

# UTRIKES PERSPEKTIV

The Student Magazine on Foreign Affairs

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UTRIKESPERSPEKTIV #3 2016

PEACE IN COLOMBIA

FEMINIST CITY

SUPREME COURT POLITICIZATION

SOUTH CHINA SEA



THEME:

## INDIVIDUAL ACTION



ASSOCIATION OF  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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## EDITORS' NOTE

“FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL TRYING TO BRING ABOUT POLITICAL CHANGE, ABOVE ALL, COURAGE IS REQUIRED

Upon first arriving in Lund after the summer break, all ready to get to work, we were struck by the question: what on earth do we do now? Instead of a set agenda we found ourselves with an almost clean slate and a full roster to fill with writers and layouters. The process of finding them was a struggle, but the result was beyond our expectations. So, after our first fumbling steps as editors-in-chief we are now incredibly proud to present the first edition of Utrikesperspektiv for this academic year, and we would like to dedicate it to the team that has made it all possible.

FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL trying to bring political change, above all, courage is required. The man on our cover picture has long served as a symbol for just that; standing in front of the Chinese army tanks, refusing to accept the terrible odds that one individual faces when trying to change the world. We see this as the very core of the theme for this issue - individual action.

AS AN EXTENSION of the cover picture one of our reporters has written on the dire situation of Chi-

nese human rights lawyers, which you can read about on page 22. On the theme you can also read about the political power of art, one Norwegian man's fight to help protect stateless refugees, the role of freelance journalists in global politics, and much more.

WE HOPE THAT this magazine will inspire you to discuss and debate. If you have any thoughts or comments, please email us and your opinion could be printed in our next issue. Enjoy your read!



VILHELM FRITZTON & TOBIAS ADOLFSSON  
EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

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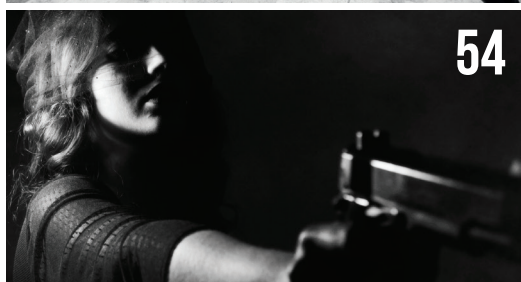
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## PRESIDENTS' ADDRESS

**DEAR MEMBER,**

**WE ARE HAPPY** to welcome you to another operational year with the Association of Foreign Affairs! Maybe all presidents say this about their year, but it does not make it less true; it feels like the year of 2016/2017 will be the best year this association has ever experienced! The events of the summer, for example the big midsummer surprise often referred to as Brexit, seems to have increased student's interest in international affairs. The amount of visitors on most lectures has a three-digit number and the committees are full of students eager to discuss and spread knowledge on foreign affairs.

**AT THE MOMENT**, a lot of focus have been directed on the historic U.S presidential election. When this magazine is released, our travel committee has visited Washington D.C. and the association has hosted a whole election week. Of course the U.S. Election needs to be highlighted and discussed.

**BUT DO YOU** know what makes us so proud of our members? On the 8th of November, the day of the US Election, our Radio broadcasted a show on important elections all over the world. During the same week as all major news sources were reporting on the reaction of a video with Donald Trump's sexist "locker room talk" utrikesperspektiv.se, published articles on "Assyrians in the Middle East". The week of the third presidential debate a lecture was held about the UN Climate Negotiations. And the magazine you now have in front of you is full of content that hopefully will bring you new perspectives on the world around you, and not only bring up the topics you see on the news every day. So thank you for contributing to this, by being a member of UPF!



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# What does it take

## to be successful in the international arena?

Why don't you ask those who know? Speak with prominent people from workplaces such as the UN, Control Risks, the Foreign Office and OSCE by applying to UPF Lund's prep course. Or, form a one-of-a-kind relationship to your own mentor from the Diplomatic Club in Lund, and use their knowledge to enable your future in foreign affairs by applying to our mentorship program.

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The career committee is now accepting applications to the prep course and mentorship program.

To find out more, visit [upflund.se/committees/career-committee/](https://upflund.se/committees/career-committee/)



## 1. THE BEER IS BACK!

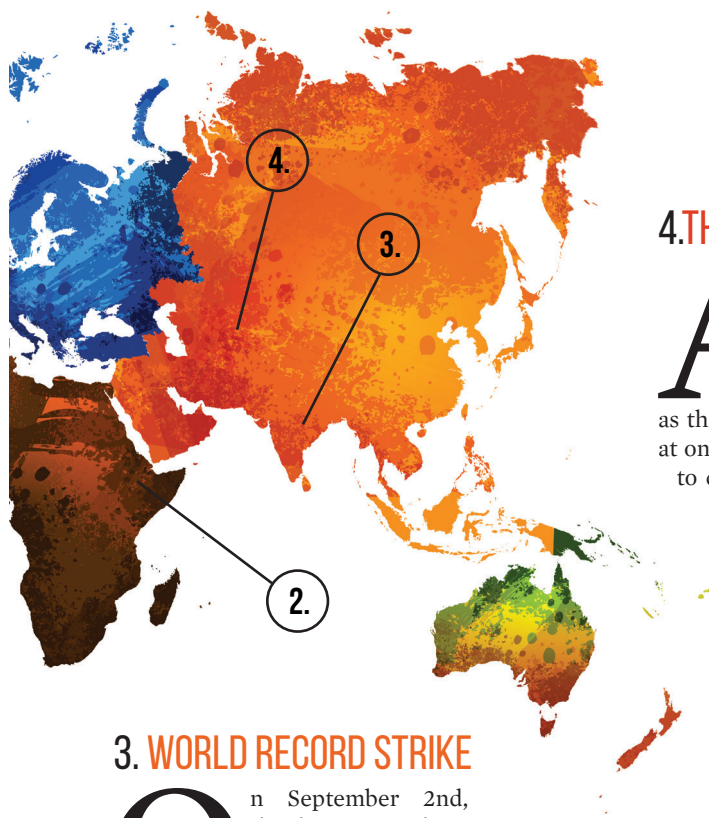
**T**he country that holds the world's largest oil reserve is still struggling with economic chaos and Venezuela is riddled with empty store shelves, a lack of water and regular power cuts. Things began to get to get crazy as the oil price dropped about 50% in 2015. Current president Nicolás Maduro started printing money to save the collapsing economy, thus triggering inflation, which could reach 1,640% in 2017. This spring the country experienced a severe drought, leading to power shortages as two thirds of the electricity supply is based on hydropower. To add to the headache, Venezuela's largest food producing company, Polar, shut down beer production in April. Polar holds 80% of the beer market and the claimed that breweries were shut down due to government policies that restricted access to American dollars, making it impossible to import goods. But in June Venezuelans finally got some good news – beer is back! Polar had managed to get a loan from Spanish bank BBVA, which let the company import goods needed for production. The deal is enough to produce beer for the rest of 2016. What lies ahead for 2017 is unknown but at least the suffering Venezuelan population can enjoy the world's most consumed alcoholic beverage for the time being. ●

## 2. A STATE OF PRETENSE

**I**n October, the government of Africa's second most populous nation, Ethiopia, issued a state of emergency. Growing ethnic tensions is what led the country to this point. The Oromo, the largest ethnic group making up about a third of the population, has long felt alienated from political power. The conflict rose to a great extent when authorities planned to annex some of the Oromo's land to expand the capital Addis Ababa. On the 2nd of October at least 52 people died as police tried to disperse protesters during a holy festival. Activists claim that the death toll was actually over 500. Officials claim that "troublemakers" were the reason behind the deaths and denied that any bullets were fired. The state of emergency allows curfews, arrests without a court-order and restricted protesting rights. The state can also ban communications and internet is now blocked throughout many parts of the country. Analysts and experts are divided on the issue – some claim that it's necessary due to the volume of protests as law enforcement agencies and foreign companies risk being endangered. Others see the state of emergency just as a way of securing the authoritarian regime. ●







### 3. WORLD RECORD STRIKE

**O**n September 2nd, the largest workers strike in history was held throughout India. 180 million people participated in staying home from work for 24 hours, protesting against the Modi government's tendency to prioritize business interests over workers' rights. The unions that organized the strike had a 12-point list of demands, at the center of which were a raise of the minimum wages to 270 USD and social security for every worker in India. Many of the demands were also aimed at improving the situation for the hundreds of millions of workers of the informal sector, who are not part of any union themselves, in order to for the unions to increase the pressure on the government. In respect of the sheer size of the strike, it was largely seen as a success. However, as many of India's news channels are backed by large corporations, the event quickly passed from national headlines, and in the biggest cities the economic effects were modest. It remains to be seen whether Narendra Modi will adjust the country's economic approach, but the support of the growing workers' movement is likely to play an important part in the upcoming elections. ●

### 4. THE BEST OR THE WORST OF TIMES?

**A**fter a twenty-seven year long reign of terror the president of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, died on September 2nd. The late despot, who can be attributed with such charming acts as the boiling alive of suspected terrorists and of at one point gunning down a thousand protesters to quench unrest, leaves behind a country at a crossroads. The former prime minister has been appointed interim leader, and so far it is not clear weather he will try to steer the country toward a more democratic future, or try to seize for himself the firm power Karimov ruled with. Further, there are a number of different international actors with a stake in the direction the country will take: America reportedly has seen in the regime an ally in the fight to stem militant Islamism, Russia most likely has an agenda behind Putin's statement at Karimov's funeral, that they will "do everything to support the Uzbek people and the Uzbek leadership", and China has a strong interest in securing future gas imports. One can only wonder: in this array of large scale power play, is there anyone that cares for the thirty-one million Uzbeks that in Karrmov's death might see a sign of brighter times? ●

# PUSHING FOR PEACE IN COLOMBIA

The country's decision to reject a peace deal with the FARC guerrillas highlights a growing discrepancy between the global political elite and the people they represent.

**O**n October 2nd, Colombians headed to the polls to vote, not for a new leader, but to decide if a peace deal with the FARC should be accepted. The country's leadership, including President Juan Manuel Santos, had worked tirelessly for four years negotiating a truce. Just over a month before the vote, President Santos signed the historic treaty with the FARC. The truce represents a chance for peace in a 52-year-long conflict, which has killed 220,000 and displaced around 6 million people. But contrary to polls, which overwhelmingly favoured a Yes-vote, Colombians rejected the deal by a painful 50.2% to 49.8%, with a participation rate of just 38%.

“THERE ARE SEVERAL STRIKING SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE COLOMBIAN PLEBISCITE AND BREXIT

**IN WHAT CAN** be called the year of unexpected referendums, the Colombian vote came as a shock. It

was by no means a perfect treaty. It offered softer punishment for FARC guerrillas, who admitted to their crimes, as well as guaranteed seats in the Colombian congress. But ultimately, it did provide peace. This in stark contrast to the No-campaign, which offered no credible alternatives. There is a case to be made for the shortcomings of referendums, but that will not be the focus here. Instead, a major hinder is a growing mistrust of career politicians, not just in Colombia but globally.

**THERE ARE SEVERAL** striking similarities between the Colombian plebiscite and Brexit. Both were called for by politicians with a distinct elitist air to them, both seemed out of touch with the will of the people. Mr. Cameron and Mr. Santos underestimated the force of the opposing movements, and so did the polls. This view of politicians, who are out of touch, far away and unaware of the difficulties facing the people they are supposed to represent, leaves voters feeling ignored. In the hope of change and having their voices heard, many lean towards more populist parties, and away from the uninspired traditional ones.

**THIS CERTAINLY HOLDS** true for Brexit, where the population chose UKIP and its promises of 'independence' from the EU and therefore full control over domestic issues. Similar to recent rhetoric by Donald Trump in the US presidential race, attempting to flirt with African-American voters, many voters felt that they did not have anything to





Colombian YES-voters campaigning for peace

lose. Similar episodes are unfolding in continental Europe, where countless populist parties are making headway.

**THE SOLUTION** TO this growing and problematic discrepancy is obviously tricky, but there is great promise in simply listening to voters, as benign as that sounds. Take for example Sweden. The meteoric rise of the Sweden democrats, a populist party with an anti-immigration rhetoric, culminated in December 2015 when it polled at 19% of the vote. In January, just a month later, the government introduced the first border controls between Sweden and Denmark. It signalled to voters that the country was working to improve its oversight of the movement of people, without budging on its core principles of openness, inclusiveness and tolerance. By being attentive to the opinions of voters, without compromising politically, the government has curbed the rise of the Sweden democrats, who currently poll at 15%. Similar action is needed in Colombia, where the No-campaign is headed by the former president, Álvaro Uribe. His

campaign built on the notion that a better peace deal was available through further negotiations, despite the fact that negotiations went on for four years and if passed would have been the first time in history that a guerrilla group agrees to disarm and face justice. Similar to the promises made by prominent Brexiteers (such as redirecting funds from the EU to the country's national health service), a better deal is not feasible, nor attainable.

