

**A BALD EAGLE IN THE LAND OF MUHAMMAD:
AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

by
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Abstract

A lack of information regarding American foreign policy in the Middle East can lead to deleterious political decision-making. There are many people both in the civilian world and the world of government that view Middle Eastern related security issues through a sociocultural lens. This thesis portfolio seeks to assess the implications of American foreign policy in the Middle East as opposed to socio-culture. It places emphasis on the theory that American foreign policy contributes to anti-American antagonism. There are a few different methods by which this is measured.

First, this thesis will assess American military policy in the Middle East. Specifically, it analyzes the impact of American military policy in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan on Muslim public opinion. This is conducted by looking at numerous sets of data and public polls from different credible organizations, as well as secondary sources.

Second, socio-cultural sources are directly assessed in order provide evidence that American foreign policy is the primary driver behind anti-American antagonism. Writings from notorious anti-American figures and scholarly sources on Middle Eastern culture, are considered in order to measure socio-cultural based anti-American antagonism against anti-American antagonism driven by American foreign policy.

ABSTRACT

Third, the diplomatic consequences of the Trump administration's withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Agreement are assessed. Specifically, it looks at how European and Middle Eastern countries most relevant to the deal have more at stake than the United States.

The results of the 1st chapter conclude that American foreign policy in the Middle East had a negative impact on Muslim public opinion. The results of the 2nd chapter conclude that American foreign policy was a stronger motivator for anti-American antagonism than socio-cultural issues. The results of the 3rd chapter conclude that other countries related to the Iran nuclear agreement had more at stake than the United States.

Readers/advisors: Dorothea Wolfson, Collin Paschall, Nicole Cosey, Shawn Reese, Alexander Rosenthal, Adam Wolfson

Thesis Portfolio Introduction

Ethnic diversity, a clash of cultures and nation states, terrorism at home and abroad, shifting balances in global energy needs, and controversial political and military initiatives, make American foreign policy in the Middle East a topic that touches most Americans. Foreign policy influences American national security as well as energy, immigration, and the economy. Foreign policy encompasses more than just military strategy. It also encompasses diplomacy, intelligence and the economy. These four aspects of foreign policy are what make up the DIME (diplomacy, intelligence, military, economy) in security studies. This thesis portfolio reviews different parts of the DIME in the Middle East. It mainly looks at the military and two different aspects of diplomacy.

Specifically, for the military angle, the first thesis looks at how American military policy in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria impacts Muslim public opinion. The second thesis focuses on the diplomatic angle and compares whether it was a propagation of American culture (a form of soft power) or military policy (a form of hard power) that was the cause for antagonism toward America. The third thesis focuses on how the Trump administration's withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) affected selected countries that had the most at stake.

While a thorough understanding of the Middle East requires sensitivity to a broad range of diverse cultural and historical material, it is also clear that a lot about the Middle East is misunderstood. It can be better understood by looking at detailed research; research that often involves some of the most pressing issues on the minds of Americans. For example, Thesis I and

II are very distinct topics, but both topics can help to address the important question of why a significant amount of terrorism emanates from conflicts in the Middle East.

Safety and security concerns have created new priorities globally due to terrorism rooted in Middle Eastern conflict. Getting on a train; flying on a plane; shopping at a market; taking a walk on the street; going to a nightclub and other commonplace aspects of life, have all been tied to a potential for terrorism. It is unnecessary to list all the attacks that have occurred that fit these criteria. Middle East Terrorism affects day-to-day life and is now pervasive, ubiquitous and a reoccurring global phenomenon. This is not to discount other types of terrorism, but this thesis portfolio focuses specifically on tensions rooted in Middle Eastern conflicts.

Terrorism with ties to Middle East conflicts is more complicated than domestic forms of terrorism. When abortion clinics and doctors were being attacked, people understood quite simply that the terrorists were opposed to abortion. When white Supremacists commit an attack, most people have at least a general understanding of white supremacist ideology—that is, they think white people are supreme and they often admire Nazis. However, when there is an attack linked to the Middle East, people often don't understand the motive at all, or more likely, they have a misperception of the entire picture. Part of this research can help both the average person to understand what motivates terrorism as well as the academic who may argue it is strictly rooted in religion and culture. Thesis I and II are the segments of the portfolio that address the issue parsing a variety of factors that motivate antagonism and terrorism.

Thesis I focuses on the military aspect of American foreign policy, which is a pivotal factor to examine when exploring the motives for terrorism. Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria are the countries obviously relevant to military interventions in the Middle East, although the United States is involved in military operations in more Muslim countries than just these. The United

States is also involved in operations in Yemen, Somalia, Pakistan, Libya and other countries. It is likely that these other operations throughout the Muslim world would have an impact on Muslim public opinion as well, but it was beyond the scope to focus on these countries lest the entire thesis portfolio strictly on military policy.

Thesis I is straightforward: It explores various sets of data in order to gauge Muslim public opinion on American military policy in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria. The data came from *Pew Research*, *Brookings* and other organizations. Specifically, the data was assessed to determine whether American military policy in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria has a negative, positive or neutral impact on Muslim public opinion. Certain factors had to be isolated and those are discussed within the Thesis chapter itself. These factors mainly have to do with political strategy and direct bias. With these factors in consideration, the research helps to determine the impact that military action in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria has had on Middle Eastern public opinion. The data helps to illuminate some of the root causes of terrorism. The knowledge that can be derived from Thesis I aligns well with the transition into what is discussed in Thesis II.

Thesis II places emphasis on the military aspect as well, but it does so in a different way. Thesis II focuses less on the numerical data. It assesses varying motives underlying antagonism to America, particularly western cultural diffusion or military policy.

The published works of multiple relevant perpetrators of political violence and scholars are assessed in order to gauge which had more of an influence on antagonism toward America. Writings from Edward Said, Osama bin Laden, and Hassan Nasrallah are some of the specific sources used to help make this determination. Some of the sources were more straightforward to analyze than others. For example, when looking at Osama bin Laden-who to this day is probably still considered the poster child for antagonism toward American and hate of Western culture-

the primacy of motivations are not clear cut. His writings evince hatred influenced by cultural clash and military policy. In what bin Laden called his “Letter to America” he lists, in what appears as order of importance, his grievances with the America and the West. This Thesis simply adds and compares how many statements he made referencing a negative view on culture versus how many statements he made referencing a negative view on American foreign policy and military interventions. This is a simple but effective method and it was only necessary for bin Laden’s letter. Other sources are assessed more straightforwardly. The bin Laden assessment was compiled and weighed along with all the other data, and this drives the conclusion reached in Thesis II.

Thesis II sets out to determine what is contributing more to anti-American antagonism: American foreign policy and intervention or American culture? The sources were analyzed and assessed to determine whether the hate being espoused by the writer was more so motivated by an opposition to American culture or American foreign policy. Simply, were the writers discussing issues such as their opposition to a lack of religion and other Western cultural trends or a disagreement over actions that the American government has taken? Or did they discuss a combination of the two such as bin Laden had?

Thesis III remains within the same broad subject of American foreign policy in the Middle East, but it takes a distinctly different focus from both Thesis I and II. Thesis III focuses on American diplomacy in the Middle East during the Trump era, specifically on Trump’s withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action also known as the Iran Nuclear Agreement, and sometimes referred to herein as “the deal”. It examines in detail the implications for some of the more relevant countries connected with and impacted by the Agreement. The U.S., the U.K., France, Russia, China, plus Germany (the so-called “P5 + 1”

countries--the permanent body of the UN Security Council) were opposed to Trump's withdrawal from JCPOA. A difference in each country's relationships with Iran and the United States is assessed. Other Middle Eastern countries that the JCPOA impacted are also examined briefly, including Israel and the Gulf states.

In order to make an assessment on American diplomacy as it compares to other relevant parties related to JCPOA, the different relationships of the countries involved is meticulously analyzed. Conclusions are drawn based on a number of factors that are assessed: partnerships, alliances, conflicted histories, economic opportunities and security implications. Factors are assessed and compared among the relevant countries to determine how much stake each nation has in JCPOA. This comparison is what makes it possible to decide how important JCPOA is to the United States as compared to other relevant nations. It helps to answer multiple questions of why the United States was so inclined to withdraw from the deal; why some countries supported the withdrawal; and why others opposed the withdrawal. These decisions, relationships and context enable a better understanding of the multi-party deal that is JCPOA, and also the broader context of the geopolitical relations that shape the world we live in.

The negotiations over JCPOA give another world stage platform to ideologically competing powers. The ideological clash between China, Russia, and their authoritarian allies and the United States along with its mostly democratic allies is a paramount strategic issue in current day foreign relations. JCPOA highlights another hot point in this clash of ideologies with China and Russia taking a very different stance from the current stance of the United States.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all my professors at the Johns Hopkins School of Arts and Sciences who taught me throughout the program, especially those who advised me both throughout and in the final stages of my thesis. I would specifically like to thank Professor Wolfson as well as Professor Rosenthal whose contributions to this thesis were important. Their encouragement and guidance provided a platform for this thesis to be written.

Dedication

This is dedicated to those who appreciate knowledge as an influential force for good in the world.

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Chapter 1

War-Torn Nations: A Muslim Perception of U.S. Military Policy in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan

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1.1. Introduction

It is often assumed that U.S. and its military policy throughout the Islamic world are held in great disdain. The U.S. has intervened on one level or another throughout many countries in the Middle East, but this report will focus specifically on Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. The hypothesis being proposed here is aligned with the common thought: That U.S. military policy in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan has a negative effect on the Islamic world's public opinion of the United States.

Numerous factors affect this research. For one, there are not always vast amounts of public opinion polls available from war torn areas. Some are available, but not as many as from areas that aren't at war. Therefore, this research will take into consideration public opinions of the entire Islamic world and not just the public opinion of Iraqis, Syrians, and Afghans themselves.

This research will explore different avenues related to the United States' military policy effect on public opinion of the Islamic world. This will include analyses of opinions related to conventional warfare and drone warfare. It will also assess the level of Islamic support for terrorist groups that the U.S. or U.S. backed entities are battling in order to achieve a multi-faceted and nuanced perspective as to how U.S. military policy in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan effects the public opinion of the Islamic world. This research method will also include parameters for distinguishing between general or cultural opposition to U.S. policy as compared to policy-influenced opposition.

1.2. Literature Review

The central theme assessed in this literature review will be the topic of U.S. military policy in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. Specifically, we will look at research on how U.S. military policy in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan affect public opinion of the Islamic world. The review will be organized around the three different countries in question as well as the different schools of thought related to my hypothesis. My hypothesis is that U.S. military policy in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan has a negative effect on Islamic public opinion. Therefore, the three schools of thought will basically be those that consider a negative effect, a positive effect, or an indifferent effect.

1.3. Negative

A *worldpublicopinion.org* poll shows that Afghan opinion of U.S. forces decreased from 2005 to 2006.¹ This decrease has a cause. If the initial invasion of Afghanistan didn't cause this sort of drop then there could be something particular regarding U.S. military style or strategy that was opposed. It was also noted in this study that a majority of Afghans would prefer economic assistance over military assistance. Additionally, there was a correlation between disapproval of Afghanistan's Reconstruction and disapproval of United States forces. Thirty-five percent rated the progress of reconstruction as fair and thirty-two percent rated it as poor. It is difficult to succeed in a rebuilding process when the war hasn't stopped yet.

A 2009 *Council on Foreign Relations* public opinion poll yielded mixed results. Certain statistics from the polling would indicate a negative perception of U.S. policy.² When respondents were asked their opinion of Al Qaeda, some countries had numbers that weren't insignificant. Measuring support for Al-Qaeda can arguably be an indirect way to prove

¹Weber, Stephen. "Afghan Public Opinion Amidst Rising Violence." World Public Opinion.org. https://drum.lib.umd.edu/bitstream/handle/1903/10120/Afghanistan_Dec06_rpt.pdf?sequence=4.

² "World Opinion on Terrorism." Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.cfr.org/background/world-opinion-terrorism>.

opposition to U.S. policy. Respondents were also asked how they felt about Osama bin Laden. These numbers were even higher than support for Al-Qaeda and would likely reflect inherent disapproval of U.S. military policy. When respondents were asked if the U.S. war in Iraq has increased or decreased the likelihood for terrorism around the world-Egypt, Iran, Turkey, and Indonesia all had strong majorities saying chances for terrorism had increased.

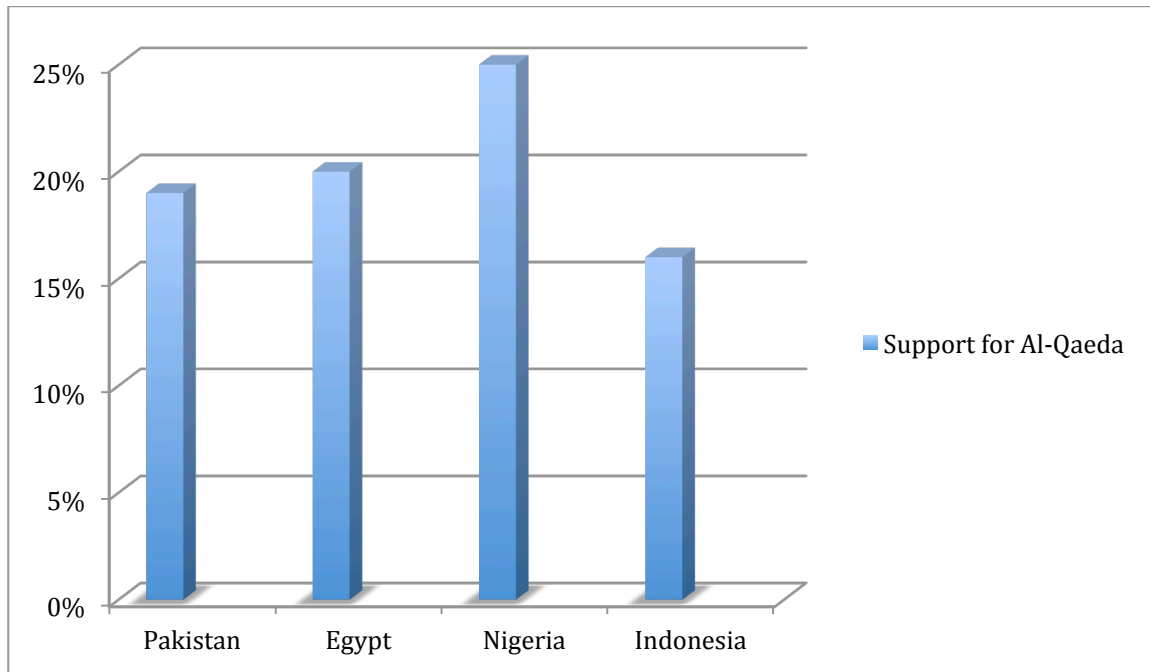


Figure 1.1. World opinion on terrorism. Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/world-opinion-terrorism>.

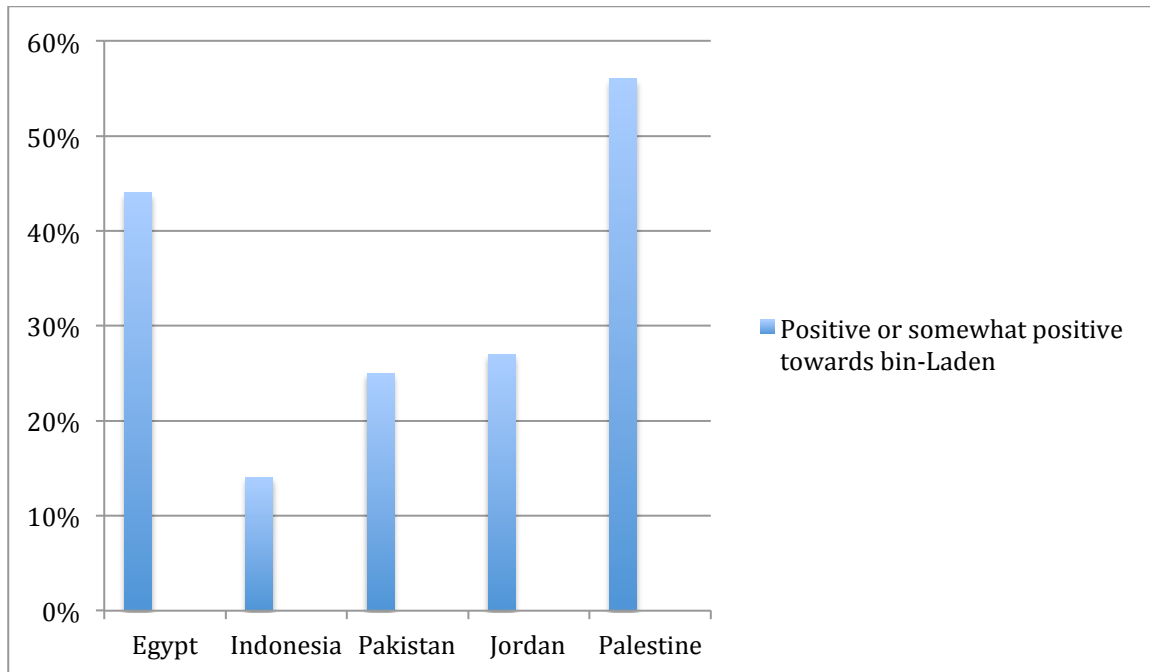


Figure 1.2. World opinion on terrorism. Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.cfr.org/background/world-opinion-terrorism>.

An article from *Foreign Policy Magazine* references a *Center for Strategic Studies in Jordan* survey regarding Jordanian approval of foreign intervention in Syria. It notes that only five percent of Jordanians approve of foreign intervention in Syria.³ Jordan has been heavily impacted by the refugee crisis and this is certainly influencing its opinion.

A study referenced by the *Foreign Policy* article from the *Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies* reflects opposition to both Assad and foreign intervention. 82 percent of those polled wanted a change in the Assad regime. However, only 3 percent of the 82 percent supported foreign intervention.⁴

³ Lynch, Marc. "Snapshots of Middle East Public Opinion." *Foreign Policy*. September 11, 2012. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2012/09/11/snapshots-of-middle-east-public-opinion/>.

⁴ Lynch, Marc. "Snapshots of Middle East Public Opinion." *Foreign Policy*. September 11, 2012. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2012/09/11/snapshots-of-middle-east-public-opinion/>.

