

THE PERSPECTIVE

MAGAZINE

No 3 2018

HEROES AND VILLAINS



ASSOCIATION OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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EDITORS' NOTE

The world has changed, we can feel it in the water, we can feel it in the earth, and we can smell it in the air. But UPF Lund remains and so does the Magazine.

THE PERSPECTIVE is up and rolling with a new editorial team and new editors. We, the editors, have been nervous over crashing InDesign files, lost pictures and whether to use “a” or “an” but with a little help from former editors and our great editorial team behind us we managed to complete a number that we are very proud of!

THIS NUMBER AIMS to spotlight all sides of a story. No one is either villain or hero, but rather both simultaneously. The perspective you have is what affects your perception of what's good and what's evil. It might be easier to see the world in black and white, but it's worth going the extra mile to explore the complexity of the modern world. There are two sides to every coin. If you count the edge encircling the coin there are three sides, and all sides should be examined before you make up your mind. In this issue we have tried to really consider all three sides.

DURING THE PROCESS we have had intense discussions, learned about a broad spectrum of views and all of this eventually led to this magazine. A magazine filled with new thinking ideas, dilem-

mas, and controversial topics. All brought to light by our hardworking editorial team. Are they the true heroes? Maybe. It certainly wouldn't had been possible without them.

HOLD YOUR GROUND! Hold your ground! Members of UPF, of Lund, my comrades. I see in your eyes the same fear that would take the heart of me. A day may come when the courage of journalists fails, when we forsake our storytelling and break all bonds of fellowship. But it is not this day. This day we write!

Enjoy your read. So it begins...



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The Perspective Magazine is the member magazine of the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University, published quarterly each year. The magazine has no affiliations with any political parties. Opinions presented are the writers' own.



PRESIDENTS' ADDRESS

After a long and hot summer break, UPF is once again booming with activity. It's amazing how each year we take a three month-long break, yet when we return to Lund we are up and running in a matter of days. Our fantastic board deserves a lot of credit, but you, our members, are the ones who really give the association its strong and stable foundation. So thank you to everyone who stayed with us from last year, and welcome to all our new members. We are excited to have you with us, and we can't wait to see what this year will bring.

ONE OF THE most important parts of our job is to ensure that the board works for the interests of the members, and considers your needs and feedback in every aspect of the work we do. Each and every one of you have an important role to play in moving the association forward, our top priority is to give you the support you need to fulfill your goals and ambitions with UPF. With that said, we also have a couple of things we want to ask of you this year.

KEEP OPEN TO the new knowledge and perspectives that being part of UPF offers - we are all here to learn, but we are also here to share the things we are experts at, no matter how big or small they are. Be confident in your own abilities - you may have CV full of experience in international affairs, or you may have no prior expertise at all. But remember, all you need is an interest in foreign affairs, and a willingness to learn. Last but not least, be open towards each other! The diversity of backgrounds and experiences in UPF is something we are extremely proud of, and it is what really makes our association stand out. Take the time to get to know each other; yeah, we are here to learn and discuss international affairs together, but also to make new friendships that will hopefully last long after our time in Lund.

WE ALREADY HAVE so many exciting activities and projects in the works, and there are many more to come. The best part is that we are still only getting started, and what a pleasure it will be putting another year in the history books together with all of you.

We hope you feel the same!



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Raoul Wallenberg at his graduation 1930

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1.

1. LIMITS LEADING TO CREATIVITY

Venezuela's economy is in free fall with a whopping expected inflation rate on 1,000,000% by the end of 2018. People are leaving the country and becoming economic refugees while the ones staying are struggling to get their hands on something as basic as a loaf of bread. The politicians in power are under severe pressure but creative measures are taken to turn the crisis around. The Venezuelan government launched a crypto currency called "the Petro" in February 2018, claiming that the currency is backed by Venezuela's oil reserves. The government stated that the introduction of the currency raised \$735 million through an ICO (Initial Coin Offering), but experts are sceptical to whether this is true. The inflation has led to a food crisis and meat in particular is hard currency in Venezuela. Venezuela's agricultural minister Freddy Bernal tried to launch a pilot program, named plan rabbit, to encourage the population to breed rabbits. But it didn't turn out the way he expected. Acknowledging some setbacks president Nicolas Maduro said "When he (Bernal) returned, surprise! The people had the bunnies with little bows and they were keeping them as pets". You can't blame the Venezuelan government for lack of trying, but in the case of the economic crisis, the people of Venezuela might have hoped for more. ●

2.

2. UNDERWATER BREATHING

Antarctica, a continent most people know little to nothing about. A day's ride on snow scooter from the closest research facility there is a hidden lake named Untersee. The lake is about six by one km big, and it's completely covered with ice. Ice that doesn't even melt during summer months. Untersee is completely isolated from other water streams, meaning that time beneath the surface is completely unknown. No human has ever seen what lies beneath, until now. A few researchers have launched a project and drilled a hole in the ice. Underneath they found no forms of life, however, they found something. The entire sea bed is covered with what they call cones. Cone like figures with what the researchers refer to as a bread-growth on top while other have spikes. What is interesting about these cones, beard-growths, and spikes is not that they have a strange look. It is that researchers have not seen anything like it anywhere else on earth. But what is even more astonishing is that they find small bubbles in the spikes and beards. Small bubbles of oxygen. Researchers soon realised that these cones, beards, and spikes are actually using the photosynthesis to produce oxygen. The researchers believe that this might be the way oxygen first was created on earth so that cells, plants, and eventually animals could grow. Talk about breathing under water. ●



3. THE WATER-MAN

In one of the largest slums in Africa, the slums of Kibera, Nairobi, water insecurity has been roaming for many years. The slum is built unofficially, making for a poor infrastructure, water shortages, and water contamination. The mafia controls the water in Kibera, making it expensive and contaminated, with pipes running through both sewage and dirt. However, one man, Kennedy Odede, is fighting back against the mafia and the water insecurity. He grew up in Kibera and has experienced the long walks to get water, water shortage, and the effects of polluted water. Nearly everyone in the community have stomach problems due to the polluted water. Nevertheless, Odede has dug his own borehole and treated the water, making it clean. He then pipes the water around Kibera, but instead of the pipes being on the ground, the pipes are kept above the houses. An idea the community came up with, as it makes the water free from contamination, but also makes it easier to find and repair leaks. The water is sold in small kiosks, at a price of two shillings/20 liters, whereas the mafia sold for 10-20 shillings/20 liters. Odede's project has without a doubt helped the community in regard to water security and due to the low prices people have been able to start saving more money, helping their economy. ●

4. HOLLYWOOD TO BOLLYWOOD

The fall of 2017 will always be remembered as the starting point of the #MeToo campaign. The spark that ignited the movement, with women speaking up on sexual harassment, were the allegations against Hollywood powerhouse Harvey Weinstein. A year after the movement shook Hollywood to its core, #MeToo now seems to have reached Bollywood, Mumbai. Indian actress Tanushree Dutta is one of the women who recently came forward with her stories on sexual harassments in the Indian movie industry. Dutta told the media about being harassed in 2008 by her former co-actor Nana Patekar. An leading Indian actor, Priyanka Chopra, supported Dutta by expressing that the world need to believe survivors, admire their bravery and not question their stories. Duttas story led to numerous women in India sharing stories about unwanted experiences with high-profile Indian men. Not only is the movie industry affected. Allegations have been directed at a minister in the sitting government as India is a country plagued by sexual violence. Mari Marcel Thekaekara, a human rights activist called sexual violence "the new normal in India". The #MeToo movement in India might put even more spotlight on one of the biggest issues, in the largest democracy in the world. ●

IT'S THE GOVERNMENTS OF ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA THAT DISAGREES, NOT THE PEOPLE

The history between the neighbouring countries Ethiopia and Eritrea have been one of conflicts, war and injustices. Ever since European colonialism was fought back at the Horn of Africa they have waged wars against each other, one lasted thirty years. Eritrea remains one of the world's most reclusive countries, but political changes in Ethiopia brings forth a hope of change. But how? And how can a local restaurant in Lund contribute to this change?

Mesob resides at Bankgatan in an old brick house. The restaurant describes itself as Ethiopian-Eritrean, and there is a comforting buzz inside. A tv-screen alternates between playing Tewodros Tadesse and Aster Aweke, two famous Ethiopian artists. On the wall hangs an old picture of Asmara, the capital of Eritrea, and the flag of the country rests on a small pedestal on the counter. The restaurant serves East African food, with the typical bread injera; a pancake on which different stews and spices are served. Injera serves as cutlery, because the food is traditionally eaten by hand. The lighting is dimmed, it's Saturday night, and there is a feeling of a safe youth center in the homely, cosy restaurant.

MICHAEL GABREMARIAM, 36, owns Mesob. He's from Eritrea, but has lived in Sweden since 2008. In Sweden he reunited with his wife who had been living here since 1997 and together they've now run Mesob for a year and a half. It was natural to name the restaurant Ethiopian-Eritrean. Michael: "It's the same culture. We eat the same food and most of us speak the same language. The food and the traditions unite us."

MOST CUSTOMERS SPEAK Amharic, the official Ethiopian language, but those who speak Tigrinya, the official Eritrean language, are not excluded. Michael believes this is a way to create unity and find common ground. He thinks meeting places

like Mesob between Eritrean and Ethiopian immigrants would contribute to a better understanding and atmosphere. "Yeah, why not?" He says. One and a half year in, he is cautiously positive to the future of Mesob. "So far, so good. Neither super-great nor bad." Michael says most Swedes that visit the restaurant are more or less aware of the situation between the countries. "Many people already know a lot and tell me they've been to Ethiopia even before I was born. It's mostly elder people that knows about the politics. But mostly they are interested in the food."

ARE MEETING PLACES like this rare? It is not obvious, or at least perhaps it wouldn't be in Addis Abeba or Asmara, considering the long independence war where Eritrea attempted to break free from Ethiopia. They succeeded in 1991, but 1998 fights broke out again and it's only recently that Ethiopia have left the border-town of Badme, which they promised to return to Eritrea back in the peace treaty in Algiers, Algeria in 2000. The threat of a new war was for a long time used as an excuse for both countries to uphold and enforce fierce laws and draconian military services. Especially Eritrea upholds a particularly feared military service, with harsh reprisals for deserters.

BUT WHEN ABIY Ahmed Ali entered office on the 2nd of April 2018, things began to change in Ethiopia. In a short period of time about 700 political prisoners were released from the infamous Kaliti prison and the military has left Badme along with

several other political alleviations. The question is will Eritrea follow Ethiopia on the path to an extended democratic society? Eritrea is a closed country, known as the North Korea of Africa, and unfortunately shows no indications of it.

TESFOM SOLOMON is 39 years old and he lives in Lund. He's politically active in a Swedish political party and has been chairman of an exile-Eritrean organization. He's been in Sweden ten years and thinks the Ethiopian changes has paved the way and it could affect Eritrea in the right direction. That there has been 15 000 refugees since the border was opened says something about the possibilities in the country, says Tesfom about the situation in current Eritrea. But unlike Ethiopia, which has begun a process of releasing political prisoners, the same is not true about Eritrea.

ERITREA HAS BEEN heavily militarized since 1998 and the compulsory military service, where both men and women are being forced to join the military for an indefinite amount of time, has been

sustained and motivated by the threat of a new war. But with Ethiopian military clearing out of Badme, this could mean that Eritrea's government no longer can use this argument. The majority of the people doesn't want to keep up the political tensions. "It's the governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea that disagrees, not the people", says Tesfom Solomon. He agrees that initiatives like the restaurant Mesob might be a good place to meet and build bridges. "Of course people discuss the political progress in everyday life, and they are happy for Ethiopia. But for Eritrea the future is more uncertain. The government has made such great errors that if free elections were to be held, they would surely lose their power. That's why they're scared, it's the risk of losing power."

MAYBE ONE CAN look at the situation on the Horn of Africa, more specifically Eritrea, as Michael looks at the future of his restaurant: with cautious optimism. And until then meeting points such as Mesob serves as a reminder that there are more things in common than things that separates the people of Ethiopia and Eritrea. ●

WE WANT YOUR THOUGHTS, COMMENTS AND IDEAS!



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REWRITE THE STARS

A REVIEW OF "THE GREATEST SHOWMAN"

The movie musical *The Greatest Showman* (2017), starring Hugh Jackman, revolves around the 19th century, American showman P.T. Barnum. The film portrays Barnum as a champion for difference, as he founds the Barnum & Bailey Circus, showcasing unique individuals. The real Barnum, however, wasn't the hero Hollywood wants us to believe.

We love films about underdogs learning to love themselves for who they are. We love these films, even more, when the underdogs sing powerful songs about it. The *Greatest Showman* has been applauded for giving the audience just that. However, the film also glorifies the problematic historical person which it is loosely based on.

BEFORE BECOMING a showman, the real Barnum tried different professions and started several failed businesses, including a lottery network and a newspaper. In 1835, his career as a showman commenced when he essentially bought and owned the elderly, blind, and partly paralysed slave woman Joice Heth. She was said to have reached the incredible age of 161 years, and to have been the former nurse of infant George Washington. Barnum took Heth on a tour, marketing her as "The Greatest Natural and National Curiosity in the World". Whilst Barnum found fortune and fame from this tour, Heth became a practical joke. Despite her old age and infirmity, Barnum worked her for 10-12 hours a day until her death at the actual age of 80. However, not even in death would he let her rest. Instead, he arranged for a public autopsy of Heth's body in which her "unnatural" age would be proven. The autopsy was performed in front of over a thousand paying spectators and did establish that Heth was actually in her 80s. Still, the event turned Barnum into a cultural icon and one of the most famous Americans of the 19th century.