**BY PAYING DEEPER** attention and communicating more closely to voters, the Colombian leadership can regain the trust it has lost and that the opposition seems to have won. This is vital for the government if it is to keep the peace deal with the FARC alive but also if it is to effectively sell future peace deals to its people. As this magazine is going to press, peace negotiations have begun with the ELN (National Liberation Army), another violent guerrilla group. If the Colombian leadership can get it right this second time around, lasting peace will take a big step towards reality. ●

# EVER-GROWING POPULISM IN EUROPE: A BITTER PILL TO SWALLOW





Populist extremists throughout Europe barely offer any calculated measures or constructive long-term visions in their fiery political rhetoric. However, they still enjoy growing rates of endorsement. Why so many Europeans have given up on traditional mainstream parties and instead opted for populist ones? And more importantly, is there a way for Europe to exit this populist trap?

**T**he rise of populism is a highly pressing challenge facing European democracies as well as European integration today. It is especially concerning at a time when many European governments find themselves in a struggle to retain their reliability in the face of unpopular immigration policies and growing scepticism towards the EU. The popularity of populist extremist and often Eurosceptic leaders such as N. Farage, M. Le Pen or J. Haider and many others has caused an uneasiness with Europe's political stability and future.

**TWO SIMILAR CORE** features are at the roots of populist extremist parties throughout Europe: a deeply critical anti-establishment strategy towards the mainstream parties and the advocating of exclusionary policies towards immigrants. Both of these features are often linked to policies stemming from the EU, which adds to a growing feel of Euroscepticism and a divide. Solutions offered therefore often lean on distancing the respective countries from the EU, if not withdrawing.

Populist extremist parties are far from being 'catch-all' and heavily count on supporters of quite distinct profile - working class men who lack formal qualifications and are economically vulnerable. In other words, they are often popularly dismissed as losers of globalization. However, too quick of a dismissal lead to a limited understanding of what underlying concerns and despairs lie at

the centre of these citizens' motivation to vote for populist extremists. A better knowledge of where the scepticism and discontent stems from is vital. One of the forces driving the Europeans to opt for radicals is a distinct erosion of left and right in the mainstream parties. Over the past decades, Europe saw traditional parties increasingly moving towards the center, which led to a confusion of their standing-points. Angela Merkel welcoming refugees to Germany and a general shift towards more progressive stances on sociocultural matters could be seen as one example of reshaping the conservative. Such redefinitions lead to a feeling that parties are getting more and more similar to each other, thus no longer fairly representing a broader spectrum of views. At this point a vacuum of ideologies is created, meaning a fertile soil for populists, attracting citizens no longer able to affiliate themselves with what used to be a traditional left and right. This yields the anti-establishment narrative employed by populist extremists in order to distinct themselves from center-oriented mainstream elites.

**IN ADDITION OF** missing a political home, there are a number of fears and insecurities in European society continuously unaddressed by mainstream parties. Populists make use of them maneuvering their way to the unattended concerns, which makes a shift in citizens support to populist extremists more likely. While controversial issues are what populists feed on, these same issues remain large-



## “ ONE OF THE FORCES DRIVING THE EUROPEANS TO OPT FOR RADICALS IS A DISTINCT EROSION OF LEFT AND RIGHT IN THE MAINSTREAM PARTIES

ly unresponded by the rest of the political elites. Arguably the most salient issue in the past decades has been the rising rates of immigration.

**ACCORDING TO W. Connor**, the essence of the nation is a psychological, vivid sense of sameness or oneness of kind, which, from the perspective of the group, sets it off from all other groups in a most vital way. This is mainly why people tend to respond more emotionally when it comes to a national identity in comparison to when an economic well-being is at stake. For these people, the core incentive of turning to populist extremism is the feeling that immigration and diversity threaten their national culture and a habitual way of life. Such psychological underlying insecurity caused by migration is much more pow-

erful than economic competition, which for too often and too long was held as a primary source of any public discontent.

**EUROPEANS MISS** a dialogue about these inner fears, but, unfortunately, only populists seem to be joining the conversation. Meanwhile, mainstream elites persist on making the economic case for immigration rather than one for cultural diversity, which poses some uncertainty about the future. A research by Lauren McLaren concludes that possible long-term consequences of such unaddressed public concern might lead to a plummeting of trust in political institutions and a decline of overall functioning of the political systems. Undoubtedly, once in power, the populist extremists will also add to a destruction. Having in mind that their vision of coping with public distress is in most cases limited to distancing respective countries from the EU or even withdrawing, the unity of Europe, often taken for granted, is also wildly at stake.

**THIS LEAVES US** expecting that concerns about the insecurity and national identity are to be taken into account and measures to increase the appreciation of cultural diversity implemented. Otherwise, mainstream parties ignoring the discontent as well as failing to rediscover the virtues of ideological heterogeneity will cause a continuous divide among Europe. Meanwhile, populist extremism blooms under upheaval and is by no means willing to leave public sphere solely on its own accord. ●





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# CONVERSATION WITH A TYRANT

## *An Utrikesperspektiv Exclusive Interview*

At first it was only a movement in the corner of my eye; a flash, and when I looked nobody was there. But then I started seeing him, sneaking around at the fringe, whispering in an ear here, making a comment there. For a while now he has been present, lurking, channeling his voice through the mouths of others, preparing. At the brink of his return, I managed to catch him for an exclusive interview.

**S**o, Adolf Hitler, you are giving politics another shot. I tell you, its gonna cause some hey-day. The readers will be interested to know, what really is your goal?

“National socialism is the determination to create a new man. There will no longer exist any individual arbitrary will, nor realms in which the individual belongs to himself. The time of happiness as a private matter is over.”

**Wow, full speed ahead I see. Seeing as you lost last time, what keeps you motivated?**

“I believe that I am acting in accordance with the will of the Almighty Creator: by defending myself against the Jew, I am fighting for the work of the Lord.”

**Interesting, I would never have guessed. Anyway, much have changed since you were last active. What do you think of this 21st century society?**

“Our whole public life today is like a hothouse for sexual ideas and simulations. Just look at the bill of fare served up in our movies, vaudeville and

theaters, and you will hardly be able to deny that this is not the right kind of food, particularly for the youth. Theater, art, literature, cinema, press, posters, and window displays must be cleansed of all manifestations of our rotting world and placed in the service of a moral, political, and cultural idea.”

**I take it that you are keeping with the infamous propaganda tactic? Tell the readers about it.**

“The art of leadership consists in consolidating the attention of the people against a single adversary and taking care that nothing will split up that attention. The leader of genius must have the ability to make different opponents appear as if they belonged to one category. The greater the lie, the greater the chance that it will be believed.”

**How exactly does that work?**

“The receptivity of the masses is very limited, their intelligence is small, but their power of forgetting is enormous. In consequence of these facts, all effective propaganda must be limited to a very few points and must harp on these in slogans until the last member of the public understands what

you want him to understand by your slogan. By the skillful and sustained use of propaganda, one can make a people see even heaven as hell or an extremely wretched life as paradise.”

**You don’t seem to hold the people in very high esteem?**

“Indeed, what luck for rulers that men do not think.”

**So what will be your course of action from now on?**

“The best way to take control over a people and control them utterly is to take a little of their freedom at a time, to erode rights by a thousand tiny and almost imperceptible reductions. In this way, the people will not see those rights and freedoms being removed until past the point at which these changes cannot be reversed.”

**Should you succeed in rising to power again, what will be the first thing that you do?**

“Two things. First I’ll put an end to the idea that a woman’s body belongs to her; the practice of abortion shall be exterminated with a strong hand. Secondly, we have to put a stop to the idea that it is a part of everybody’s civil rights to say whatever he pleases.”

**On a more specific note, as the question of immigration is among the hottest right now, would you care to comment the direction the European Union have taken?**

“If the race is in danger of being oppressed or even exterminated the question of legality is only of secondary importance. The established power may in such a case employ only those means which are recognized as ‘legal’, yet the instinct of self-preservation on the part of the oppressed will always justify, to the highest degree, the employment of all possible resources.”

**Lastly, some of our readers might be interested in political careers, would you give them some advice?**

“If you do not know how to counter your opponents efforts, if you remain confused and uncertain as your opponent makes his moves, step by step with decisiveness and intention, and your inaction allows him to come closer to power, then you have already lost and they have won, for they know the rules of the game and you do not.” ●



Photo: Wikimedia Commons



Amid the growing tension of migration and border controls gripping the continent, one foreign university student journeys from the Copenhagen Airport to the Lund Central Station. On route he meditates on questions of identity and humanity arising from the encounter with a new country.



## Chapter 1

**I**t was pretty late by the time my plane arrived at the Kastrup Airport in Copenhagen. The air was a stinging cold but the winds had been moderate. The flight was fine. No turbulence and my usual flight anxiety had not been as severe. Before any flight, my mind would conjure up a very detailed and vivid image of a plane crash. Either the wing of the plane would snap off leading to an uncontrollable descent. Or, the engine would burst into a ball of flames and consume the entire crew and passengers alike.

**SOMETIMES WHEN I** am lucky enough to fall asleep I would dream that I am in blackness. Within this space I would think that it is all over. Somehow I had missed the event of my death and I was on the other side. I would loiter around a bit in the blackness and feel a deep sadness. The blackness would press me in and my essence would tighten like a knot finally snapping. I would wake to the usual no smoking sign above me. Everything as normal as it could be 30,000 feet in the air.

## Chapter 2

**I WAS TIRED** and wanted to be in bed. It would be another hour or so before I was to arrive in Lund. Only immigration control and train ride to go. With immigration checked I made my way down to the ground floor of the airport.

**I WASN'T PARTICULARLY** hungry but the glaring Burger King advertising lured me in. I stood behind a short Asian woman who wore huge spectacles and seemed anxious about what she would order. Looking up at the digitized menu I also pondered what I should eat.

**I HAD SOMEWHAT** denounced Islam as my religion some years ago. The bacon reminded me of the day that I told my friends that I would expand my diet to include pork. We had been working up an appetite throughout the day and by evening walked up the street to the McDonalds. They were serving a famous seasonal burger, the McRib. It was glorious. Between the burger buns were two slabs of pork ribs layered with cheese and bacon. Each bite severely stymied the flow of blood to my heart. When we were done I didn't feel any different.

The gates of hell didn't open up to swallow me. The skies didn't break apart and shower me with scorching fire. All I felt was the hollow feeling you experience after eating fast food.

**I DECIDED ON** just a normal cheeseburger with fries. I slouched over the high tables and munched on my meal looking over at the other arrivals pace toward the ticket machine. The issue of not eating pork for Muslims has to do with the hygiene of the animal. It is seen as unclean and therefore deemed to be ungodly. It is strange because the reason is really more scientific or health-based than anything spiritual or otherworldly. Much of the religion is based on reason, which you would not usually associate it with in our world today.

**AND ME? I** haven't dumped the religion entirely. I just don't want to be controlled by something that has so many flaws. Going to university had opened my mind. I now knew of the threads that sewed history and religion. I became aware of myself within its design. Consequently, the concrete that walled the house of my morality turned to sand and I stood naked in an open field.

**BUT, I AM** still a Muslim. It will never leave me. And no matter how much I stray from it I will adhere to its values.

## Chapter 3

**AT MALMO THE** train stopped and border control officers boarded to examine everyone's documents. There were a number of people on my carriage but everyone was seated alone as was custom in Sweden. It took a while before the officers came to my compartment. It took even longer for them to examine everyone's identification before coming to me. I reached into my pocket and gave my passport to the officer. He stared down at the small booklet then handed it back to me.

"Do you have your Swedish visa?"  
"Yes I do. One second."

**I PULLED OUT** my bag and checked the inside pockets where I usually put my residence permit. It wasn't there. Nervous now, I checked the outside pockets then checked the pockets of my trousers and wallet for the permit. It wasn't there. It wasn't on me. The officer asked again if I had the permit

and I told him that I didn't. He instructed me to go see his colleague on the platform. I rushed out and saw a lady officer with a gadget in her hand. I went over to her and explained the situation. I must've looked worried. She asked me to calm down and assured me that if I could remember my personal identification number she would be able to process me. Relief.

**I HAD SAVED** my number on my phone. I produced the number anxious that the train would leave without me. She processed my information, smiled and told me not to forget my permit again. I thanked her.

**HAPPY THAT I** wouldn't be stranded in Malmo or Copenhagen or wherever I would need to go if I didn't have my information, I got back onto the train. It was a different carriage and there were a few more people on this car than the one I was in beforehand.

**I SAT BEHIND** a brown man nearly my age and rested my head against the window waiting for the train to start again. By the time the train got going the man in front of me began to sing along to a song playing from his phone. I was sleepy but I recognized the song as a prayer from the Quran. He was quite loud. Loud for a midnight train at least.

**I WAS A** little tense about this development given the simmering environment all over Europe regarding Muslims. Muslims and attacks to be precise. My mind began to detail a story leading to my death, as my stories always did. I stretched my eyes over the head of his chair and saw that he was clutching a bag very close to his body. The story became even more vivid.

**HE MUST BE** praying the prayer the suicide bombers pray before they blow-up themselves and ev-

eryone else within the blast radius to the next dimension. Damn, what a way to go. I can see the headlines. Blast kills 12 on train to Sweden. Oh shit, they might mistake me as the perpetrator!

**I DIDN'T LIKE** the feeling of not being in control of the situation. Some form of action needed to be taken. Before I made a move, a young Swedish lady got up and approached the man.

"Could you please be quiet? This is a train for everyone."

"I wasn't being too loud."

"Im sitting at the back and you were disturbing."

"Alright I will put it lower."