A 2014 study conducted by the *Arab Center for Research and Policy* polled participants from Lebanon, Iraq, Tunisia, Jordan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, as well as Syrian refugees. This research was conducted by doing 5,100 phone interviews. The study found that a significant percentage of Arabs oppose coalition led bombings of ISIS.⁵ The approval ratings of ISIS aren't as high as those who oppose the U.S. coalition led bombings. This evidences that much of the Arab disapproval towards the U.S. is linked to its military policy and comes from regular people more so than extremists. However, it should be noted that there is a strong overlap between military policy and extremism. It is often military related issues that can motivate terrorism. 55 percent of ISIS supporters tended to support ISIS due to reasons such as "its preparedness to battle the West; its opposition to Iran and the Syrian and Iraqi regimes; or its purported support for the Sunni Muslim community in the Levant."⁶ Only 13 percent of ISIS supporters supported ISIS on religious grounds. The latter includes the supporters who disapprove of the U.S. regardless of its policy because their motivation for opposition is cultural and religious, but they are the minority. 73 percent of those polled rated U.S. foreign policy in the region as either negative or somewhat negative. These numbers correlate strongly with a policy influence for opposition more so than a cultural or religious influence.

⁵ "Arab Public Opinion on ISIL and the Coalition Against ISIL." Dohainstitute.org. https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/lists/ACRPS-PDFDocumentLibrary/Arab_Public_Opinion_on_ISIL_and_the_Coalition_against_ISIL_the_Full_Report.pdf.

⁶ "Arab Public Opinion on ISIL and the Coalition Against ISIL." Dohainstitute.org. https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/lists/ACRPS-PDFDocumentLibrary/Arab_Public_Opinion_on_ISIL_and_the_Coalition_against_ISIL_the_Full_Report.pdf.

Average support or opposition to US led coalition airstrikes against IS and other groups in Iraq and Syria



Figure 1.3. Arab public opinion on ISIL and the coalition against ISIL. Dohainstitute.org. https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/lists/ACRPS-PDFDocumentLibrary/Arab_Public_Opinion_on_ISIL_and_the_Coalition_against_ISIL_the_Full_Report.pdf.

Average responses on positive or negative views of ISIS

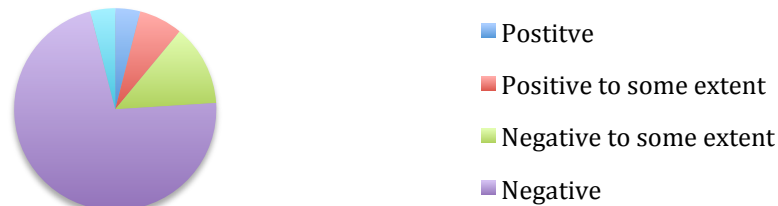


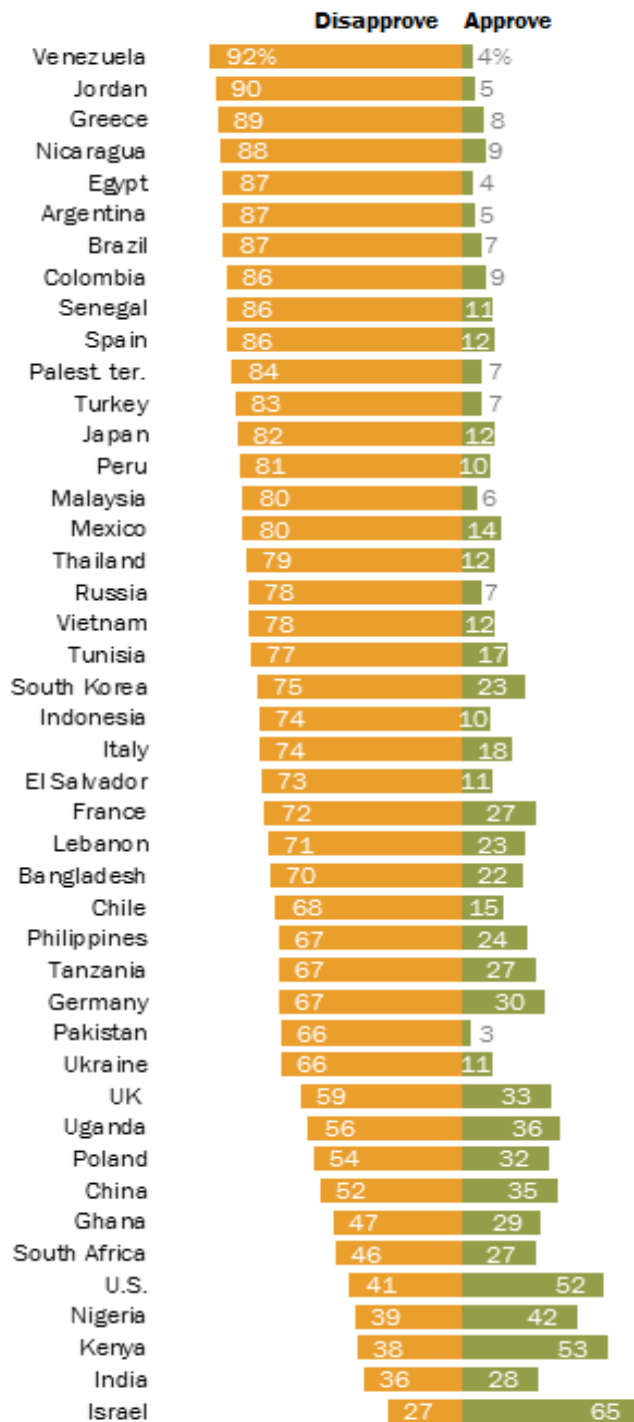
Figure 1.4. Arab public opinion on ISIL and the coalition against ISIL. Dohainstitute.org. https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/lists/ACRPS-PDFDocumentLibrary/Arab_Public_Opinion_on_ISIL_and_the_Coalition_against_ISIL_the_Full_Report.pdf.

A 2014 *Pew Research* study assessed worldwide opinion concerning U.S. drone policy and opposition was widespread, especially among Muslim majority countries. High numbers of Muslim majority countries were opposed. Also, the U.S. favorability ratings seem to correlate downward parallel to an increase in U.S. military activity for many Muslim countries.⁷ This can correlate with both the initiations of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars themselves, as well as troop expansions within those wars. Some of these trends are more pronounced than others, but they

⁷ "Global Opposition to U.S. Surveillance and Drones, but Limited Harm to America's Image." Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project. July 14, 2014. Accessed August 08, 2018. <http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/07/14/global-opposition-to-u-s-surveillance-and-drones-but-limited-harm-to-americas-image/>.

all follow the same downward trajectory. The only explicit relevant similarity between the countries is the influence that U.S. foreign policy has on each of them. While there are many U.S. foreign policies that have a big influence on the Middle East, such as energy policy or economic policy, military policy is arguably the most dominant in terms of its impact on Islamic public opinion. There is arguably a strong overlap between those three policy sectors, but the most impactful in terms of creating negative opinions of the U.S. seem to be those motivated by U.S. military policy initiatives.

Widespread Opposition to Drones



Source: Spring 2014 Global Attitudes survey. Q63.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 1.5. Widespread opposition to drones.

Table 1.1. U.S. favorability

U.S. Favorability														
	1999/ 2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
France	62	62	42	37	43	39	39	42	75	73	75	69	64	75
Germany	78	60	45	38	42	37	30	31	64	63	62	52	53	51
Greece	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	35	39	34
Italy	76	70	60	–	–	–	53	–	–	–	–	74	76	78
Poland	86	79	–	–	62	–	61	68	67	74	70	69	67	73
Spain	50	–	38	–	41	23	34	33	58	61	64	58	62	60
UK	83	75	70	58	55	56	51	53	69	65	61	60	58	66
Russia	37	61	37	46	52	43	41	46	44	57	56	52	51	23
Ukraine	70	80	–	–	–	–	54	–	–	–	60	–	–	57
Turkey	52	30	15	30	23	12	9	12	14	17	10	15	21	19
Egypt	–	–	–	–	–	30	21	22	27	17	20	19	16	10
Jordan	–	25	1	5	21	15	20	19	25	21	13	12	14	12
Lebanon	–	36	27	–	42	–	47	51	55	52	49	48	47	41
Palest. ter.	–	–	0	–	–	–	13	–	15	–	18	–	16	30
Tunisia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	45	42	42
Israel	–	–	78	–	–	–	78	–	71	–	72	–	83	84
Bangladesh	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	76
China	–	–	–	–	42	47	34	41	47	58	44	43	40	50
India	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	56	55
Indonesia	–	–	–	–	38	30	29	37	63	59	54	–	61	59
Japan	77	72	–	–	–	63	61	50	59	66	85	72	69	66
Malaysia	–	–	–	–	–	–	27	–	–	–	–	–	55	51
Pakistan	23	10	–	21	23	27	15	19	16	17	12	12	11	14
Philippines	–	90	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	85	92
South Korea	58	52	46	–	–	–	58	70	78	79	–	–	78	82
Thailand	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	73
Vietnam	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	76
Argentina	50	34	–	–	–	–	16	22	38	42	–	–	41	36
Brazil	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	62	62	61	73	65
Chile	–	–	–	–	–	–	55	–	–	–	–	–	68	72
Colombia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	64
El Salvador	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	79	80
Mexico	68	64	–	–	–	–	56	47	69	56	52	56	66	63
Nicaragua	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	71
Peru	74	67	–	–	–	–	61	–	–	–	–	–	–	65
Venezuela	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	53	62
Ghana	–	83	–	–	–	–	80	–	–	–	–	–	83	77
Kenya	94	80	–	–	–	–	87	–	90	94	83	–	81	80
Nigeria	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	81	–	–	69	69
Senegal	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	81	74
South Africa	–	65	–	–	–	–	–	60	–	–	–	–	72	68
Tanzania	–	53	–	–	–	–	46	65	–	–	–	–	–	75
Uganda	–	74	–	–	–	–	64	–	–	–	–	–	73	62

Note: India data from Winter 2013–2014 survey. 1999/2000 survey trends provided by the U.S. Department of State.

Source: Spring 2014 Global Attitudes survey. Q15a.

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A 2016 *Arab Center Washington DC* study (“2016 ACDC”) polled people from Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Tunisia. The 2016 ACDC reflects high disapproval of U.S. military policy.⁸ In each country where the U.S. or a U.S. ally conducts military action the U.S. has a high disapproval rating. A

⁸ “Poll: Arabs See U.S. as a Threat.” U.S. News and World Report. Accessed August 13, 2018. <http://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2017-04-11/poll-arabs-believe-Israel-us-are-biggest-threat-to-region>

striking 82 percent of respondents believe the U.S. poses a threat to the stability of the Middle East. The only country with a higher threat to stability ranking is Israel at 89 percent.

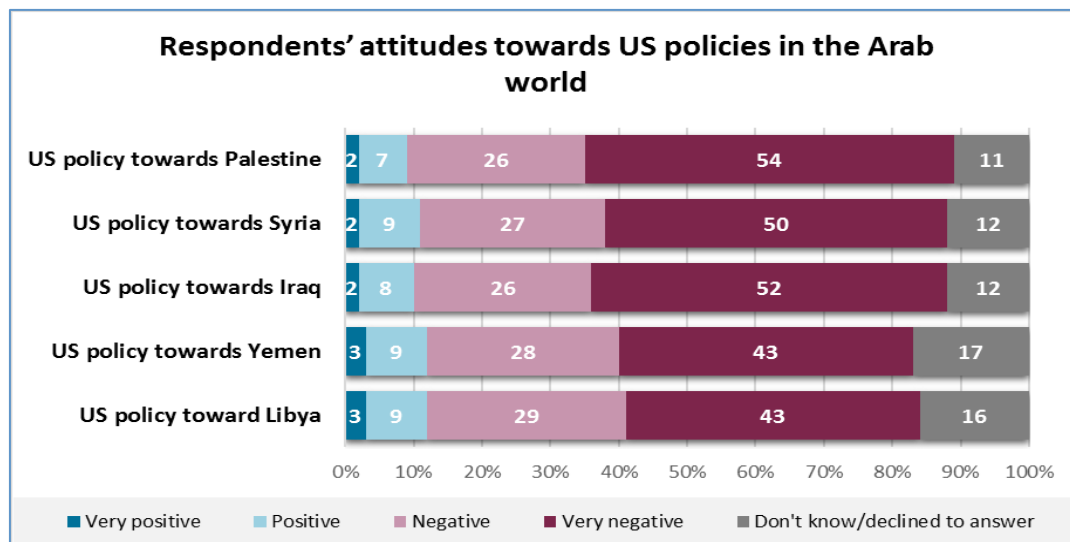


Figure 1.6. The 2016 Arab opinion index. Arab Center Washington DC. Accessed August 9th, 2018. <http://arabcenterdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/2016-Arab-Opinion-Index-Executive-Summary-for-web.pdf>.

This research also studied general views of the Arab Spring on a country-by-country basis. Iraq was overall 57 percent positive towards the Arab Spring. Some countries where revolutions actually took place, like in Tunisia and Egypt, were even more supportive. In U.S.-backed Jordan, however, only 22 percent of those polled were positive towards the Arab Spring. 58 percent of Arab interviewees are said to blame the existence of ISIS on policies of foreign powers. The U.S. led invasion of Iraq is probably the primary event responsible for driving that ubiquitous viewpoint.

The Arab Center Washington DC conducted a public opinion survey in conjunction with the *Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies* based out of Doha, Qatar in 2017. They polled in Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia, Palestine, and Lebanon. The research mainly revolved around opinion polling of the Trump Administration's policies and positions on

the Middle East.⁹ It is noted in this research that there was a strong correlation between opinion of the United States with age and education. The younger and more educated a respondent was the likelier they were to support the U.S. The quantitative difference between more general Arab views of the U.S. and Arab views of U.S. foreign policy is crucial. It shows that even among those respondents that dislike U.S. foreign policy, there are many Arabs that still approve of Americans themselves. It could be argued that if there were not a negative foreign policy influence, the general Arab approval of Americans would be even higher. There's also a likely negative shift in Arab public opinion towards U.S. foreign policy and possibly Americans as well, due to some of Trump's Middle Eastern policies, for example, the Trump Administration's move of the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

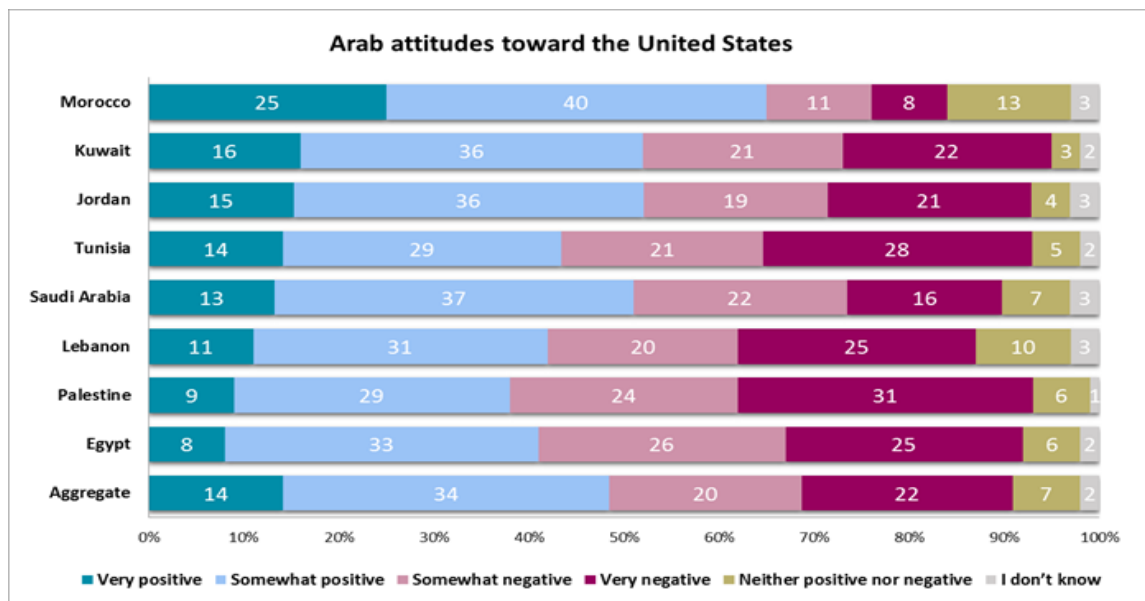


Figure 1.7. Arab attitudes toward President Trump and his Middle East policies and positions ACW. ACW. Accessed August 08, 2018. <http://arabcenterdc.org/survey/arabs-opinion-trump-oct-2017/>.

⁹ "Arab Attitudes toward President Trump and His Middle East Policies and Positions ACW." ACW. Accessed August 08, 2018. <http://arabcenterdc.org/survey/arabs-opinion-trump-oct-2017/>.

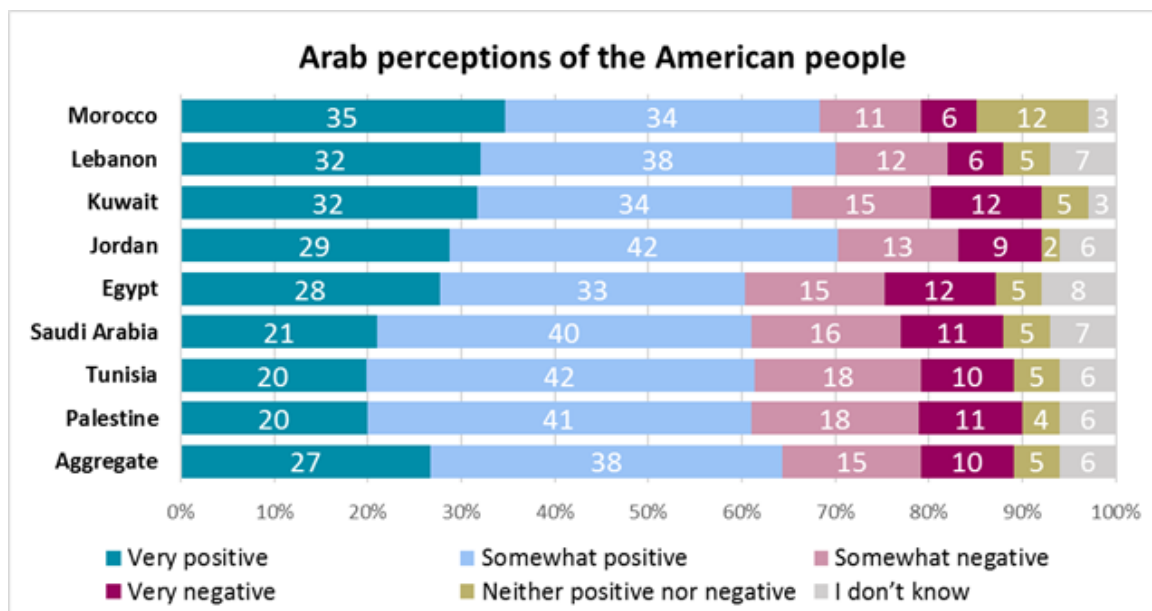


Figure 1.8. Arab attitudes toward President Trump and his Middle East policies and positions ACW. ACW. Accessed August 08, 2018. <http://arabcenterdc.org/survey/arabs-opinion-trump-oct-2017/>.