IN THE FILM, the Heth affair never happens. Instead, the plot concerns Barnum's creation of his circus and the people in his show. Although, to state that the plot largely focuses on these people would be an exaggeration. These characters are acts in the show because they are "macabre and exotic", most notably the bearded lady Lettie, the little man Tom Thumb (both very loosely based on reality), and the woman of colour Anne Wheeler (fictional). These characters are, in the film, praised by Barnum for their various talents, for example, singing and trapeze artistry. However, in the real Barnum's circus, many of his "living curiosities", his "freaks", were exhibited, not because of certain talents, but for being deformed, ethnic, exotic, and different.

AS THE PLOT progresses, the "freaks" realise that Barnum uses them for his own benefit and financial gain. By putting them on display, the doors

to high society open up to him and he acquires a fortune. Meanwhile, they are still shunned by society. Had this aspect of the plot been developed, it could've become an interesting film. If they had realised their own worth by coming together, challenged Barnum, and maybe started a show of their own, that would've given them agency. In the outstanding film, with a similar theme, *Freaks* from 1932, this aspect is explored, which makes the plot interesting and dynamic. Sadly, in *The Greatest Showman*, these characters simply forgive Barnum for his deceptions, exploitation, and selfishness. They even thank him for giving them a home, a family, and making them understand their worth.

CONSEQUENTLY, THESE CHARACTERS' main function is to emphasise what a great guy Barnum is. He is constructed as the true underdog, the one we should root for, the personification of the American dream, and the champion of people who can't champion themselves. Another white and male character even praises him for being courageous and innovative, and his circus show is described as a "celebration of humanity". Yay for white and male saviourism!

MAKING HUGH JACKMAN the face of Barnum doesn't make it better either. We've seen him in movie musicals such as *Oklahoma* and *Les Misérables*, but also in musical opening numbers at the Academy Awards. He's the dad of Hollywood movie musicals. He's beloved, so Barnum's beloved. Hugh Jackman would never buy a slave, therefore, neither would Barnum.

THIS FILM BECOMES yet another case of Hollywood rewriting problematic aspects of American history. We saw it in, for example, *Pearl Harbor* (2001), *Argo* (2012), and *American Sniper* (2014). We even saw it in *Pocahontas* (1995). Many Hollywood productions tend to ignore the bad parts of American history. They could learn a few lessons from, amongst others, Germany; a nation with an obvious dark historic past. However, Germany doesn't shy away from that past in the way that the US does. Various German films linked to events from World War II are good examples; *Der Untergang* (2004) and *Die Welle* (2008) to mention some. By not admitting their bad aspects of history, the US risks not learning from past mistakes, and thus, risks repeating them. These Hollywood films that glorify problematic parts of American history erases other aspects of the same history. Regardless if it's misrepresentation of the war in Iraq or

glorifying a man who profited from exhibiting certain individuals for other people to ogle and laugh at, this trend needs to stop.

AS PUT BY Benjamin Reiss, author of *The Showman* and *The Slave*: “we can choose to erase things or dance around touchy subjects and present a kind of feel-good story, or we can use it as an opportunity to look at very complex and troubling histories that our culture has been grappling with for centuries”. If what you want to give the audience a feel-good movie musical, then write a new story that is not based on (problematic) true events. *The Greatest Showman* ignores the sticky aspects of history and minimises the sufferings of people that Barnum exploited. So, rather than glorifying a problematic historical figure, the film should’ve been brave enough to either delve deeper into an uncomfortable history or to create something new. The film would’ve been better for it. Instead, they ended up with a plot and characters that the viewer doesn’t feel emotionally invested in. Adding catchy songs, no matter how good, doesn’t change that fact.

WE ALL NEED heroes, and one place to find them is on the big screen. Still, we have to be wary of whom we choose as heroes. Reconstructing Barnum as a heroic character is fundamentally wrong, and damaging, since it erases the bad acts the real historical person committed. It rewrites history. It’s almost ironic that one of the songs in the film is titled “Rewrite The Stars”. ●

“ BY NOT ADMITTING THEIR BAD ASPECTS OF HISTORY, THE US RISKS NOT LEARNING FROM PAST MISTAKES, AND THUS, RISKS REPEATING THEM.



Photo: Gage Skidmore

WHOSE HEROES IN WHOSE PUBLIC SPACE

The relocation of the ‘Bronze Soldier’ in Estonia in 2007 brought up the question of who should be considered a hero in the national history of the country. Eleven years later, the country still seems to be divided over the issue. It poses the question of what happens when the government creates a national historical narrative that part of the population does not agree with.

The ‘Monument to the Liberators of Tallinn’, more commonly known as the ‘Bronze Soldier’ was inaugurated in Tallinn in September 1947, when the city was part of the Soviet Union as the capital of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic. It consists of a simple bronze statue of a soldier – whose identity still remains unknown – against a stone background. The monument and burial site had a prominent location on the hill Tõnismägi in Tallinn’s city centre, on the burial site of thirteen soldiers during the liberation of Nazi-occupied Estonia at the end of the Second World War.



THE SOVIET ARMY WAS SEEN AS HAVING LEGITI- MIZED THE OPPRESSION OF ESTONIA FOR HALF A CENTURY.

IN 1991, AFTER Estonia’s restored independence, the local authorities changed the monuments name to ‘Monument to the Fallen in the Second World War’. To them, and a majority of Estonia’s ethnic Estonian population, the Soviet soldiers were not seen as liberators at all. Rather, they were regarded as occupiers that had cleared the way for an illegal annexation of the country to the Soviet Union, while Estonia attempted to re-establish its

independence at the end of the Second World War. The Soviet army was seen as having legitimized the oppression of Estonia for half a century.

THE NARRATIVE OF the Soviet Union having illegally annexed Estonia was behind a 2006 petition by Estonia’s Pro Patria Union, then one of Estonia’s governing political parties. They requested the Tallinn City Council to relocate the monument and burial site to the Defence Forces Cemetery of Tallinn. While the City Council seemed receptive to the idea, opposition party Constitution Party was strongly against. This discrepancy in positions on the relocation strongly reflected the differences in their ideologies and that of their electorates. The Pro Patria Union was an Estonian nationalist party, while the Constitution Party strongly defended the interests of the ethnic and linguistic Russian minority in Estonia, consisting of around 25% of the country’s population.

ESTONIA’S ETHNIC RUSSIAN population and its political representatives do not see Soviet Army as having occupied Estonia, but as having genuinely liberated the country from the Nazi-occupation. Though many acknowledge that the Soviet authorities and the communist system were repressive and that both Estonians and Russians suffered under this system. Nevertheless, they saw, and still see, the relocation of the monument and the burial site to an obscure location in the outskirts of Tallinn as a great dishonour to soldiers who gave their lives to make an end to Estonia’s Nazi-occupation. This ties in with the argument that the Soviet Union’s role in defeating the Axis Powers in the Second World War is not being recognized enough in general in the Western world. The relocation of this monument is seen by them as an example of how the Soviet Union’s defeating the Axis Powers is often obscured in most non-Russian narratives of The Second World War.

MERELY THE NEWS about the possible relocation sharpened the division in Estonian society. Even

before an official decision about the matter was made, an activist group, Nochnoy Dozor (Night Guard), was founded to guard and protect the monument from relocation. This protection went as far as releasing public statements in which Estonian politicians were openly called Nazis and fascists, and spreading of disinformation to discredit the authorities. On the other hand, Estonian nationalist activists vandalized the Bronze Soldier. In May 2006, the social-democratic Minister of the Interior, Jüri Pihl, banned all protests and public gatherings near to monument to stop the public disorder surrounding the monument. Despite the controversies, Tallinn's City Council approved the relocation of the monument in early 2007.

IN THE NIGHT of 27th to 28th April 2007, the relocation took place. The preceding days were characterized by severe unrest. Estonian society was strongly divided over the issue, and protests both in favour and against relocation were organized. Anti-relocation protesters clashed with police officers in Tallinn on the night of April 26, to which the riot police responded with water cannons and tear gas. The anti-relocations protests continued, however, and pro-relocation protesters were quickly drawn to the sites of confrontation, leading to worsening of the riots. Over the next days, the protests spread from Tallinn to towns in Eastern Estonia, home to most of the country's Russian-speaking population. On 28 April, the day following the relocation, public order was re-

stored. During the riots, remembered in Estonia as the 'Bronze Night', one person died, and more than 150 were injured. Over 1,000 people were arrested, many buildings were looted and severely vandalized.

THE CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING the relocation of the Bronze Soldier resembles the tensions that currently exist at many places around the world regarding what historical narrative authorities should take when organizing public space. Just think of the controversies surrounding the Confederate Civil War monuments in the United States or the #RhodesMustFall campaign in South Africa, the story is strikingly similar. The reorganization of public space is called for by one social, ethnic or ideological group in a society, while another group strongly opposes it. Both groups share a different vision on history, and both groups want their version of the story to be reflected in the places they are every day.


EVEN NOW, ELEVEN years after its relocation, the Bronze Soldier still remains a controversial topic in Estonia. Despite its small size, the statue brings up the big issue of how a hero of some is a villain to others. What the true meaning of the Bronze Soldier is, depends on one's own constructed vision on history. Even though the monument is currently firmly standing in one place, its location in the collective memory of Estonia's inhabitants is ambiguous. ●



KOFI AS GOOD AS COFFEE

A MODERN HERO



The United Nations logo, featuring a world map surrounded by olive branches, is centered in the background of the top section.

Kofi Annan, a modern hero. Dedicated his life to working in the UN, trying to make the world a better place. Achieving many great things but passed away before the world wanted to. A missed hero and a truly inspiring person. A person we all can look to for inspiration and guidance. He was a mentor and now the world must try to follow what he started without him. This is Kofi Annan.

”What do you see is the biggest challenges for the United Nations (UN) over the next decade?”. Kofi Annan is sitting down with a journalist from Time Magazine, answering questions about his role in the UN, the current status of the world, and the environment. “There are challenges and issues but not just for the UN. It is for all of us. We live in a world where we have to understand that we are all in the same boat and one can not be secure at the expense of another. One cannot be prosperous at the expense of another. In a world in which extreme poverty and immense wealth live side by side is simply not sustainable. When we say: What should the UN do? How can the UN do this? We are basically saying, how do we get governments, your government and mine, to act cooperatively in the common interest?”

KOFI ANNAN was born 1938 in Ghana. Annan started studying economics at Kumasi College of Science and Technology in Ghana. He later received a grant from the Ford Foundation, so that he could continue studying at Macalester College, Minnesota, USA. He proceeded to study international relations at The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, Switzerland, where he finished his studies in 1961. Ten years

later he studied a master's degree programme at the MIT Sloan School of Management.

BETWEEN STUDYING INTERNATIONAL Relations in Geneva and studying at MIT, Annan started working within the UN, at the World Health Organisation agency in Geneva, as a budget officer. He continued working within the UN, within the High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in Geneva as head of personnel. In the early 1980s Annan became the director of administrative management services of the UN Secretariat in New York. In the late 1980s he proceeded as an Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management and Security Coordinator. His next position was Assistant Secretary-General for Program Planning, Budget and Finance, and Control. Later he was appointed to be the Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. In other words, Kofi Annan has had a long professional journey within the UN and worked within many different organs of the organisation.

HOWEVER, ANNAN IS mostly known for his position as the United Nations Secretary-General from 1997-2006. Annan has so far been the youngest appointed Secretary-General, 59 years old. During Annan's time as Secretary-General he worked es-

pecially hard on combating HIV, mainly in Africa. He also launched the UN Global Compact which is a UN initiative to encourage businesses to be more sustainable and socially responsible within their policies and to report on how they implement these policies. During Annan's years as secretary-general at the UN he also received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001 together with the UN for his work to organise a better and more peaceful world, as well as his work against HIV and international terrorism. One of Annan's tasks as secretary general that he himself felt the most pleased about was the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as he expressed in an interview with Time Magazine. Annan has also expressed what he believes is one of the key roles of the UN; trying to be the glue between nations and governments in the world. As he said in his quote in the beginning of the article, when countries ask; how the UN is going to do something, they are basically asking how do we get our governments to work together.

THROUGHOUT HIS CAREER, Annan has basically devoted everything to the UN. Though he has received some criticism during his time, such as the Oil-for-Food Programme investigation, not doing more to stop the genocide in Rwanda, and the failure to withdraw from the Iraq war, most people

have been pleasantly surprised with his role within the UN and the things he achieved during his career. People believed that when he became secretary-general he was bureaucrat, with no special qualities of leadership. A few years later, he was seen as one of the greatest leaders within the UN. He is generally recognised for being the voice of the multilateral cooperation for peace and disarmament, earning the respect of the different nations of the world. Kofi Annan came across as calm person who could listen to other, but also how he could get them to listen to him.

ANNAN WORKED UNTIL the very end. After his time in the UN he founded the Kofi Annan Foundations. He was also a chairman of the international organisation created by Nelson Mandela, called The Elders. During his life, but also after his death on the 18th of August 2018, he has been seen as a modern hero. Working his entire life for a more peaceful, equal, and sustainable world. "The world is grieving..." wrote the Swedish newspaper Svenska Dagbladet after his death. He was seen as one of the greatest leaders of our time, brave, wise, and friendly. He will truly be missed in the international arena. However, his work still continues to inspire others to follow in his path, and making the world a better place. ●



Photo: Vicipaedia



MULTILATERAL BANKS

HEROES IN THE LIGHT AND VILLAINS

IN THE SHADOW

Once a Human Right icon, a Nobel laureate, and now the embodiment of the violation against Rohingyas, Aung San Suu Kyi is one of the most controversial people of our time. Though what has escaped the public is how the Myanmar government still receives financial assistance from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

More than a year has passed and the world is still pointing the finger at Aung San Suu Kyi, the de facto head of the Myanmar government, for not acting upon what the United Nations (UN) has condemned as an ethnic genocide in Myanmar. Over 700 000 Rohingyas have been persecuted and deprived of their home since violence broke out in Myanmar's northern Rakhine state in August last year. The UN claims the situation to be the "world's fastest-growing refugee crisis" as most Rohingya refugees have fled across the border to neighbouring Bangladesh. This unprecedented number of refugees has turned areas in Bangladesh, into the largest and most dense refugee camps in the world. Lack of food, water, sanitation, shelter, and medical care, to mention a few, are daily struggles for the Rohingya refugees.

