawa delivers his lecture at the Aula Magna of Sofia University

The ceremony was attended by H.E. Mr. Takashi Koizumi, ambassador of Japan to Bulgaria, guests from Japan, and faculty and students of Sofia University.

In his acceptance speech Mr. Sasakawa, who has made a lifelong commitment to eliminating leprosy, expressed his gratitude for the honor bestowed on him and remarked on how deeply touched he was of being given the opportunity to talk in front of a Sofia University audience about the efforts he has made over the years to eliminate the disease. He followed the speech with an academic lecture titled, "Victory on Two Fronts: The Elimination of Leprosy as a Disease and as a Stigma." The audience also watched a short video dedicated to the noble cause of Yohei Sasakawa.

Warm Welcome by Bulgarian Sylff Fellows

After the conferment ceremony, Mr. Sasakawa and his colleagues from the Nippon Foundation attended another ceremony organized by the Japanese Studies program of Sofia University, held at the Center for Eastern Languages and Cultures. There, Mr. Sasakawa was first given a brief tour of the premises used by the Japanese Studies program, during which he was presented with the latest publications of the program's faculty and students. The faculty, staff, students, and many current and former fellows of Sylff then warmly welcomed Mr. Sasakawa with a short ceremony. Professor Habil Alexander Fedotoff, who is the Director of the Center for Eastern Languages and Cultures as well as the coordinator of the university Sylff Steering Committee, gave some opening words expressing gratitude for Sylff's support. Next, Associate Professor Anton Andreev, Head of the Department of East-Asian Studies and a former Sylff fellow, made a brief speech noting the exceptional opportunities and benefits that Sylff was offering, especially for the students in the Japanese Studies program. Proof of his words came from the speeches made by two of the excellent students enrolled in the Japanese Studies program, Ms. Silvia Iva-

nova and Mr. Martin Ivanov; Mr. Ivanov reprised the speech that won him first prize at the 2016 Japanese Language Speech Contest in Sofia.

On behalf of the Sylff fellows at Sofia University, I too presented a short speech to Mr. Sasakawa, in which I gave my most sincere congratulations for the highest honor bestowed on him from Sofia University. I also spoke a few brief words of gratitude to Mr. Sasakawa and to the Foundation itself.

Sylff Supports Education of Many Excellent Students

It has been nearly 25 years since the Nippon Foundation became one of the most generous sponsors of our university. During a difficult transition period for Bulgaria, Sylff provided significant and indispensable help for the further development of PhD programs at the university and for the research and career development of over 100 young, excellent, and promising students. Some of them already hold key positions in Bulgaria as leading journalists, politicians, political scientists, university professors, lawyers, diplomats, and more.

Dr. Evgeny Kandilarov gives a congratulatory speech on behalf of the Bulgarian Sylff fellows.

It is very important that this tradition continue and that the number of Sylff fellows in Bulgaria continue to grow every year.

Personally, as a former fellow of the Sylff program, I can say that the fellowship from the Nippon Foundation perhaps played the most significant role in furthering my research interest in Japan, Japanese studies, international relations in the Far East, and East-West relations in the contemporary world. It gave me the unique chance to start working on a subject that gave me a completely new perspective of the international relations between countries and regions that developed very differently in political, socioeconomic, and cultural terms. And I hope that, through my work, I have followed and fulfilled one of the main goals of the Nippon Foundation, which is to contribute to better mutual understanding and peaceful international communication and development.

Once again, I give my most sincere thanks for the honor of being a Sylff fellow.

At the end of my speech I reminded all of the guests and colleagues in the audience that we had established a Society of Sylff Fellows in Bulgaria (SSFB) in 2003. The goals of the association are: to create a local Sylff fellows network, es-

Students of the Japanese Studies program welcome Mr. Sasakawa with a Japanese dance.

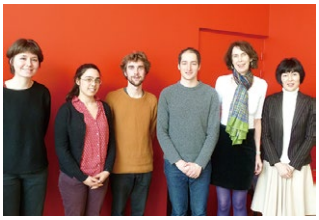
tablish collaboration among Sylff fellows, strengthen relations with Sofia University's Sylff administration, make our relations with the Nippon Foundation less formal and more active, share ideas for the future activities of our association, organize topic-based seminars and other events, publish the proceedings from these seminars and thereby create a yearbook of the association, establish contacts with other local associations of Sylff fellows as a step toward forming a regional Sylff fellows network, further develop and consolidate the Bulgarian Sylff fellows association, and, last but not least, to become an active part of the global Sylff family. The SSFB has not been very active over the last several years, but Mr. Yohei Sasakawa's visit to Bulgaria has offered a great occasion for the Bulgarian Sylff society to restart its activities.

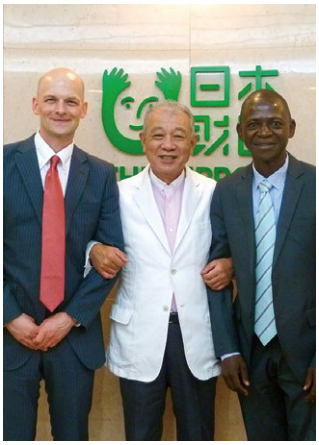
The ceremony at the Center for Eastern Languages and Cultures closed with a short Japanese dance performed by students of the Japanese Studies program. It was a great pleasure and honor for all of us to welcome in our center such distinguished guests from the Nippon Foundation, which has contributed so much to education and research at Sofia University and particularly to the Japanese Studies program.

SYLFF ASSOCIATION

Bringing Leaders Closer Together

Meetings with Sylff Fellows 2016–17





The Sylff Association was launched in 2017 to commemorate Sylff's thirtieth anniversary. We now have a new logo and website, and the secretariat has a new office. It has been an exciting time for all of us, and here we look back on our meetings with fellows worldwide over the past two years in pictures. Congratulations and many thanks, in particular, go to the UNSW Business School and Jagiellonian University, which organized events in 2016 and 2017, respectively, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Sylff at their institutions, and to Peking University and Jilin University, which hosted administrators meetings to discuss program operations for the 10 Sylff universities in China in 2016 and 2017, respectively.

Sylff Association

Sylff Association

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