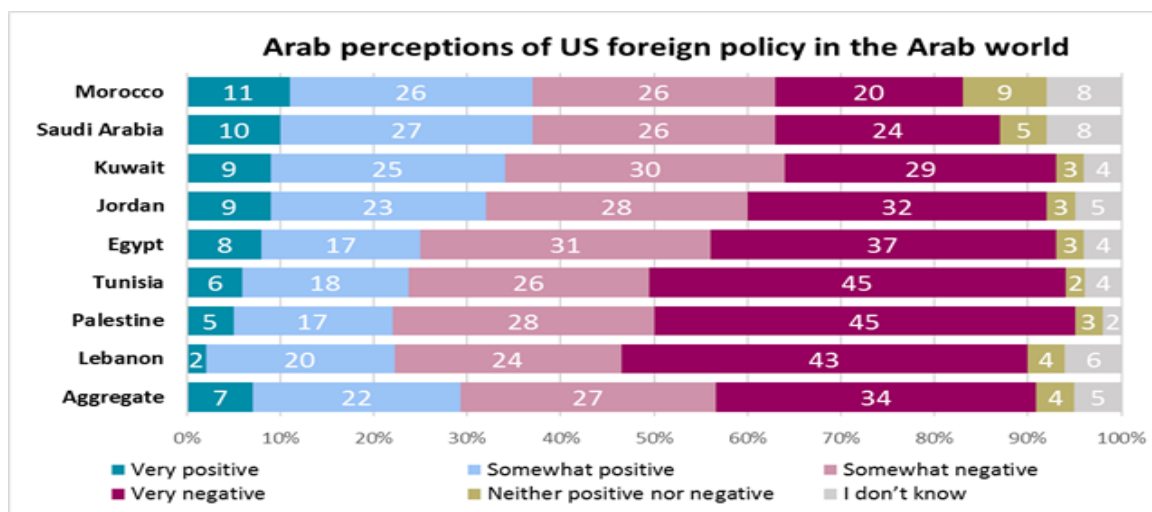


Figure 1.9. Arab attitudes toward President Trump and his Middle East policies and positions ACW. ACW. Accessed August 08, 2018. <http://arabcenterdc.org/survey/arabs-opinion-trump-oct-2017/>.

An aggregate of 61 percent of Arab people that were polled view Trump's policies in the Middle East as either very negative or somewhat negative. When Arab people were polled on Trump's policies in Iraq and Syria, the disapproval was high. Disapproval of Trump's policies were slightly higher than general disapproval of U.S. policy, suggesting a correlation between

presidential policy change and public opinion ratings.

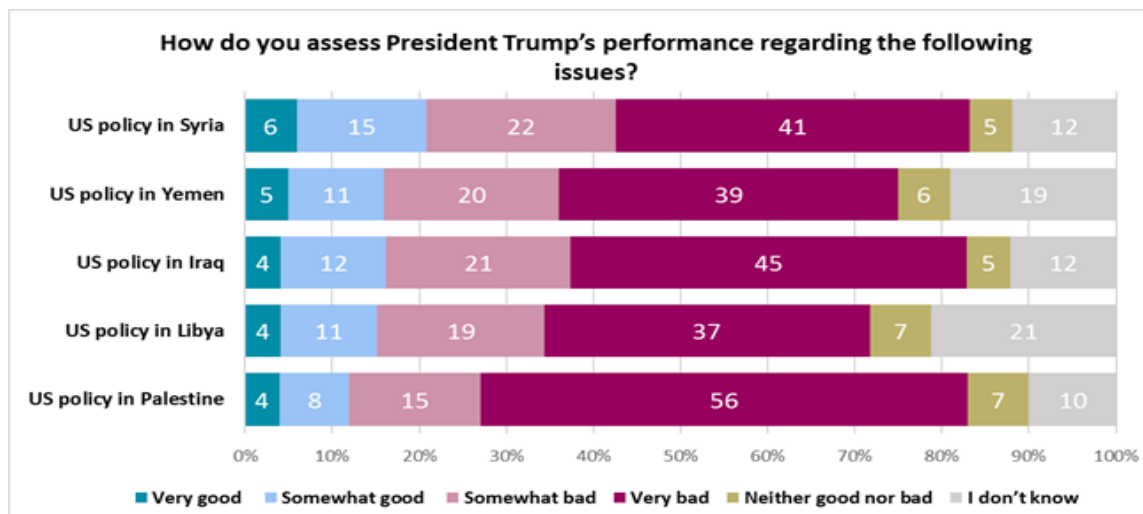


Figure 1.10. Arab attitudes toward President Trump and his Middle East policies and positions ACW. ACW. Accessed August 08, 2018. <http://arabcenterdc.org/survey/arabs-opinion-trump-oct-2017/>.

A 2017 *Zogby Research* poll meticulously examined the public opinions of seven Arab countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan Palestine, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Iraq) as well as Iran and Turkey. A majority sees the U.S. role as negative in all countries except Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkey.¹⁰ In the case of the U.S. role in Iraq, the U.S. only gets a majority positive score from Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Respondents were polled about President Trump's policies and again most countries displayed negative majorities, with only Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkey registering positively. This research greatly conflicts with *Brookings* research that has 95 percent of Saudi Arabia answering that the U.S. intervention in Iraq would bring about less democracy, that is, unless some of those polled support less democracy in Iraq. It is important to keep in mind that discussion of the propagation of democracy does not always have a positive tone in the Muslim world.

¹⁰ "Portfolio." ZRS - Zogby Research Services. Accessed August 08, 2018. <http://www.zogbyresearchservices.com/index/#/new-gallery-56/>.

A *Brookings Institution* article cites a study that polled over 3,000 participants and concludes that the view of the United States is mostly negative, and that this view is mostly based on attitudes towards U.S. foreign policy. *Brookings* released these findings a few months after the U.S.-Iraq war began. When questioned about whether the war in Iraq would bring about more or less democracy, the majority of those polled said it would bring less.¹¹ When asked whether the U.S.-Iraq war would bring about more or less peace, the responses were overwhelmingly negative. These numbers are claimed by *Brookings* to be some of the most negative in recent history. They also claim the results to be largely influenced by deep seeded opposition to the Iraq war, to the U.S. policy regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the suspicion of ulterior motives on the part of the U.S. for oil.

Table 1.2. Will the U.S.-Iraq War mean more democracy or less democracy in the Middle East?

Table 3. Will the U.S.-Iraq War Mean More Democracy or Less Democracy in the Middle East?				
COUNTRY	MORE DEMOCRACY	LESS DEMOCRACY	NEITHER	NOT SURE
UAE	8%	59%	25%	8%
Jordan	7	58	26	9
Lebanon	7	73	16	4
Egypt	6	63	18	13
Saudi Arabia	3	95	2	0
Morocco	2	66	21	11

Telhami, Shibley. "Arab Public Opinion on the United States and Iraq: Postwar Prospects for Changing Prewar Views." *Brookings*. July 28, 2016. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/arab-public-opinion-on-the-united-states-and-iraq-postwar-prospects-for-changing-prewar-views/>.

¹¹ Telhami, Shibley. "Arab Public Opinion on the United States and Iraq: Postwar Prospects for Changing Prewar Views." *Brookings*. July 28, 2016. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/arab-public-opinion-on-the-united-states-and-iraq-postwar-prospects-for-changing-prewar-views/>.

Table 1.3. Will the U.S.-Iraq War mean more democracy or less democracy in the Middle East?

Table 4. Will the U.S.-Iraq War Mean More Peace or Less Peace in the Middle East?				
COUNTRY	MORE PEACE	LESS PEACE	NEITHER	NOT SURE
Lebanon	9%	79%	10%	3%
Egypt	5	79	13	2
Saudi Arabia	5	91	3	0
Jordan	4	60	30	7
UAE	3	76	19	2
Morocco	1	89	8	2

Telhami, Shibley. "Arab Public Opinion on the United States and Iraq: Postwar Prospects for Changing Prewar Views." Brookings. July 28, 2016. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/arab-public-opinion-on-the-united-states-and-iraq-postwar-prospects-for-changing-prewar-views/>.

How the U.S. is portrayed in the Arab media was assessed in a joint study between Professors from Qatar University and University of Louisiana. A *Zogby* poll was cited in this study in which Arab participants were asked what they thought of when they heard the word “America”; most responded that they associate America with unfair policies.¹² The study cites an Arab public opinion poll by *Telhami*, which found that U.S. foreign policy was a bigger influence on Arab opinion than U.S. values. U.S. policy was the determining factor for at least five countries. When participants were asked how America could remedy this problem they mostly responded with different iterations that America should be fairer. This study notes that general Arab hostility is linked to U.S. policy going back to the Gulf War, as well as the U.S. stance on the Israel-Palestine conflict. The United States has long been at odds with the United

¹² Galal, Ashraf, Dr., Mahmoud Galander, Dr., and Philip J. Auter, Dr. "The Image of the U.S. Portrayed in Arab World Online Journalism." <https://www.iso-j.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/GalalPaper.pdf>.

Nations and other international organizations regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict. The Muslim world is largely the one being affected by the conflict, and it is largely at odds with U.S. policy as well. The Israel-Palestine conflict and other events or policies have a significant effect on Muslim public opinion.

An interesting study was conducted using a methodology where scholars compiled different tweets and assessed what the general opinion was based on social media chatter. This study was called “Anti-Americanism and Anti-Interventionism in Arabic Twitter Discourses”. It highlighted a few different schools of thought regarding anti-Americanism in the Middle East. One school of thought believes that Arab-Muslim identity has an innate opposition to the U.S. The other school of thought believes that anti-Americanism in the Middle East is mostly based on disapproval of U.S. foreign policy. The study acknowledged the Syrian chemical weapons attacks and how Twitter discourse differed before and after. Varied categories were represented including anti-regime, pro-regime, and general, but 87 percent had a negative response towards the U.S. before the chemical attack. 95 percent had a negative response after the chemical attack.¹³ Each of the categories signified a mostly anti-U.S. stance. The different categories of tweets were each anti-U.S. from different perspectives. Some supported Assad, others opposed Assad and others were indifferent, but a large majority all opposed the U.S.. The *Twitter* study showed that even when monitoring tweets from the anti-Assad camp prior to the chemical weapons attack in August 2013, there were still 350 percent more anti-U.S. tweets than pro-U.S. tweets. After the chemical weapons attack there were 1200 percent more anti-U.S. tweets than pro-U.S. tweets.

¹³ Jamal, Amaney A., Robert O. Keohane, David Romney, and Dustin Tingley. "Anti-Americanism and Anti-Interventionism in Arabic Twitter Discourses | Perspectives on Politics." Cambridge Core. March 06, 2015. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/article/antiamericanism-and-antiinterventionism-in-arabic-twitter-discourses/B845BE52DC35D6D7FF77A90D6BD7E5FD>.

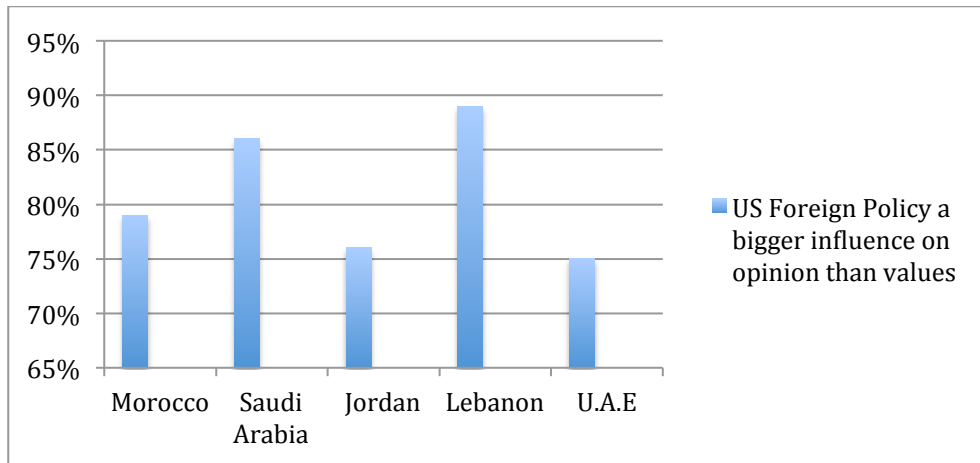


Figure 1.11. The image of the U.S. portrayed in Arab world online journalism. Galal, Ashraf, Dr., Mahmoud Galander, Dr., and Philip J. Auter, Dr. <https://www.isojo.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/GalalPaper.pdf>.

1.4. Positive

The *worldpublicopinion.org* poll taken in 2005 showed that Afghans had an 83 percent favorable view of U.S. forces in Afghanistan. In 2006, the same poll revealed that Afghans had a 75 percent favorable view. The numbers did decrease, but ultimately were still very high. Both in 2005 and 2006, roughly nine in ten of Afghans said they were opposed to the Taliban. In 2005, 82 percent of Afghans supported overthrowing the Taliban government. In 2006, 86 percent of Afghans supported overthrowing the Taliban government.¹⁴ These numbers don't fluctuate much overall and seem to mostly reflect a dislike of the Taliban more than anything else. Since the goal of the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan was to overthrow the Taliban, agreement with that goal and disapproval of the Taliban arguably is the basis for support of U.S. actions, at least in this specific case.

The 2009 *Council on Foreign Relations* poll also revealed reactions towards terror groups that may indicate support for U.S. policy. 29 percent of Afghans believe the U.S. war in Iraq may have decreased the likelihood for terrorism. Most countries had significant negative responses to

¹⁴ Weber, Stephen. "Afghan Public Opinion Amidst Rising Violence." World Public Opinion.org. https://drum.lib.umd.edu/bitstream/handle/1903/10120/Afghanistan_Dec06_rpt.pdf?sequence=4.

their views of Al-Qaeda. This doesn't necessarily correlate to their opinion of U.S. policy. However, it's still worth noting that 82 percent of Turks, 35 percent of Egyptians and Indonesians, and 72 percent of Lebanese have negative views of Al-Qaeda. 68 percent of Turks, 20 percent of Palestinians, and 26 percent of Indonesians have a very negative or somewhat negative view on Osama bin Laden.¹⁵

A *Washington Post/ABC News/BBC/ARD* face-to-face survey in 2010 showed that more than six in ten Afghans supported U.S. forces being in the country. The survey noted that "majorities" of Afghans see progress in the training of Afghan security forces and the related obstruction of Al-Qaeda.¹⁶ Also, it is important to note that Afghans have had so many powers shifts over the last few decades that they are known to very carefully strategize their political support based on who they believe holds the power. This is why some Afghan tribes are known to have supported both the Soviet backed government and later the Taliban. In Afghanistan, politics is very much a game of musical chairs associated with power grabbing.. This is something that obviously plays a influential role in public opinion.

The 2014 *Arab Center for Research and Policy* polling calculated much different numbers compared to the 2016 *Arab Center Washington DC* study. The support for strikes against ISIS seem to correlate more closely with a dislike of ISIS in this study than it does in the 2016 study that will be examined later. It is significantly higher. The numbers show quite a high level of support for U.S. strikes against ISIS, but it's important to consider the influential factors of why these demographics would support U.S. military policy. Some of the people being polled

¹⁵ "World Opinion on Terrorism." Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.cfr.org/background/world-opinion-terrorism>.

¹⁶ Clement, Scott "Afghan people once supported war, but do they now?" *Washington Post*. March 21, 2012. Accessed August 9th, 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/behind-the-numbers/post/afghan-people-once-supported-war-but-do-they-now/2012/03/07/gIQAf0gQSS_blog.html?utm_term=.fc35cdf7302e

have an inherent bias because they are themselves directly involved in some of the conflicts related to the polling. Also, ISIS is largely disliked.

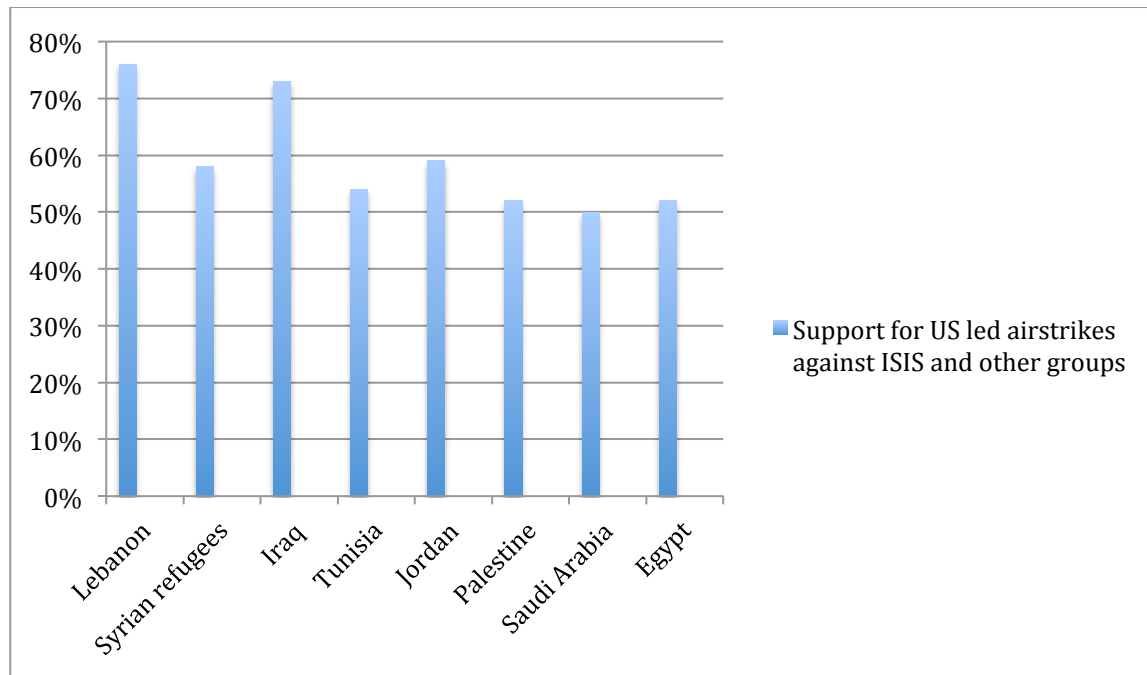


Figure 1.12. Arab public opinion on ISIL and the coalition against ISIL. Dohainstitute.org. https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/lists/ACRPS-PDFDocumentLibrary/Arab_Public_Opinion_on_ISIL_and_the_Coalition_against_ISIL_the_Full_Report.pdf.