DESPITE SEVERAL PUBLIC appearances, Aung San Suu Kyi maintains defensive position toward the Human Rights abuse of the Myanmar military. In a recent interview at the World Economic Forum, Aung San Suu Kyi claimed that the country could have handled the Rohingya crisis "better"

but gives no indication that the military will be held accountable for their actions. At the forum she also responded to the recent seven-year sentence given to two Reuter journalists for writing about the violence in the Rakhine state. She claimed the imprisonment to be just as it was based on the court's verdict that they had broken the Official Secret Act. A statement that fed the already outraged international community.

WITH THIS SAID, Aung San Suu Kyi continues to be portrayed as the villain in the eyes of the public in the West. Our tendency to view a conflict from two sides has however made us blind to the roles played by third partners. The fact that the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank are still providing financial assistance to the government illustrates how a conflict has more perspectives than what we perceive.

ABOUT A YEAR ago the World Bank made it clear in their official response to the situation in Myanmar that they had "reviewed their engagement in the country" and "assessed the conditions of their recently approved development policy loan". Yet, the World Bank as well as the Asian Development

Bank remains engaged. In contrast to aid providers like Sida that have a direct contact with NGOs, the finance of multilateral development banks to specific projects usually goes through client country governments. This becomes especially problematic as it is difficult to detect where the money goes.

FIRST, THE WORLD Bank has a “no political interference” mandate that limits the bank to automatically withdraw funds even if genocide is occurring. In previous cases, such as Russia’s incursion in Crimea, the bank was able to cease supporting projects in Russia after the financial respond of the G7 because the major voting powers in the institution are board representatives in the G7 as well. This means that the senior management of these institutions act accordingly to its leading shareholders. Except for the recent news on possible EU sanctions on Myanmar, there are no other signs of foreign governmental disengagement in the country at the time of writing.

SECONDLY, THE CONTENT of the programs within the Myanmar government that are funded by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank are supposed to follow the strong rules that the in-

stitutions have set up. This includes treatment of the minority population. However, withdrawing support relies mostly on victims reporting violation through the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank grievance mechanisms, which is extremely bureaucratic difficult in this case. There have even been money distributed to projects in Rakhine state but it is uncertain whether the money contributed to the abuse of Rohingyas or not.

IT IS EASY to portray Aung San Suu Kyi as the face of the Rohingya genocide. After all, she has in a way legitimized the vicious actions of the military junta with her passive behaviour. However, the involvement of the multilateral banks in the conflict can be interpreted as equally controversial, if not as equally villainous. They provide humanitarian aid to Rohingya refugee camps while backing up the government with financial assistance. Yet, development finance and its influence in zones of conflicts is not an expectation to Myanmar. This revelation might enable us to see internal conflicts with more transparency that stretch beyond domestic politics. Also, it gives the stories we choose to tell more justice by overlooking our fixed perceptions of heroes and villains. ●



THE AQUARIUS: THE (NON)RESPONSIBILITY FOR MIGRANTS

Europe is facing one of the largest displacement crises since the Second World War. More than 1.8 million migrants have entered the EU since 2014, of which hundreds of thousands have embarked upon the dangerous journey of crossing the Mediterranean to seek asylum. The failure to effectively take care of and share responsibility for the migrants has created a deep rift in the EU in which nobody wants to step forward as a hero, yet nobody wants to be declared a villain. Consequently, the lack of consensus for a shared EU migration policy has led to states taking the question into their own hands.



This summer in June, the Aquarius, a humanitarian rescue ship jointly operated by SOS Mediterranean and Doctors Without Borders, rescued 629 migrants off the coast of Libya, who had embarked upon the perilous journey of crossing the Mediterranean towards Europe. Of these migrants, 123 were unaccompanied minors. However, the ship's journey came to an abrupt halt only hours away from land as nearby European countries flatly refused to open their ports, applying a restrictive interpretation to the international law regulating the duty to rescue ships at sea in distress.

ACCORDING TO THE International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, states are obliged to rescue ships at sea that are in distress regardless of the circumstances and the state operating in that area has the primary responsibility. Given that the Aquarius rescued the migrants off the coast of Libya, the closest ports were in Italy or Malta. However, neither Italy nor Malta considered the necessary requisite of distress to have been met, citing that the Aquarius was not in any obvious mechanical difficulty, and that the passengers had been provided with food and water.

ITALY'S NEW POPULIST government refused to give the Aquarius docking rights, stating that it wouldn't condone "the business of illegal immigration." The Interior Minister and leader of the right-wing League Party, Matteo Salvini, stated that, while "saving lives is a duty, turning Italy into a huge refugee camp is not" and angrily demanded that other states help deal with the issue. Malta, on the other hand, flatly refused to open their ports. As they claim, they have neither the competence, nor the coordinating authority to do so.



THE SHIP'S JOURNEY CAME TO AN ABRUPT HALT ONLY HOURS AWAY FROM LAND AS NEARBY EUROPEAN COUNTRIES FLATLY REFUSED TO OPEN THEIR PORTS, APPLYING A RESTRICTIVE INTERPRETATION TO THE INTERNATIONAL LAW REGULATING THE DUTY TO RESCUE SHIPS AT SEA IN DISTRESS.

DURING THIS STALEMATE, the rescue boat remained stranded in the water between Italy and Malta, after a hazardous journey across the Mediterranean in poor weather conditions and choppy waters. The ship was reportedly above capacity and the passengers on board were exhausted and growing increasingly anxious over their future. After a couple of days spent at a virtual standstill, Spain eventually stepped in and announced that it would allow the boat to dock at its port in Valencia. Thus, the Aquarius began an arduous 1 500 km long journey towards Spain, adding an extra four days to the time spent at sea. While Italy and Malta, by comparison, were only hours away.

ALTHOUGH THE MIGRANTS were brought to Spain, and the situation with the Aquarius has been resolved, the greater conflict it's exposed has not been. That is: the failure of the EU to compromise on a sustainable solution for how to take care of entering migrants. The way the Aquarius incident played out is emblematic of the lack of solidarity



THE HUNGARIAN PRIME MINISTER, VICTOR ORBAN, SAID HUNGARY WOULD ASSIST AT THE SOURCE OF THE PROBLEM, NOT BY ACCEPTING REFUGEES. HE CONTINUED BY ADDING: “WE ALSO HAVE HEARTS” BUT THAT HUNGARY “CANNOT HELP ANYONE IF WE DESTROY OUR COUNTRY IN THE MEANTIME.”



Photo: flickr

among EU states in dealing with migrant arrivals. One consequence of the lack of effective solutions has been EU states attempting to exonerate themselves of any culpability, whilst blaming other member states for not doing enough.

ANY CRITICISM OF a state's migration policy has been met with the jabbing of a finger and a “but what about you?” France's president, Emmanuel Macron, for instance, criticized Italy's decision to close its ports to the *Aquarius*, calling it “cynicism and irresponsibility.” In return, Italy retaliated by accusing France of falling short of its promise to take in a quota of migrants under a 2015 EU redistribution scheme to relieve frontline countries. The conclusion is clear: nobody wants to be declared a villain. On the flipside, nobody wants to step forward as a hero. A deep rift between EU member states has erupted in which every state considers itself to be doing “enough”, toeing the line between hero and villain.

THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR migrants entering the bloc has been defined in terms of duty. Salvini echoes the opinion of many alt-right politicians, which is that the state has a primary duty to its citizens. Contrary to this opinion, other political parties formulate duty as extending one's help to all humankind—that is, to people in need, regardless of citizenship. At this point, it is clear that the definition of duty is central to how a state can justify restricting migration rights, while still insisting on maintaining its moral position. For instance,

many central European countries including Hungary and Poland have flatly rejected any kind of redistribution schemes using this kind of rhetoric. The Hungarian Prime Minister, Victor Orbán, said Hungary would assist at the source of the problem, not by accepting refugees. He continued by adding: “we also have hearts” but that Hungary “cannot help anyone if we destroy our country in the meantime.”

RETURNING TO THE particular incident with the *Aquarius*, as previously mentioned, states are not obliged to open their ports to ships if they are not in distress. Distress is defined as “reasonable certainty that a person, a vessel or other craft is threatened by grave and imminent danger and requires immediate assistance.” According to reports from the *Aquarius*, passengers were traumatized and in need of medical assistance. Despite this, Italy denied access to the vessel, arguing that it provided immediate and sufficient medical support, and afterwards assessed that the lives of those on board were not at risk anymore. Thus, the ambiguity of the law led to an interpretation, which legally allowed Italy to act as passively as it did. From Italy's perspective, its decision was not only dutiful to its citizens, it was also within international law.

THE FATE OF the *Aquarius* shows how EU member states are ignoring fundamental values and principles to instrumentally interpret the law, even when human lives are at stake, and doing so using duty to still appear morally heroic. ●



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INTERVIEW WITH THE ENEMY

Syria, Russia and Iran make up the opposing side in the Syrian civil war, at least from a Western point of view. We are used to hearing of chemical attacks, indiscriminate bombings and vile dictators. Yet the leaders of these factions enjoy strong support from some segments of their domestic audience. These are the perspectives of their supporters.



Areej Saoud is a 25 year old civil engineer from the coastal city of Jableh. She has been a member of the governmental Ba'ath party since 2011, which she joined during the early years of the war. After graduating last year she has been employed by the Syrian government.

Is Bashar al-Assad the best leader Syria can get?

He is the strong leader we need during times of conflict. He has been working hard for seven years to end the war, I don't see any rational reason to replace him now. This is one of the major reasons I joined the Ba'ath party. He is a moderate working for all Syrians. Also Bashar al-Assad was not planned to be the president, he was studying to be



Photo: Imagery

a doctor in the UK. His older brother Basel was, but he was murdered by Israel. He came home and was accepted as president by both the parliament and the people. As long as a leader provides everything his people needs, why would we want someone else?

How do you believe the war will finish, especially with Turkey being heavily involved in the north-west and the United States partnering with Kurdish militia YPG?

Every country involved have their motives. Turkey is trying to revive their Ottoman dream. They also want to realize the oil pipeline that was planned to link them to Qatar, which it can not do with our government. United States are used to ruling the Middle East and can not tolerate having an inde-

pendent country as us. Luckily we have strong allies like Russia, Iran and Hezbollah.

Assad won a presidential election in 2014 by 89%, in the midst of civil war. Can those numbers really be trusted?

Yes they can. The election was scheduled to be finished by 8pm, but the polling stations were full until midnight. A friend of mine is actually critical of the government yet she voted for Assad. Imagine the chaos if we changed leadership now. Many Syrians think like this.

There has been reports that the Syrian government conducted chemical attacks in Zamalka, Khan Shaykhun, Douma and elsewhere. What's your view on this?

There is so much evidence to this being fake. Just search for it, you'll see children playing injured, and then after rising up and receiving candy. Syria will never use chemical weapons against its own citizens.



MOHAMMAD J is an 18 years old voluntary member of the Basij, a paramilitary militia part of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). He joined when he was twelve and has steadily risen in rank since. He is now preparing for his military service.

How is the Basij?

Basically we had theoretical classes until we were 15. There were exams to show how religious we were, like remembering prayer verses, and our opinion of the leader. After that we got weapons training and were considered active members. They would mix the religious classes with military drills, a day could consist of three hours on a shooting range and then a one hour seminar on Islam. There are war games too. By our constitution

Photo: Private photo

the Iranian Army can only defend our country, but the IRGC is responsible for the foreign operations. If I get the chance to partake in those I would.

Iran saw protests earlier this year. What happened?

It's all staged by the US and happens every ten years. Obviously they are our enemies and want our government gone. They have Iranian spies smuggled in here. These agents would start protests on Telegram channels, chant provocative slurs about our leaders, and push the riots to be as aggressive as possible. Then there are cameras everywhere and Westerners think that all Iranians hate the government.

What is Iran's purpose in Syria, and will they stay there?

The IRGC will stay there. As good as it was for us, the US made a grave mistake in Middle Eastern politics by removing Saddam Hussein. This was our only real enemy and enabled us to grow. Now we have bases in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen. This gives us leverage against Israel and Saudi Arabia, being so much closer to them. There is another war coming for the Middle East. Saudi Arabia is now surrounded by our forces, like a scared dog in a corner, and they are barking loud.

What is your opinion on Iran spreading its Islamic revolution?

This might not be expected from me, but I want a secular, democratic republic. With a prime minister elected by parliament. What many westerners do not know is that this is perfectly applicable with an Islamic revolution. The changes were perfect in 1979. But then something went wrong and we did not end up where we should had. Ayatollah Taleghani, one of the great philosophers of the revolution, even advocated against mandatory hijab. It should be recommended but not forced. He among others were unfortunately killed shortly after the revolution. Our interventions are needed to help Muslims oppressed by Israel, their existence is a cancer. It's a threat to the whole world.

ROMULO IS A Mexican in his 30's who has worked in Russia for four years. He earlier lived in the United States and Latvia. The latter he described as riddled with russophobia and nazi parades, so he decided to see Russia for himself and moved to Nizhny Novgorod. There he became a staunch supporter of Vladimir Putin.



THERE IS ANOTHER WAR COMING FOR THE MIDDLE EAST. SAUDI ARABIA IS NOW SURROUNDED BY OUR FORCES, LIKE A SCARED DOG IN A CORNER, AND THEY ARE BARKING LOUD.