**“ I CLOSED MY EYES  
AND LET THE BLACKNESS  
CONSUME ME. FEAR OF  
NOTHINGNESS CREEPING.  
MY STOMACH PLUMMET-  
ING. A SICK SENSATION. IT  
WAS ALL TOO MUCH AT  
ONCE**

**JESUS, WHAT HAS** she done. She has doomed us all. If he ever needed an excuse to go through with it she just gave it to him. Damn, what a way to go.

#### Chapter 4

**A FEW MINUTES** passed and I got up to sit by the brown man. I introduced myself and he told me his name was Mohamed. He asked if I was Muslim and

what I was doing in Sweden. I told him about my program and that I was from Ghana. He asked me about Ghana and I told him it is sunny. Sunny and beautiful. He was from Pakistan and had found his way to Sweden a while back. He wanted to be a police officer and was training to enter the Swedish force. I thought it incredibly ironic, but also sad. If he only knew the problems he might run into pursuing his dream. Whilst conversing we heard the young Swede from the back talking quite audibly on her phone.

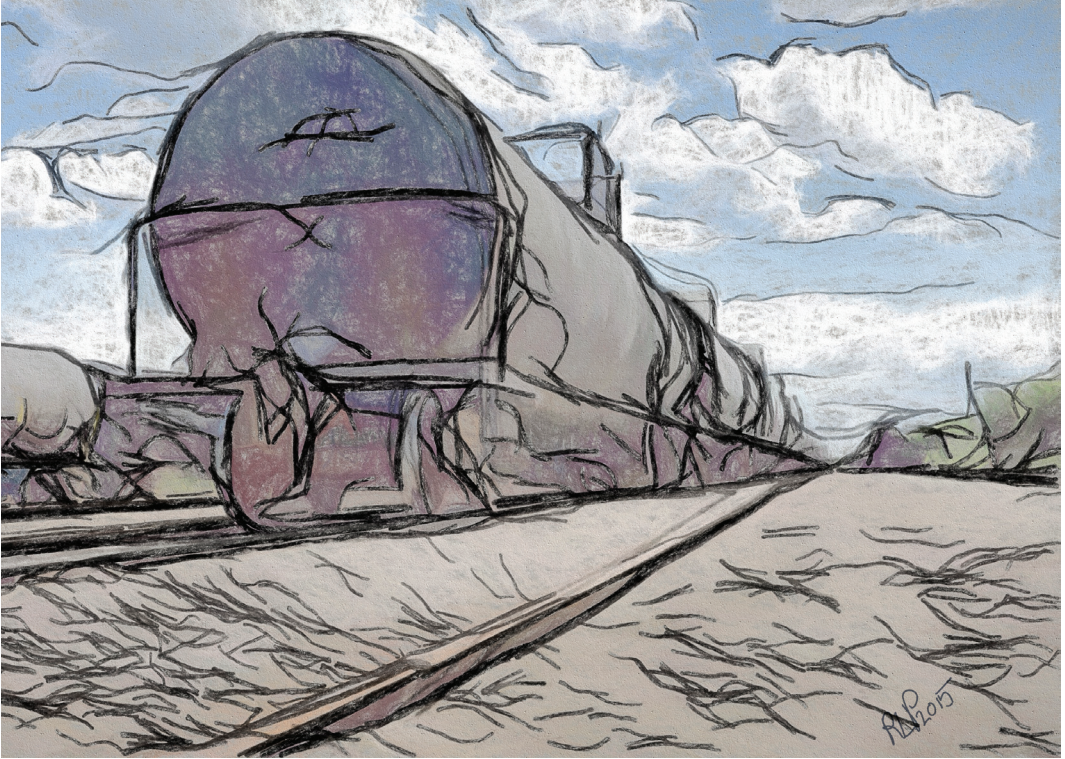
"People are very quick to forget."

He shook his head and smiled. I smiled as well.

"Here is my stop."

"Mohamed, I wish you the best of luck, brother."

"You too."



**I WANTED TO** say something more meaningful. Something along the lines of “don’t let people get to you,” or “follow your dream no matter.” But I was no older than he was. Who was I to tell him that?

**AND THERE WAS** also the embarrassment and the shame holding me back. The embarrassment that I had thought he was a suicide bomber and the shame in feeling like I wasn’t really a real Muslim. That I am, in more than one way, a fake. Caught in between the world that I had grown up believing and the world I was now trying to understand.

**I HAD HELD** on to the image of heaven when I was child because it made me less fearful of death. Less fearful of losing my parents after death. I held onto the belief that our home would transcend time, space and earth. That my mother would be there to hold me till the end of time. My father napping on his chair, a fixture in God’s kingdom. I was embarrassed because it felt like I had been fooled. A big joke. And it would get to me like it was getting to me now. And I would feel sorrow rushing to my

eyes like the blurred pastures we were rolling by.

**I CLOSED MY** eyes and let the blackness consume me. Fear of nothingness creeping. My stomach plummeting. A sick sensation. It was all too much at once.

**SO I LET IT** wash over me.  
Then the tightness in my chest loosened.  
My heart eased.  
The train began to slow down.

**I LOOKED UP** at the arrival sign. Back in Lund. Everything as normal as it could be millions of miles away from home. Happy, at least, that I was going to sleep on my own bed. ●





THEME:

# INDIVIDUAL ACTION

What is an ocean,  
but a multitude of drops?  
Can a single person  
make a difference?  
And if so, how?  
How does an individual react  
when facing powers  
larger than oneself?







FEATURE  
ALICE ROBERTS



# THE RULE OF POWER

THE STORY OF WANG YU



In Summer 2015, over 300 Chinese lawyers, activists and their associates were detained or interrogated in a nationwide crackdown on human rights lawyers. This represents the biggest attack against free speech since the aftermath of the Tiananmen square protests.

**T**he New Chinese president, Xi Jinping, has often stressed that China should employ a system based on the ‘rule of law’. However, following a string of human rights lawyers being detained, it seems the reality is far from the ‘rule of law’ and remains heavily-handedly the rule of power.

**THE NATIONWIDE POLICE** operation began when Wang Yu was taken from her home on July 9th 2015. Wang Yu’s friends received terrified phone messages from her after she returned home alone late to find her electricity and Wi-Fi turned off and men trying to break into the house.

**ORIGINALLY, WANG YU** had been a commercial lawyer, until she felt the sting of injustice when she was refused entry onto a train, despite having a valid ticket. Rather than the train conductor being punished, Wang Yu was imprisoned for 2½ years for ‘intentional assault’. Through witnessing the mistreatment and torture of inmates, she converted to a human rights lawyer by the time she was released. Wang Yu then worked at Fengrui Law Firm in Beijing, tackling sensitive and high profile human rights cases. The firm became a major

target during the July crackdown as authorities rounded up many of her colleagues, including her husband, in one weekend.

**THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT** were quick to use their monopoly over the media to gain public support and present the frankly laughable image that the government follows rule of law. Just days after Wang Yu’s arrest, the Communist Party newspaper reported that the lawyer arrests were to “smash a major criminal gang” that had used the Fengrui Law Firm firm to “draw attention to sensitive cases, seriously disturbing social order”.

**A WEEK LATER,** Wang Yu was personally targeted by the media as she was described as an aggressor while an old clip of her shouting “pack of scoundrels” at bailiffs was televised. Of course the context preceding this clip was excluded. In truth, her defendant was forcefully shoved and removed from the room and her fellow lawyer was beaten unconscious after bringing up a sexual assault that the defendant experienced in custody.

**ON THE 6TH** October, Wang Yu was hit again by the government’s actions, when her 16-year-old son was captured in Myanmar during a plan to escape

“ WHEN ORDINARY  
PEOPLE HAVE NO CHOICE  
BUT RISE UP IN THEIR  
OWN DEFENCE, THOSE IN  
POWER WILL REAP WHAT  
THEY’VE SOWED:  
HEIGHTENED SOCIAL  
TENSION AND CHAOS

-CHEN, ARRESTED LAWYER

to the US. This was after he was detained and refused permission to attend his school in Australia before boarding his flight. He now stays with his grandparents under heavy surveillance and is emotionally effected by his parent’s detention. Wang Yu’s two friends who helped him escape now face serious people-smuggling charges.

**BY JANUARY 8TH,** Wang Yu had been in isolated solitary detention in a hidden location for six months. She was scared for her husband, her son, her friends and her colleagues. She was unable to communicate with the outside world.

She was kept in the dark about her case. Wang Yu’s lawyer, Li Yuhan, was repeatedly refused visits to her client and after 6 months her lawyer’s licence was revoked. The State reportedly chose their own lawyer for Yu as a way to sentence her more easily; state appointed lawyers can only play the role of “stability maintenance” and not truly defend her rights. It was on this day when Wang Yu was formally arrested for the crime of “subversion of state power”, which carries a sentence from 10

years to life, if the person played a leading role. Her husband was formally arrested for “inciting subversion of state power”, with a maximum penalty of 15 years.

**ANOTHER SIX MONTHS** later, after no contact or news from her, Wang Yu is seen on television sitting outside in a relaxed looking interview and has supposedly been released on bail. She is seen confessing that she went to extremes in her work, “wrote inappropriate things online and accepted interviews with foreign media” and said

“ SHE IS THE BRAVEST  
AND THE MOST UPRIGHT  
AND SELFLESS HUMAN  
RIGHTS LAWYER

-WANG QUANPING, LAWYER

“I feel ashamed and express remorse”. She continued by saying she hoped that her son would “serve the motherland” and rejected two awards for her brave work in human rights commenting that they were intended to “blacken the reputation of the Chinese government. I am Chinese. I only accept the leadership of the Chinese government. I do not accept these awards”. But she can’t really mean that, right?! In fact, many people doubt that she was genuine, with fears that she had been



threatened. This is not the first public confession, and, among others, journalist Gao Yu made a televised confession and later withdrew her words, saying that the authorities had threatened her son and made her read a script. Could the same have happened to Wang Yu? Wang Yu has remained incommunicable after the interview, and family members are unsure of the conditions of her so-called ‘bail’.

**THIS SUDDEN DISPLAY** of power against lawyers who follow international human rights conventions, outside the laws of China, is a shocking start to President Xi Jinping’s rule and has gained international criticism and national frustration. The China director at Human Rights Watch comments that these events “demonstrates the authorities’ willingness to warp the law beyond all recognition”. Sina Weibo (Chinese twitter) users

mock the Chinese ‘rule of law’: “guilty or not, the authorities have the final say, nothing to do with law”.

**DOES THIS HEAVY** stance demonstrate a heightened level of paranoia within the current administration?

“ IF THEY SAY WE’RE GUILTY, THEY WILL FIND WAYS TO INCRIMINATE US, EVEN IF THEY HAVE TO PULL RIDICULOUS AND GROUNDLESS EVIDENCE

-SU TIENFU, LEAD PASTOR OF HUOSHI CHURCH

level of paranoia within the current administration? Could this be the start of another reign like Chairman Mao’s? Amongst desperations to keep the country from harmful Western influences and prevailing political dissent, journalists and writers have been jailed for challenging Chinese history, while internet censorship and academic controls have increased and NGO’s are banned from receiving foreign funding. China advocates freedom of speech and press, however this is often undermined through the loop-

hole that these freedoms may expose state secrets or endanger the country. ●



**FEATURE**  
ERLEND MALMER





# FRIDTJOF NANSEN

A MAN OF COMPASSION, VISION AND ACTION

Today, at least 10 million people are defined as stateless, and therefore unable to get medical care and education. The definition of statelessness is “a person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law”. The story of avoiding and preventing statelessness starts with one man’s great compassion for his fellow human beings and unique innovative thinking, which has become the founding stone of every modern international refugee relief policy.



**E**xplorer, scientist, diplomat, humanitarian and politician. These are some of the titles of the great Fridtjof Nansen (1861-1930). Nansen is mostly known as the crazy Norwegian arctic explorer who reached the North pole using a specially designed boat that could repel the unforgiving ice. As a young man, Nansen crossed Greenland on skis which launched him into fame and established Norway as a polar nation. In 1893 he set sails on a mission to reach the North Pole. With his uniquely built ship Fram, he was the first man to reach the North Pole, or at least as close to the pole as any man had been before.

**FIERCELY INTELLECTUAL, NANSEN** earned his doctorate degree at the University of Oslo when he was only 26 years old, writing about the human central neural system. Nansen had a great compassion for politics, society and his fellow human beings, which he worked hard to uphold and preserve in his later years. In Norway and worldwide he is mostly known for his daring adventures but is however less known for his truly inspiring and heartwarming work as the High Commissioner for refugees. Nansen's relentless efforts, methods and hard work is the inspiration of mostly all modern international organizations who work with helping and protecting refugees today.

**1917-18 WAS** a truly desperate year. The allied blockade in Germany was at its worst, effectively starving the population during war. Nansen was the head of the Norwegian delegate in Washington D.C. trying desperately to negotiate an agreement which would let food and supplies through the Allied blockade and into Germany. In the spring of 1920, the League of Nations asked Nansen to undertake the task of repatriating the prisoners of war, many of them held in Russia. Working with his usual boldness and ingenuity, despite restricted funds, Nansen repatriated 450,000 prisoners in the next year and a half.