The 2014 *Pew Research* study assessing U.S. drone policy (discussed above in the Negative section) did have low double-digit support in Tunisia, Lebanon, and Bangladesh. There were also some countries whose favorability rating of the United States went up in correlation with a continuation of U.S. military policy in the Middle East. Lebanon, Indonesia, and Malaysia all scored an increase of U.S. foreign policy approval correlated to continuing U.S. military action. It's also notable that in 2014, Bangladesh had a 76 percent approval rating of the U.S.¹⁷ Unsurprisingly, none of these countries are directly affected by any of the U.S. military policies

¹⁷ "Global Opposition to U.S. Surveillance and Drones, but Limited Harm to America's Image." Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project. July 14, 2014. Accessed August 08, 2018. <http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/07/14/global-opposition-to-u-s-surveillance-and-drones-but-limited-harm-to-americas-image/>.

in Iraq, Syria, or Afghanistan, unless they are affected in such a way that parts of their population have a politically or strategically motivated reason to support U.S. military policy. For example, there are no U.S. troops in Lebanon but the U.S. troops in Iraq, and especially Syria, still have a significant effect on Lebanon's geopolitical stability. Since Lebanon has a large Shia and Christian population it is more likely to be against radical Sunni Wahhabi groups that the U.S. is fighting, and therefore is also more likely to support U.S. actions.

The *Arab Center Washington DC* and *Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies* 2017 Public Opinion Survey based out of Doha (See numbers at the Negative section), found that a non-majority but significant number of Arab people supported U.S. foreign policy. General perceptions of the United States were rated even more positively. Arab perceptions of the American people themselves averaged out to a relatively high majority.¹⁸ These numbers seem to evidence a distinct correlation in the difference between opposition to U.S cultural values (or the U.S. generally) in contrast with opposition oriented to U.S. policy and initiatives.

The 2017 *Zogby Research* poll did have positive responses constituting a majority concerning U.S. policy in at least a few countries. The U.S. role in Syria is seen by a majority as positive in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkey. The U.S. role in Iraq is seen by a majority as positive in the UAE and Saudi Arabia. U.S. policy in the Middle East under Trump only had positive reactions from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkey.¹⁹ These are Sunni countries and they therefore have more of an inherent bias in opposing the Iranian backed Syrian Government, and are in alignment with the U.S. position. There are multiple possibilities concerning the reason for support in different areas from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkey beside survey sample errors, but these differences would require further research to enable conclusions.

¹⁸ "Arab Attitudes toward President Trump and His Middle East Policies and PositionsACW." ACW. Accessed August 08, 2018. <http://arabcenterdc.org/survey/arabs-opinion-trump-oct-2017/>.

¹⁹ "Portfolio." ZRS - Zogby Research Services. Accessed August 08, 2018. <http://www.zogbyresearchservices.com/index/#/new-gallery-56/>.

1.5. Neutral

The neutral responses could be made up of people who either are uninformed or unconcerned about foreign policy. It can also be composed of respondents who were afraid to answer honestly. Lastly, some of the neutral responses may come from those who adhere to one of the traditional schools of thought concerning this topic. They may represent the school of thought that embodies a cultural opposition to the U.S., and consequently military policy might not have much more of an influence on their opinion. The statistics themselves are available in the data presented above, but are somewhat irrelevant to the argument that U.S. military policy and initiatives affects Muslim public opinion negatively.

1.6. Literature Review Conclusion

There wasn't much peer-reviewed literature available. The review has so far leans towards supporting my hypothesis that U.S. military policy in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan causes a negative effect on Islamic public opinion. However, there have certainly been discoveries that conflict with the hypothesis. For instance, Islamic public opinion, specifically the opinion of Afghans themselves, seems to be more positive than I would have expected. U.S. military policy in Iraq seems to be more explicitly opposed by Muslims than the other conflicts. However, there is some evidence so far showing that negative public opinion of the U.S., related to Afghanistan and Syria, could much more be linked to the strategy and style of military policy being implemented, as opposed to strictly the fact that the U.S. is involved at all. Part of my further research will possibly entail trying to delve deeper into the nuance of why public opinion on U.S. military policy in Syria, and certainly Afghanistan, seems to be a bit more complicated and unclear than the public opinion on Iraq.

1.7. Thesis

1.7.1. Iraq

To understand whether U.S. military policy has a negative effect on Islamic public opinion, all biases must be considered. Empirical data is crucial, but certain nuances must be considered when examining the data. For example, Turkish opinion may be impacted by the U.S. stance on issues related to the Kurds. Palestinian opinion and some others may be affected by the U.S. stance on the Israel-Palestine conflict. It is mostly these types of dynamics that led a *Council on Foreign Relations* article to note: “the United States is viewed in Iraq as either [an] indispensable broker or main irritant to the political process underway.”²⁰ Sunni-Shia relations certainly impact this statement, and whichever sect the U.S. is seen as not supporting governmentally and militarily will inherently feel disenfranchised, and therefore more likely opposed to U.S. policy. The Sunni Shia divide could possibly explain the 2017 *Zogby Research* poll that calculated Iraqi opinion of U.S. policy in Iraq and Syria totally even on Iraq and nearly even on Syria. Iraq’s first post war civilian Defense Minister Ali A. Allawi alleges, “...most of the Shi’a went along with the occupation for the time being. The Sunni Arabs were another matter.”²¹ However, that pattern doesn’t seem evident throughout many other Muslim countries. Therefore, all political implications are to be evaluated to the greatest degree possible in order to determine how they might influence, shape and weigh upon Islamic public opinion on U.S. military policy and the U.S. itself.

This research doesn’t revolve around determining the motives behind U.S. policy. Even if a topic engenders a range of subjective opinions, it doesn’t necessarily impact that topic’s ability

²⁰ "U.S. Intervention in Iraqi Politics." Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/us-intervention-iraqi-politics>.

²¹ Allawi, Ali A. *The Occupation of Iraq: Winning the War, Losing the Peace*. Yale University Press, 2007.

to sway public opinion. According to a survey cited by Noam Chomsky, conducted by a University of Maryland professor, roughly 95 percent of the Middle East believes the U.S. invaded Iraq in order to control Iraqi oil and the Palestinians.²² When motives for foreign intervention are distrusted from the start, it's not unexpected that those who have the distrust would be even more opposed as troops and casualties increase. U.S. troop deployment levels in Iraq reached 160,000-170,000 troops at their peak.²³ A study cited by the *Washington Post*, shows that there were roughly 405,000 civilian deaths²⁴ and other estimates are even higher.

So, not only is a negative influence to be somewhat expected, it's also borne out in the data. The 2016 *Arab Center Washington DC* poll questioned participants across twelve Muslim countries including Iraq, and found that 78 percent were opposed to U.S. policy in Iraq.²⁵ The poll cited by *Brookings* from 2003 questioned participants from multiple Muslim countries on whether or not the U.S. war in Iraq would bring about more peace and democracy. Every country polled had majorities, some very high, reflecting a widespread belief in the region that the war would bring about less democracy and peace. Some of the most telling evidence corroborating that the U.S. policy and intervention in Iraq negatively affects Islamic public opinion comes from the 2014 *Pew Research* study, in which the public opinions of multiple Muslim countries correlate downward in parallel to an increase in U.S. military activity.

²² Chomsky, Noam. *Interventions*. New York: Penguin Books, 2008.

²³ Cocks, Tim. "U.S. Military Says Iraq Troop." Reuters. July 22, 2008. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iraq-surge/u-s-military-says-iraq-troop-surge-has-ended-idUSL2249013120080722>.

²⁴ Bump, Philip. "Analysis | 15 Years after the Iraq War Began, the Death Toll Is Still Murky." The Washington Post. March 20, 2018. Accessed August 08, 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/politics/wp/2018/03/20/15-years-after-it-began-the-death-toll-from-the-iraq-war-is-still-murky/?utm_term=.d2ec772a6a23.

²⁵ "Poll: Arabs See U.S. as a Threat." U.S. News and World Report. Accessed August 13, 2018. <http://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2017-04-11/poll-arabs-believe-Israel-us-are-biggest-threat-to-region>

Of course, as one school of thought suggests, it's undeniable that certain segments of the Islamic world do fall into the category of opposing the U.S. on religious or cultural values. Research reveals that answers from the Muslim world to direct questions about U.S. policy in the Middle East, correlate the timing and circumstances of the war with public opinion. Factual data, and scholarly assessment further underscores that the majority of opinions held by participant Muslim citizenry are impacted by U.S. military policy and intervention, as distinguished from cultural or religious values that influence their assessments.

While the majority of the research so far has leaned towards U.S. policy in Iraq having negative effect on Islamic public opinion, some has been positive. When U.S. troops first invaded and overthrew Saddam Hussein, Iraqis on the street were seen cheering.²⁶ Much in the same way as those who oppose the legitimacy of a foreign intervention are more inclined to oppose the intervention itself, those who approve of the legitimacy of a foreign intervention are more inclined to support it. Strong arguments can be made against the invasion of Iraq based on the hypocrisy of previous U.S. relations with Saddam Hussein; Saddam Hussein was a brutal dictator, but such support can be rationalized as a sober choice among the lesser of many evils, and as such, that U.S. decision is only partially defensible. If one considers the Anfal Campaign alone-- which of course was not Saddam's only crime—where, conservatively, a minimum of 50,000 Iraqi Kurds were killed²⁷, it relegates Saddam Hussein to someone worth being overthrown.

²⁶ "Liberated Iraqis Cheer Troops." The Washington Times. April 10, 2003. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2003/apr/10/20030410-090636-5365r/>.

²⁷ Human Rights Watch. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1993/iraqanfal/ANFALINT.htm>.

There is data that supports positive public opinion effects of U.S. military policy in Iraq. The 2014 *Arab Center for Research and Policy* polling concluded that 75 percent of Iraqis support U.S.-Coalition led bombing campaigns. Majorities of Lebanese and Syrian refugees also supported the campaign. The 2017 *Zogby Research* poll enumerated a majority support in both the UAE and Saudi Arabia of U.S. military policy in Iraq. The 2009 *Council on Foreign Relations* poll revealed that 29 percent of Afghans believe the U.S. war in Iraq could have decreased the likelihood for terrorism. According to the 2014 *Pew Research* study, U.S. favorability ratings in Lebanon, Palestine, Indonesia, and Malaysia seemed to increase roughly in correlation with the continuance of the U.S.-Iraq war.

Much of this data supporting a positive impact of U.S. military policy can be easily explained by the aforementioned political implications and biases. For example, some scholars believe the Sunni Gulf states would have supported U.S. action in Iraq in order to topple the other strong Shite powers besides Iran.²⁸ Some of the data, such as an increase of U.S. favorability among Indonesians suggests a causal connection to the U.S.-Iraq war. The support for U.S. military policy having a positive effect that is not politically implicated, quantitatively pales in comparison to the support for it having a negative effect.

1.7.2. Syria

It's difficult to pinpoint with certainty what the goal of the United States is in Syria. There is such chaos and confusion on the ground that there has been reports of Pentagon backed militias fighting CIA backed militias.²⁹ However, the two most obvious main policy goals would

²⁸ Lynch, Marc. *The New Arab Wars: Uprisings and Anarchy in the Middle East*. New York: Public Affairs, 2017.

²⁹ Hennigan, W.J., Brian Bennett, and Patrick J. McDonnell. "In Syria, Militias Armed by the Pentagon Fight Those Armed by the CIA." *Los Angeles Times*. March 27, 2016. Accessed August 08, 2018. <http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-cia-pentagon-isis-20160327-story.html#>.

seem to be striking a balance between fighting ISIS and opposing the Syrian government, which is backed by Iran, Russia, and Hezbollah.

The Arab Center for Research and Policy notes that 82 percent of Jordanians have the same goal that the United States arguably has: to topple Assad. Yet, only 3 percent of Jordanians support foreign intervention as a means to do so.³⁰ The 2017 *Arab Washington DC Center* polling determined that strong majorities of Arab people (63%) are opposed to Trump's policies in Syria.³¹ In 2016, polling from the same organization determined a total of 77 percent were opposed to Trump's policies in Syria. Again, it's hard to tell exactly what those policies are. An article from *the Guardian* discusses how Trump had vacillated between five different strategies in two weeks.³² One Trump policy in Syria is explicit: he is fulfilling his campaign promise to "bomb the s**t" out of ISIS. *Newsweek* reports that by September 9, 2017, the United States had already dropped more than two thousand more bombs than it did in all of 2016. Consequently, civilian casualties are said to have also increased along with the increased war against ISIS in both Syria and Iraq.³³ An increase in civilian casualties obviously is going to have a strong negative effect on public opinion. Even while many have declared ISIS defeated, the fighting continues. A *BBC* article from July 2018 notes the U.S. led Coalition announced that during a strike against ISIS, in which over fifty people died, that at least twenty-eight were civilians.³⁴ It's practically a truism throughout scholarly terrorism literature that excessive levels of civilian

³⁰ Lynch, Marc. "Snapshots of Middle East Public Opinion." *Foreign Policy*. September 11, 2012. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2012/09/11/snapshots-of-middle-east-public-opinion/>.

³¹ "Arab Attitudes toward President Trump and His Middle East Policies and Positions ACW." ACW. Accessed August 08, 2018. <http://arabcenterdc.org/survey/arabs-opinion-trump-oct-2017/>.

³² Ackerman, Spencer. "What's Trump's Plan for Syria? Five Different Policies in Two Weeks." *The Guardian*. April 11, 2017. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/apr/11/donald-trump-syria-bashar-al-assad-isis>.

³³ Haltiwanger, John. "Donald Trump Says He Wants a Safer World, Yet Has Dropped More Bombs than Anyone on the Middle East." *Newsweek*. September 19, 2017. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.newsweek.com/trump-era-record-number-bombs-dropped-middle-east-667505>.

³⁴ "Syria War: Anti-IS Strike 'kills Many Civilians'." *BBC News*. July 13, 2018. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-44821746>.

casualties caused by foreign forces will stimulate increased recruitment by terrorist organizations.

The reaction to the 2013 Chemical weapons attack seems to have had a significant impact on public opinion. Obama had drawn a red line against chemical weapons attacks. Some critics say Obama was weak by not reacting, but it was actually Congress that voted down Obama's proposal to respond with military force.³⁵ Either way, many Syrians considered this as a total betrayal. Marwan Hisham writes in his book *Brothers of the Gun: A Memoir of the Syrian War* that after the lack of a response "conspiracy theories were thriving and Islamists were filling the void."³⁶

Quantitatively, it appears that a majority of studies show a correlation between an increase in foreign military policy and interventions, with increased disapproval from the Islamic public. But, in the case of not specifically sanctioning the use of chemical weapons, many Syrians and Muslims were upset that the West, particularly the United States, didn't respond. The *Twitter* study showed that pro-U.S. comments decreased after the lack of a response to the chemical weapons attack, even if only by a little. The 2014 *Arab Center for Research and Policy* study showed an average of 59 percent favorability among the countries polled when asked if they support U.S. military strikes against ISIS. However, support decreased on average when participants were asked about using U.S. and Western ground troops to help fight ISIS. This research also shows that Lebanon supports U.S. strikes on ISIS by about 76 percent. Additionally, the 2017 *Zogby* poll showed that majorities of the UAE, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia support the U.S. role in Syria. When chemical weapons attacks happened again in 2018, Trump

³⁵ Chollet, Derek, Bill Scher, Edward-Isaac Dove, and Jeff Greenfield. "Obama's Red Line, Revisited." *Politico*. July 19, 2016. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/07/obama-syria-foreign-policy-red-line-revisited-214059>.

³⁶ Hisham, Marwan, and Molly Crabapple. *Brothers of the Gun: A Memoir of the Syrian War*. New York: One World, 2018.

decided to respond with strikes against Syrian military facilities.³⁷ Considering the data, while keeping aside many arguments including how meaningful or effective the strikes were, it's easy to make the point that in the specific context of responding to the use of chemical weapons, majorities of Muslims probably agreed with Trump's military strikes.

In Wendy Pearlman's *We Crossed a Bridge and It Trembled: Voices from Syria*, interviews reveal the brutality of the Syrian government. One of her interviewees tells a story of when the protests were first beginning: "the American and French ambassadors attended the 500,000 person demonstration in Hama. They were welcomed with enthusiasm".³⁸ Before they were at war, it seems that a shared common enemy had increased the positive effect U.S. military policy has had on Islamic opinion. Also, there is more evidence in Syria than in Iraq, that substantial amounts of disagreement over U.S. military policy are more related to strategy and civilian casualties, than strictly the fact that the U.S. is there at all. While of course the purely oppositional demographic exists as well.

1.7.3. Afghanistan

A 2009 *ABC* poll referenced in a study by *Center for Strategic and International Studies* notes that in 2005 83 percent of Afghans had a favorable opinion of the United States. By 2009, only 47 percent had a favorable rating of the U.S. One of the most cogent statistics also comes from the *ABC* poll: 25 percent of Afghans say violence against U.S. and Western troops can be justified, but when polling people in areas that have been bombed, 44 percent support violence against U.S. and western troops. It's not surprising that areas that have been more heavily

³⁷ Capaccio, Anthony, Henry Meyer, Margaret Talev, and Daniel Flatley. "Trump Says 'Mission Accomplished' With Syria Strike Unanswered." Bloomberg.com. April 14, 2018. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-04-14/trump-to-make-statement-on-syria-as-expectations-of-strike-grow>.

³⁸ Pearlman, Wendy. *We Crossed a Bridge and it Trembled: Voices from Syria*. S.I: Custom House, 2018.

bombed are more likely to agree with a violent response. This supports the notion both that military policy can have a negative effect on Muslim public opinion. Also, it reveals how civilian casualties during military campaigns can help to motivate support for violence, and therefore terrorism.

It's not difficult to fathom why public opinion in Afghanistan shifted. An assessment of *Operation Enduring Freedom* by *Human Rights Watch* reported that U.S. forces were subjecting the Afghan people to "excessive force during arrest, arbitrary arrest, and indefinite detention".³⁹ In his book *No Good Men Among the Living*, Anand Gopal, relates how U.S. forces attacked a school and a governor's house and thereby eroded most U.S. support.⁴⁰ Another more recent *Human Rights Watch* report from 2015, examining the Kunduz Hospital attack, concludes that the U.S. strike on the hospital "killed forty-two patients, care givers and medical staff, and injured dozens more." These types of events would most likely have had a negative effect on public opinion.

The statistics show most Afghans to be opposed to the Taliban. However, many Afghans are well aware of the unspoken history between the CIA and the Mujahideen, when they were fighting the Soviet Union, and the relationship of these Mujahideen figures to the foundational backbone of the Taliban and Al Qaeda. In his groundbreaking work *Taliban*, Ahmed Rashid thoroughly examined how the U.S. played a balancing act with respect to their level of support for the Taliban, largely growing out the U.S.'s support for Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. He argues that the United States was at least acquiescently supporting the Taliban up until the late 1990s,

³⁹ ""Enduring Freedom" | Abuses by U.S. Forces in Afghanistan." Human Rights Watch. November 08, 2016. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2004/03/07/enduring-freedom/abuses-us-forces-afghanistan>.