Is there democracy in Russia, especially considering the arrest of presidential candidate Alexei Navalny?

Of course there is democracy here. There are tons of opposition TV-channels, radio stations, and anyone disliking the current system can openly express it. But in the US, Facebook and TV-channels are censoring some topics. It's different in America. If you go against the stream you will get killed like Kennedy was.

What is Putin's plan for Syria?

Primarily to cleanse out the terrorist groups that America created to destabilize the region. Their plan was to use ISIS to oust Assad, and then start sending these terrorists to the Russian border to do the same with us. Of course we should destroy them while they are far away. USA calls Russia aggressors, but look at the number of military bases worldwide. Do we have bases in Mexico and Canada? America does everywhere.

In recent years Russia is known to increasingly use the mercenary Wagner Group in its foreign operations. An incident in May saw them battling American troops directly. What are your thoughts on their use?

I wonder what the problem is? The US use Blackwater, and even the Taliban and ISIS. Mercenaries are an efficient way to conduct warfare in secrecy. I can't say what happened in May. There is nothing on Russian media about it, but all over Western media, so it's their word against ours. ●





Photo Credit: Hans Runesson

THE LADY WITH THE HANDBAG

Racism and fascism have been smoldering under the surface in Sweden for a long time. What is our duty as citizens and human beings in the face of growing polarization and violent behavior? Could everyday actions lead to a change of course?



Ten members of the Swedish neo-Nazi political party, Nordiska Rikspartiet (NRT), marched through the streets of Växjö on the 13th of April, 1985. The protest caused much disturbance in the city that day, as roughly 2500 residents had gathered to show their resistance towards the shaved, bomber jacket wearing members of NRT. One hour before the protest began, the Swedish Left party leader Lars Werner spoke to the crowd, ending with a call for everyone to leave the city square to show their discontent with the Nazi protest. Only a few adhered this message and left the scene.

AS THE NAZIS marched for the square, people threw eggs and rotten tomatoes at them. One lady walked up to one of the banner-men and swung her handbag at the man as he marched by. That lady was Danuta Danielsson, a Polish-born woman in her late 30s whose mother had been incarcerated

in a German concentration camp during World War 2. The moment was captured and immortalized by the young press-photographer Hans Runesson working for the Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter. The situation quickly escalated and fights broke out. The handful nazi protestors were severely beaten and chased to the train station, where they hid in the toilets until police later escorted them away.

THE PICTURE OF Danuta that Runesson took soon became world famous and has become a symbol of resistance, and the woman with the handbag was praised as an icon of courage and bravery.

FAST FORWARD TO the election year of 2018. Nazis are yet again marching on the streets of Swedish cities, and in what seems as increasing numbers. Bomber jackets have been exchanged for slick suits and the extreme-right has adopted and changed form. Nationalistic, extreme right-wing political

“WE ALL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEROES OR VILLAINS HERE, USE YOUR ACTIONS TO CHOOSE WHOM YOU WANT TO BE.

rallies are held on public places and the political climate is as polarized as ever before. In our day to day life, what duties does one have to stand up against racist and fascist sentiments spreading like cancer across Europe?

TRADITIONALLY, RACISM AND fascism in Sweden have publicly been faced by either violence or looking the other way. I would argue that this is two extremes that quite clearly have not been as effective as one might had hoped for. While skewed racist views should never be accepted by society, sweeping it under the rug won't make the problem go away. In a society where hateful comments and racist views are getting more accepted, you and I have a duty towards history, ourselves, others, and the inclusive society I hope you agree with me should exist.

A COUPLE OF months ago a woman sat outside the grocery store in one of the squares in Lund. She sat on a pile of clothes asking for change from the by-passers. As I got closer, I saw what seemed like a sweet old couple approaching her. As I passed I could hear them swearing at her, pointing their fingers and telling her that she did not belong here, she had to go away. I stopped, baffled, for a couple of seconds. This was not acceptable, at least not in accordance with my own moral compass. I told the old couple to leave her alone, she had not done anything to them, if they don't like to see poverty they could either give her money or to some organization, and if they don't like her as a person, then I didn't like them. They called me a leftist, liberal, green party advocate. Something I would hardly view as an offense. They stumbled away and I was left thinking whether that could have ever made any difference at all in their world view. They were so sure on their own moral high-ground. Although I don't believe people follow racist narratives just because their plain evil, rather that they actually believe it to be the truth. The dangerous part of viewing the world in black and white is that it's easy and even harder to combat. There is a time

and place for everything. Having a long, nuanced political debate outside the groceries might not be the right forum. However for the woman asking for change, maybe this gave her a few moments of peace.

INDIVIDUAL ACTION IS hard. Especially in public places where one could feel that someone else could take care of the issues we see. Bystander effect and diffusion of responsibility is something widely studied in psychology. I do believe that taking action is necessary, all the while not losing one's core values or being swept away with crowd behavior. Most importantly, never by the same means as the oppressors themselves. We all have the opportunity to be heroes or villains here, use your actions to choose whom you want to be.

DANUTA DANIELSSON TOOK action that fateful day in April 1985. However, she later expressed regret regarding hitting the man with her handbag. She wanted the whole thing to be forgotten. After her death, her son has urged for the symbolism of her action to stop. She had become a token for both sides to use, one of courage and action, the other for violent behavior.

Whatever the beliefs regarding her hitting a man with a handbag, one action should be praised during the protest in Växjö in 1985, a lesser known one. As the crowd kicked a Nazi bloody and unconscious, one unknown man rushed down and shielded him from his fellow protestors. The scene was captured by another photographer Erik Johannesson, who believed that the man's life was saved. That expression of love and empathy, not for other people's beliefs, but for other people's humanity might just be the answer we are looking for when we are standing up for what we believe is right in a polarized society. Although not an easy answer, but in the words of the great Albus Dumbledore: *“Dark times lie ahead of us and there will be a time when we must choose between what is easy and what is right”*. ●

A high-contrast, black and white portrait of Milton Friedman. He is an older man with thinning hair, wearing thick-rimmed glasses, a dark suit jacket, a light-colored shirt, and a patterned tie. He is resting his chin on his right hand, looking thoughtfully to the right. The background is dark and out of focus.

MILTON FRIEDMAN

Milton Friedman, a pivotal figure in the economic history, someone whose work and ideas attracted many supporters and critics alike. His ideas benefited some countries and some people, but have had devastating consequence on others. Friedman's theories are still in power, as they are adopted by international economic institutions in today's world.

In 1955, a group of economy professors from the prestigious Chicago University went to Chile to sign an agreement with the Catholic University of Chile. The US- financed agreement between universities lasted 8 years (1956- 1964) with a broader aim to redirect the Chilean economy away from socialist economy. It was a part of a bigger investment by US government of about 7 million US dollars in Latin America to counter the threat of communism and its influence in the region. That year, the governmental fund to American universities to assist developing Latin-American universities jumped from 700 thousand to more than six million dollars.

OCTOBER 1956, THE first batch of Chilean students arrived at Chicago to pursue their degrees in economics , where the strong man of economics in Chicago, Milton Friedman, was teaching. Chicago University was known for its monetarist orientation, a school in macroeconomics that was originally founded by the famous British economist John Keynes, which emphasizes the role of governments in controlling the amount of money in circulation. After finishing, they went back teaching at their home university, heavily influenced by Friedman, they were called “Chicago boys” among chilean students. It was not long until they came into power. On September 11th, 1973 a coup lead by general Pinochet adopted the Chicago boys’ economic program “the brick”, and Chicago boy Sergio de Castro was appointed as the Minister of Economy in 1975, followed by Boy Rolf Lüders in 1982 the other Chicago boy, who coined a controversial saying that he doesn’t care about inequalities and the gap between the poor and the rich, what he cares about is poverty.

“THE BRICK” MAINLY revolved around Friedman’s main ideas of a free market, privatization, little government intervention, free trade, and deregulation. A simplification for his economic philosophy would be “The freedom to set prices will raise the prices, and that will incentivize people to produce more, those who have accumulated goods will sell them to get more money, that will work to reduce the prices”.

IN MARCH 1975 Milton Friedman visited Chile, and he praised their adopted policies, predicting that they will soon lead to economic recuperation, but moreover, to closely witness his theories come into practice.

BUT, WHO IS Milton Friedman? Friedman was Born in New York, 1912, to immigrant parents. He started his degree in the department of economics at Chicago University in 1932. In 1946, he landed again in Chicago, this time as a lecturer and a researcher. At first, he believed in Keynesian economics but then criticized Keynes’ theory of fighting economic downturns using fiscal policy (government spending). Later, he totally lost faith in the Keynesian economic system and started aggregating his own theory through monetarism.

IN 1957 HE published his well-known book “A theory of the Consumption Function”. One of the books that later awarded him the Nobel prize in 1976. In his 1962 book “Capitalism and Freedom”, Friedman advocated policies such as freely floating exchange rates, abolition of medical licenses, and a negative income tax. His sci-

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**FRIEDMAN’S MAIN
IDEAS ARE: FREE MAR-
KET, PRIVATIZATION,
LITTLE GOVERNMENT
INTERVENTION, FREE
TRADE, AND DEREGULA-
TION**

entific focus was always technical economics, predicting the consequences of public policies.

IN 1963, HE and his colleague Anna Schwartz co-published “A monetary history of the United States (1867- 1960) “ his most influential work in which he argued that “inflation is always and everywhere a monetary phenomenon.”

FRIEDMAN BELIEVED THAT competition is always better than monopoly (government control) and he prioritizes freedom over equality. He had a strong critique for the welfare, and minimum wages, while his political philosophy enthusiastically praised the virtues of a free market economic

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THE WASHINGTON CONSENSUS HAS SHAPED DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR MANY YEARS AND MOSTLY DID NOT HELP THE WEAK DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AT ALL

system with minimal government intervention.

KEYNESIAN ECONOMIC THEORY which he countered generally argues that, as total demand is unstable, a market economy will often experience inefficient macroeconomic outcomes in the form of economic recessions (when demand is low) and inflation (when demand is high). Monetary policy actions by the central bank and fiscal policy actions by the government should be taken to alleviate this, which can help stabilize output over the business cycle.

“**THE CENTRAL CONTROL** necessary to ensure full employment will of course involve a large extension of the traditional functions of the government” is Keynes’ general theory of employment, interest and money. Keynesian theory of economics relies on the belief that enough government spending will create jobs and trigger spending on goods and services, which in turn will create more jobs. Friedman’s main counterargument was that people don’t make their spending decisions based on their current income or a short infusion of cash, they make decisions based on what he called “permanent income”, i.e. what they think they are likely to make over time.

NOW LET’S LOOK at some flaws and valid critique of Friedman economic model. In modern economics, free markets believed to function, only

if some preconditions are fulfilled. If they aren’t, “market failures and disparities” occur, where a government intervention becomes essential to efficiently allocate resources. This is not considered in most of Friedman’s work.

AS FOR DEVELOPING countries, The Washington Consensus; a set of 10 economic policy prescriptions which constitute the reform package promoted for crisis-wracked countries by International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank is based on neoliberal ideas of liberalization and little government interventions. This has shaped development policy for many years but mostly didn’t help the weak developing countries at all, while granting market access to the US and its allies.

IN CHILE, THE Chicago boys radical regulations and liberalization policies, which could have never been implemented without force and violence from the authoritarian government, might have on one hand lead to an economic recuperation, resulting in Chile nowadays having one of the better functioning economies in South America. On the other hand, there are many economic problems in Chile today; One of the highest inequality rates in Latin America, which economists believed to hinder economic growth, economic development, and no proper social safety net. ●



Photo: Wikipedia

Chilean military council



CENSORED

As skyscrapers tower over villages like giants, the Chinese society undergoes extreme transfigurations; an economy transitioning from agrarian to a market-oriented, a booming population and rapid technological developments. A modern yet traditional pathway is being paved. Artist and activist Ai Weiwei reveals if the human mind is capable of following these extreme transitions as well.






na's abnormally rapid development. "I am a refugee. Growing up during the cultural revolution had a very strong impact on my becoming an artist."

BEING AN ARTIST in the context of Weiwei's youth was not something one would be proud of. Weiwei's father Ai Qing was a poet who critiqued the Maoist government for suppressing culture. As his poetry gained popularity, the Chinese Communist regime interpreted his work as a threat which could spark a domino effect of individualist thinking and a possible revolution. Therefore, the Ai family was sentenced to "re-education camps" along with 300,000 individuals in north-west China for two decades. Weiwei has illustrated his experience, "At the camp, we had to live in an underground dugout and were subjected to unexplainable hatred, discrimination, unprovoked insults and assaults, all of which aimed to crush the basic human spirit rooted in my father's beliefs." Ai Weiwei's background has left inerasable marks, which have shaped his motivation and perseverance to continue his art and fight for freedom of speech.

The Chinese artist and activist, having fought a life-long battle with the Chinese government, depicts his arts with provocative themes while often displaying the extreme transition from ancient to modern society. Weiwei's most profound trait is having the ability to communicate and actively express himself, which came to him as a child. Growing up during the central planning period of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, Ai Weiwei reveals the struggle which several generations had to face in wake of Chi-



COMMUNISM, NATIONALISM, AND heavy monitoring has paved a unique pathway for China. Freedom of speech and human rights have never been distant or difficult to grasp in the eyes of Ai. A lifelong battle of fighting for rights has led Ai Weiwei's goal to make young individuals aware of one's human rights, facts, truth, and media. "Even inter-

nationally, Western nations are trying to tolerate what is happening in China today. This is very short-sighted, and this will not help China to become a modern society." Communication and truth are key to maintaining a steady and solidified civil society. Ai protests against the Chinese government, interpreting that the institution is one which puts individuals behind bars for speaking their minds.