**THE HISTORY OF** international protection of refugees started with the League of Nations. In the aftermath of World War I, the Russian revolution and the Greco-Turkish, Caucasus and Balkan wars, all in the same time era (1918-1922), there were some major upheavals on the European Continent. A steady stream of different minorities, religious and political exiles were pouring out as a

consequence of these brutal wars and there were no organization or system to handle it.

**RECOGNIZED AS THE** strong leader that Fridtjof Nansen was, The League of Nations appointed him as their very first High Commissioner for Refugees in 1921. First order of business was the Russian revolution and civil war. Lenin's Red army defeated the White movement and took power in Russia. Many Russians refused to submit to the new regime and therefore decided to leave the country. On the 15th of December 1921 Lenin decided to revoke the citizenship for all those in exile, leaving around 800 thousand Russians stateless, and therefore unable

“ THE REFUGEES WHO  
WERE REGARDED AS AN  
INTOLERABLE BURDEN  
WOULD COMPRISE  
A RICH ASSET

-FRIDTJOF NANSEN

to seek asylum in any other European country. Nansen quickly identified this as the main problem and started creating a unique passport called “the Nansen passport”, which gave the refugees a valid name, ID number and were therefore able to seek asylum. In 1921 Nansen was granted another enormous task requested specifically by the Red Cross. During the dire Russian Famine of 1921-22, his task was to provide food and shelter for the Russians, whose crops had failed 2 years in a row and in the aftermath of the first world war were running extremely low on provision. Due to his outstanding methods of organizing, he was able to produce food enough to save 7 million Russians, out of which 6 million were children. Nansen was also a pivotal figure in Greco-Turkish war. The Greek army was beaten and Greeks living in Asia poured into their native land. Nansen arranged a swap and 1.2 million Greeks who lived in Turkey returned, likewise for 500,000 Turks living in Greece.

**NANSEN MINISTERED HUNDREDS** of thousands of





The Nansen Passport

refugees - Russian, Turkish, Armenian, Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean - using methods that were to become classics. Custodial care, repatriation, rehabilitation, resettlement, emigration and integration were all a part of Nansen's program and are today the standard methods in protecting and helping refugees.

**THE DISSOLUTION OF** the League of Nations in 1946, due to their failure to prevent the Axis power aggression which led to World War II, made way for a new peacekeeping international organization, the United Nations. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is a very important part of the undertakings of the UN. The successful work and innovation all produced by Nansen is still very much influential, especially noticeable in the UNHCR program to end statelessness by 2024.

**STATELESSNESS IS STILL** a worldwide problem. War is one of the main reasons for people being state-

less, and war is something that is historically constant. Nansen gave us the right tool a long time ago, something which is still being applied to help stateless people today, but with natural disasters happening more frequently and more brutal wars occurring, the issue of statelessness is a reality the world still faces.

**THE NANSSEN PASSPORT** is no longer active, but the UNHCR gives out a travel passport to stateless people, a renewed Nansen passport. Except for preventing statelessness, the most effective way to protect is to identify and give stateless people a chance to seek asylum in other countries. There are at least 10 million stateless people wandering around today, unable to get education, medical treatment and other necessities because they are denied a nationality. Even though Nansen started and identified the problem, it is still a major problem that perhaps needs modern innovation and diplomacy. ●

Jalla, habibi, mafi, bukra, As-salamu alaykum

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# Fragments from the Mediterranean

Wanting to help other people is a conventional human feeling. Being able to help, is a privilege. Thousands of people made their way down to Greece in the name of humanity last autumn. Being a volunteer is problematic in many ways. Having a lawless power position is difficult to handle without any experience related to crisis situations and vulnerable people. And constantly facing prejudices. Here follows three short stories about some freelance volunteers I met while I was present in Greece one year ago as a volunteer myself.

**I**t's not saying like 'I saved this person's life. Or 'I changed this person's life'. Because that is bullshit. These people are adults, they're taking care of their own lives, they've been through worse stuff. I mean, they crossed the sea in a rubber boat. We just helped them along the way."

**A BUNCH OF** push and pull factors brought Matteo to Greece in the beginning of November 2015. As he walked besides the waterfront on the Greek island, the first thing he got confronted with was the unilateral media reporting. Instead of rubber boats dramatically being washed up on the coast he saw people jumping in the water to cool themselves off and observed families gathered in the local cafés. "Is this really a refugee crisis or a holiday resort in Beirut?"

**BUT A HUNDRED** meters away from the waterfront he got confronted with the bad conditions in the camp. And being present one night in the port as wet, hungry, tired people in bad shape arrived, Matteo soon realized the gravity of the situation. After a couple of weeks with thousands of arrivals, a lack of volunteers, chaos, devastation and barely any sleep it suddenly became quiet and Matteo de-

cided to leave. "Of course three days later the chaos started again on the Greek Island. I guess the lesson is that as a freelance volunteer, you never really know what is bad or good."

**"WHEN I LEFT** Greece the first time, in the end of last year, I got the impression that the time for the freelance volunteer is over. Which is good; because that meant that there was more structure and system in place. Sad; because it was great to arrive as a random person and make a really big difference on your own initiative. But that's not how it's supposed to be obviously. It shouldn't be possible for random people to just walk in to a camp. They could have bad intentions as well."

\*

**"NOW I LIVE** in a good situation in Germany. They are my people. You know, these are Syrian people, and I'm Syrian. This is my duty, to go to Greece and help."

**IN THE BEGINNING** of 2015 Ibrahim reached Greece as a refugee. Just a couple of months later he returned to volunteer. Ibrahim's role as a volunteer was mostly based on his knowledge of the Arabic







Photos: Rishabh Kaul

language. He devoted a lot of time in the hospital for medical cases, but also helped Frontex and the police with translating.

**THERE EXISTED A** general misunderstanding about the volunteers. Many refugees thought that the unpaid helpers in matter of fact received juicy salaries from big organisations. “They really don’t take salary?’ they asked. And I responded ‘No they don’t take salary.’ When I told them we come as humanitarians, a lot of people started to cry.”

**HE PUTS WEIGHT** on the importance that Europeans observed that refugees like him went to Greece to contribute. “Because many European people say ‘oh refugees come and they only want to sit and take money and don’t want to do anything for the European community and doesn’t work.’ No, we didn’t come to Europe to stay and play. We come because there is war in Syria. We come here to make a future. And by volunteering in Greece we showed the European people that. “

\*

**“IN GREECE,** it was very traumatic but easy to help; which gave you such a strong feeling of success. In Lebanon, no matter what you did it made you realize how little of a difference you made.”

**FANNY WENT TO** Greece in November last year, intrigued to be a part of the humanitarian movement representing solidarity. “Something necessary to demonstrate in a time when it seemed that the official policy of Europe corresponded the opposite.” After spending some months on The Greek island the situation became more organized. The Greek ministry took over and freelance volunteers lost the right to enter camps. She and a little group of other freelance volunteers heard about the situation in Lebanon. “We choose to go there and try out. There was more of a need there. Our hands were more worthy there.”

**IN GREECE ANYONE** hade the possibility to walk out

on the street and respond to the crisis. In Lebanon it required meetings with all the NGO' s, military and municipalities in order to get anything done as a freelance volunteer. "It was even more clear and frustrating that we weren't able to work within a system. We would never be able to finish our work. There would always be one more person in line with the same problem."

**THE LEBANESE HAD** a full system in place with legislation about everything related to refugees. But again one familiar condition was present: the chaos. "Because a structure doesn't mean anything when it doesn't work in praxis and in praxis there were just too many refugees, with too few resources."

\*

*It is so close to the primal, when the mountains in the sea around me,  
are lying like dinosaur bodies.  
I swam in the same sea where children and mothers and fathers  
have died on their way from Turkey to Greece,  
but the sea made such an innocent sound in my ears.  
And in that combination where the frustration and devastation,  
faces the constant beauty of the island  
it creates an echoing existential question in my head.*



# THE SEX POSITIVE ACTIVISM OF TIM MILLER

In a performance called US, the American performance artist Tim Miller confessed to consider to go into exile in Canada so that he could legally marry his boyfriend. Only a decade later were the two able to marry in the US. Could Miller's body of work help the juridical change? Or, what are the consequences if the state wants to decide what is art and what is not?

**A**s Tim Miller tells us in the origin myth of his third book, he got a thought, did some calculations, and concluded that if he continues to perform in different parts of the world, living the traveling agent's life (selling art and political opinions) he'll end up sleeping in nearly a thousand hotel beds. As a result, he published 1001 beds. Performances, Essays, and Travels in 2006 with Glen Johnson as the editor. 1001 beds is a book and a performance. It's an autobiography reflecting on around twenty-five years of a career, and an anthology of interviews, journals and performance transcripts. It is a blend of his art and "behind the scenes". The journals and es-

says are really enjoyable to read as they give a nice touch of vulnerability to the confident professionalism.

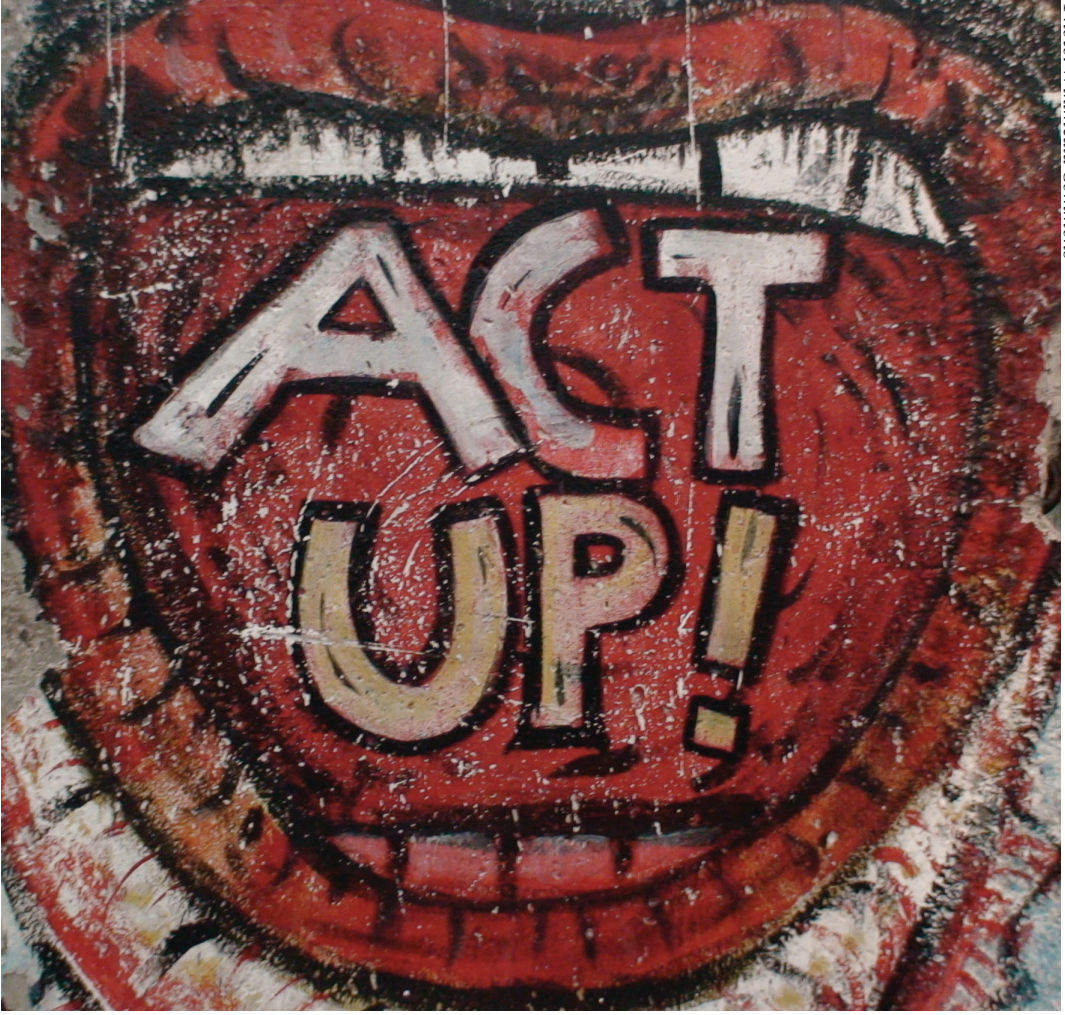
**THE 1001 NIGHTS** were originally spent by telling tales; the stories in Tim Miller's book are definitely different but not less interesting. Once upon a time... there was a boy in America who wanted to play Oliver in the musical, a boy finding all those Vietnamese boys on the pages of the National Geographic handsome. This queer boy grew up to be a queer man seeing friends and lovers die by AIDS, while his loved country didn't acknowledge their need for help so he worked together with ACT UP/LA. A man leaving dance for performance, co-founding Performance Space 122 on Manhattan's Lower East Side and Highways Performance Space in Santa Monica. He met other brilliant artists and together they fought against the state-structured homophobia. He created art interwoven with his political opinions because change was what he was burning for, but words and moves were what he believed in. He also believed in love but couldn't marry the one because he happened to be a man and he could even lose him because he happened to be Australian.