⁴⁰ Gopal, Anand. *No Good Men among the Living: America, the Taliban, and the War through Afghan Eyes*. New York: Picador, 2015.

and that the first moment of public opposition came in November 1997 when Madeline Albright called the Taliban “despicable”.⁴¹ Not long before that time, support for the radical elements that would ultimately evolve into the Taliban and Al-Qaeda was not acquiescent, it was explicit. With a history of both supporting fundamentalists as well as then using them as a reason to invade the country, leading to a long-lasting violent military occupation, it’s clear to see why this situation might not bode well with Afghans or Muslims. In an article from *The Guardian*, Nushin Arbabzadah, eloquently describes Afghan perception of the U.S. as “the proverbial cowboy that enters the town, dividing the locals into haters, admirers, and the undecided who keep their options open.”⁴² Ultimately, however,, any foreign power that is seen to divide a nation, is usually more likely than not to have more haters than neutrals and admirers. Meanwhile, *Pew Research* from 2009 and other studies, show that throughout the Muslim world, the proposition of U.S. troops in Afghanistan seemed to be more unanimously opposed than favorability ratings attached to Afghanistan itself.⁴³

Despite the presumed significant negative impact of U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan on Muslim public opinion, some Afghans have approved of U.S. forces being in the country. Polling from 2010 (*ABC*, *Washington Post*, *ARD*, *et. al.*) showed that more than six in ten Afghans approve of U.S. forces. There is other data that doesn’t mirror these numbers as closely but seem to corroborate Afghan support for U.S. military presence. Even if the degree of accuracy is slightly off, and support of U.S. forces in Afghanistan falls below a super majority, it is strong evidence of there being significant percentages of the population who feel positively

⁴¹ Rashid, Ahmed. *Taliban*. I.B. Tauris, 2010.

⁴² Arbabzadah, Nushin. "How Afghans See America: The Cowboy That Divided the Village | Nushin Arbabzadah." *The Guardian*. November 21, 2013. Accessed August 08, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/nov/21/afghans-see-america-cowboys-enemy-partner>.

⁴³ "Most Muslim Publics Not So Easily Moved." *Pewglobal.org*. <http://www.pewglobal.org/files/pdf/264.pdf>.

about U.S. military policy. Even though approval ratings decreased from 2005 to 2006, they seemed to have leveled out in 2010, according to the 2010 studies. However, again, these relatively high approval ratings can probably be attributed to political implications and bias. Many Afghans don't like the Taliban anymore than U.S. forces do. Therefore, these segments of the population are more likely to support the U.S. than they would be under other circumstances. This is evidenced by the distinction between the higher public approvals of U.S. military policy in Afghanistan than in the rest of the Muslim world.

1.8. Conclusion

This research has shown that U.S. foreign policy, particularly military interventions, in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria does have more of a negative effect on Muslim public opinion than a positive effect. The extent of the positive effects was notable, as well as surprising, often related to the specific military or political motivation involved. Usually, when the public opinion polling results came from participants further removed from the conflicts at hand, then the negatives would increase.

It also has been proven based on this research that negative perceptions of the U.S. in the Muslim world are more based on U.S. policies and interventions than anything else. Multiple studies throughout the report corroborate this assessment. However, more research could be done on the minority of those who do culturally oppose the U.S. New research might try to determine whether the small percentage of cultural opposition comes more from religious extremists, or non-extremists with an opposition to cultural imposition-which is still arguably connected to foreign policy. The dichotomy between U.S government opposition and support for the

American people should be further explored as well. This trend shows that soft power approaches could be successful.

Chapter 2

They Hate Our Freedoms: Assessing Anti-Americanism in the Muslim World



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A thesis submitted for the degree of *Masters of Government*

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2.1. Abstract

This thesis will explore the issue of Western cultural diffusion and how much it influences anti-Americanism in the Middle East relative to the effects of American foreign policy. It will do so by contrasting the Clash of Civilization theory with different points of view from academic, State, non-State and terrorist sources which variously describe sociological, demographic and political influences in the Middle East. Contrary to the suggestion of President Bush following the 9/11 attacks, the thesis concludes that anti-American sentiment is fueled by American foreign policy rather than the ‘us and them’ divide engendered by Western cultural diffusion.

2.2. Introduction

On September 20th, 2001, nine days after the attacks of September 11th, President Bush addressed Congress. He sought to answer the question that was on so many American minds during that nationally trying time: Why us? Why do they hate us? His answer was “they hate us for what they see in this chamber- a democratically elected government, their leaders are self-appointed, they hate our freedoms- our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other.”⁴⁴ These baseline freedoms are the catalyst of Western culture. So, could it really be that simple? That it is all about Western freedom and culture? This thesis will attempt to determine how accurate President Bush’s statement really was.

First, Western cultural values and Islamic cultural values are different. This difference is not only a conflict between two different forms of Abrahamic religion. In the West women have achieved near equality, LGBT rights are more accepted, use of alcohol and recreational drugs is permitted, as is open access to the Internet and diverse music genres. Comparatively, in many Islamic societies women’s status has not been equalized, LGBT rights are stigmatized, alcohol is prohibited, access to the Internet is restricted, and music genres are more limited. Western Christianity and Islam both have their own moral philosophies that can subsequently influence

⁴⁴ *They Hate Our Freedoms* (George Bush speech). C-Span. September 20th 2001.

culture in distinct ways. Religious beliefs influence cultural attitudes, and cultural attitudes frame societal norms. These beliefs and norms affect how sexuality, gender roles, music, the Internet and other issues are perceived. *Pew Research* revealed data evidencing a large cultural divide between Islamic and Western societies.⁴⁵ For example, Sharia law is largely supported throughout many Muslim countries. Application of this law would lend support for stoning as punishment for adultery, a death penalty for leaving Islam, and corporal punishment for crimes such as theft.⁴⁶ Western values, on the other hand, avoid cruel and unusual punishments.

There is also a lot of anti-Americanism in the Middle East. However, there is not a unanimous consensus on what causes this anti-Americanism. Some scholars, such as Samuel Huntington, believe that this anti-Americanism is rooted in a clash of cultures following Western cultural diffusion. Some others, such as Noam Chomsky, believe it is rooted in objections to the impacts of America's exercise of its foreign policy. Additionally, there is also the possibility for a combination between these two causes. This thesis posits that Western cultural diffusion does not play a primary role in motivating Anti-Americanism.

On the flip side, it is important to note that anti-Islamic sentiment in America is misplaced, and will become increasingly important as a consequence of demographic trends. Muslims are not a small minority group. Actually, *Pew Research* concluded that by 2050 almost 30 percent of the world will be Muslim.⁴⁷ As the Muslim population continues to grow, Westerners are going to be increasingly exposed to and interacting with Muslims. There is currently a lot of tension between Americans and Muslims. Much of the tension in the West revolves around misconceptions about terrorism, and what American people think the root causes of terrorism are. Islamophobic notions influence many Americans, such as that all Muslims are inherently intolerant people. A significant majority of Americans polled by Gallup

⁴⁵ Wormald, Benjamin. "Muslim Beliefs About Sharia." *Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project*, Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project, 9 Jan. 2015, www.pewforum.org/2013/04/30/the-worlds-muslims-religion-politics-society-beliefs-about-sharia/.

⁴⁶ Wormald, Benjamin. "Muslim Beliefs About Sharia." *Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project*, Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project, 9 Jan. 2015, www.pewforum.org/2013/04/30/the-worlds-muslims-religion-politics-society-beliefs-about-sharia/.

⁴⁷ Masci, David, and Drew DeSilver. "World Muslim Population More Widespread than You Might Think." *Pew Research Center*, Pew Research Center, 31 Jan. 2017, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/01/31/worlds-muslim-population-more-widespread-than-you-might-think/.

between 2007 and 2009 believed that Muslims don't want peace, don't accept other religions, and don't accept races other than their own.⁴⁸ This parochial view does not allow for an empathic understanding of the diverse Muslim people, or for a more balanced view of the ramifications of American foreign policy. This viewpoint can both contribute to foreign policy blunders, and foreign policy blunders can instigate terrorism-in the turn of a vicious cycle contributing back to Islamophobia. Trying to find the primary cause for anti-Americanism reveals different perspectives. There are those who believe the motivation of terrorism has nothing at all to do with the actions of the United States or the West, but simply to do with the fact that the Muslims are, as Orientalist Mark Twain put it, "filthy, brutish, ignorant, unprogressive and superstitious."⁴⁹ More recently, controversial film "American Sniper" was heavily criticized for causing a spike in anti-Muslim sentiment. The film glorified Chris Kyle, an American sniper said to have the most ever kills, who also referred to Muslims as "savages in his memoirs. The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination committee collected over 100 threatening messages early after the film's release.⁵⁰ While there is no evidence showing that a significant majority of Americans hold these views, the data still shows that Islamaphobia is not an insignificant issue. Clearly these racist characterizations need to be more carefully scrutinized as the world gets closer, more complicated, and more populated.

The world has seen a great increase in Islamophobic hate crimes in the past few decades.⁵¹ Credible studies show a significant uptick in hate crimes. Crucially, ignorance is one of the main enablers of hate. A ubiquitous misbelief that violence emanating from the Muslim world is strictly rooted in Islamic culture obstructs a more nuanced understanding. Linking an alleged general propensity for violence to someone's culture is a form of dehumanization.

⁴⁸ Gallup, Inc. "Islamophobia: Understanding Anti-Muslim Sentiment in the West." *Gallup.com*, Gallup, news.gallup.com/poll/157082/islamophobia-understanding-anti-muslim-sentiment-west.aspx.

⁴⁹ Gilad, Moshe. "Mark Twain's Book on the Holy Land Is Still Controversial - Some Would Say Trumpian." *Haaretz.com*, 24 Apr. 2018, www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium.MAGAZINE-mark-twain-s-trumpian-book-on-the-holy-land-1.5448781.

⁵⁰ Guarino, Mark. "Group Says 'American Sniper' Film Spurs Threats against Muslims." *Reuters*, Thomson Reuters, 24 Jan. 2015, www.reuters.com/article/us-film-americansniper-threats/group-says-american-sniper-film-spurs-threats-against-muslims-idUSKBN0KX0RB20150124.

⁵¹ Lopez, German. "FBI: Reported Hate Crimes Increased by 17 Percent in 2017." *Vox*, Vox, 13 Nov. 2018, www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/11/13/18091646/fbi-hate-crimes-2017.

Dehumanization can easily be considered a gateway for Islamophobia or other forms of bigotry.

2.3. Literature Review

Clash of Civilizations: Samuel Huntington references a quote from a book called *Dead Lagoon* by Michael Dibdin: “There can be no friends without true enemies. Unless we hate what we are not, we cannot love what we are. These are the old truths we are painfully rediscovering after a century and more of sentimental cant. Those who deny them deny their family, their heritage, their culture, their birthright, their very selves! They will not be lightly forgiven.”⁵² Huntington agrees with this sentiment and calls out “statesmen and scholars” to pay attention to the “unfortunate truth in these old truths”.⁵³

Samuel Huntington is essentially asserting that cultural, ethnic and religious identities are inherently opposed to one another. Therefore, according to this theory, there is simply no hope for understanding, peace, or diplomacy between the supposed natural cultural enemies. Huntington considers Muslims to be one of Western civilization’s enemies. He reveals a microcosm of his *Clash of Civilizations* theory concerning the Muslim world. He says that “somewhere in the Middle East a half-dozen young men could well be dressed in jeans, drinking Coke, listening to rap, and, between their bows to Mecca, putting together a bomb to blow up an American airliner.”⁵⁴ Huntington’s point here is that Muslim enemies might be adopting the more superficial aspects of Western culture, but they are fundamentally antagonistic to American society. Societies can dress the same way, listen to the same music, and consume the same products, but that doesn’t mean there is not still a deep-rooted cultural or civilizational clash.

Huntington’s *Clash of Civilizations*, while controversial, is representative of a main school of thought in explaining the divide between civilizations. Although, if Huntington’s theory were totally accurate, there would be polling which showed the Muslim people to be heavily antagonistic to the American people, as a people, apart from their policies. Most of the negative polling relates to the general opinion of America as a whole, which includes foreign

⁵² Huntington, Samuel. *Clash of Civilizations*. Simon & Schuster. New York. 1996.

⁵³ Huntington, Samuel. *Clash of Civilizations*. Simon & Schuster. New York. 1996.

⁵⁴ Huntington, Samuel. *Clash of Civilizations*. Simon & Schuster. New York. 1996.

policy, or foreign policy itself. Some polling included in Thesis I supports quite the opposite conclusion of Huntington. It shows that Arabs have a mostly positive perception of Americans overall. Also, there is *Pew Research* concluding that nine out of ten Muslim Americans are proud to be American.⁵⁵ Lastly, to share an important anecdote, I lived in the Arab world for four months, mostly in Jordan. I also traveled to Lebanon, Egypt, Palestine, and Qatar. Unlike some, I never hid the fact that I was American. I interacted in a notable way with dozens, if not hundreds of people. Their response to my being American was almost unanimously “I love you America” or a similar response. Only when we began to have conversations about foreign policy did they usually express disapproval.

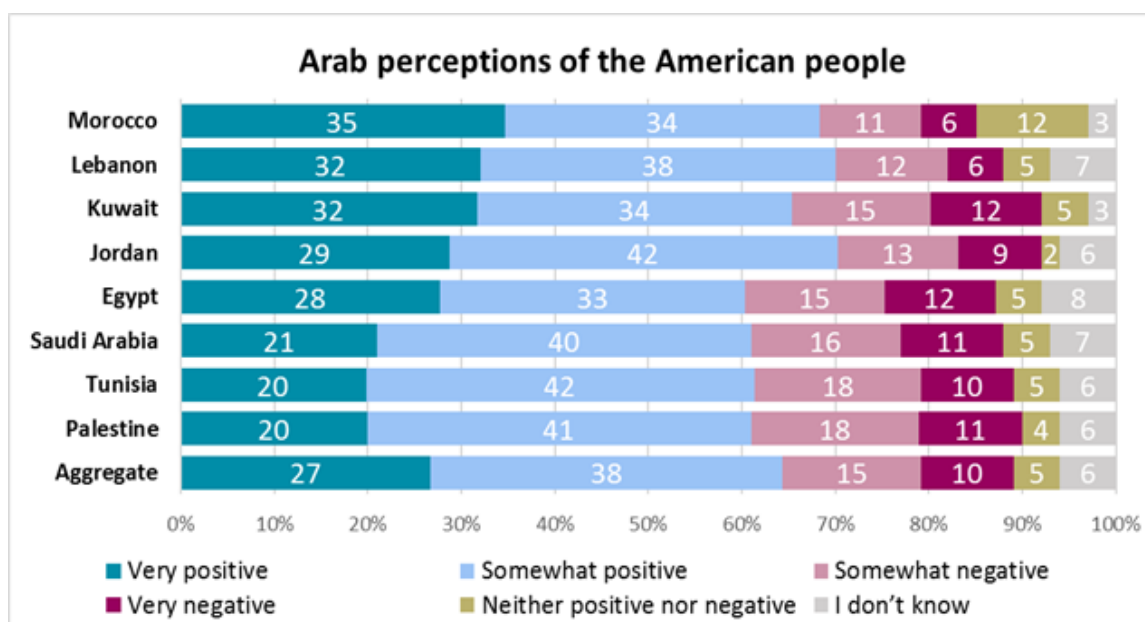


Figure 2.1. Arab attitudes toward President Trump and his Middle East policies and positions ACW. ACW. Accessed August 08, 2018. <http://arabcenterdc.org/survey/arabs-opinion-trump-oct-2017/>.

Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Theory: In Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart’s Harvard University paper, they analyze Samuel Huntington’s *Clash of Civilizations* theory. It’s relevant to review the scholarly literature that was published in response to Samuel Huntington’s famous theory. Huntington’s theory is almost akin to believing people are born and raised to be against one another. Norris and Inglehart do a good job in debunking this. Huntington’s theory is often used as an explanation for terrorism, but a more thorough understanding of terrorism can be gauged once it’s understood that the West is not hated strictly

⁵⁵ Lipka, Michael. “Muslims and Islam: Key Findings in the U.S. and around the World.” *Pew Research Center*, Pew Research Center, 9 Aug. 2017, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/08/09/muslims-and-islam-key-findings-in-the-u-s-and-around-the-world/.

because of a deeply rooted religious or cultural conflict. Understanding the more realistic motive for terrorism, such as foreign policy, allows us to better understand Muslim public opinion in general.

Orientalism: *Orientalism* is a famous work written by Edward Said which seeks to understand the means by which the “the Occident” views and treats “the Orient” in an imperious fashion. Said himself explains the ideology of Orientalism as “not a mere political subject matter or field that is reflected passively by culture, scholarship, or institutions; nor is it a large and diffuse collection of texts about the Orient; nor is it representative and expressive of some ‘Western’ imperialist plot to hold down the ‘Oriental’ world. It is rather a *distribution* of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts.”⁵⁶ A skewed perspective of the divide between the East and West is even mentioned by Said to take on different forms from different European countries. Orientalism acts as an obstruction of understanding between the ostensible East and West divide. Said’s *Orientalism* embodies somewhat of a Marxist viewpoint in that clarifying a true history of people allows for those people to have a better chance at living their lives in a contemporary context. He references Gramsci who says that “ The starting-point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is ‘knowing thyself’ as a historical process to date”.⁵⁷ This theory seems to apply more faults on the West than does Huntington’s theory.

From Said’s point of view Western cultural diffusion does play a role in anti-Westernism, and therefore anti-Americanism as well. However, the cultural diffusion in this case is imposed by imperial and colonial rule and it is not considered to be organic. Said believes it is tied directly to colonialism and imperialism, and particularly how the underlying ideologies transfer themselves through the propagation of cultural values by scholars and cultural influencers. He says that Arabs are “highly diversified consumers of a vast range of United States products, material and ideology”.⁵⁸ Additionally, at the time this book was written, the dominant radical trend in the

⁵⁶Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. Random House. New York. 1978.

⁵⁷ Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. Random House. New York. 1978.

⁵⁸ Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. Random House. New York. 1978.

Middle East was nationalism as opposed to today's terrorism. Said states "Since World War II Arab nationalism has been a movement openly declaring its hostility to Western imperialism."⁵⁹

For Said, Orientalism causes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Instead of looking at the problems with the East, he looks at the problems that the West projects onto the East. Within Western culture stereotypes about the East are so prevalent, it is not surprising that these can lead to uninformed decisions being made about how west and east might coexist. To illustrate how ubiquitous and atavistic Orientalism is, Said even goes back to the time of Dante: he states that "even though the Koran specifies Jesus as a prophet, Dante chooses to consider the great Muslim philosophers and King as having been fundamentally ignorant of Christianity."⁶⁰

Said also mentions that he is indebted to Michael Foucault. Foucault helped pave the way to enable him to intellectually observe the effects of Imperialism. The philosophical lens that he adopts from Foucault and others is essentially a strategy of studying Orientalism by studying the work of Orientalists. The Orientalists in this case are academics who study the East side of the East-West world paradigm, whether it is the study of foreign policy, economics, poetry or a number of other academic fields.