"IN GENERAL CONDITIONS, if one types my name in China, articles will disappear due to illegal words being used". The Chinese internal firewall blocks social medias such as Facebook, Twitter and Google, heavily hindering the communication of information which is deemed sensitive. He describes, "The Chinese government is censoring my work, I am constantly being monitored, both physically and virtually." Art can be powerful, provocative, and influential; therefore, Ai Weiwei has been a target for long.

AI WEIWEI is a notable individual, often portrayed as both a hero and a villain. He has an immense goal of preventing marginalization and the destruction of human rights but often by pushing buttons of the Chinese government. This can be portrayed in one of his most famous images, a photograph of himself dropping a traditional 2000-year-old Han dynasty urn. Intentionally dropping the urn and destroying the historical artifact symbolizes the Maoist idea that building a new world requires destruction of the old, an idea that was critiqued by Weiwei. Ai Weiwei wants to preserve but also enrich the Chinese society by making individuals aware of the rapid development that is occurring. Bulldozers bashing down entire neighborhoods to construct a modern China puts tradition

at stake. The Chinese government sees Ai Weiwei as a threat to the Chinese civilization as exposure to individualistic thinking could spark a revolution. Weiwei states, "If I don't act then the danger becomes stronger", illustrating China's ongoing path as a destructive one.

WEIWEI IS COURAGEOUS, determined, and fearless. His underground fanbase extends far beyond the borders of China. Being a forefront for human rights and promoting freedom of speech, he directed *Human Flow* (2017), a cinematic and empathetic documentary which reveals the complex nature of being a displaced individual in midst of the mass refugee crisis. He reviews the cumulative impact climate change, political suppression, famine, and war have had on individuals in 23 different countries; resulting in the many displaced men, women, and children seeking shelter. Alongside this documentary, Weiwei has also set up an artistic installation of 9000 children's backpacks, representing the many lives that were lost in Sichuan province of China in the 2008 earthquake. Together a mixture of bright, vibrant colored backpacks make up a sentence in Mandarin, "For seven years she lived happily on this earth". The mass number of lost students was due to poor construction work being built near a local school. Weiwei encouraged remembrance of the students' identities, which should never have been lost in the first place. The abstract graphic writing reveals how the lives of innocent civilians should not be at cost in the face of rapid development.

AI WEIWEI'S LARGE fan base continues to support his motivation to fight for rule of law, transparency, and freedom of speech, despite costly hardships. China is undergoing great political and economic change along with rapid technological developments to manipulate and control society. A threat to the communist authorities is interpreted as a threat to the entire society. China continues to develop through immense nationalism and collectivistic thinking. Surveillance is, collectively, interpreted as a safety net which will only foster protection from potential danger. However, individually, the topic of societal manipulation becomes extremely complex and debatable as Ai Weiwei states, "I think it is a responsibility for any artist to protect freedom of expression and to use any way to extend this power." ●

THE HIGHEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD

Lesotho is surrounded by the misty mountain chain Drakensberg as well as South Africa on every side. A small enclaved country with an even smaller economy, placing the country in the bottom 35 economies in the world according to the World Bank. However, the paradigm shift on the view of marijuana might be the new hope for one of the poorest countries in the world.

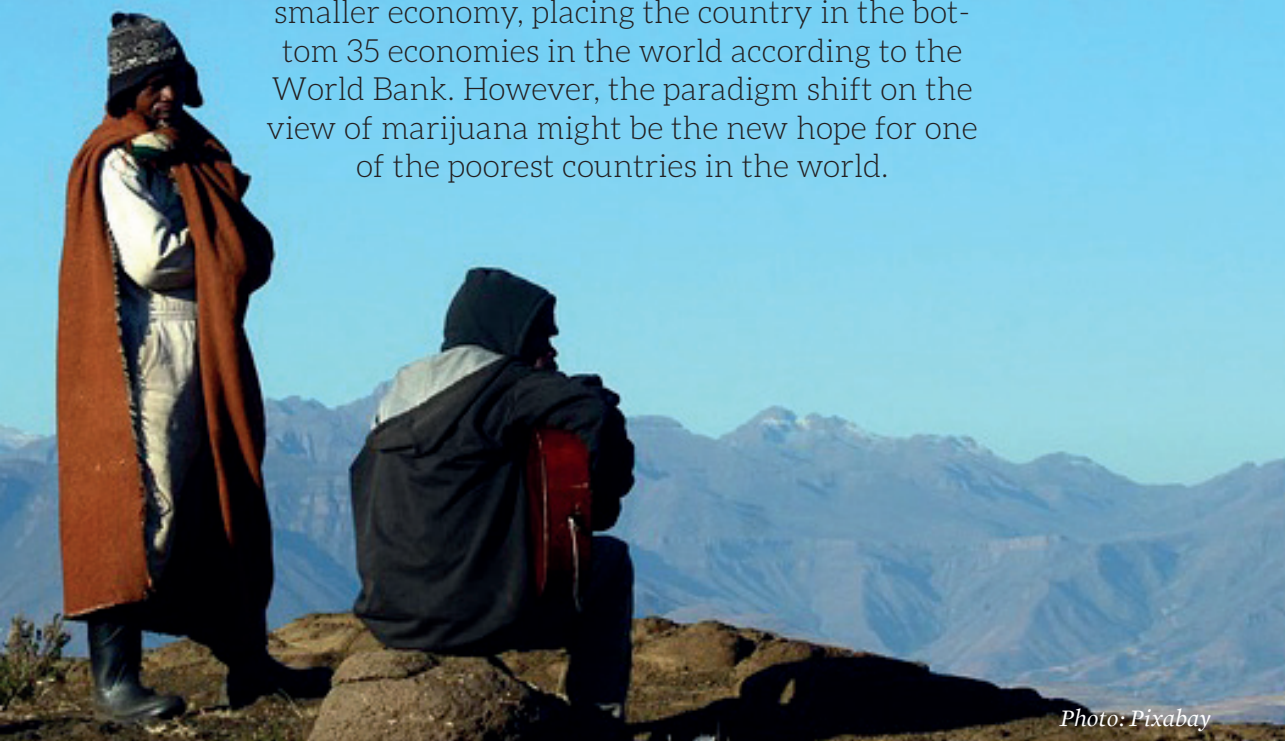


Photo: Pixabay

President Richard Nixon popularized the term “war on drugs” in 1971 claiming drug abuse, including marijuana, was America’s public enemy number one. The general opinion that drugs should be criminalized is still intact but the view on cannabis has drastically changed over the last decades. Nine states in the US have legalized marijuana for both medical and recreational use, while 29 states has legalized medical marijuana. Legislation is not the only thing that’s changing, the public acceptance in the US reached a new high in 2018 with 64 percent of Americans now being positive on legalization of marijuana. The highest percentage since the question first was polled in 1969. Uruguay is another example of a country

that’s been through a liberalization of drug laws. With the most ambitious legislation policies in the world you can now buy the marijuana over counter in pharmacies.

THIS PARADIGM SHIFT is also discernible in southern Africa since various countries now are re-evaluating their stance on marijuana. Lesotho became the first country in Africa to legalize marijuana cultivation permits or medical use in 2017, shifting towards a more liberal drug stance in the region. Zimbabwe didn’t take long to follow in Lesotho’s footsteps, going against their traditionally conservative stance on drugs, by issuing licenses for cultivation of medical marijuana in September, 2018. According to a report carried out by the United



LESOTHO'S EXPORT OF CANNABIS TO SOUTH AFRICA CLEARLY REPRESENTS ONE OF THREE MAIN INCOME SOURCES OF HARD CURRENCY

Nations, Africa is the second biggest producer and consumer of cannabis after America. Information has circulated that other countries in the region including Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) and Malawi are investigating how to tap into this lucrative market. There seems to be a “weed race” around the region, where policymakers realize that a more liberal view on the drug could lead to big investments and a growth for the economy, something the region is determined to achieve.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN highest court ruled the prohibition laws on marijuana, referred to as dagga in South Africa, unconstitutional. Coming into effect in 1997 South Africa's constitution is one of the newest in the world, emphasizing personal liberty throughout. The court argued that criminalizing personal use of dagga was a far too big intervention in the people's personal sphere and that this outweighed the government's concerns of public health and order. Cheering out “Weed are free now” the South African pro-marijuana activists were pleased with the decision but other stakeholders might also be delighted with the ruling since this could open up for a brand new exporting opportunities for Lesotho.

LESOTHO IS UNDOUBTEDLY largely economically dependent on South Africa as it is their, by far, biggest trade partner both when it comes to products and labor. Both countries are also part of the SADC Free Trade Area, indicating a strong economic

dependence in the whole region. According to a report carried out by UNESCO (Cannabis in Lesotho: a preliminary survey) , Lesotho's export of cannabis to South Africa clearly represents one of three main income sources of hard currency, the other two being remittances from workers in the South African mining industry, and international aid. Legal export could therefore lead to an significant national income that derives from Lesotho.

On the other hand local farmers might not benefit from this cultivation since it's likely that most licenses will be issued to global companies with capital and know-how to invest in big scale cultivation, something most rural farmers lack.

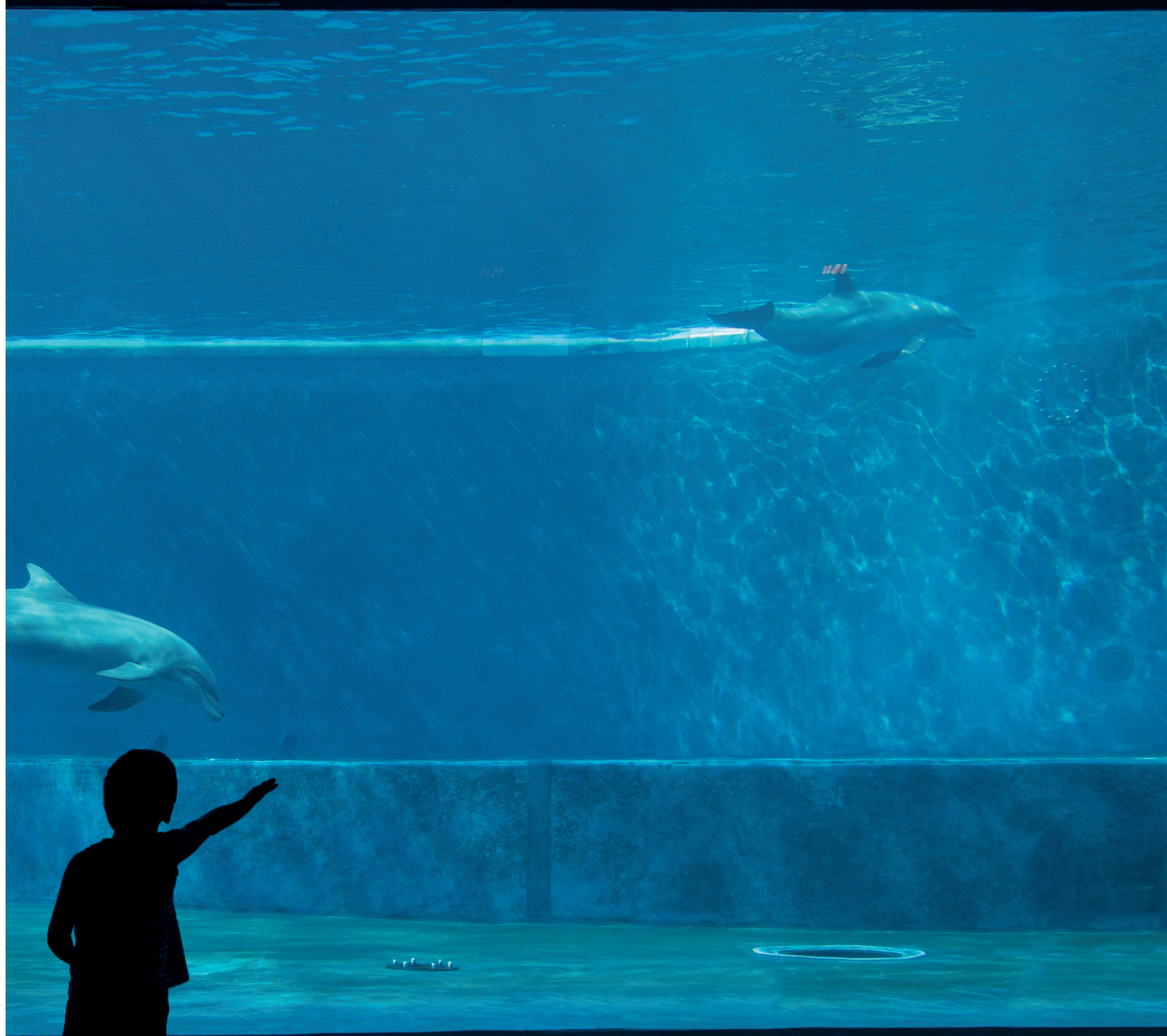
THE COUNTRY LIES 1400 meters above sea level, thus making it the highest country in the world. The high altitude marijuana thrives with the clean water and air provided by the mountain sides of Drakensberg giving Lesotho vast opportunities to expand cultivation.

The decision of South Africa's highest court could be seen as an opportunity for Lesotho to legally capitalize on more lenient marijuana restrictions around the region. Liberalization seems to be a worldwide trend and the global legal marijuana market is expected to reach USD \$146 billion by 2025 according to the consulting firm Grand View Research. If Lesotho could tap in on only a small share of that market, that would undoubtedly be a factor in developing their economy, and pushing Lesotho out of poverty. What once was seen as public enemy number one might become one of Lesotho's closest ally. ●



THE SHALLOW SIDE OF “THE COVE”

In the quaint fishing village of Taiji, a swarm of raucous activists cluster along the calm Japanese coastline, feverishly snapping photos and brandishing eye-catching signs in hopes of sabotaging the surreptitious affair taking place just 200 meters from the shore: ritualistic dolphin hunting.