**IN THE PROLOGUE** of the book he writes: "Maybe the writing cure could now help me once again to get a lock on a very chaotic situation, the nagging fear that at some point Alistair will be forced to leave the country. This can really cut through a lot of writer's block. I'm writing as fast as I can before his visa expires! ... I decided that rather than dutifully try to meet my deadline, it was



Photo: Tim Miller





more important that I should spy on Alistair in his office.” This quote illustrates why personal material keeps popping up in his performances. The answer might seem simple: that’s what concerns him. The personal really is political in his case and so he uses the potential of art to raise his voice. As RoseLee Goldberg wrote “many artists reclaimed performance as a mechanism for grassroots activism, and in the hands of Tim Miller or the late David Wojnarowicz, . . . it became the most effective means to publicize political and social issues.”

**HE WAS, ALONG** with Karen Finley, John Fleck, and Holly Hughes, the NEA Four: three gays and a feminist. They were denied grants from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1990, or, they were “to be censored, distorted, and used by right-wing demagogues”, with Miller’s words. The four sued the NEA and got grants in 1992. However, it wasn’t a clear win: in 1998 the Supreme Court decided it was constitutional to judge art by its decency.

The discussions evolving around the case both in political and media agenda effect the artists even today: not only did they simplify their art as sexual ignoring its values but were also a clean sign of no support. Every now and then performances get canceled in states with a strong right-wing because of Miller’s history.

**WHAT IS THE** overall picture like? When reflecting on his career in an interview, he notes how AIDS became less significant in his work after 1996 when new drugs appeared. He perceives it as a kind of feedback – when a topic is not that pressing anymore it might be because what he did actually made some change. After achieved marriage equality he has the freedom to tell new stories and so he does. His new performance, *ROOTED*, premiered recently, and beside he works frequently with young artists to help them start their own journey. ●



## VIOLENT RIOTS - A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

“Those who make peaceful revolution impossible, make violent revolution inevitable.” - John F. Kennedy

**I**n the past few years there has been a surge in the number of public protests across the globe. Massive public gatherings in different countries have taken place to protest against issues ranging from intense economic inequality, social injustice and ethnic grievances to austerity measures taken by their governments. Majority of these gatherings have been peaceful and fruitless. However, those protests that turned violent have left their lingering markers in the places they occurred. The Arab Spring, 15-M and Spanish Indignados, London Riots, Occupy Wall Street, Ferguson unrest amongst many others had a few things in common: they were reactions to states' actions or inactions and started out as peaceful protests, but set off as riots because some form of state-sponsored violence, ordinarily police brutality, was used.

**It is common** knowledge that peaceful protests are largely ignored by governments – when the pro-

test is over, the issues mechanically subside. In order to get the attention of those in power, such issues are dramatized. From disobedience to destruction, the methods are used by the participants to express their anger and resentment, and to incite immediate governmental action to change the status quo. As the methods become extreme, it is often suggested that the political character of the protest is lost in the mayhem of vandalism and looting; the rioters then become criminals, and their actions are classified as meaningless and random acts of criminality. The complex issues are reduced to such simple explanations, and the root causes are conveniently ignored. The psychological underpinnings of the riots are never analysed since they do not occur because the participants had no alternative in the face of ugly brutality. Or that the dehumanized behavior could no longer be ignored, and the repressed tensions of society needed to surface in order to be resolved. These perspectives are deliberately not hinted at to keep



# “ THE STATUS QUO IS KEPT AND MAINTAINED THROUGH GOVERNMENT-LED REPRESSION AND VIOLENCE

up the façade that everyone is treated equally and fairly.

**THE REACTION OF** the different governments all-around has been almost identical: deploring and discrediting the protest-turned-riot, and labeling it as mindless acts of violence and criminality by apolitical opportunists. In making this the universal truth, governments involve different institutions to preach their ‘official version’ of the story in an attempt to make it more believable. Governments’ streamlining of mass media is perhaps the most common tool employed to manufacture the ‘right’ responses from the public. For example, during the London Riots, the Prime Minister termed the riots as “sickening” which needed to be “confronted and defeated”. The politicians and media alike presented the riots in the same fashion. Apparently, this “criminality” was defeated when a 24 year-old student was sentenced for 6 months for stealing bottled water worth £3.50.

**IT IS IN** no way suggested that vandalism and looting represent anything more than criminal damage and theft. However, the stress of politicians and mainstream media is always consciously on the damage caused by the riots to portray the picture of meaningless and self-contradictory anarchy. It is suggested that the focus should be more on changing the way how riots are perceived: are stone buildings and mechanical devices more important than people? It is the failure of the systems of a state, including its justice system, when a blind eye is taken towards complex issues in a society, and when particularly communities within it are branded as criminals. In 2014, researchers from University of Oxford concluded that rioters in London “came from economically deprived areas and from boroughs where policing had less legitimacy”.

**THE CONCLUSION OF** this research can be best explained in the famous words of Dr. Martin Luther

| Marching riot police.



Photo: Serge klk/flickr





Police trying to disperse protestors.

King Jr.: “There is nothing more dangerous than to build a society with a large segment of people in that society who feel that they have no stake in it; who feel that they have nothing to lose. People who have stake in their society, protect that society, but when they don’t have it, they unconsciously want to destroy it.”

**NONETHELESS, THE OFFICIAL** story portrayed through mainstream media does not take these factors into consideration as these would highlight governments’ inability to solve the issues. A superficial social analysis is provided that only deals with the after effects of the riots. As the riots are politically divorced phenomenon, there is no genuine anger or grievance behind the actions and reactions of rioters, hence there is no need to grapple with underlying social causes. The status quo is kept and maintained through government-led repression and violence. It would be outrageous to suggest that such government violence only begets violence: a form of self-defense of the participants. After all, the Icelandic saucepan revolution is a successful story of peaceful protests that brought

along a change in political regime in Iceland with major changes in their constitution.

**THE ISSUES OF** social inequality, economic issues, social stratification, ethnic issues, state-sponsored brutality, etc. have been present in the world in one form or the other since time immemorial. The national revolutions that took place over the time in history involved violence and achieved results. They are glorified through songs and literature, and are celebrated as proud historical moments. If any lesson can be learned from history, it is this: freedom of any kind is earned, forcefully taken from the oppressor. It is not a charity donated by him.

**IT IS TIME** for governments to learn from history and see social issues and riots from a different perspective to avoid what their inactions will make inevitable. ●

# WIR SCHAFFEN DAS!

**September 2015.** Crowds of people applauding the arriving refugees. Angela Merkel proclaims “Wir schaffen das” – “We can make it”.

**September 2016.** One year later the same motto is still valid, yet increasingly disputed. On the local level people still have to “make it” on a daily basis. What is the situation like for volunteering helpers and refugees one year later?



**T**he initial engagement during the peak of the ‘refugee crisis’ was quite overwhelming all over the country. Now the everyday is setting in. Gyms and other makeshift emergency shelters are emptying and refugees settle more permanently in local municipalities. Those who are left volunteering to help have to cope with fostering

integration and settling in on a long-term, everyday basis. Because the problems are not becoming less complex. Help is not done with a one-time donation of old clothes. Solutions have to be more sustainable.

**THE SMALL BAVARIAN** town Höchststadt an der Aisch is one of many examples of a community where

refugees found a new home. Stefanie Wittmann is one of several locals who are committed and support the newly arrived. After initially paying sporadic visits to the shelters and new homes in town she quickly built up relationships with an array of asylum-seeking people. Now she's doing something almost every day: "You get sucked into it. You see that helping out once is not enough, there is always a next step to be taken". Her activities comprise phone calls to all kinds of local and regional authorities, driving refugees to the doctor, accompanying them to certain appointments, helping to find work or explaining mail they receive: "Certain letters contain words I don't even straight away understand myself as a native speaker. I had to figure out the incredibly complicated social systems and competences of each authority", she explains.

**WHERE SWEDEN HAS** Skatteverket and Migrationsverket, Germany has the foreigners' office, the social office (managed by the district administration), the job center (managed by the agency for work) and the federal office for migration and refugees. "Also the people there have to grow into their responsibilities, some authorities haven't had these tasks before." Stefanie knows most of the people working there personally by now.

**ONE WONDERS HOW** Germany can expect the newcomers to figure out all of that themselves, especially with no centralized system for German language classes. The refugees can choose between different organizations offering these services. It is also hard to understand what they should base their choice on, not knowing who all these organizations are.

**IN MAY 2016** Germany passed the first 'integration law' in its history, defining the guidelines for what integration of the refugees should consist of. One of its cornerstones is the mostly compulsory completion of an 'integration course'. The example of Iranian asylum-seeker Ali K., however, shows

how impracticable this can be in concrete situations. One month ago the trained welder managed to find work – again with considerable help of Stefanie, who could sort out the necessary paperwork after around 20 phone calls with 4 different authorities and the new work place. This process took so long that the employer almost withdrew his offer. "Luckily this company was very cooperative and really wanted to employ Ali. Otherwise this is impossible", she remembers.

**SHORTLY AFTER SETTLING** in at his new work place the migration office asked Ali to take part in an integration course – during his work hours of course. Luckily Stefanie was able to fix this problem, Ali won't have to attend this 8-week course now. After all the same law emphasizes that work is the most vital and best form of integration. This shows that often a solution presupposes a resolute negotiation position against the authorities.

“HELP IS NOT DONE  
WITH A ONE-TIME  
DONATION OF OLD CLOTHES;  
SOLUTIONS HAVE TO BE  
MORE SUSTAINABLE

**PROBLEMS ARE MANIFOLD**, but usually of very practical nature. Apart from organizational problems language and cultural barriers add to the complexity of the daily life. Hand and feet can be crucial instruments of communication. This is especially complicated with the "pile of letters

and application forms from the authorities. They pile up in their apartments, they don't even open them anymore, because they can't read them anyway. And when the helpers visit them they get confronted with this pile", Stefanie tells. These papers are often of a simple nature: letters to the parents from school or a registration form from the health insurance. This last one Stefanie filled out for Ali K.: "It was two pages in a tiny font with unnecessarily complicated terms. Ali initially thought the form was about his illness history, which it wasn't at all."

**ANOTHER PRACTICAL PROBLEM** is distances. All legal matters concerning asylum-processes are administered at the place of the initial reception center.

**FOR SYRIAN MOHAMMED L.** this is in Regensburg,





Migrants in Wien waiting for the train that will take them to Munich, Germany.

100km from Höchststadt, for Ali K. in Zirndorf, a 50km journey. The latter one is however overloaded, which meant some weeks ago that Ali had to take his family to Nürnberg instead for a hearing concerning their asylum application. He took the day off from work, their daughter Anna couldn't go to school. It took them three hours on public transportation to arrive in Nürnberg in time, just to find out that the responsible judge was sick that day. Also Mohammed's wife whose baby is due in a couple of weeks doesn't know yet how to come to the hospital once labor pain sets in.

**HOWEVER, LOOKING AT** the situation in the long run – and of course the long history of migration proves it once more – encounter and exchange of experiences is the key for integration. The circle of volunteers in Höchststadt therefore organized an intercultural encounter party during the summer to give old and new citizens an opportunity to meet and better get to know each other around food from different home countries and music. The attendance was surprisingly high, an important signal against rising xenophobia and violence from right-wing extremists also in Germany.

**MAYBE THIS IS** what Angela Merkel meant when

she was talking about “Willkommenskultur” – “welcome culture”. Anyway, the situation of the refugees and the volunteers shows that this culture has to happen on the very local, individual and interpersonal level. And this requires efforts from both sides – the very definition of the term integration. Politics are often very far from these local realities, using symbolic legislations and questionable rhetorics to keep loud voices from the far-right quiet – people who could instead of shouting spend their time for making it work. ●

“MAYBE THIS IS WHAT ANGELA MERKEL MEANT WHEN SHE WAS TALKING ABOUT “WILLKOMMENSKULTUR”





Australian Government



# NO WAY

**YOU WILL NOT MAKE AUSTRALIA HOME**



**The Australian Government has introduced the toughest border protection measures ever.**

- If you get on a boat without a visa, you will not end up in Australia.
- Any vessel seeking to illegally enter Australia will be intercepted and safely removed beyond Australian waters.
- The rules apply to everyone: families, children, unaccompanied children, educated and skilled.
- No matter who you are or where you are from, you will not make Australia home.

**THINK AGAIN BEFORE YOU WASTE YOUR MONEY. PEOPLE SMUGGLERS ARE LYING.**

[www.australia.gov.au/novisa](http://www.australia.gov.au/novisa)

# UNWANTED BY ALL

## RELOCATION - A NEW WAY OF RESETTLING REFUGEES

Australia celebrated two years of stopping illegal boat arrival in July 2016. Asylum seekers arriving by boat are sent to detention centres in Nauru or Manus Island. To provide resettlement for refugees in Nauru, Australia and Cambodia signed an agreement that is inconsistent with all international practice on refugee matters. Could this be the new way of resettling refugees or is Australia just sending them away by paying Cambodia?

### Chapter 1: Encounter

**B**eing a stateless Rohingya from the Rakhine state of Myanmar means that forced labor is common. One night, you were too sick to work on the shrimp farm. After explaining to the Nasaka Commander, you were beaten up. The police were drunk so you took a chance and escaped. Great, you're out of the camp! You went back to your family but were told to escape as the Nasaka would come for you. Fearing for your life, you paid your life savings to a smuggler who promised you a new life in the promised land, Australia.