This work is a notable and important counterweight to *Clash of Civilizations* on the political spectrum. Said notes how he himself grew up a colonial subject in two different British colonies-in the Mandate of Palestine and in Egypt. Said's sensitivity to the feelings of those who live under a colonial regime is instructive to understand how cultural imposition impacts Muslims. Insights gained by Said, as someone who lived under two different colonial regimes, adds an inimitable gravitas to the subject matter making *Orientalism* a unique and worthwhile source when exploring this subject.

⁵⁹ Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. Random House. New York. 1978.

⁶⁰Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. Random House. New York. 1978.

Full Text: bin Laden's Letter to America: bin Laden's letter explicitly reveals his motives for masterminding the 9/11 attacks. The letter is relatively detailed. Mostly, his condemnation of the West is centered on America's foreign policy positions. One of his foremost concerns is unqualified American support for Israel and Israel's mistreatment of the Palestinians, which is maligned throughout most of the Middle East.⁶¹ Bin Laden also alludes to conflicts in Kashmir, Chechnya, Iraqi sanctions, and many other contentious points of interest to justify his attacks.⁶²

Bin Laden focuses more on foreign affairs, but he does discuss cultural issues as well. He speaks of "usury" that is being practiced in the West and rails against homosexuality, drugs, gambling, the commodification of sex, corporate greed, and political corruption.⁶³ Bin Laden did not really speak of any invasive cultural effect when it came to the sociocultural traits of America he disagreed with. The tone was more of a critical accusation on policy grounds. Certainly, more emphasis was placed on his fundamental disagreement with America's Middle Eastern affairs as well as the West's affairs in the Muslim world.

Due to this letter, there is a clear understanding of what bin Laden was thinking when he set out to attack the United States. Various justifications and observations are included; one would assume in a hierarchical order sorting among issues that are most important to least important. Clearly there were cultural reasons included in the letter explaining why bin Laden perpetrated 9/11. The bin Laden letter partially aligns with Huntington's theory in that there is a perceived cultural clash from bin Laden, but it differs in that it corroborates that American foreign policy is the most influential factor, as opposed to culture.

In examining bin Laden's letter to America multiple important points relevant to the hypothesis can be discerned. Bin Laden prefaces the letter with a verse from the Quran that justifies fighting "non-believers". Then, bin Laden places an initial emphasis of concern on American foreign

⁶¹"Full Text: bin Laden's 'Letter to America'." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 24 Nov. 2002, www.theguardian.com/world/2002/nov/24/theobserver.

⁶²"Full Text: bin Laden's 'Letter to America'." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 24 Nov. 2002, www.theguardian.com/world/2002/nov/24/theobserver.

⁶³"Full Text: bin Laden's 'Letter to America'." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 24 Nov. 2002, www.theguardian.com/world/2002/nov/24/theobserver.

policy.⁶⁴ He references American support for the establishment of Israel and calls it “one of the greatest crimes”.⁶⁵ When responding to his self proclaimed introductory question of “why are we fighting and opposing you?” the very first substantive response is “you attacked us in Palestine”.⁶⁶ The letter goes on to discuss the issues of Israel-Palestine further while explaining from his perspective both the ancient and recent history. After much focus on Israel-Palestine, he also expresses opposition to American military actions in Somalia, alleged American support for Russian actions against Chechnya, Indian actions against Kashmir, and Israeli actions against Lebanon. Additionally, on his concern for American foreign policy, he also rails against American oil policy in the Middle East as well as the Iraqi sanctions from the 1990s. Finally, throughout the remainder of the letter, there are also references to America’s dropping of nuclear bombs in Japan, Guantanamo Bay, opposition to the Algerian revolution, America “supporting the Manila Government against the Muslims in Southern Philippines”⁶⁷, and accused war crimes in Afghanistan.

After focusing much of the initial portion of his letter on American foreign policy, he eventually delves into his opposition to American culture as well. The first cultural issue he pontificates on is religion itself as he attempts to proselytize America into Islam. He then continues to criticize America for “fornication, homosexuality, intoxicants, gambling, and trading with interest”.⁶⁸ He calls AIDS an “American invention” and even brings up the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal. Anti-Semitism intones much of his rhetoric about some of the political and economic issues he sees. He claims that it is Jewish control of “policies, media, and economy”⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Al Qaeda’s ideology focuses on a globalized viewpoint of a holy war between Islam and the West. They see America as the leader of the West and this probably explains why they are conflating the West with America. This is different from other Jihadist ideologies that focus more on directly opposing local governments in the Middle East. Al-Qaeda would insist they oppose the disliked local governments by attacking directly at the source of the foreign governments who back them.

⁶⁵ “Full Text: bin Laden’s ‘Letter to America’.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 24 Nov. 2002, www.theguardian.com/world/2002/nov/24/theobserver.

⁶⁶ “Full Text: bin Laden’s ‘Letter to America’.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 24 Nov. 2002, www.theguardian.com/world/2002/nov/24/theobserver.

⁶⁷ “Full Text: bin Laden’s ‘Letter to America’.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 24 Nov. 2002, www.theguardian.com/world/2002/nov/24/theobserver.

⁶⁸ “Full Text: bin Laden’s ‘Letter to America’.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 24 Nov. 2002, www.theguardian.com/world/2002/nov/24/theobserver.

⁶⁹ “Full Text: bin Laden’s ‘Letter to America’.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 24 Nov. 2002, www.theguardian.com/world/2002/nov/24/theobserver.

that is responsible for the flaws of the American system in which the rich have so much control over politics.

Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah: It's useful to review the writings of Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah, for the same reasons it's useful to review Osama bin Laden's letter. While bin Laden might have placed cultural issues lower on his list of grievances, there definitely were some strong references to these issues in his letter. Nasrallah's writings and statements on the other hand-which make up a book of over four hundred pages-reveal no references to Western sociocultural issues. Instead he focuses meticulously on foreign affairs. His worries related to the West are mostly related to U.S. support for Israel, French involvement in Lebanon, the Iraq war and other issues. Therefore, it can be surmised that Hezbollah's concern is not with Western cultural diffusion, but with its foreign policy. Hezbollah not only has strong representation in Lebanon, but they are also mainly backed by Iran. The main issues concerning Hezbollah can also be seen as a view into the thought processes of some Lebanese and Iranians, as well as Shiites.

This source proves an interesting comparison in the viewpoints of two very similar groups. Bin Laden is the leader of a terrorist group from the Muslim world, and Nasrallah is the leader of a group from the Muslim world that is considered a terrorist group by many governments. Comparatively, they tend to agree on their bitterness over Western foreign policy, but Nasrallah does not have the same concern for sociocultural issues that bin Laden has. Both seem to view foreign policy in the forefront, but Nasrallah does not address cultural concerns.

Similarly to bin Laden, Nasrallah also repudiates American foreign policy quite assiduously. His writings and statements show that he was opposed to the Iraq war, and like bin Laden also believed America was just after oil.⁷⁰ Unsurprisingly, since Hezbollah is believed by many to have formed in response to the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, there is a significant amount of criticism aimed at the actions of "the Zionists and the Americans".⁷¹ Nasrallah references

⁷⁰ Nasrallah, Sayyed Hassan, and Nicholas Noe. *Voice of Hezbollah: the Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah*. Verso, 2007.

⁷¹ Nasrallah, Sayyed Hassan, and Nicholas Noe. *Voice of Hezbollah: the Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah*. Verso, 2007.

America's violent history with Native Americans when he insists in a speech given in Beirut that "The American and Israeli administrations have to understand that Arab and Muslim populations, and the people of this area as a whole, are not the Red Indians, whom they can annihilate or isolate in the desert or on the mountains."⁷² Whereas bin Laden saw his conflict with America through a lens of global Jihad and referenced a dozen different foreign policy critiques as motives, Nasrallah's writings and speeches covered in this book show a focus on issues Hezbollah is directly involved in; he does not speak out on anything else.

Media, Culture, and Society in Iran: Living with Globalization and the Islamic State: This particular source provides us with a window into Iranian society. Iranian society is one considered to foster a significant amount of anti-Americanism. Iranian society can be better understood if one researches sources outside of the rhetoric that is expressed between the Iranian and the American government. This source takes Internet discourse or censorship, satellite television content, scope of music genres, feminism, and other issues all into consideration. When asking the question of how much Western cultural diffusion in the Middle East feeds into anti-Americanism, a useful exercise is to explore how governments in the Middle East respond to cultural encroachment. This study reveals how different institutions and forms of media inside Iran actually operate. There is a noticeable difference between the government and the general populace when it comes to support for Western culture.

Arab Public Opinion on American Policies, Values and People-Joint Hearing Before the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight and the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives: This hearing was held on May 3, 2007 as part of the deliberations of the 110th Congress. It is a useful source to examine for a variety of reasons. It provides a direct assessment of the exact topic this Thesis explores. An authoritative body is conducting the assessment: the United States Congress. Also, the United States government is directly linked with the topic at hand.

⁷² Nasrallah, Sayyed Hassan, and Nicholas Noe. *Voice of Hezbollah: the Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah*. Verso, 2007.

Throughout the hearing, many different sources of data are used such as the 9/11 Commission Report and polling data from the same organizations used in Thesis I, such as *Pew* and *Zogby*. It is noted by David Pollock during the hearing that the polling data discussed is serious, but has methodological flaws. The flaws include a lack of experimental details, demographic issues, timing, and cultural issues. Additionally, some places, such as Iraq, are just difficult to conduct polling in.

Many different angles of Arab public opinion are discussed. This includes references to culture as well as foreign policy. It also includes dissent towards the view of George W. Bush on this issue. Each different body of Congress has its own bias based on the proportion of seats allocated to political parties, but this source yields a great opportunity to observe a high level debate on the topic of Western cultural diffusion and anti-Americanism.

2.4. Methodology

The main method used to determine how much Western cultural diffusion affects anti-Americanism in the Muslim world was to assess the different sources of relevant literature. Literature from differing perspectives was taken into consideration. Scholarly analyses such as from Said and Huntington were assessed as an authoritative overarch to the topic, however it was equally important to gather the viewpoints that come directly from other sources. The main query that usually concerns this issue of Western cultural diffusion and anti-Americanism in the Muslim world is to what extent does it motivate terrorism. Therefore, it was necessary to look at the opinions of the terrorists themselves. Another area where there is a high level of anti-Americanism is Iran. Assessing Iran is different from assessing the terrorist groups because it required a more thorough exploration of the entire society; whereas, it was determined that assessing terrorist groups mainly required just reviewing what those groups themselves have said about Western cultural diffusion in their speech or writings.

2.5. Results

Clash of Civilizations: Huntington's theory supports the idea that Western cultural diffusion influences anti-Americanism. He states in chapter five that "the Islamic challenge is manifest in the pervasive cultural, social, and political resurgence of Islam in the Muslim world in the accompanying rejection of western values and institutions".⁷³ Huntington's theory seems to largely be based in the idea that Muslims believe themselves to be of a superior culture.⁷⁴

Huntington makes the claim that the resurgence of Islam has some similarities with Marxism.⁷⁵ Marxism is an ideology considered to be largely in conflict with Western culture. It can be considered to inherently influence anti-Americanism; at the very least in the way it views the economy. Similarly, it is asserted by Huntington that Islam has an inherent clash with the idea of a nation state.⁷⁶ Religious forces and the "ummah" have more control over society than does a sense of nation or statehood. Therefore, these elements have more control over any potential democratic institutions as well.

Huntington cites a lot of evidence to support his theory. He brings up wars that he refers to as "fault line wars" in which the proposed cultural clash between Islam and Judeo-Christianity plays out on the ground such as the Chechen-Russian wars, Armenian-Azerbaijani wars, and Yugoslav wars.⁷⁷ Huntington also notes that many Muslims feel the same way as he does.

Without assessing how legitimate Huntington's viewpoint of cultural clash is, it can still be discerned that based on his school of thought anti-Americanism would not be motivated by an intentional cultural diffusion. The ideas structured within Huntington's writings insinuate that this clash is organic. Nonetheless, this theory supports the idea that Western cultural diffusion plays a large role in anti-Americanism.

⁷³ Huntington, Samuel. *Clash of Civilizations*. Simon & Schuster. New York. 1996

⁷⁴ Huntington doesn't refer only to Muslims as having a superiority complex; he also asserts the same for East Asians as well.

⁷⁵ The resemblance is allegedly based on "scriptural texts, a vision of the perfect society, commitment to fundamental change, rejection of the powers that be and the nation state, and doctrinal diversity ranging from moderate reformist to violent revolutionary."

⁷⁶ Huntington, Samuel. *Clash of Civilizations*. Simon & Schuster. New York. 1996

⁷⁷ Huntington, Samuel. *Clash of Civilizations*. Simon & Schuster. New York. 1996

Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Theory: This study maintains that while some of Huntington's theories are correct, some are also false. It concluded that Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* theory was questionable because "Western and Islamic societies generally agreed on three of the four indicators of political values".⁷⁸ The one indicator of disagreement was the viability of theocratic governments, and it was not only the Muslim world that disagreed with the West about this.⁷⁹ Note also that the report mentions that support for democracy is relatively strong in the Muslim world. However, democracy in the Muslim world can have consequences that lead to groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood gaining power. Norris and Inglehart opine that the post 60s West is most certainly different from the Muslim world, but they also say that to call it a clash of civilizations "represents an oversimplification of the evidence".⁸⁰ It concurs that there is a clash of cultures between Islam and Judeo-Christianity. But it also found that according to their data, "Western and Islamic societies generally agreed on three of the four indicators of political values. Rates of approval for Democracy, as well as its functionality and level of governmental superiority, were very similar in Islamic countries as compared to Western countries."⁸¹ Norris and Inglehart found the one difference to be the way in which people from Islamic and Western societies considered what role religious leaders should play in society.

The study concludes by recognizing that there is a cultural clash, especially since the Western liberal and sexual revolution of the 1960s. However, it also insists that to consider a cultural clash as the main factor behind conflicts between the East and West is an "oversimplification of the evidence".⁸²

⁷⁸ Norris, Pippa, and Ronald F. Inglehart. *Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Thesis*. 2002, *Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Thesis*.

⁷⁹ Norris, Pippa, and Ronald F. Inglehart. *Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Thesis*. 2002, *Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Thesis*.

⁸⁰ Norris, Pippa, and Ronald F. Inglehart. *Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Thesis*. 2002, *Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Thesis*.

⁸¹ Norris, Pippa, and Ronald F. Inglehart. *Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Thesis*. 2002, *Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Thesis*.

⁸² Norris, Pippa, and Ronald F. Inglehart. *Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Thesis*. 2002, *Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Thesis*.

Orientalism: In this book, Said takes a different stance from Huntington. A lot can be distilled from the first few paragraphs in the introduction of *Orientalism*. Said states “The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences.” He also calls Orientalism a “British and French cultural enterprise.”⁸³ He asserts that the British and French “dominated the Orient and Orientalism; since World War Two America has dominated the Orient, and approaches it as France and Britain once did.”⁸⁴

In a sense Said is arguing that there has been an ages-long propaganda campaign waged against the East by the West, and that the propagandistic campaign is a direct element of Western hegemony. He doesn’t specifically touch upon a descriptive connection between Western cultural diffusion and anti-Americanism, but it is easy to infer by his use of words such as dominance, imperialism, and power, along with his ideas that what he is arguing is a cultural subjugation born out of imperialism. In order to deem this source irrelevant because it only observes the connection between Western cultural diffusion and imperialism as opposed to anti-Americanism, it would have to be asserted that people generally appreciate subjugation. There are some colonized subjects who exploit the situation or fall under an optimistic colonial mentality, but it is not the norm. For example, only 16.4% of Filipino Americans polled felt fortunate about being previously colonized.⁸⁵

Full Text: bin Laden’s Letter to America: As is obvious by the length of each of these distinctive paragraphs on bin Laden’s letter, he focused significantly more of the letter on foreign policy. Overall, there were twenty-four different noted paragraphs on foreign policy, and there were twenty on cultural issues. As reviewed in the 2nd paragraph, bin Laden did have some cultural quarrels with the U.S., but not as many as he did with its foreign policy.

⁸³ Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. Random House. New York. 1978.

⁸⁴ Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. Random House. New York. 1978.

⁸⁵ David, E.J.R. “Filipinos, Colonial Mentality, and Mental Health.” *Psychology Today*, Sussex Publishers, 2 Nov. 2017, www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/unseen-and-unheard/201711/filipinos-colonial-mentality-and-mental-health.

Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah: Nothing was found within this book relevant to how Western cultural diffusion could influence anti-Americanism; everything was related to foreign policy. As a consequence the absence of an articulation of cultural divisions supports this thesis statement. After analyzing four hundred and ten pages of writings and talks from the leader of Hezbollah, nothing was found evidencing that anti-Americanism within Hezbollah, Lebanon, or the Shia religion is related to Western cultural diffusion. The results of bin Laden's letter are somewhat mixed, but the result in *Voice of Hezbollah* is straightforward.

Media, Culture, and Society in Iran: Living with Globalization and the Islamic State: There is a ban on satellite television in Iran, however the ban is reportedly not thoroughly enforced. The Iranian interior Minister is reported to have called satellite television a "cultural invasion by the enemy" and to have said "Western countries beamed satellite television to Iran to weaken people's religious beliefs".⁸⁶ The music scene is said to be quite vibrant but some concerts are sanctioned and some are not. Since the Minister of Culture must approve the bands, many have to operate in clandestine fashion. Rock is the most popular genre, based on how often it is referred to in the study.

It is quite impressive that there are more women graduating from university than men in Iran. In those universities, subjects such as "continental philosophy, critical theory literary criticism, and cultural studies"⁸⁷ are common classes in the curriculum. This is significant due to the potential clashes with Islam ideology that these subjects engender.

It is written in the Iranian Constitution that television is completely controlled by the top religious leader. It is stated that television is intended to be used for a propagation of Islam. Also, it is strictly forbidden to use it for anything "anti-Islamic".⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Semati, Mehdi. *Media, Culture and Society in Iran: Living with Globalization and the Islamic State*. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2010.

⁸⁷ Semati, Mehdi. *Media, Culture and Society in Iran: Living with Globalization and the Islamic State*. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2010.

⁸⁸ Semati, Mehdi. *Media, Culture and Society in Iran: Living with Globalization and the Islamic State*. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2010.

How the Iranian government reacts towards a Western online presence can also be indicative of their view on Western cultural diffusion. This source reveals that the Iranian government had blocked 100 websites at the time the book was published. Some of those sites were blocked due to inclusion of American content. It is also reported in the source that they have “attempted to control the Internet by filtering net activity, arresting web designers, and enacting restrictions over the Internet”.⁸⁹

The book also focuses on a fundamentalist Shiite scholar from the 1970s named Morteza Motahhari. Motahhari was a part of the anti-Western anti-feminist movement that is considered to have shaped the contours of how Iranian society thinks on this issue. Motahhari’s ideology revolves around forced gender roles as well as other patriarchal ideas such as women needing a veil to insulate themselves from savage-like men who would not be able to contain themselves from committing rape if the woman were exposed.