In 2009, dolphin-trainer-turned-activist, Ric O'Barry, and renowned director, Louie Psihoyos joined forces to spearhead a film that took global audiences for an epic, tear-jerking ride: "The Cove"—an exposé on the peculiar practice of cetacean-slaughter in the small Japanese coastal town of Taiji. Many, like myself, will remember weeping as the film closed to sprightly dolphins dancing through an aquamarine dream world, while David Bowie's heartstring-plucking, "Heroes," streamed in the background; the scene, a tellingly stark contrast to the gritty footage of crimson-soaked carnage we had just witnessed minutes before. The film's recipe for emotional manipulation, a teaspoon of outrage mixed with a heaping cup of moral superiority, elicited a satisfying response in its Western audiences. Unsurprisingly, in the wake of this groundbreaking animal-rights documentary, the small seafaring community became the recipient of seemingly the entire world's righteous indignation, and a target for environmentalist groups worldwide.

SINCE THE FILM'S debut, residents have received a flood of complaints and media attacks for having the gall to continue performing the local rite. In response to this rising tide of ridicule, the people of Taiji have remained curiously silent, never attempting to fight the roaring sea of criticism against them. That is, until filmmaker, Megumi Sasaki took the helm and steered her investigative journalistic efforts into the murky waters of moral

subjectivism, having the audacity to delve into the other side of the tale. With the recent release of her bold counter-documentary, "Okujirasama" ("A Whale of a Tale"), Sasaki attempts to re-tell what she perceives to be a one-sided narrative of a very complex issue. The response: a wave of cultural debates, which has prompted Taiji-locals to open up to global media sources, including The Guardian, after nearly a decade of having their voices drowned beneath the surface.

DRENCHED IN MACABRE images of battered dolphins lying lifelessly on the shore and coastal landscapes tainted a harrowing crimson-red, "The Cove" serves as an indictment of Taiji's 400-year-old traditions; that is, the hunting and eating of dolphins, pilot whales, and other small cetaceans native to the coastal waters of Japan. Using hidden recorders, remote-controlled helicopters, and a series of underwater cameras, Psihoyos dredges up graphic footage of Taiji's infamous dive hunts and the putative controversies surrounding the practice. In addition to censuring the fishermen for their inhumane hunting policies, the filmmakers accuse the town's residents of a number of other atrocities, including lobbying at the International Whaling Convention, perpetuating the remunerative albeit vile practice of global dolphin trading, and substituting fish produce with cheaper dolphin meat, associated with ghastly health hazards like lead poisoning. With little to no statistical or numerical figures, however, the movie defends its meaty suppositions with choppy interviews and



Photo: Google Images

rogue investigative camera work, sympathetic imagery of dolphins in distress, and anecdotes that corroborate the aquatic mammals' superior intelligence. Despite all of these fishy tactics, the Hollywood-esque shockumentary has received the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature and garnered international prestige, not to mention inspiring a highly successful mobilization campaign.

“ EITHER YOU'RE AN ACTIVIST OR YOU'RE AN IN-ACTIVIST

THIS SUCCESS, HOWEVER, has come at the expense of the people of Taiji, who feel the film has portrayed the town in a magnificently unjust way. This is the starting point of Sasaki's valorous cinematic rebuttal. She argues that Psihoyos and O'Barry's one-sided journalism, and blatant disregard of culture and history in the process of contextualizing Taiji's actions has, ultimately, problematized the issue from a very western perspective. With a predominantly white-male cast, and not a single mediating voice, "The Cove" is quintessential of a shallow, culturally outdated, "us-versus-them" narrative—depicting the few residents who were interviewed, and their wayward behavior, as emblematic of the villainous "Other". Laced with black-and-white rhetoric, the movie's message is made crystal clear: as O'Barry proclaims, "Either you're an activist or you're an in-activist". There's no in-between.

AND THIS "IN-BETWEEN" is exactly where Sasaki sets the scene of her documentary—"A Whale of A Tale". With help from American journalist and Taiji resident, Jay Alabaster, Sasaki attempts to turn the tide, restoring some equilibrium to discernibly unfair debate. The film takes up the relevant arguments of activists, but also gives a voice to Taiji's fishermen and residents. While for animal enthusiasts whaling may be seen as an act of moral turpitude, for Japan's sea-dwelling community it's the rope anchoring the town to its distinctive history and identity. It's a tradition that

enabled their ancestors to survive before any form of transportation or alternative sustenance was available. It's the economic and cultural bedrock of the town. It's a local idiosyncrasy. This defining cultural factor is explored in the film and, thereafter, in a series of interviews with townspeople by the international press.

WHEN IT COMES to global environmentalism, this type of cultural impasse isn't new. For decades, environmental conservation and animal-rights agendas have been at odds with indigenous groups and pleas for cultural preservation. What is new, however, is how the global community has dealt with them. For a long time, these cultural disputes were met with contempt on behalf of influential development actors, ranging from UN constituents to international NGOs, who tended to favor more western-based value systems when it came to environmental issues.

ONLY MORE RECENTLY have these discussions become more critical to prejudice and cultural intolerance. And, in many ways, "A Whale of a Tale" is a testimonial to this. Sasaki makes it clear that she does not advocate for whaling. But, by moving beyond finger-pointing and, instead, pointing out more profound cultural clashes between global western-led animal rights movements and local customs, saturated in faith and ancestral worship, she makes it clear that 'black and white' rhetoric isn't constructive. The first step to abating tensions is encouraging constructive dialogue. This means letting all perspectives be heard.

"A WHALE OF A Tale" is not about environmentalism so much as it is about power—how power can be used or abused by politically-dominant groups to represent others, and what this means for managing future global conflict. Being critical of this power means reflecting on one's own cultural presumptions and taking all sides into account before painting a group with a villainous wash. It may be unpleasant to taste the brackish brew of our own self-righteous hypocrisy, but it is necessary in order to move beyond self-appeasing displays of indignation towards inclusive and lasting change. In the absence of such a critical voice, future environmental agendas will likely be ineffective, just more pandering with no porpoise. ●

FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE:

RENEWABLES VS NUCLEAR POWER

The fight against climate change is massing world-wide support, but changes are coming in too slowly. If we really want to tackle the problems of our climate and deliver on the objectives of the Paris Agreement, we need to re-evaluate our stance on nuclear power, sooner rather than later.

The 2015 Paris Agreement has the world committed to combating climate change and keeping the rise in global temperatures between 1.5 and 2 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial times. In order to achieve this goal, CO2 emissions must be reduced dramatically. The promises have been made and indeed a lot of countries are doing their best at curbing CO2 emissions. Bans on the sale of diesel- and petrol-fuelled cars have been announced since 2015 in a series of countries, the biggest of which are China, India, Germany, and France. Meanwhile, the demand for renewable energy resources has been on the rise. However, in order to reach the main objective of the Paris Agreement, countries need to bolster their efforts. Governments have been criticised for implementing changes too slowly, while 2017 saw a rise in CO2 emissions by 1.5 percent, compared to a steady period between 2014 and 2016. Indeed, while the world is going in the right direction with renewables, the changes we make will not offset the adverse effects of climate change in time. In fact, they might worsen them if not dealt with properly.

IN THE BATTLE against climate change, our best bet is the use of renewable energy coming from solar panels, wind turbines, water dams (hydro-power), and biomass production. The switch to electric cars and improvements to public transportation are seen as an essential part of this

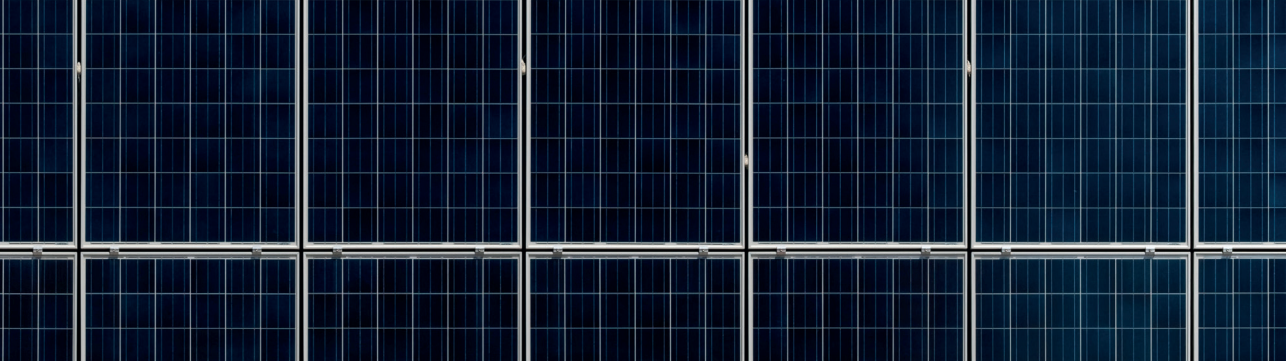
plan. However, there are various problems with the production of some of these renewables that usually go by unnoticed by the general public.

FOR EXAMPLE, the most important part of an electric car is its battery. Most of these batteries are lithium based, made of various materials like graphite, nickel, cobalt and others. These materials are hard to extract and often come from developing countries, like the Democratic Republic of Congo in the case of cobalt, where the labour force is subjected to inhumane toil. The actual process of mining these products exacts vast quantities of CO2 into the air, produces water shortages, and there is always the risk of toxic spills. Then, if the energy used to power the battery comes from coal-burning plants, its purpose becomes self-defeating even when the e-car is on the road. It will need to travel many miles in order to offset the CO2 emissions from the production of its battery.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE IS with solar panels. Even though they produce no pollution, these panels deteriorate over time and will need to be recycled eventually. However, most countries have no plans on how to deal with these panels, which contain toxic materials, like silicon, lead, and carcinogens like chromium and cadmium. This would mean that for all the good the panels do, their waste will pile up unrecycled and ever-growing due to demand, which will increase pollution rather than reduce it.

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IF NUCLEAR POWER CAN HELP
US FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE, HOW
CAN WE EXPLAIN THIS PHAS-
ING-OUT PROCESS?
ONE MAJOR FACTOR IS FEAR.



ANOTHER OBVIOUS PROBLEM with these energy resources is their dependency on the weather. When there is no sun or wind, production stiffens, but people will still need to consume energy. The hope is that the rising demand for renewables will eventually even out these problems and the world will indeed become fossil free. However, as mentioned, we cannot wait around for this to happen and need to act now if we are to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement. This leads us to an already existing solution that produces clean energy but has been villainised over the decades for being unsafe and costly. This is, of course, nuclear power.

NUCLEAR POWER HAS a zero-carbon imprint and produces tons of energy utilising small quantities of uranium. Despite this, the use of nuclear power has steadily declined over the years, especially after the disasters of Chernobyl in 1986 and Fukushima in 2011. A number of countries around the world have made a commitment to stop their reliance on nuclear power and have banned the construction of new reactors. As of 2018, Italy and Lithuania have phased-out nuclear power completely, while Germany has shut down half of its reactors and plans to completely phase-out nuclear power by 2022. However, as nuclear plants shut down, the energy they produced needs to come from somewhere and the gap is usually filled in by fossil fuels, which increase CO2 emissions. This is largely the case in Germany, which, despite being a pioneer in the field of renewables, is set to miss its 2020 goals of reducing CO2 emissions. With this in mind, if nuclear power can help us fight climate change, how can we explain this phasing-out process?

ONE MAJOR FACTOR is fear. Surveys show that most people fear nuclear power more than coal and oil. However, they largely overestimate the dangers of nuclear power. The radiation factor is much smaller than usually believed and in fact, burning coal exposes people to more radiation than nuclear power due to some radioactive atoms in the coal. Nuclear waste is another major concern. Current methods at containing nuclear waste are only temporary, costly, and inefficient. However, a new permanent solution seems to be on its way. The Onkalo spent nuclear fuel repository in Finland is the first site in the world that aims to contain nuclear waste safely underground, essentially forever, with no human supervision. Operation is set to begin in 2020 and it might be a feasible solution to the nuclear waste problem.

IN ADDITION, BUILDING nuclear plants and producing nuclear energy has improved tenfold since Chernobyl and even Fukushima. Indeed, thorium-based reactors, which require small quantities of thorium (of which there is an abundance on the earth and moon for that matter), are compact, extremely clean, and affordable, and can replace uranium in the long run.

ALL IN ALL, it is time for us to re-evaluate our stance on nuclear power, especially if we want to keep up with our Paris Agreement commitments. It may not be perfect, but until we further develop our renewable energy resources, nuclear power can be the bridging technology that will lead us there one day.●



Photo: Creative Commons

BECOMING A HERO

NEW METHODS ARE IMPLEMENTED BY MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS TO RECRUIT MORE EFFICIENTLY. WHAT ARE THESE TECHNIQUES AND WHICH SOCIETAL PRESSURE POINTS ARE EXPLOITED IN THIS ATTEMPT TO GAIN NEW RECRUITS?

Today, obligatory military service is the exception within the European Union and the army's role has shrunk in most countries. Even if there are still great differences between countries regarding the public's perception of soldiers, they have one thing in common: A massive lack of young people voluntarily joining the army. Therefore, the number of governments trying to meet this challenge by targeted recruitment is rising.

TARGETED RECRUITMENT REFERS to strategies, tactics, and techniques an organization uses to find, attract and bind personnel. First, one defines a target group matching the organization's needs.

Modern tools for data analysis and strategic marketing are applied to get in touch with potential employees. Coming from the data-driven field of targeted marketing, targeted recruitment is a standard tool to efficiently focus available financial resources on those candidates that can be attracted to the company with a high probability of being recruited. Most of the techniques within targeted recruitment are based on exploiting potential candidates' hopes and weaknesses so-called pull and push factors. This also holds for the military but was not the case before.