“FEAR OF TERRORIST  
ATTACKS AND MASS REFUGEE  
FLOWS ARE DRIVING MANY  
WESTERN GOVERNMENTS TO  
ROLL BACK ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
PROTECTIONS

- KENNETH ROTH, HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

**YOU HOPPED INTO** a small boat with more people in it than it could handle, thinking about your

ambitions. Soon you will have a shot in life! Upon reaching Australia's shore, however, you were intercepted by Australian Navy and sent to an off-shore processing center in Nauru where your claim for refugee status will be processed.

### Can Australia transfer asylum seekers to a 3rd country?

**AUSTRALIA IS A** contracting state of the 1951 Refugee Convention, which emphasizes on the principle of non-refoulement. According to Article 33 of the United Nations' Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, ratified by Australia in 1973, a contracting state has an obligation to not return a refugee to a place where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a social group or political opinion. But Australia is not sending you back to Myanmar, it's sending you to Nauru. Before the Migration Act was changed in 2012, former Prime Minister Julia Gillard appointed expert panels for guidance. The expert panel's report stated that asylum seekers have no right to have his status determined in a particular place under International Law and there is no rule that an asylum seeker must seek protection in the first state. A High Court ruling in 2011 stated that Australia cannot process asylum seekers in a country that was not bound by law to provide protection while their refugee status is being determined. Nauru ratified the Refugee Convention in 2011, so it



seems it is not illegal for Australia to send asylum seekers there.

## Chapter 2: Limbo

**IT'S BEEN 2** years since you set foot in Nauru and your refugee status has been determined. However, you've been told that settling in Australia is impossible. Australian immigration authorities approached you with the "golden ticket" to leave Nauru, made possible by the Australia-Cambodia Refugee Relocation Agreement. They told you that Cambodia is "free from persecution" with "a stable economy and good employment opportunities". Anywhere is better than this prison-liked detention camp. You could not bear anymore of the beatings, robbing and harassment. Not to mention the appalling standard of medical care. You decided to abandon the tiny impoverished island and take your chances in Cambodia.

**"WE BELIEVE THAT THE UP-COMING AID FROM AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT... WILL ADD AND INCREASE THE CORRUPTION IN CAMBODIA**

- PISES MAO, CAMBODIAN POLITICAL ANALYST

### What is the Australia-Cambodia Refugee Relocation Agreement?

**AUSTRALIA AND CAMBODIA** signed an agreement providing relocation for refugees from Nauru to Cambodia on 26th September 2014. The agreement was negotiated without consultation with parliament or civil society in Australia or Cambodia. Many details of the agreement remained unclear, such as the number of refugees to be relocated to Cambodia. Former Australian Immigration Minister, Scott Morrison, stated that as many as 1,000 refugees will be relocated but the Cambodian Interior Minister said they would only accept "three to four" at first as a "trial". However, under the agreement, Cambodia will decide how many refugees to accept and when. The exact cost of the agreement is a mystery, but in October 2015 the Secretary of Department of Immigration and Border Protection clarified that Australia was

providing A\$40 million in 'development assistance' and another A\$15 million for overall resettlement program. Only five refugees accepted the offer of resettlement. As of June 2016, 4 of them have returned to their home countries despite the well-founded risks of persecution. The last refugee in Cambodia, Mohammed Roshid, a stateless Rohingya Muslim, which the Myanmar government does not recognize, described his situation there with the words, "I fear that I will die here."

**"REFUGEE STATUS DOESN'T MEAN THEY WANT TO STAY IN CAMBODIA FOR GOOD... THAT'S WHY WE DON'T DO MUCH TO INTEGRATE THOSE PEOPLE WITH VOCATIONAL TRAINING OR SHARING HOW TO MAKE A LIVING IN CAMBODIA**

- MR. PHAY SIPHAN, CAMBODIA'S GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN

## Chapter 3: Utopia

**AFTER BEING IN** Cambodia for few months, you realized that you've been lied to about life in Cambodia. Cambodia is not flooded with employment opportunities. You found a job selling roti but the pay is not enough to support yourself. You felt cheated for agreeing to come to a poor, once refugee-producing nation, where around 18% of the Cambodian population survive on less than \$0.93 a day and the government struggles to provide basic services even for its own people.

### Who is legally responsible for refugees' protection in Cambodia?

**BOTH CAMBODIA AND** Australia are bound by the 1951 Refugee Convention. The country that has legal responsibilities for the refugees in Cambodia depends on whether the country has effective control over them. The non-refoulement principle of Article 33 as mentioned earlier only applies to a state that has effective control. Once the refugees settled in Cambodia, it can be safe to say that Cambodia has effective control over them and not

Australia, as Cambodia would have territorial jurisdiction over them, thus shifting the responsibility from Australia to Cambodia.

**LET'S GO BACK** to Nauru processing center, where Australia has effective control over asylum seekers and refugees. Again, based on the non-refoulement principle of Article 33, if there is compelling evidence that refugees' rights would be violated in Cambodia, then Australia would be legally obliged to stop resettlement in Cambodia.

**THIS IS WHERE** the lines are blurred. How do we define 'compelling evidence' and what is the threshold? I could only make persuasive arguments. Under the agreement, refugees will be given 'temporary accommodation' in the capital, Phnom Penh, then they will be resettled outside of the capital. Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website described Cambodia's medical services as "poor and very limited" with "no medical facilities" for emergencies outside of the capital. In 2009, Cambodia, who ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention in 1992, forcibly returned 20 ethnic Uighurs to China despite universal condemnation of Cambodia's action and China's record of torture, disappearance and arbitrary detention of Uighurs. In return, China confirmed a

commitment of \$900 million in aid. Human Rights Watch have also long reported the forced return of Khmer Krom activists into the arms of the Vietnamese security services. In the session of the Human Rights Council in September 2016, Australia joined 36 other nations in a statement raising concerns about Cambodia's political tension, which threatens oppositions and human rights organizations after the "politically-motivated" murder of political commentator, Kem Ley. All these may indicate that Australia is aware of Cambodia's poor human rights record and that refugees' safety and rights would be violated, which may trigger the non-refoulement principle. ●

“HOW IRRESPONSIBLE IS IT FROM AUSTRALIA? CAMBODIA CANNOT PROTECT ITS OWN PEOPLE AND VIOLATES EVERY POSSIBLE RIGHT THEY HAVE

- OU VIRAK, CHAIRMAN OF THE CAMBODIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



Photo: Takver/flickr

# HUNTING SEASON FOR JOURNALISTS

Journalists play a vital role in the fight for freedom. Driven to get closer to the truth, they sometimes have to decide whether a story is worth risking their life for or not. At the same time, we bear witness to an ongoing discussion here at home concerning the death of journalism itself.

**F**reelance journalist Martin Schibbye is well aware of the risks that come with the profession. He began his journalistic career ten years ago. His aim ever since has been to cover the stories that otherwise never would have been told. This still remains one of his greatest motivations. Nevertheless, the current trend with increasing risks for journalists in parts of the world troubles him. “It almost appears to be a hunting season for journalists”, he says.

**AROUND THE GLOBE** reporters are threatened, tortured and imprisoned. Last year, at least 199 journalists were sent to jail. During the past six years 452 journalists have been forced to live in exile. Sometimes their very lives are put at risk. As a consequence of today’s various publication platforms the need for journalism as a method for political actors to communicate their agenda has diminished. Nowadays governments, politicians and other actors on the international arena can express themselves through social media. “It is more efficient for terrorist groups to execute a journalist

and post it online rather than being interviewed”, Schibbye argues.

**IRAQ, SYRIA AND** the Philippines are the countries where most journalist killings have taken place in the past 24 years. Whereas many die in cross-fire, the proportion of murders are disturbingly high. From 1992 until today at least 1,211 journalists have lost their lives. More than half of them

“ SOME ARE GOING AS FAR AS CLAIMING THAT WE ARE WITNESSING THE MURDER OF JOURNALISM





Freelance journalist Martin Schibbye believes that the hunger for journalism is more present than ever.

were murdered. The Philippines has, in addition, the lowest rate of conviction in such cases. The country's president, Rodrigo Duterte, justified the killings of local journalists by claiming that they were corrupt.

**WHILE JOURNALISTS ARE** risking their lives for our access to information there is a current debate here at home about the potential death of journalism itself. An unwillingness to pay for online articles, leading to cost cuttings and job losses and are part of the picture. As technology has developed, old journalistic institutions have demised. Some are going as far as claiming that we are witnessing the murder of journalism.

**ACCORDING TO SCHIBBYE** this is, however, not the case. "The crisis lies with the old business model", he argues. This does not mean that journalism as a whole is an obsolete profession. On the contrary, Schibbye believes that the hunger for qualified journalism is more present than ever. He recently took part in the starting of crowdfunded Blank Spot Project, aiming to cover the stories that are

often overlooked. The project was met with great enthusiasm, proving that people are willing to pay for quality journalism.

**THE ALARMING AMOUNT** of threats and violence against journalists should not be taken lightly, especially not from a democratic perspective. The ideal of journalism as a generator for peace and freedom remains and so does the public demand for it. As long as there is an interest for foreign correspondence the risks taken by the journalists cannot be disregarded.

**ACCORDING TO MARTIN** Schibbye being a journalist is the greatest job there is. Regardless of the dangers he might face while covering stories abroad, and despite the warnings of a profession facing a potential extinction, his enthusiasm for journalism is obvious. Schibbye is only one of many journalists around the world who are willing to take the risks. It is the belief in the power of journalism itself that makes it worthwhile. ●



LONDON.



BEIJING.



TEL AVIV.





The image is a composite of two aerial city views. The top half shows a dense urban skyline with various skyscrapers, including a prominent triangular glass building on the left. A large white rectangle is superimposed over the middle of the image, containing the title and subtitle text. The bottom half shows a different cityscape with several tall, modern apartment or office buildings and a complex highway interchange.

# THE NEXT SILICON VALLEY

THE CAPITAL OF DIGITAL STARTUPS AND HIGH-TECH  
COMPANIES IS STILL LOCATED IN THE AMERICAN WEST.  
WHERE CAN ITS FUTURE CHALLENGERS BE FOUND?



**N**estled in the sunny bay area of Northern California, Silicon Valley has grown to garner a worldwide reputation for being leaders in startups, high-tech and digital companies. Silicon Valley roughly covers the city of San Francisco, Santa Clara and San Mateo county, and a few surrounding areas. This region was originally known for its semiconductors industry, but in the past few decades it has become more known for its technology and software. Major companies such as Google, Facebook, eBay, Apple and Netflix have all chosen to base their headquarters in Silicon Valley. What makes an area a thriving spot for startups and innovation? Usually it is a combination of a high number of startups and scaleups, large pools of venture funding, a large percentage of local area employment in the technology sector, and an entrepreneurial culture that attracts domestic and foreign talent. However, Silicon Valley is far from the sole owner of an impressive tech scene. Here are three regions of the world that could give Silicon Valley a run for its money.

### London, UK

**LONDON IS OFTEN** cited as the number one city in Europe for supporting startups, as well as one of the world leaders in financial technology. The city's extensive access to capital, digital infrastructure and an overall high level of entrepreneurial culture makes it a solid ground for innovation. The number of startups in London is considerable, with around four thousand startups and over 250,000 digital jobs. Tech groups based in London have raised a staggering 2.28 billion pounds collectively in 2015. It is estimated that the economic activity from the tech scene will generate 12 billion pounds and around 46,000 new jobs over the next decade. London is an attractive city for investors and companies expanding abroad because they see the location as a good base for moving into the European market.

**ONE CAVEAT TO** the predicted upward growth of London's tech scene is the result of the Brexit decision. A significant portion of tech companies within the United Kingdom saw an exit from the European Union as an impediment on bringing foreign talent. There are also concerns that public confidence in the tech sector will be weakened. More concrete effects from Brexit on London's

tech development are likely more visible after 2018, when the UK will officially leave the EU.

### Beijing, China

**THE CAPITAL OF** China is not only known for its important political institutions, but also for its establishment and potential in the technology sector. Beijing is home to Zhongguancun Science Park, headquarters to major firms such as Weibo and Youku, and this area has often been referred as China's Silicon Valley. Beijing boasts at least 40 tech startup companies that are valued at over one billion each. Similar to other prominent startup technology cities, Beijing has a significant concentration of venture capitalists willing to bet their money on new investments. Renowned universities in Beijing, such as Peking and Tsinghua University, has supplied many talented graduates into the technology workforce. Due to the size of its population and geography, China has a massive domestic market for Beijing startups to tap into.

“ **BEIJING BOASTS AT LEAST 40 TECH STARTUP COMPANIES THAT ARE VALUED AT OVER ONE BILLION EACH** ”

**FOR FOREIGNERS HOWEVER,** Beijing may prove to be a difficult market to establish and grow startups. Complications on taxes, visa approvals, and general unfamiliarity with the culture and customs can all be potential barriers to setting up companies in Beijing. On the other hand, tech firms in Beijing may also face cultural and language barriers when moving abroad and thus some companies opt for just staying within the Chinese market.



Zhongguancun Science Park, Beijing

## Tel Aviv, Israel

**TEL AVIV** IS well known for its prominent role in the cybersecurity industry. Originally developed around military affairs, cybersecurity in data mining and cryptography is finding its place into the financial world, allowing digital transactions to be made safely and effectively around the globe.