Arab Public Opinion on American Policies, Values and People-Joint Hearing Before the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight and the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia of the Committee on Foreign Affairs House of Representatives: As addressed above, there are certain issues with the polling some of this discussion is based on, but it should still be considered credible data. It is stated early on in the hearing by Rep. Gary Ackerman that “anyone who has bothered to read the polling data coming out of the Middle East [will see] that the policies of the United States are overwhelmingly disliked.”⁹⁰ He also notes that the 9/11 Commission Report placed heavy emphasis on foreign policy. These viewpoints align succinctly with the thesis statements of both Thesis I and Thesis II.

James Zogby, Senior Analyst of *Zogby International* is interviewed and he describes the style and results of the polling. He reports that American movies, freedom and democracy, and science and technology all had majority support in the Middle East. Low support was more

⁸⁹ Semati, Mehdi. *Media, Culture and Society in Iran: Living with Globalization and the Islamic State*. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2010.

⁹⁰ United States, Congress, Joint hearing before the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight and the Subcommittee on the Middle

correlative with policies on terrorism, the Iraq War, the Palestinians, Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, or secret prisons.⁹¹ Zogby categorically states that “Overall, when you look at the importance of values and policies in determining attitudes toward America, they do not judge us by our values. 10 percent is the highest we get on that in Saudi Arabia. In almost every case, they judge us by our policies. It is not what we say about ourselves; it is how we treat them. That is the issue.”⁹²

There were some results discussed that didn’t align with this thesis statement. General support for America was not as positive. Countries such as Jordan and Morocco had roughly a third of those polled in support of the United States, but overall support in Egypt and Saudi Arabia was very low hovering around 10 percent. Also, there was very high support for the war in Iraq from Iraqi Shi’a and Kurdish communities-reportedly around 75 to 80 percent. Support for the war generally would represent a decrease in viability for this thesis statement, arguably placing more focus on Western cultural diffusion. But, it is important to note that there is a bias in this case, as those showing support for the war are those whom were most negatively impacted by Saddam Hussein. Lastly, there is also a general outlier. Zogby notes that Egypt is unusually opposed not only to policy, but to values as well. No conclusive reason why is offered for this result.

This source evidenced more support for the thesis statement than it did opposition to the statement. As just revealed, there were some oppositional results. But those results were mostly in the context of James Zogby stating them, after having already stated that all the polling his company has done supports this thesis statement.

2.6. Discussion

Clash of Civilizations: Samuel Huntington’s famous *Magnum Opus* ideologically opposes this thesis. Huntington delves into great detail in explaining what he sees as an inherent culture clash between “the East and West”, however he doesn’t give much credence to opposing viewpoints. For example, in his discussion of “fault-line wars” he only focuses on the divide among

⁹¹ A medical study conducted by Physicians for Human Rights determined that both Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib prisoners “suffered torture and ill-treatment by U.S. personnel, which resulted in severe pain and long-term disability.”

⁹² United States, Congress, Joint hearing before the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight and the Subcommittee on the Middle East.

societies, while ignoring the togetherness. He uses the Chechen-Russian wars, Armenian-Azerbaijani wars, and the Yugoslav wars as evidence to support a culture clash.⁹³ In fairness, the current epidemic of Islamist attacks on Coptic Christians in Egypt would probably further bolster his argument were he alive. However, there are contradictory scenarios from multiple angles that conflict with his theory.

First, take into consideration accounts from World War II in which Muslim Bosnians were responsible for protecting Jews from Nazis. According to a *BBC* article, 70 Muslims have been added to a list of honor at the official Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Israel dedicated to those people who took it upon themselves to defend Jews during the holocaust.⁹⁴ The Muslims who did this were putting their lives on the line and they would not do so for a people whom they inherently clash with. Additionally, to draw from this same historical scenario, Nazis were mainly going after Jews. Yet, according to Huntington's theory, all the world's problems revolve around a culture clash. Jewish people operate religiously under the same Judeo-Christian umbrella as Christian people. Huntington and many other scholars refer to "Judeo-Christianity" in that light for obvious reasons. So, if Huntington were accurate, Jewish people would never have been targeted. Possibly, Huntington would claim that anti-Semitism cancelled out that perspective, or is another mini clash against Christianity in and of itself, but Anti-Semitism is based out of the same core ideology that Huntington's is: that is an emphasis between the us and them. In fairness, he had difficulty determining where exactly to categorize Jewish people. Also, the Nazis were opposed to the church in many ways and even used pagan symbols in their propaganda.

Second, Noam Chomsky supports a similar perspective when highlighting a notorious incident that he often focuses on: the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero. Oscar Romero was Archbishop of San Salvador, El Salvador and he was known to be a social justice advocate who opposed the government during a time of sectarian strife. El Salvadoran government death squads backed by the U.S. murdered him and everyone who was with him at the time. So, in

⁹³ Huntington, Samuel. *Clash of Civilizations*. Simon & Schuster. New York. 1996

⁹⁴ Bousfield, Tom, and Catrin Nye. "The Muslims Who Saved Jews from the Holocaust." *BBC News*, BBC, 17 Apr. 2013, www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-22176928.

essence, you had a dominant Judeo-Christian government backing another Judeo-Christian government who brutally murdered a very popular Judeo-Christian Archbishop.⁹⁵ According to Huntington's theory, an incident like this should really only be happening if either Romero had been an Imam or if at least one of the two Judeo-Christian governments involved had been Islamic. Chomsky also opines that the United States is very closely allied with the most fundamentalist state in the world: Saudi Arabia. Why would the ostensible leader of the West-the United States- be so closely linked to such a strongly authoritarian Islamic theocracy such as Saudi Arabia if cultural divide is what dictates the world's most pressing issues? Does Huntington's theory simply become irrelevant when money and oil is involved or is it just somewhat farcical in general?⁹⁶

Third, there are many examples in everyday society of Muslims and Judeo-Christians cohabitating in peace. Jordan is 5 percent Christian and there are no major problems between religions there. Lebanon in the past could have been used as an example to support Huntington's theory but the current status of Lebanon would oppose his theory. Lebanon has not had significant strife between Muslims and Christians in decades, and is at the moment, arguably one of the more stable places in the region. This stability exists despite the fact that Lebanon is almost half Christian and half Muslim, depending on which statistics are looked at.⁹⁷ However, there has been persecution against Christians in countries such as Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Sudan.

Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Theory: This report ultimately found that Samuel Huntington's theory was wrong based on three of four false indicators used in trying to determine the compatibility on political values between Western and Islamic societies.⁹⁸ However, it partially concurs with him. Therefore, it would probably align with the belief that

⁹⁵ "On Religion and Politics." *On Religion and Politics, Noam Chomsky Interviewed by Amina Chaudary*, Islamica Magazine, chomsky.info/200704___/.

⁹⁶ Chomsky, Noam. "Noam Chomsky - Clash of Civilizations." *YouTube*, YouTube, 12 Dec. 2015, www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQ7QbUPJkiA.

⁹⁷ "Guide: Christians in the Middle East." *BBC News*, BBC, 11 Oct. 2011, www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-15239529.

⁹⁸ Norris, Pippa, and Ronald F. Inglehart. *Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Thesis*. 2002, *Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Thesis*.

Western cultural diffusion slightly contributes to anti-Americanism. The thesis statement of this study wouldn't necessarily disagree with this, because it doesn't claim Western cultural diffusion plays no role in Anti-Americanism at all; it only claims that it does not play a primary role.

However, *Islam and the West* does come to a conclusion that agrees with the thesis statement in claiming that Samuel Huntington's theory was simplistic. It is simplistic because it does not take into strong consideration any studies on foreign policy, international relations, or terrorism. In fairness, the study of terrorism was most likely to have been highly insufficient when Huntington published *Clash of Civilizations* in 1996.

Norris and Pippa reference data from *Freedom House* revealing that of forty-seven Islamic majority countries, a quarter are democracies. One of Huntington's central tenets is the cultural effect on political ideals. This statistic evidences data against that notion.

Orientalism: It is frankly axiomatic that a large swath of academic works from *Arabian Nights* to modern day mainstream media analyses of the Middle East has had a negative stereotypical impact upon the way the region is viewed and treated. The recent Mosque attacks in New Zealand places emphasis on the sort of Islamophobia that runs rampant throughout many parts of the world. According to a *New York Post* article, it was specifically the work of right-wing political commentator Candace Owens who the New Zealand shooter claims to have been greatly influenced by.⁹⁹ Edward Said would certainly link this attack to Orientalism. While Candace Owens is certainly no expert on the Middle East, within the vacuum of her critiques on the Middle East, that so happened to influence an Islamophobic mass shooting, she was acting as an Orientalist by Said's standards. This is a straightforward example of how Said's concern was manifested.

As previously stated, Said agrees that Western cultural diffusion plays a significant role in anti-Westernism and anti-Americanism. So, technically speaking, his theory somewhat opposes this thesis statement. However, it does not oppose the thesis statement in totality because Orientalism is a byproduct of imperialism. Therefore, it is imperialism that would be the primary catalyst, not organic western cultural diffusion on its own.

⁹⁹ Eustachewich, Lia. "Conservative Candace Owens 'Influenced Me above All': New Zealand Gunman." *New York Post*, New York Post, 15 Mar. 2019, nypost.com/2019/03/15/conservative-candace-owens-influenced-me-above-all-new-zealand-gunman/.

Full Text: bin Laden's Letter to America: The results from assessing bin Laden's letter align with the thesis statement of this study. When it came to the issues that he began to list in a particular numbered and lettered order, cultural issues did play a role in his thinking, but they were clearly not the primary issue that he was concerned with. He was foremost concerned with foreign policy. This is not only shown in the rhetorical emphasis placed on the discussion of foreign policy in comparison to cultural issues, but after the religious preface, he listed the issues in what seemed like an order of importance, and the initial topics were foreign policy related.

Without having a more transparent view into the mind of bin Laden when he was writing this letter, there is no way to totally understand the significance of his religious preface. The first question he lists is self responded to by nothing but foreign policy related answers. The second question he lists is self-responded to by mostly culturally related answers. It is atypical to think he would list the lesser important question as the first question and the more important question as the second question. So, most evidence concurs that cultural issues were not his primary motivator in committing anti-American violence. If it is not conclusive, it is certainly not conclusive in the other direction either.

Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah: This source was totally about foreign policy issues, and most of the foreign policy concerns were ultimately connected to Israel. These results strongly support the thesis statement of this study. Notably, the results go even further in that they not only conclude that Western cultural diffusion is not a primary motivator for Hezbollah, but they don't even seem to be considered at all, according to this book.

Why is it that while according to the sources analyzed, bin Laden seemed somewhat concerned with Western cultural diffusion, but Nasrallah did not? It could be due to their distinctly different subscribed forms of Islam. Nasrallah and Hezbollah are an Iranian backed Shia organization. Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda are a Saudi backed Wahhabi Sunni organization.¹⁰⁰ It could be due to the upbringing of each leader. Lebanon is a significantly more secular place to grow up in

¹⁰⁰ Both these groups have been linked to more countries than the two mentioned, but these are the two countries that are most relevant in recent history and the present. Notoriously, Pakistan, the United States, and Britain have all been exposed as having either supported Al-Qaeda in its evolutionary incipient stages, or even as it more thoroughly evolved towards the group it is today. Hezbollah has known links to Russia and Syria.

than Saudi Arabia. It could be due to the fact that Nasrallah knows part of his political base includes many Christians, and so he therefore limits most anti-Western or anti-Christian cultural rhetoric. It could be due to the fact that Hezbollah, in contrast to many other state classified terrorist groups, have a chance of power in the government, and thus want to not burn bridges with potential western trade, military, or aid partners. It could also simply be that generally, throughout the Middle East, the main motivator of anti-Americanism is not western cultural diffusion, but overwhelmingly foreign policy.

Media, Culture, and Society in Iran: Living with globalization and the Islamic State: This study had some conflicting discoveries. On the one hand, there was evidence for a lack of hostility towards Western cultural diffusion, which would suggest less of a chance that this is the primary issue contributing towards anti-Americanism. This was represented in the allowance of Western academic fields, as well as the majority of women who graduate from the universities teaching those classes. There is also a love for Western culture such as the love for rock music.

On the other hand, many Internet sites with American content have been banned. Western satellite television channels have been banned. And despite Women attending university at higher rates than men, there is still a large overtone of anti-feminist patriarchal ideology that defines the society. The enforced wearing of the hijab is largely representative of the patriarchal issues occurring not only in Iran, but also in many places throughout the Middle East. Recently, in Iran, some women have begun to protest against the enforced wearing of the hijab by simply taking it off in public places. A woman recently climbed atop an electrical box and took her hijab off. Her life was destroyed and she was sentenced to three years in prison.¹⁰¹ An article by foreign policy entitled *The Flame of Feminism is Alive in Iran* noted an instance where dozens of women were arrested for a similar showing of defiance.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Wither, Emily. "I Did It for My Daughter, Says Woman Arrested for Headscarf Protest..." *Reuters*, Thomson Reuters, 6 Mar. 2019, www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-protest-hijab/i-did-it-for-my-daughter-says-woman-arrested-for-headscarf-protest-in-iran-idUSKCN1Q30Q7.

¹⁰² Hakakian, Roya. "The Flame of Feminism Is Alive in Iran." *Foreign Policy*, Foreign Policy, 8 Mar. 2019, foreignpolicy.com/2019/03/07/the-flame-of-feminism-is-alive-in-iran-international-womens-day/.

Some of this evidence is clearly in support of the thesis and some is against it. However, some is difficult to discern. The results can have different meanings depending on the level of importance applied to each entity relevant to the action. Is it more significant that the government banned Western websites, satellite TV channels, and rock music or is it more significant that they were possibly a big enough problem that they needed to be banned? Should the level of anti-Americanism be determined by the opinions and actions of the people, the government or a combination of both? This is an interesting question that can be assessed with additional research.

Arab Public Opinion on American Policies, Values and People-Joint Hearing Before the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight and the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia of the Committee on Foreign Affairs House of Representatives: Zogby's assessment of the overall results is a really cogent factor. There were also some disagreeable and conflicting moments during the hearing. One that really stood out was when Rep. Ackerman stated that the divide between Arabs and Americans is "a betrayal that will not be undone by a United States withdraw from Iraq or a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is betrayal that will not be soothed by political settlement in Lebanon."¹⁰³ Actually, I'd propose that if each of these three hypothetical initiatives happened it would drastically improve support for American policy and other attitudes that were the focus of the polling. Both Osama bin Laden and Hassan Nasrallah focused on some of these issues in the sources reviewed in this report. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict was the very first situation referenced by bin Laden in his letter to America. Nasrallah was heavily concerned with it as well. That is not to say it would alleviate the entire problem, but to belittle such a scenario is totally in conflict with Ackerman's own statements as well as testimony that was submitted throughout the remainder of the hearing.

To receive government acknowledgement that anti-Americanism is not caused mainly by Western cultural diffusion is crucial for this thesis. The United States government is the entity

¹⁰³ United States, Congress, Joint hearing before the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight and the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. "Arab Opinion on American Policies, Values, and People." *Arab Opinion on American Policies, Values, and People*.

most directly involved with foreign policy. Although, when it comes to culture, an interesting question is begged. Is the government most responsible for Western cultural diffusion or does it come more so from the private sector? That is something that can possibly be researched further. Regardless, the government is involved in at least one component of this thesis statement. This hearing didn't seem to have much of an impact on real world foreign policy. Testimonies get swept under the rug, governments change, and Administrations lean in expected ways, so it is unsurprising this has no critical bearing on current reality. However, in terms of support for this thesis statement, it is a strong source.

2.7. Conclusion

There were seven different sources analyzed in this Thesis. Two sources were directly from non-state violent actors, one source was from a Western state government, and four sources were academic. The underlying data analyzed by these sources also included other forms of evidence such as the polling discussed in the Congressional hearing. All but Samuel Huntington's ideologically based book treats anti-Americanism as more heavily linked to foreign policy than Western cultural diffusion.

It is uncomfortable to have to take into consideration what figures such as Osama bin Laden and Hassan Nasrallah have to say, but terrorism is one of -if not the main reason- why the topic explored in this report is so pressing. It behooves us to hear and assess the grievances of non-state violent actors to try to understand what can be done to prevent more violence from happening in the future, as well as what can be done to structure a more cohesive world. We must not only consider the opinions of Western governments and academics, but also those whom seem to most significantly represent this dichotomy between the West and the Muslim world. There is no one better to voice the divide and disagreement than the non-state violent actors that are assessed in parts of this thesis. Analyzing the ideas of these actors help to support the argument that Western cultural diffusion is not the primary motivator in anti-Americanism or terrorism, as did every other differently angled source besides Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations*.

It should be comforting that evidence shows foreign policy to be more of a factor than Western cultural diffusion in anti-Americanism because it is arguably easier to do something about. The government has significantly more control over foreign policy than it does cultural diffusion. It is apparent what can be done, but if it will get done is of course a totally different story, and unlikely. It is unlikely because the US government tends to prioritize military related goals in the Middle East over how the actions related to those goals will impact Muslim public opinion.

There are many factors that contribute to anti-American antagonism. The withdrawal from the Iran nuclear agreement, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), is another situation that adds to anti-American hostility. It was also a decision that was made without much consideration for how it would impact the other parties directly or indirectly involved with the agreement. Thesis III will take a look at how withdrawing from JCPOA might have impacted others relevant countries as compared to how the withdrawal impacted the United States.

Chapter 3

Anti-Diplomacy: Assessing the Impact of America's Withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Agreement



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3.1. Introduction

This chapter will shift attention from America's unfavorable standing in the Arab world to President Trump decision to withdraw from the Iran Nuclear Agreement and the impact this had on world opinion of America's standing.

On May 8th 2018, President Donald J. Trump announced to the world that the United States was withdrawing from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) or what is more colloquially known as the Iran Nuclear Agreement. The deal, which was signed between the P5+1 nations and Iran, achieved a removal of sanctions on Iran in exchange for Iran limiting its nuclear ambitions and allowing verification by inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) into their facilities.