MANY ANCIENT SOCIETIES had a rigid separation between the rulers and the ruled. Within these systems there often existed a class of warriors

connected through a common ethnic background, education, enslavement or in rare circumstances free choice. A transition took place whereby those who were traditionally forced into military service, almost as a form of slavery, were replaced by the common citizen who volunteered for the role, as practiced in ancient Greece. The narrative of these warriors was always a heroic one, even though this was created by their commanders or historians, although rarely by themselves. In the 16th century, the concept of citizen as soldiers was reborn with military obligations for men regardless of class. Later, parallel to the rise of mercenaries during the Thirty Years War, armed forces became a part of modern state theory.

AFTER THE END of World War II, the European continent witnessed an unprecedented time of relative stability. Nevertheless, the military presence was extremely high due to the tensions of the Cold War. A compulsory military service was the norm and soldiers were publicly visible. After the end of the Cold War, most armies reduced the number of soldiers and relied more on partnerships within the European Union and NATO. Also, many governments reduced the number of soldiers due to a neoliberal agenda.

RECRUITING THE POOR is a morally questionable but widely used strategy. It is a balancing act between exploiting weak individuals with a lack of opportunities and searching for suitable personnel. For example, the British Army specifically targets economically weak and socially isolated adolescents. Its *This Is Belonging* multichannel campaign aimed at the working class, aged 16 to 24, living in economically strained cities like Sheffield, Manchester, Belfast, and Cardiff. Criticism has been mounting because the targeting is explicitly focused towards people earning an average income of less than £10,000. Therefore, this can be viewed both as an opportunity for a better, more prosperous future or an exploitation of those who are of a lower socio-economic class.

RECRUITMENT BASED ON previous education seems to be common in many European armies as well, leading to a rising segregation between the commanders and the lower ranks. While officers are recruited at private schools, universities and generally in structurally better-off districts, the ranks are filled by the disadvantaged. The British

Army distinguishes in its training paths between candidates for technically demanding activities and often riskier roles such as infantry and direct combat groups, which empirically tend to attract below-average students. Therefore, young, economically and academically disadvantaged people are overrepresented in active combat troops as a result of this strategy, while the vast majority of medical personnel and those in the higher ranks are mainly white, better educated and economically more secure.

“YOUTUBE, INSTAGRAM, SNAPCHAT AND FACEBOOK ARE DOMINATED BY THREE TYPES OF IMAGES: HEROES, MINORITIES AND ADVENTURES.”

TO EXPLOIT AGE group-specific characteristics is the most ethically dubious strategy. The use of social media, internet communication, and public advertising, described below, particularly appeals to children between the ages of 12 and 18, is no longer an exception. It is intended to introduce children, who could become potential applicants, to the army in order to facilitate direct recruitment at a later date. While international law does not directly forbid the active recruitment of minors from age 16 for military purposes, its legality as practiced is disputed.

SOCIAL MEDIA RECRUITMENT is concentrated on the pull side. Camaraderie, equality, and adventure are in the foreground as well as career opportunities. It is therefore not surprising that the countries used as examples, England and Germany, have professionalized this image. Youtube, Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook are dominated by three types of images: Heroes, minorities, and

adventures. Glossy pictures of young, beautiful and smiling soldiers alternate with heavily armed fighters in the dirt and sports soldiers at international competitions. To what extent does this reflect reality?

YOUTUBE IS ONE of the most prominent channels for social media-based recruitment. The German Armed Forces have their own elaborately produced advertising series called *The Recruits* and *Mali*. These series are intended to show the everyday life of young soldiers both at home and abroad. The recordings, often made to look like a video blog, deceive the millions of budgets behind these productions. The series *Mali*, based on the German participation in the international mission in Mali, aroused criticism because public posters of soldiers appeared heroic looking like computer game covers. Considering the high consumption of video games by those between 12 and 18 as well as the susceptibility of many impressionable adolescents to pictures of strong and adventurous heroes, this practice is questionable from a moral standpoint.

“THE IMAGES CONVEY BOTH A ROMANTICIZED IMAGE OF THE ARMY AND REFERENCE POINTS TO CHALLENGES IN THE LIVES OF TEENAGERS.

THE BRITISH ARMY'S *This is Belonging* campaign may be seen as the most sophisticated multichannel campaign and raised targeted recruitment to a new level. Both the professionalism and mood of the clips as well as the precise and calculated tailoring to specific groups are a media consultancy's outcome. People of color who lead an otherwise white combat troop under the heading having my voice heard. A group of soldiers who stop

for the prayer of a Muslim comrade in front of a breathtaking mountain panorama and allow no interruption, accompanied by the message keeping my faith. A young, dainty soldier, surrounded by his comrades, who grows beyond his own physical limits to loud applause and faces his kryptonite. These images convey both a romanticized image of the army and reference points to challenges in the lives of teenagers.

BOTH THE BRITISH and German defense ministries are committed to not deploying underage soldiers. They would only be trained with weapons by age 18, in strict accordance with international law and child protection conventions. However, the fundamental question is in what ways and with what images democratic systems recruit young people for the military. Despite all the beautiful and heroic pictures, being a soldier and possibly risking one's own life and health is an enormous commitment. This decision should be made wisely and whether one has this maturity at a young age is highly questionable.

EXPLOITING PEOPLE'S HOPES and weaknesses in order to integrate them into military service raises the question of equal opportunities. The trend is still too young to be proven empirically, but current developments suggest the emergence of a strong separation between the leading officers and the regular ranks. While propagating heroism in the media to recruit vulnerable groups in society may be highly effective, it raises a multitude of ethical questions. Societies describing themselves as progressive might open up a deeper discussion regarding the methods in which they recruit their soldiers based on their suitability for service or preying on individual hopes and disadvantages. ●



Photo: Flickr



SMARTPHONES

VILLIANS IN DISGUISE?

Smartphones are without question an extremely useful device of modern everyday life. However, these tiny computers appear to change professional and social habits. The average person checks the phone over 150 times a day causing a severe distraction from studies or work. Moreover, studies find that smartphones start to become emotionally more important than social relations.

Undoubtedly, phones have become the heroes of our everyday life. Constantly having access to the internet and therefore access to information, private and business communication, access to navigation as well as a multitude of leisure activities. Our current experience of globalisation with worldwide fragmented production processes is always linked to the incredible information and communication technology inventions of the past 25 years. But not only

business is profiting. To me, an international student at Lund University, who studies now in her fourth country, smartphones are a live saviour! Looking up words and phrases like 'fika' or 'sex dagar i veckan' and navigating through the city as well as public transportation networks are all complex issues smartphones solve.

HOWEVER, IT ALSO recently led me to realise just how dependent I have become. I was on my way to a new friend's apartment here in Lund when

suddenly my phone crashed. Not being able to access maps, navigation or even call my friend and ask for directions, I did it the old-fashioned way: I started asking people on the streets for direction. The result was that I arrived later at my friend's home but I arrived and made a first acquaintance with the amazing friendliness (and the outstanding level of English) of the Swedish non-student population here in Lund. Consequently, in my personal experience smartphones really are heroes of our lives and I doubt anyone seriously wants to go back to times without them.

NEVERTHELESS, VOICES, WARNING about negative side-effects and dangers of smartphones, are becoming louder as phones become an ever more crucial part of our life. A recent trial found that the average participating user spend approximately 2 and a half hours a day on their phones, which was spread over 76 sessions. Some business experts warn that smartphones may harm our labour productivity by constantly distracting us and forces us to multitask, which also applies to other distractions such as having to keep an eye on your email account. Moreover, the same blog (bankunderground.com) points out that being interrupted by phone messages can lead to a habit of letting yourself easier being distracted by other things or even self-interrupt. After any interruption it takes us approximately 25 minutes to resume the work in the same quality as before. Overall, digital distractions, including smartphones, may lower our efficiency at work while the technology itself may still have a positive productivity effect.

EACH NOTIFICATION FROM your phone induces a hormone cocktail to your body, which causes constant stress to the body. Moreover, it can lead to an addiction and there is now a word for the fear of being without your phone: "Nomophobia". A recent survey by Kapersky Lab found that the phone is increasingly ranked more important than close relationships. It reports amongst others that "21.2 per cent (of the participants) said their smartphone was equal to, or more important, than their partner". This result is further mirrored by the surveys finding that Germans spend more of their free-time on their phone and less with person-to-person socialising or time-intense hobbies.

Even if people meet up you can observe more and more that people stay very engaged with their phones instead of the other person in the room. In the same fashion it used to be normal to, for example, have a chat with strangers while waiting for the train or bus to arrive. By now, everyone is listening to music, messaging or playing games on their phone instead of having small-talk with others. A spontaneous conversation is more and more considered to be unusual. It indeed appears as if we don't appreciate direct person-to-person contact anymore.

UNDER THE SLOGANS like "airplane mode on – it's my turn now" primary school children recently held a demonstration against their parents excessive smartphone usage in Hamburg, Germany. They complain that their parents are not really present if they are on their phone and children may feel neglected. In fact, studies have found correlations between parental phone usage and the mental resilience and well-being of their children. Interestingly, it found that physical presence along with mental absence has a worse impact than physical absence because it induces the feeling of being left out or less important. Additionally, it is not a secret that children often follow the example of their parents and imitate behaviour. Therefore, if you want your kids to have a responsible phone behaviour a good starting point is to demonstrate it yourself.

So, WHAT SHALL we make of all this? I would not recommend throwing away your phone. Not everything was better in the past! There are great advantages to smartphones, which everyone can benefit from. However, writing this article certainly has led me to become more aware of my own smartphone behaviour and perhaps it can raise awareness that smartphones may very well be "villains in disguise". So, why not try to put away the phone next time you are meeting someone for a fika? And dear (future) parents, please make sure to teach your children how to navigate without a navigation system and that it is alright to talk to or ask strangers for help. In my opinion, skills like that are valuable and should not get lost due to the digital alternatives that are almost always available. ●



Photo: Wikipedia

GERMAN WHEN WINNING, IMMIGRANT WHEN LOSING

“Football and politics do not mix” is an old cliché which is repeatedly disproved. This summer, Vladimir Putin made the World Cup his own propaganda party. The same tournament also triggered a debate in Germany focusing on integration and racism.

It all started in May, about four weeks before the opening game. Two German key players with Turkish descent decided to meet the President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Photographs from the meeting were spread in media, and soon people all over the world could see Mesut Özil and Ilkay Gündogan handing over football shirts to the Turkish president, smiling and shaking his hand.

ERDOGAN HAS BEEN in charge in Turkey since 2003, first as prime minister, then in a presidential role he designed for himself. During the years, the power has been more and more concentrated to his person. His authoritarian regime is widely criticized by the international community for pursuing the opposition. Courts are controlled and the freedom of expression is limited. Meeting with Özil and Gündogan was a brilliant move for Erdoğan in his campaign for the upcoming election, where about 1.2 million Germans are eligible to vote.

THE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONSHIP between the two countries is unstable. Last year, the Istanbul correspondent for Die Welt was imprisoned in Turkey, accused of terrorism. Due to this, the photos were not greeted with enthusiasm. Reinhard Grindel, President of the German Football Association (DFB) tweeted: "Football and the DFB stand for values that are not sufficiently respected by Mr Erdogan."

FOR ALMOST A decade, Mesut Özil has been one of the best footballers in Germany. But after the opening game in the World Cup, he was criticized in Bild by football legend Lothar Matthäus: "He is unaware of what the people in Germany expect from a national player, and that it would have been right, after the mistake of the Erdogan photo, to show commitment to Germany and to open up to the fans."

DESPITE DEFEATING SWEDEN, Germany was eliminated. A complete disaster for the World Champions. In search of scapegoats, eyes were directed towards Özil. "I believe the fact that Mesut and Ilkay took the pictures did not distract the squad so much, but the debate afterwards did" general manager Olivier Bierhoff said.

IN SWEDEN, a debate about racism flared up after that game against Germany. Swedish player

Jimmy Durmaz suffered huge amounts of hatred and racist attacks on social media after causing a free kick. Özil went through a similar situation. After the German World Cup was over, he wrote on Twitter: "Having to leave the World Cup already after the group stage hurts so much. We just weren't good enough. I'll need some time to get over it. #SayNoToRacism"

SO WHAT WAS all of this about? Was the critic of Özil legitimate or was he treated differently due to his roots? Or maybe both? In the end of July, he announced that he would no longer play for the national team. "I am German when we win, but I am an immigrant when we lose", Özil explained. "Despite paying taxes in Germany, donating facilities to German schools and winning the World Cup with Germany in 2014, I am still not accepted into society. I am treated as being 'different'." "They didn't criticize my performances, they didn't criticize the team's performances, they just criticized my Turkish ancestry and respect for my upbringing."

REGARDING THE FAMOUS photo session, he added: "I have two hearts, one German and one Turkish. My mother taught me never to forget where I came from. /.../ The photo with President Erdoğan was not about politics but about respect for the highest office of my family's country."

ÖZIL'S POINT OF view were not shared by his fellow teammates. Toni Kroos called the remarks "nonsense". Manuel Neuer denied any racism within the team. Thomas Müller went the furthest, by declaring that "there can be no talk of racism in sports and in the national team." but didn't remain unchallenged. "When was the last time Thomas Müller was the victim of a monkey chant or had a banana thrown at him at a football match?" journalist Alima Hotakie asked rhetorically.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION in Germany is since last year's election quite unstable. Far-right Alternative for Deutschland (AfD) became the third largest party and the extreme right is, like in the rest of Europe, on the rise. An AfD representative called Özil an example of "how integration has failed". The situation also became Turkish politics. Minister of Justice congratulated Özil for "scoring the most beautiful goal against the virus of fascism." and Erdogan himself publicly supported the play-

er: "Such a racist treatment towards a young man who has given his all to the German national team for his religious beliefs is unacceptable."