“ ISRAEL HAS MORE STARTUPS PER CAPITA THAN ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD

**THE CITY ITSELF** has as much as five thousand startups, an impressive number for a population of around 404,000. Examples of prominent startups originating from Tel Aviv include Kaltura, a vid-

eo platform company, and Wix, a web publishing platform.

**ISRAEL, WITH A** population of 8 million, has more startups per capita than anywhere in the world. However, some point out that the limited population and small domestic market of the country may be a hindrance on the rapid development of its tech industry.

**TEL AVIV'S BOOMING** tech economy has seemingly outpaced the domestic skilled worker supply, leading to a shortage of developers available for hire. One solution is to look towards foreign talent, but immigration laws in Israel makes it hard for non-Jewish people to move into the country. The Israeli government has worked toward steps in making arrangements for foreign skilled workers to work in Israel for a few years. However, the special arrangements may be only temporary, as Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu elaborated that the import of foreign talent was only to fill the vacuum until Israel's own population is trained enough to fill the demand. ●

*Photo: Gage Skidmore/flickr*



## A WORLD OF ABSURD

The 2016 US election has amazed people around the world, mainly because of the craziness of the Donald Trump campaign. Still, Trump is not the only political candidate to cause raised eyebrows in the history of world politics. Utrikesperspektiv maps out three politicians around the world – all mad, but in their own unique way.

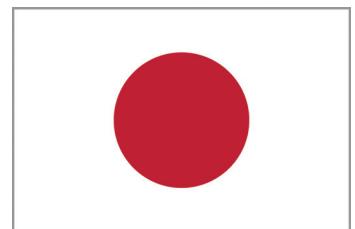
**Who:** Toyama Koichi

**Where:** Japan

**What:** Running for Governor of Tokyo/President of the US

**MR. KOICHI BEGAN** his first speech by declaring the state of Japan a horrible nation which needs to be destroyed. He went on by saying that the majority of the people watching the speech his sworn enemies. To round off the show, Koichi stated that nothing would be changed through elections anyway and gave the camera the finger. In 2008 the fireworks continued as Toyama Koichi ran for President of the United States, his case being that the rest of the world should be seen as the “51th state” because of American world hegemony.

**Result:** Placed eight in the Tokyo elections with just over 15.000 votes. Apparently Mr. Koichi's straightforward speech didn't do a bang up job. Oddly, he was not allowed to run in the American presidential election.



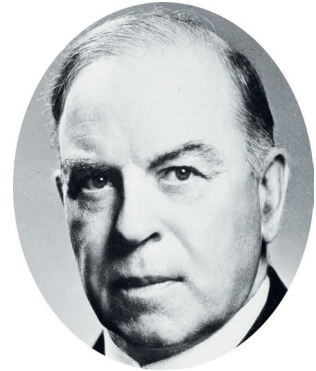
*Photos: Wikimedia Commons*



**Who:** William Lyon Mackenzie King  
**Where:** Canada  
**What:** Running for Prime Minister

**A BIOGRAPHY ON** Mackenzie King stated: “out of eleven characteristics of an insecure passive-aggressive male, King demonstrated nine every single day”. Disliked by most of his colleagues, self-absorbed, moralistic, vain, and paranioid, the story about the oddity of the Canadian politician doesn’t end there. Mackenzie King often talked to dead relatives and Leonardo Da Vinci using mediums, auspicated his shaving foam in the morning for signs of what would happen during the day and was obsessed with his mother. Although Mackenzie King might come across as a cold person, he was a big animal lover. After his first dog Pat died, he got a second one and named it Pat II, followed by Pat III. When Pat III passed away Mackenzie King’s fourth Irish terrier was named Bob. No one seems to know why the pattern was broken.

**Result:** The longest serving Canadian Prime Minister of all time, holding the office for 22 years. The weirdness aside - William must have been doing something right.



*Photos: Wikimedia Commons*

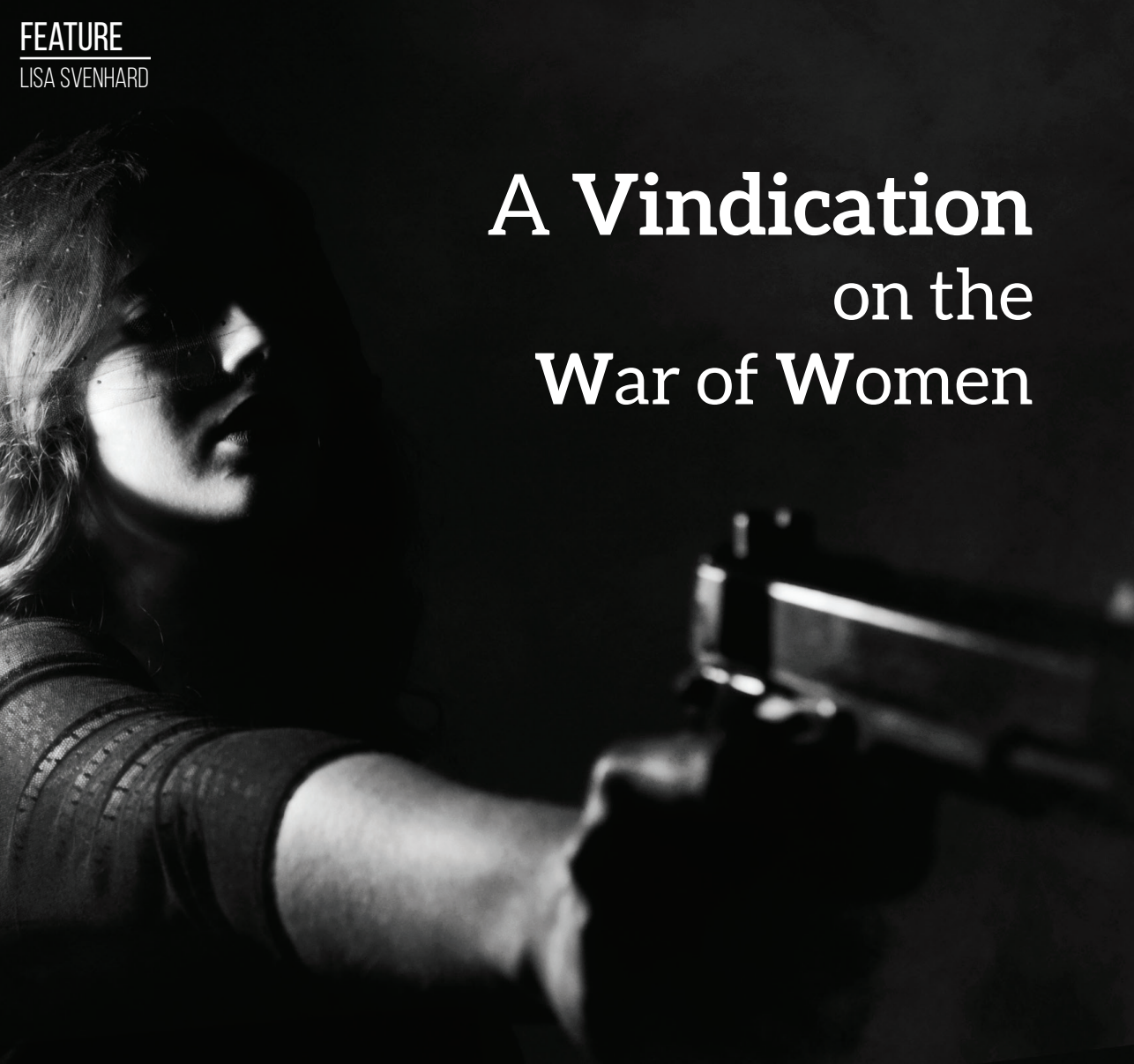
**Who:** Michel “Sweet Micky” Martelly  
**Where:** Haiti  
**What:** Running for President

**WHAT DOES HILLARY** Clinton, Wyclef Jean and Ben Stiller have in common? During a few weeks in the beginning of the year of 2011 they all campaigned for “Sweet Micky”, a well-known dance artist in Haiti, to become the President of the country. With the support of local superstar Jean, a big gala held in New York led by Stiller and a visit to Haiti by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to promote the candidacy, the road to the president’s office was paved for Mr. Martelly.

**Result:** The entertainer assumed office in May 2011. As President “Sweet Micky” delayed elections, was accused of corruption and police had to use tear gas to break up large protests demanding his resignation. Martelly eventually resigned in February 2016, leaving the Caribbean state without a President for a week. To say goodbye, he released a song suggesting that Lilliane Pierre Paul, a famous journalist in Haiti and one of the president’s most influential criticizer, needs some banana (Martelly’s successor, chosen by himself, is called “Banana Man”). Maybe “Sweet Mickey” for President wasn’t such a good idea.



*Photo: [www.glynlowe.com/flickr](http://www.glynlowe.com/flickr)  
Photo: Wikimedia Commons*

A black and white photograph of a woman with long, wavy hair, seen in profile from the chest up. She is holding a handgun with both hands, pointing it towards the right. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights on her face and arm, and deep shadows elsewhere. The background is dark and indistinct.

# A Vindication on the War of Women

*Photo: pexels.com*

Far from the common assumptions and stereotypes rests the fact that women play a significant role in various terrorist networks around the globe. Lisa Svenhard tackles the background, reasons, and consequences of not considering the realities and dangers associated with this fact.

**T**o describe the characteristics of a terrorist is not as simple as one would like to believe. In fact, it may even be extremely difficult. A common assumption may be a crazed man seeking vengeance or meaning through the extreme ideas of fanaticism in religion or politics. This may be true in many cases. However, the simplicity of that idea is not a fair description of reality. We tend to overlook the role women have played in terrorist organisations over the past 50 years. Women are equally capable of committing violent terrorist crimes as men and as passionate about their extreme ideas; the idea that they are not is fatally misleading and dangerous.

**AS HISTORY REVEALS,** women in terrorist organisations tend to be very active in the communication between current and prospering members. Between 1970 and the turn of the century, various German left-wing terrorist groups exclusively consisted of women, and bombings and other attacks were committed in the name of feminism and anarchy. One of these groups was the Baader Meinhof-gang which were co-founded by women, and the women were active in the planning of bombings and attacks that cost 34 lives until their dissolution in 1998. Another organisation was Rote Zora, who were solely female-led, and they targeted shops and organisations that in their eyes were discriminating women.

Today, ISIS is another example of a terrorist organisation where women are independent in their passion for the cause. Women spread propaganda and communicate via social media to recruit and

radicalize, broadening the reach of the organisation. Moreover, violent terrorist acts is not something they shy away from. ISIS appeals to women who share the organisation's values and a will to fight. Over 600 western women are believed to have joined ISIS, and the numbers are even higher in other parts of the world. For example, in Tunisia alone it is estimated that 700 women are now part of ISIS.

**THESE PREVIOUS EXAMPLES** lead us to question as to why this is not spoken of today. This could be explained by applying the almost outdated theories of the relation between a man and a woman. The idea that women only conform to terrorism when they're under the influence of a man is still dominating. Whether it be to support a love interest, or to obey a guardian, these are all assumptions that originate in this aged perception where the man leads the woman. In many cases, that's what we still like to believe. The women who use violent methods to exercise terrorism frightens us in a different way to the violence conjured by men. Not only does it show that women are equally able to perform these kinds of acts, but it also shakes the whole idea of women's passivity into the ground. The expectation of a woman's life is not an independent one, whether it be criminal or not, and to see a woman choosing a life without a commitment to a man as the main focus is alienating.

**IT IS CLEAR** that another obstacle in this discussion is heavily rooted in the cracks between "the west and the rest" and the belief that our modern "secular ways" are correct. Let us exemplify

**“ BY CLAIMING THAT ALL THESE WOMEN ARE UNDER GREAT OPPRESSION, WE CEASE TO ADMIT THE DANGERS OF THE WOMEN THEMSELVES**



“ NOT ONLY DOES IT SHOW THAT WOMEN ARE EQUALLY ABLE TO PERFORM THESE KINDS OF ACTS, BUT IT ALSO SHAKES THE WHOLE IDEA OF WOMEN'S PASSIVITY INTO THE GROUND

this by looking at the French government's ban of the Burkini, the beach clothing that covers the full body of a woman. The argument for this ban claims that it serves as an elimination of the Islamic oppression of women. All of this has been said through the western perspective, gravely overlooking the opinions of Islamic women. Whereas in relation to terrorism, these cracks are deepened due to the preconception that women who belong to terrorist groups are oppressed. Finally, who are we to say what is right in this very complex situation? In what context do “western” opinions apply, and when do they not?

**WE MUST UNDERSTAND** that there's more to terrorism than what meets the eye. By claiming that all these women are under great oppression, we cease to admit the dangers of the women themselves. An oppressed person is a harmless person, right? One may assume that an oppressed person is a victimized person, that needs saving. Truth be told, this whole situation is a huge advantage for the organisations themselves, as the women can commit crimes without facing the same suspicion as men. A blind spot is created, that could be very harmful. The engagement of women in these organisations is broad and difficult to define, yet something we cannot deny exists. If we keep overlooking the

danger that their involvement holds, we may fail to comprehend the background as to why a lot of people surrender to these forces. Without acknowledging the fact that both men and women are susceptible to surrendering to terrorism, we will never be able to work against this kind of behavior. Parents educate their sons to teach them peaceful manners, but without conducting this kind of education for girls everything may be for nothing.

**CONSEQUENTLY, IT IS** of great importance that we open the discussion about this. We need to challenge the discourse that dominates in this area. By acknowledging the existence of facts and learning more about them, we can also start preventing terrorism. Education is needed for both boys and girls to enable them to pursue a life without this kind of violence. An inclusive discourse concerning the life of women in all countries of the world, and especially in those where terrorism is frequently occurring, is needed. The exchange of thoughts on what equality and feminism means for all women is essential for us to stop judging one another based on cultural differences. By shedding light on the challenges which we are facing, we may find the solution to a complex problem that involves every single person on this earth. ●



Photo: yeowatzup/flickr

# POLITIC JUSTICE

A look into how the Scalia nomination provokes questions about the horizon of American democracy beyond just one man's judiciary clout.

**I**t has been eight months since supreme court justice Antonin Scalia was pronounced dead at the age of 79. He died quietly, in his sleep, after an evening out hunting and dining at Cibolo Creek Ranch, in his home state of Texas. Stuck in a stalemate between a staunchly polemic congress, President

Obama has been unable to forward a candidate to supplant Scalia due to a lambast of right-wing umbrage undermining his prerogative to appoint a new justice. According to many, all of this posturing is just a strategy to put the power of nomination into the hands of the Republican nominee for president, Donald Trump. This painfully re-



proachful dialectic is more than a mere sophomoric fit on who-gets-to-play-supreme-court-first, it is actually a discussion that has serious implications for the national democratic endgame. Not only does Scalia's death open up a seat for either party, but it also brings into question the fallibility of civil rights law.

**TO ELABORATE,** THE supreme court was originally founded on a premise of justice grounded in neutrality. That is, the court, under its original conscriptions, strived to wipe its hands of political proclivity in the sanctum of the stand. Since the 1960s, this precept has been nuanced. Since the ruling of *Baker vs. Carr* in 1962, the judiciary branch has been tasked with a political imperative—to invert the power of the many under the power of the few (that is, nine judges, or one plaintiff), when justice demands. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandies has articulated this development as such: 'a single courageous state may, if its citizens choose, serve as a laboratory; and try novel social and economic experiments without risk to the rest of the country.'

**WHEN *BAKER VS.*** Carr was weighed upon in the Supreme Court, the judges not only had to choose between a plaintiff and a defendant, but two opposing visions for democracy. *Baker vs. Carr*

concerned a redistricting case for the state of Tennessee. Under the in situ districting, which determines the distribution of representative votes across the state, Tennessee had given superior voting privileges to white populations. The issue was brought to the Supreme Court in hopes that justice would be brought for the black population. This case, as average as it sounds, actually provoked an ideological furor among the judiciary. The conservative side of the court invoked the Political Question Doctrine, which alleges that the court has no business interfering with state legislature, because such an action would be 'fundamentally undemocratic.' In other words, the judges shouldn't impose their own opinions over the legislative fiat of elected state representatives, or put another way, impose the will of a minority over the representative majority. Because the citizens of Tennessee had voted on the district proportions, the legality of that layout should be upheld. However, not interfering would show complicity in the overtly racist and unjust districting of Tennessee. In the end, the court fell in favor of *Baker*, in a 6 to 2 vote—and thereafter, all redistricting cases brought to the court were deemed 'justiciable.'

**ALTHOUGH, FROM THE** lens of *Baker vs. Carr*, the politicisation of the court appears to be a victory for democracy, certainly from the leftist eye, there



## “ AMERICA NEEDS TO THINK SERIOUSLY ABOUT THE SUPREME COURT IN A WAY NEVER ANTICIPATED BY THE PRESIDENTS THAT CREATED IT

are several cases in recent history that evoke just the opposite, and confirm Justice Douglas' (served 1939 - 1975) fear that this would 'open the flood-gates.' Indeed, there has been a veritable flood of right wing agendas being pushed through the Supreme Court in recent decades, which have maliciously challenged and undermined long fought for civil rights laws. Edward Bloom, for example, is an independent lawyer who has been described as a 'one man wrecking crew of civil rights law.' His most recent case was *Fisher vs. The University of Texas*, which attempted to dismantle Affirmative Action Laws. Another case was *Shelby County v. Holder*, which butchered a section of the Voting Rights Act, revoking voting privileges for many. Though *Baker vs. Carr* was able to herald in justice for a minority population over the hegemonic majority, the same ideological premise that allowed it to do so also permits a malevolent minority to exercise greater control over the majority. These questions are acutely salient in the turmoil over Scalia's passing. In a time replete with attacks on civil rights by way of the Supreme Court, the judiciary branch of government has an immense amount of power. They can guide history in a direction that strikes justice for Americans who have been oppressed by majority powers, as is exemplified this year by *Obergefell v. Hodges*,

which legalised gay marriage—or, America can be lynched by elitist, white, male agendas, in a new and unique way.

**FROM A HISTORICAL** viewpoint, it's comical that the Supreme Court has risen to an echelon of power that was never premeditated at its apotheosis. Few people know that the court actually began practicing in the basement of Congress, and it was seldom used as a tool for democracy by politicians or the polity alike. Now, during the 2015 presidential elections, America needs to think seriously about the Supreme Court in a way never anticipated by the presidents that created it. The Scalia replacement, in fact, isn't the only justice on the table (literally and figuratively). There are three judges in the court which are over the age of 70. This means that the incumbent president will likely have to nominate not one, but four justices in total. The consequences of this judicial upheaval could be massive. It's only fitting that this discourse re-emerges at the time of Scalia's passing, though, for these were issues he strongly enunciated during the course of his career, and will surely be what he is remembered for. Whether his invocation of and vision for 'constitutional originalism' and democracy appealed unilaterally to the right or left, his voice, posthumously, echoes loudly still. ●



# THE FEMINIST CITY

Women and men experience urban life in different ways. They use the public sphere differently and are exposed to different kinds of threats and difficulties. To meet the associated challenges a new branch of city planning is growing, taking care provide to each according to his or hers need.

**A**ccording to the UN Habitat programme, which aims to develop and create a better urban future, there is a serious lack of knowledge about the specific needs of marginalized groups in the urban environment. The increasing urbanization happening across the globe is a consequence of numerous factors. Economic growth and the higher amount of job opportunities in urban areas and the fact that rural areas are more affected by dispossessions, conflicts, natural disasters and land grabs. The rural-to-urban migration process has gained rapidly in speed, and the adjustments and development of the cities haven't kept pace.

**FEMINIST CITY PLANNING** isn't just about the needs of women in the urban space, but includes the various perspectives of other marginalized groups. This is an issue touching upon many different aspects: decision and policy making, design and architecture, infrastructure, accessibility, transport, housing etc. The feminist analysis and critique

of city planning is intersectional, which means that it considers more than just gender as a basis of discrimination. How are cities experienced by low-income groups? What are the needs in suburban areas? How do newly arrived immigrants find their space in the city? Is the city planning contributing or counteracting segregation?

**PARTLY, THE NEEDS** of women in the city can be very hands-on. For example: they need somewhere to breast feed their babies, if this isn't accepted to do in public. On the other hand, the needs can be a bit more abstract, such as the feeling of being safe after dark. To this the right kind of infrastructure can be provided, such as lights and a safe public transportation system. There are also other needs that are on a more political level, such as representation and discussions about separate areas, for example at public baths.

**IN THE CLASSIC** essay 'What would a non-sexist city look like?' from the 80's, the American urbanist Dolores Hayden argues that the division between



work and home should be less strict and more porous. Domestic work is not viewed upon or acknowledged as a productive activity, rather it's excluded and physically separated from economic life. It is hard to speculate how cities would be planned if women and other marginalized groups would have been included in the architectural, infrastructural and strategic decisions and planning, since there are so few examples that have run for a long enough time for it to be measurable. For example, when a new transport system is under discussion, there has to be a people's angle for it to be possible at all to talk about the gender angle. Usually it's not, but rather a technocratic and economical basic view that confines the possibilities to raise the issue about how to work against the harassment and assault that many women face when using public transport.

**BASICALLY, THE QUESTION** is: how can we get all groups in society to coexist in the same city on the same terms? The local governments need to ac-

“ HOW CAN WE GET ALL GROUPS OF SOCIETY TO COEXIST IN THE SAME CITY ON THE SAME TERMS?

knowledge and recognize the systematic impacts of discrimination. Gender and socio-economic dynamics of the city are crucial to have in mind at all stages of the process. But when the diverse experiences and needs of women as well as men are taken into consideration when it comes to urban planning and design, there can be possible change in the procedures of planning, public spaces and management.

**IN VIENNA** an urban planning project focused on gender mainstreaming has been running for a couple of years now. It started small, as a survey where they found out that women's experience from moving around in the city using public transport or after dark was shockingly different from the experiences of men. They also found that women were using a much more varied pattern of movement, due to their extra duties when taking care of children and elderly family members to a higher extent than men. A first step in Vienna was to make pedestrian areas better and more accessible, and expanding the bus net with more routes and more stops. Gender mainstreaming in practice means that city administrators create laws, rules and regulations that benefit men and women equally. The goal is to provide equal access to city resources. In the local government of Stockholm, the leftist majority presented their budget for 2017 in the middle of October. In it there was money set aside for architects and housing corporations to work with feminist city planning, with the aim to include more people from different marginalized groups in the elaboration of the urban environment. ●



Photo: Beijing City Planning Museum



# A DROP IN THE OCEAN FOR BEIJING

In July came the ruling: Chinas claim on practically all of the South China Sea lacks legal grounds. But it didn't take long before Beijing declared the ruling to be "null and void". What's behind Beijing's drive to control the South China Sea, and what may the future hold?

**T**he conflict regards several countries with borders towards the South China Sea and their colliding territorial claims. The Sea has substantial amounts of fish, an industry of great importance for many of the countries in the region. But the disputed sea does not only hold fish: major oil and gas resources are also believed to be found. Furthermore is the South China Sea the second most used sea line in the world. The conflict has escalated in step with Chinas extending attempts to gain control over the area, for instance using artificial additions to reefs and islands – making Manila initiate the cogent dispute-resolution under 1982's UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which China has confirmed.

**BUT CHINAS CLAIMS** are probably not only based on economical incitements. Below the surface is a great deal of national pride hidden. As a measure of his ambition, Xi Jinping, in his first days in office, announced his agenda - the "great dream of national revitalisation". And nothing is probably more central about "The Chinese dream" than China's conception of its rightful place in the world. The place which, Chinese people are taught, they been robbed of twice: first by European imperialism and then by an American-imposed Asian order that has been in place since the second world war. Prior to these setbacks has the Chinese

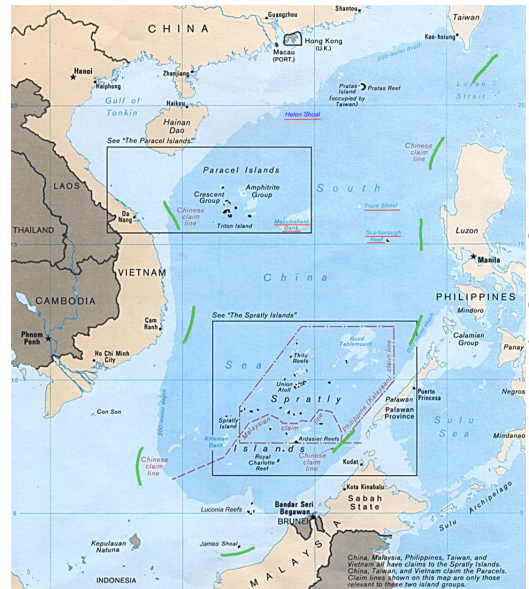


Photo: U.S. Central Intelligence Agency

The "nine-dash line", in green, marks the Chinese claim.

civilization been the superior state of East Asia, where neighbouring states, vassal states, paid tributes. To understand (not vindicate) the Chinese history, and the country's return to preeminence is thus a prerequisite for understanding such actions as the "nine-dash line", which might seem incomprehensible for the ones less conversant.

**AN ILLUSTRATION OF** the nationalistic winds that is amplifying the conflict is the extensive Vietnamese protests that took place after China in 2014 built an offshore oil rig outside of Vietnam. Even Chinese factories in Vietnam were burned down.

**AS A RESULT HAS** the American-Vietnamese relations improved, despite their tragic history, and now also covers military exchanges. Chinas actions might therefore huddle the surrounding countries into US's open arms – which might suit the experienced superpower perfectly, in line with the American "pivot" towards Asia.

**AND IN THE** middle of all this was the judicial decision based on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea ruled, which few believe China will take notice about. The ruling is legally binding, but the court has no right to implement the sentence. The convention will probably not be more than a dot on the Chinese radar – the question is rather if China will show restraint. ●

LAST WORDS:

# HENRY DAVID THOREAU ON CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

UNDER A GOVERNMENT which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison.

IF ANY THINK that their influence would be lost there, and their voices no longer afflict the ear of the State, that they would not be as an enemy within its walls, they do not know by how much truth is stronger than error, nor how much more eloquently and effectively he can combat injustice who has experienced a little in his own person.

IF A THOUSAND men were not to pay their tax-bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceable revolution, if any such is possible. If the tax-gatherer, or any other public officer, asks me, as one has done, “**But what shall I do?**” my answer is, “**If you really wish to do anything, resign your office.**”

WHEN THE SUBJECT has refused allegiance, and the officer has resigned his office, then the revolution is accomplished.





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