MESUT ÖZIL BECAME the subject for a national debate on immigration and racism. Thousands of Germans with immigrant background shared their experiences of discrimination under the hashtag #MeTwo. Initiator Ali Can said that the hatred towards Özil made him react, along with the increased success of AfD. "It's an opportunity to talk about integration, and what it actually means to be German," Can stated. "The point is, you have to feel both German and committed to another culture or another language." #MeTwo quickly turned into a national concern. "If you think racism in Germany is no longer a problem, I recommend reading through all the #MeTwo tweets," foreign minister Heiko Maas tweeted.

FOOTBALL AND POLITICS do mix. But it's important not to mix every component in this story. One could argue that taking photos with an autocrat like Erdogan was a mistake. One could also argue that world of football is a paradise of hypocri-

sy. The next World Cup will take place in Qatar, a country that violates human rights and are being accused by their neighbors of funding terrorism. Their candidacy was supported by football legends like Zinedine Zidane and Pep Guardiola. Many of the largest football clubs have ties to authoritarian regimes through owners with shady business. And by participating, visiting and watching this summer's World Cup, we were all used by Putin's propaganda. Some more than others, like Lothar Matthäus, who even met with Putin, posed for photos and called the tournament "the best one ever". Even though posing with Erdogan was a mistake, Mesut Özil is not the first footballer to dance with the devil.

THE CASE OF Jimmy Durmaz has shown us in Sweden that as immigrant or second-generation immigrant, your right to the country is conditional. Mesut Özil is German when they win, immigrant when they lose and immigrant when posing for photos with dictators. Nationality tied to what you do. Not quite the same for, well, Thomas Müller? ●





HAMBI BLEIBT: ACTIVISTS' STRUGGLE FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

Sometimes, it seems, words are not sufficient to express the deep dissatisfaction felt from state action. In Germany, activism against climate-harming brown coal excavation has now gained much public attention, reviving peaceful protest for a common goal.

The Hambacher Forst (Hambach Forest), located in the West of Germany, is the remainder of a larger ecosystem which has been demolished over the past decades to excavate brown coal for energy production. Trees have been cut, whole villages have been resettled in order to create Europe's largest whole. Activists have, however, squatted parts of the forest for 6 years, fighting to end coal production at the location, and ultimately for good due to its strong negative impact on the environment.

THE MEANS OF action? Roughly 60 treehouses built into the tree crowns, about 200 core activists inside the forest, some of them for years, and a large public outcry against the practices of energy producer RWE in light of recent eviction plans. On the 13th of September, hundreds of police officers were moved to the forest in order to demolish the tree houses and remove the activists from their temporary living, the decree of eviction, quite ironically, citing fire safety as the reason. These scenes, being seen and noticed by a broad audience in Germany, seem to illustrate the questionable way the country is taking with its current energy policy.

OVER THE PAST years, Germany (and the EU as a whole bloc) have often been regarded as being at the forefront of the global fight against climate change. Germany Chancellor, Angela Merkel, has enjoyed the public image as a "climate chancellor". However, there are considerable regressions in the country's efforts to cut carbon dioxide emissions. In its climate goals, tailored to the Paris agreements from 2016, Germany pledged a 40% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2020 compared to the 1990-levels. However, the reduction will only total to around 32% following current projections.

AFTER THE TRAGIC incidents in Fukushima, the exit from nuclear energy has been hastily conducted, leaving only renewables and coal as significant sources of energy. Of course, the production of renewables has been heavily expanded, but since energy conservation is problematic, brown coal has been used to smooth peaks in energy consumption as well as provide energy in all weather conditions. However, in 2014, 13 coal power plants had been in

the planning or construction process, which suggests a difference between peak-smoothing and relying on a climate-destructive energy source as brown coal.

THE ACTIONS OF the activists in Hambach Forest have created something relatively rare in Germany over the past years: sympathy with activism and the realisation that positive change may be possible through protest. Since mid-September, activists have tied themselves to trees, cemented themselves in holes in the ground, and have committed civil unrest. Almost more importantly however, thousands of peaceful protestors have flooded the forest during "week-end walks", sympathising with those in the tree houses and a debate has been sparked in which the public is leaning towards sparing the Hambach Forest. Even in Sweden, university climate justice groups are planning bus trips to the area in order to support the abolition of brown coal extraction.

EVEN IF THE protestors will not ultimately be successful in preventing the demolition of the forest, something more important may emerge out of the discourse. Talks about the withdrawal from brown coal extraction and usage so far have meandered for years, sometimes stating 2038 as a possible date. Public sympathy, if not with the protestors themselves, may nonetheless lead to the creation of a certain atmosphere, a window for action. Since 2015, issues of migration have dominated the German public discourse, leading to a diversion away from other important topics pertaining to the global challenge of climate change.

BUT IN THE end, will there be hope for the activists and the Hambach Forest? On October 5th, a regional court has halted the eviction on the grounds of the legal procedure, which will likely carry on for months. The court says RWE might not appropriately have considered all alternatives to demolishing the forest, and therefore suspended the eviction.

THE ACTIVISTS, THAT is for sure, will continue in their struggle for climate justice, announcing already that new tree houses will be built, and drawing thousands to the coal mine in peaceful protest. ●



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

THE HEADSCARFS OF **EUROPE**

Throughout Europe, there has been a heated debate going on, one about values, identity and the place of Islamic headscarves within society. Often villainized as an oppressive and controlling piece of clothing, is this really the case? Or is there more to these garments than meets the eye?

“ I don’t get it. It’s just a piece of clothing. Why can’t I be a part of society if I wear it?” For H, a new student in Lund who wishes to remain anonymous, this is a question that has been on her mind a lot since arriving in Sweden. As a Sunni Muslim, H wears a headscarf (hijab), an article of clothing that covers her head and neck but leaves her face clear. For H, a personal decision, a way for her to practice her faith, and feel closer to God. But across Europe, this private choice has become a matter of public debate.

FROM GERMANY, WHERE draft legislation has been proposed prohibiting full-face veils in certain professions, to France and Belgium, where complete bans have already been implemented in public

“
DON'T WANT TO MAKE A
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WOMEN.

spaces, there have been increasingly heated discussions concerning the place of Islamic headscarves within European society. Often framed as being antithetical to the continents’ values of equality and secularity, the debate has also centred on concerns over integration and security, which have become more pronounced following the arrival of many Muslim asylum seekers and refugees from the Middle East and North Africa in the last few years.

ALTHOUGH THERE IS a distinction between the hijab, which H wears, and the more concealing niqab and burqa that have been the focus of most conversation in Europe, Islamic headscarves in general, and the women who wear them, have become tar-

gets of sharp criticism and attack by many politicians and political parties. In Sweden for example, Jimmie Åkesson, leader of the Sweden Democrats, proposed banning the burqa because he said it was connected to “terrorists and other criminal elements”, before dropping the policy earlier this year.

FOR H, THESE larger discussions aren’t just occurring in some far off parliamentary building or on a campaign trail, they are having tangible effects on her daily life. “I certainly feel more pressure here”, she says. “I don’t want to make a mistake or do something wrong because I feel like people see me as representing all Muslim women. I have thought about taking it off, that would make things easier”. Despite taking this extra attention in a mostly positive way, as an opportunity to think more about her religion and become more informed about it, H does feel “heavier” in Lund.

THESE OBSERVATIONS HIGHLIGHT a central paradox within many of the debates around Islamic headscarves in Europe: while saying burqa bans are an attempt to free Muslim women from religious oppression and help them find their voices in a more liberal, progressive society, the women themselves are often never listened to or consulted in the process. This lack of dialogue between the decision makers and those impacted by their decisions is not unique to Muslim women, says H. “This type of things always happen to women. Morals, ethics, there is so much more expected of women than men”.

FOR H, HER decision to wear a hijab was completely her own. Her mother, a civil servant, chose not to wear one and was fearful that her daughter’s decision would make her life harder than it needed to be. Now very supportive, H says it was difficult wearing a headscarf without her mother’s approval, especially during her teenage years, but she does not regret it. “For me it’s how I connect with my faith. I know some women who don’t wear a hijab and they’re no less Muslim than me. It’s an individual thing”.

H’S CASE EMPHASIZES something often excluded from narratives around the headscarf in Europe: personal choice. Usually presented as a mechanism of control and subordination imposed by men upon women, H says her relationship with the hijab is very different to that. “I find it a bit insult

ing really that people think I'm oppressed. It takes away my agency. It was my decision to wear it".

UNDOUBTEDLY, THIS ISN'T the case for every woman. H comes from a relatively secular Muslim majority country and acknowledges that the situation in other places is quite different. Furthermore, the hijab is a much less restrictive garment than the niqab or burqa, meaning the impact on her life and how it affects her ability to interact with the world is not as significant. But what is obvious is that H, and the headscarf she wears, are not the villains they have been made out to be.

"FOR ME, WEARING a hijab is a process. Sometimes I struggle with it and make mistakes but it's what I want to do". For H, this is something she believes is

important for other people to understand. "I'm not exotic or mysterious, I'm just a normal person". It is in this recognition of our shared humanity that H believes there is some hope for things to get better. "We're all humans. I don't think our differences should keep us from talking and connecting".

THIS THOUGHT IS important to keep in mind, especially with the debates around the hijab, niqab and burqa unlikely to be going away anytime soon. It is necessary, therefore, to stop talking at each other and start talking to each other. Hopefully, this will result in a more nuanced and productive dialogue around the place of Islamic headscarves within European society. As H says, "I don't find the hijab oppressive. What I do find oppressive is the strict framework of what a person has to look like". ●





A DEATH OF A LEGEND

Surname: Walesa. First Name: Lech. Occupation: electrician, co-founder and the first leader of the trade union Solidarity, President of Poland. 1983 Nobel Peace Prize laureate and... a communist collaborator?

This is a story of a hero turned villain.

At the dawn of the capitalist era, there has been approximately ninety thousand secret collaborators with the communist Security Service in Poland. All details were documented in personal folders. Today, they are in possession of a government-owned Institute of National Remembrance. In a nation that trusts their authorities that might have been the end of the story, but not in Poland. When a folder is discovered, people are discredited, jobs lost, and charges pressed. More importantly, people start asking questions. Was the timing coincidental? Was the person mentioned in the folder somehow inconvenient to those in power? Sometimes, such questions are simply conspiracy theories. More often than not, seeds of doubt are planted and people distrust both the accused and the accuser.

THESE PARTICULAR DOCUMENTS are known as the “Bolek” folder, where “Bolek” is supposedly Lech Walesa’s code name in his work for the Security Service. According to this narrative, the leader of Solidarity was a secret collaborator before and after 1989. The accusations are not new, however, they regained significance during 2015 elections, when the Law and Justice government was appointed. While Walesa is the central figure of this narrative, it is used as a wider tool to discredit all Polish governments since 1989 and to start a new era of the Polish politics.

IT IS A simple, centuries-old tactic. By defaming the hero of the independence movement, new heroes can be created. In this case, they are the Kaczynski twin brothers, Lech and Jaroslaw. They have been present in the Polish politics ever since 1989. Lech Kaczynski

first rose to power in 2005, becoming the President of Poland, with Jaroslaw becoming the Prime Minister half a year later. Jaroslaw Kaczynski's government lasted only a year before it was forced to resign, while Lech Kaczynski remained the President until the infamous plane crash in 2010. At the same time, Jaroslaw Kaczynski has been continuously the leader of the Law and Justice party since 2003 and many see him as the puppet-master of the current government.



BY DEFAMING THE HERO OF THE INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT, NEW HEROS CAN BE CREATED

HOWEVER, WHAT MANY forget is that it was Lech Walesa who promoted the Kaczynski brothers as politicians. They were the right-wing counterbalance to the mostly liberal left-wing candidates coming from the Solidarity movement. When at the turn of the '80s and '90s Walesa was campaigning to become the next president of Poland, the Kaczynski brothers were strongly supporting him and became part of his office. Some claim that they knew that they would eventually had to knock the hero of his pedestal.

ON THE SURFACE, the narrative makes sense. Of course the Security Service would like to be able to have a degree of control over the first independent labour union in the communist bloc and who would be a better person to target than Lech Walesa himself? However, the longer one thinks about it, the more the theory falls apart. What interest would the Security Service have in overthrowing the

communist regime and transitioning Poland to capitalism? The supporters of the narrative say that the transition to capitalism, under Walesa as the President, was too slow, that the de-communisation could have been done better, and that the society had paid the price for that. That might be the crux of it. A big part of the Law and Justice electorate are people who had somehow lost in the transition. If you have never managed to adjust to the new reality, the market and job competition, you would look for people to blame. In this way, "Operation 'Bolek'" is an ingenious political tactic, where people who governed Poland for the first 25 years of independence are held responsible.

ANOTHER PROBLEM IS that Walesa has always been and remains a simple man, a worker first, not an elocutionist. That is how he had rallied masses behind him, however, what worked under the communist regime does not work now. This is also where Jaroslaw Kaczynski and many other Law and Justice politicians have an advantage. They might not be elocutionists themselves but they have PR teams behind them. In the televised polemics between the modern politicians or journalists and Walesa, the latter is usually crashed by their elaborate oral persuasion techniques. It does not matter if your moral compass is set right if your opponents degrade you in front of media.

THE SIGNATURE STUDY conducted by the Polish Institute of National Remembrance concluded that the accusations are true. The problem is that the institute is affiliated with the government and, therefore, lacks public credibility. Hero or villain, whatever happened in the 1980s and afterwards is not ancient history. A lot of people who lived through the Solidarity movement and Walesa's rise to the national hero status are still alive today. This is not a story of whether Walesa has been a communist collaborator or not. This is a question of how we can know what is true. ●

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