This foreign policy move by Trump to pull out of the deal reversed one of President Barack Obama's most important achievements and sent shockwaves through the international community. A report from *Arms Control Association* reveals evidence that the international community strongly supports the deal. There are documented statements of support from Africa, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, the Czech Republic,

Estonia, the European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Namibia, the Netherlands, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and Zimbabwe.¹⁰⁴ However, the Trump administration did not see things the same way as did the Obama administration or the international community. In a White House press statement, President Trump claimed:

*In theory, the so-called “Iran deal” was supposed to protect the United States and our allies from the lunacy of an Iranian nuclear bomb, a weapon that will only endanger the survival of the Iranian regime. In fact, the deal allowed Iran to continue enriching uranium and, over time, reach the brink of a nuclear breakout. The deal lifted crippling economic sanctions on Iran in exchange for very weak limits on the regime’s nuclear activity, and no limits at all on its other malign behavior, including its sinister activities in Syria, Yemen, and other places all around the world. In other words, at the point when the United States had maximum leverage, this disastrous deal gave this regime — and it’s a regime of great terror — many billions of dollars, some of it in actual cash — a great embarrassment to me as a citizen and to all citizens of the United States.*¹⁰⁵

After the United States withdrew from the deal, Iran as well as many other countries refused to follow suit, and stood strong with the deal in defiance of the United States’ withdrawal.

However, the United States withdrawal from the deal came with impact. The implications were that within a few months of withdrawing from the deal, the United States decided to re-impose economic sanctions on Iran. The United States initiated sanctions that targeted Iranian oil,

¹⁰⁴ Pitz, Samantha, and Ryan Fedasiuk. “Arms Control NOW.” *International Support for the Iran Nuclear Deal / Arms Control Association*, 9 May 2018, www.armscontrol.org/blog/2018-05-09/international-support-iran-nuclear-deal.

¹⁰⁵“Remarks by President Trump on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.” *The White House*, The United States Government, www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-joint-comprehensive-plan-action/.

banking and transportation sectors.¹⁰⁶ The imposition of sanctions continued in 2019 against Iranian space agencies, shipping networks, and against the Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. It was inevitable that Iran would respond to an American breach of the agreement. Iran did so by breaching the agreement itself, as it intentionally surpassed the 300 kilogram limit for the amount of low-enriched uranium that it could have. This regression led to such a breakdown between parties that the *BBC* published an article entitled “*Iran’s nuclear deal is on life support. Can it be saved?*”¹⁰⁷

The United States has such power and leverage over the world economy that even if all the other 5 of the P5+1 countries abide by the deal, there is still a lot that the United States can do to sabotage the deal—and that sabotage seems to be currently at work. JCPOA and its possible demise means something different for many relevant countries. This report will explore some of the varying perspectives these different countries have about American withdrawal from JCPOA.

It can be surmised from the *Arms Control Association* data listed above, concerning the countries that support JCPOA, that there are many supportive nations, but each country interprets the situation through its own unique foreign policy lens. It is beyond the scope of this Thesis to explore the implications that American withdrawal from JCPOA has for all the countries that support it. However, this report will assess the distinct meanings for those countries that are tied most closely to the situation. While Thesis I and II focus on Muslim public opinion, this Thesis will focus on the impact the JCPOA withdrawal has on three different sets of countries: the

¹⁰⁶ Wroughton, Lesley. “U.S. Reimposes Iran Sanctions, Tehran Decries ‘Bullying!’” *Reuters*, Thomson Reuters, 5 Nov. 2018, www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-iran-sanctions/u-s-reimposes-tough-curbs-on-iran-tehran-hits-at-bullying-idUSKCN1NA0ZR.

¹⁰⁷ Wroughton, Lesley. “U.S. Reimposes Iran Sanctions, Tehran Decries ‘Bullying!’” *Reuters*, Thomson Reuters, 5 Nov. 2018, www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-iran-sanctions/u-s-reimposes-tough-curbs-on-iran-tehran-hits-at-bullying-idUSKCN1NA0ZR.

European countries, the Middle Eastern countries, and Russia and China. It sets out to prove that the United States' withdrawal from JCPOA is less significant for the United States than it is for other countries connected to the deal.

3.2. Literature Review

A variety of positions on JCPOA exist within the literature. The European countries are most supportive of the deal. They have less tension with Iran than do the United States and they support the institutions that will facilitate the deal. China and Russia don't have any unique tension with Iran, but they are not as supportive of the institution that facilitates the deal. All these countries have different relationships with one another and examining the literature helps to narrow down why these stances might be taken.

*Uncertain Future: The JCPOA and Iran's Nuclear and Missile Programmes*¹⁰⁸: This book is the most comprehensive and extensive piece of scholarly literature available on the Iran nuclear deal. The book's introduction discusses how Donald Trump decided to withdraw from the deal in May 2018. The withdrawal was an election campaign promise that Trump had put forth back in 2016. It is stated in the book that "It took Trump 18 months to fulfill this election promise: in part because Iran was honoring its commitments but also because his key advisers recognized that withdrawing from the deal would serve no strategic purpose."

The introduction of the book also explores why there is such hostility between Iran and the United States and explores the causes of animosity on both sides of the conflict. Among the reasons discussed on why America is hostile towards Iran are the takeover of the U.S. Embassy

¹⁰⁸ Fitzpatrick, Mark, et al. *Uncertain Future: The JCPOA and Iran's Nuclear and Missile Programmes*. IISS.

and the taking of fifty-two American diplomats hostage back in 1979 and Iranian perpetration of terrorist attacks both directly and indirectly. Specifically, Hezbollah carried out a suicide bomb attack against the U.S. Embassy back in 1983 and it is claimed that Iran was complicit in the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia. Additionally, Iranian forces are said to harass U.S. ships on the Persian Gulf, detain U.S. citizens on dubious charges, trained forces in Iraq that targeted U.S. military, supplied Hezbollah with rockets that target Israel and backed the Assad regime in Syria.¹⁰⁹

The book also lays out the quarrels that Iran has with the United States. Iran resents CIA involvement in the overthrow of Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh, U.S. involvement or acquiescence-dependending on your perspective- in Iraq's use of chemical weapons against Iran during the 1980-88 Iraq-Iran War, the downing of a private airliner by a guided missile cruiser in 1988, naval actions, and a raid on an Iranian Liaison office.¹¹⁰

The early background of JCPOA is also discussed. Back in 2013, Iran almost achieved the capability to build a nuclear weapon.

“Iran’s stockpile of low-enriched uranium was growing at an average rate of 150 kilograms per month, and it had almost enough 20%-enriched uranium hexafluoride for a weapon if further enriched. The underground enrichment facility at Fordow was being readied to produce more 20% product. Meanwhile, the Arak research reactor was

¹⁰⁹ Fitzpatrick, Mark, et al. *Uncertain Future: The JCPOA and Iran's Nuclear and Missile Programmes*. IISS.

¹¹⁰ Fitzpatrick, Mark, et al. *Uncertain Future: The JCPOA and Iran's Nuclear and Missile Programmes*. IISS.

nearing completion, and would soon be able to produce enough weapons grade plutonium for one or two bombs per year.”¹¹¹

There was more pressure gathering against Iran by this point, but there had been attempts to deal with their nuclear aspirations long before JCPOA was negotiated. Many of these attempts were from countries other than the United States.

Understanding the history behind this deal and the events that led up to it is important and the book does a thorough job of providing historical context. It not only discusses the historical tensions between the United States and Iran, it looks at some of the historical background of the other countries involved in the deal as well. France, Germany and the United Kingdom negotiated with Iran from 2003-2005 and the United Nations placed sanctions on them from 2005-2010. This was a latent issue that had been boiling under the surface for over ten years.

The book meticulously explores the details of JCPOA. It highlights what was at stake for the parties involved. The P5+1 was most motivated to limit Iran’s nuclear program to the most stringent level possible. Iran desired getting sanctions removed while not giving away too many concessions on their nuclear program. As averred in the book, “the JCPOA established the most intrusive monitoring regime applied by the IAEA anywhere in the world.”¹¹² It goes on to show that Iran had been instructed to destroy its aforementioned 20%-enriched uranium as well as 98% of its low-enriched uranium (LEU); Iran had to limit LEU stockpiles to 300 kilograms for 15 years; remove 14,000 of 20,000 centrifuges at the Natanz plant; limit the levels of enriched uranium for 15 years; allow the IAEA to inspect its nuclear sites, and to not obtain heavy water.

¹¹¹ Fitzpatrick, Mark, et al. *Uncertain Future: The JCPOA and Iran's Nuclear and Missile Programmes*. IISS.

¹¹² Fitzpatrick, Mark, et al. *Uncertain Future: The JCPOA and Iran's Nuclear and Missile Programmes*. IISS.P.24

In return, Iran received sanctions relief. This relief also meant that Iran would get roughly 100 billion dollars in oil profits frozen in accounts that they did not have access to.

The book also explores the involvement and implications concerning other countries around the world. For example, the book shows that in April of 2018 Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu revealed thousands of pages of Iranian documents taken by Israeli intelligence regarding its past nuclear programs. This proved that Iran did intend to build a nuclear weapon. However, throughout these documents there was no evidence proving that Iran was currently continuing any of its nuclear programs.¹¹³ Israel is in a different position from most other countries signed onto JCPOA. They perceive themselves and are considered by many analysts to be in a constant existential crisis. Israel has threatened that they would possibly attack Iran in order to prevent it from acquiring nuclear weapons. The book notes a precedent for this type of action: Israel conducted airstrikes against Iraq's Osiraq reactor in 1981 and Syria's reactor in al-Kibar in 2007.¹¹⁴

There were three other countries in the Middle East that supported Trump's withdrawal from JCPOA. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain all were opposed to JCPOA. The contextual relations between these three countries exist in a Sunni-Shia conflict. Similarly to Israel, Saudi Arabia feels very threatened by Iran and it is alleged that it could possibly attempt to facilitate its own nuclear weapons program in order to deter Iran.

The basic positions of other countries are examined as well in the section on U.S. withdrawal. After the Trump administration decided to withdraw from the deal, multiple European politicians

¹¹³ Fitzpatrick, Mark, et al. *Uncertain Future: The JCPOA and Iran's Nuclear and Missile Programmes*. IISS. P.40-41

¹¹⁴ Fitzpatrick, Mark, et al. *Uncertain Future: The JCPOA and Iran's Nuclear and Missile Programmes*. IISS. P. 20

visited him to try and convince him to do otherwise. French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, and Boris Johnson-- who was United Kingdom Foreign Secretary at the time --all visited Washington DC.¹¹⁵ That's not to say those are the only countries and political representatives who opposed withdrawal from the deal, it is just who personally visited Washington DC. There is a lot more detail that cannot be thoroughly listed here, but the book's information is extensive.

Uncertain Future also discusses some of the positions and actions of other important countries such as China and Russia. For example, both countries are suspicious of the IAEA. They don't want to allow the IAEA to have unfettered access to search Iranian facilities. Also, the book explains the significance of United Nations Security Council resolutions (UNSCR) 2231 and 2216. It looks at how the European Union did its best to save the deal after the Trump administration withdrew; how the United States was considering regime change, and a panoply of other issues.

Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit (Congressional Research Service) ("U.S. Exit"): This report from the Congressional Research Service is not quite as extensive as *Uncertain Future*, but it gets down to the most important points in a concise manner. The summary of this report states that the Trump administration believes JCPOA is insufficient because the sanctions relief will allow Iran to pursue dubious activities that the United States disagrees with. The summary also notes that the JCPOA will not prevent Iran from developing ballistic missiles.¹¹⁶ In *Uncertain Future*, the authors stipulate that critics of the deal, including Trump, had a problem

¹¹⁵ Fitzpatrick, Mark, et al. *Uncertain Future: The JCPOA and Iran's Nuclear and Missile Programmes*. IISS. P.52-53

¹¹⁶ United States, Congress, Kerr, Paul, and Kenneth Katzman. "Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit." *Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit*, 2018. P. Summary

with the Sunset provisions. The Congressional Research Service introductory summary goes on to explain that Russia, China, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom all opposed the United States withdrawal from the deal.

In the introduction, it is noted that the P5+1 were negotiating with Iran around 2006. Also noted, was that the UN passed Resolution 1929, its most comprehensive resolution up to that point back in 2010. However, the road to JCPOA began with the Joint Plan of Action (JPA) back in 2013, after the election of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani. This document informs that the JPA essentially put Iran's nuclear program on hold, which allowed time for JCPOA to be formed and signed. It goes on to note that "[W]hen the JPA went into effect in January 2014, Iran had enough uranium hexafluoride containing up to 5% uranium-235, which, if further enriched, would have yielded enough weapons-grade HEU [Highly Enriched Uranium] for as many as eight nuclear weapons."¹¹⁷ The JPA included centrifuge limits, level of enrichment limits, LEU stockpile limits, the right to continue enrichment research and development activities, but not to accumulate enriched uranium. It also included additional monitoring from the IAEA and a pledge from Iran to "refrain from commissioning the [Arak] reactor, transferring fuel or heavy water to the reactor site, testing and producing additional reactor fuel, and installing remaining reactor components."¹¹⁸ The deal also included some general promises from Iran such as the rather straightforward pledge of not building a nuclear weapon. In return, Iran received access to

¹¹⁷ United States, Congress, Kerr, Paul, and Kenneth Katzman. "Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit." *Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit*, 2018. P. 5

¹¹⁸ United States, Congress, Kerr, Paul, and Kenneth Katzman. "Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit." *Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit*, 2018. P. 6

hard currency and the continuation of trade in Iranian sectors such as the petrochemical industry, the precious metal industry, and the auto sector.¹¹⁹

The *U.S. Exit* report also goes through a bullet point list of the provisions accomplished for the JCPOA deal. When the facets of each deal are simply listed one after the other, it is unsurprising that the provisions detailed in JCPOA are much more extensive and binding than the provisions laid out in the JPA. Iran's centrifuge production was limited for ten years to no more than 5,060 IR-1 centrifuges. Under the JCPOA Iran cannot produce enriched uranium with more than 3.67% uranium-235 for fifteen years. In that same time frame Iran can only enrich uranium at the Natanz facility and cannot build any new facilities, and must limit their LEU stockpile, as discussed in *Uncertain Future*. For the duration Iran must limit the amount of centrifuges at Fordow enrichment facility. Limitations were placed on Iran's ability to replace damaged centrifuge machines over periods of eight and ten years. Also, Iran's ability to conduct research and development was halted on all technologies except for gas centrifuge enrichment. Other provisions were listed, but these were the main ones.

Some important facts are noted in a section on U.S. withdrawal from JCPOA and its effects. It is stated that the Trump administration initially was ostensibly in support of the deal. It was not until 2018 that the Trump administration began to express disapproval. Then Secretary of State Rex Tillerson expressed concern that while JCPOA might delay Iran achieving a nuclear weapon, it would not totally prevent it.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ United States, Congress, Kerr, Paul, and Kenneth Katzman. "Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit." *Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit*, 2018. P. 7

¹²⁰ United States, Congress, Kerr, Paul, and Kenneth Katzman. "Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit." *Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit*, 2018. P. 22

It is noted that on January 12th, 2018 President Trump declared that the United States would no longer waive sanctions unless America's "European allies" fixed the parts of the deal that were perceived by Trump to be flawed.¹²¹ Afterwards, President Trump claimed the United States would try to work out a new deal; diplomatic meetings were held between the United States and European partners, but no deal was agreed upon.

It is ultimately explained that the Trump administration officially withdrew from the deal on May 12th, 2018 and revealed a list of demands that had to be met in order for the United States to agree to a new deal. Other parties involved in the deal heavily criticized the withdrawal. France, Germany, and the United Kingdom issued a joint statement that they would continue to try and maintain the deal, specifically mentioning the economic benefit for Iran. Additionally, a representative from the European Union (EU) made it clear that the EU would abide by the deal if Iran did as well.¹²² But importantly, it was explained that Iran made the decision that they would not abide by the deal if the United States did not do so also.

*Impacts of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) On the United States Interest and the Military Balance in the Middle East (Hearings Before The Committee On Armed Services, United States Senate, One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, First Session)*¹²³: This hearing provides crucial perspectives regarding the implications of JCPOA. Now deceased Senator John McCain, in the hearing's opening statement, expressed concern that Iran's access to new funding will inevitably give it the funding necessary to purchase military hardware from Russia or China-

¹²¹ United States, Congress, Kerr, Paul, and Kenneth Katzman. "Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit." *Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit*, 2018. P. 23

¹²² United States, Congress, Kerr, Paul, and Kenneth Katzman. "Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit." *Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit*, 2018. P. 25

¹²³ United States, Congress, Committee on Armed Services. "Impacts of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) On the United States Interest and the Military Balance in the Middle East" *Impacts of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) On the United States Interest and the Military Balance in the Middle East*, 2015.

who are eager to sell to Iran.¹²⁴ Senator Jack Reed spoke next and expressed concern over Israel. He noted that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu would never support the deal but that the United States must “deepen further our cooperation on military and intelligence matters with Israel and to better understand the concerns of the Israelis.”¹²⁵ Secretary of Defense Ash Carter also made clear that Israel would be heavily supported. Specifically, he said “Iran still directs hostility and violence towards our closest ally in the region, Israel” and that “The United States will maintain its ironclad commitment to Israel’s qualitative military edge, or QME. We will keep providing Israel with advanced capabilities.”¹²⁶ Later on in the hearing, General Dempsey presented an article from the Israeli newspaper *HAARETZ* critiquing JCPOA as he claimed that Israelis across the political spectrum were opposed to the deal and so was Saudi Arabia.¹²⁷

Throughout the hearing a lot of queries were made regarding how Iran impacts United States national security strategy. There was also further emphasis on Israel and Saudi Arabia’s opposition to the deal. There is additional discussion of Russia’s willingness to sell weapons to Iran. There is also a worrying concern that some European partners-particularly the UK, France, and Germany --would not go along with the United States withdrawing from the deal. Important to this Thesis, is Ambassador Burns’ statement concerning unifying positions with the Europeans:

“We’ll have to have the Europeans with us. In a strange sort of way, President Putin has stayed with President Obama on this particular issue, despite our sanctions on Russia

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 3.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 8.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 24.

over Ukraine. The Russians don't want Iran to become a nuclear-weapons power. I'm not predicting they're going to be a great partner, but you have to work on the Russians as well.”¹²⁸

Russia is highly relevant to this deal because they are aligned with Iran on issues such as support for the Assad regime in Syria.

The implications for the Middle East are much more profound. For example, at one point in the hearing, Senator Cotton and Ambassador Burns both strongly agreed that a nuclear proliferated Middle East undoubtedly would lead to nuclear war. Professor Walter Russell Mead was interviewed in the hearing as well. Professor Mead noted that some people believe American foreign policy involvement in the Middle East will decrease due to the recent shale gas revolution in the United States, but he believes that is a false assessment because while Middle Eastern oil might not be important to the United States anymore, it is still important to American allies. Also according to Mead, if the United States were to relinquish this involvement, then another country would most likely take their place.¹²⁹

Belfer Center Experts on U.S. Withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Deal: This source includes a large collection of brief statements on JCPOA from experts in the field. Of the fourteen statements included in the source, only one expert was in support of President Trump's decision to withdraw from the deal. From the point of view of the large majority of the scholars, the United States withdrawal has created a host of problems.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 133.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 158-59.

The world is now more likely to side with Iran on JCPOA because of the troublesome behavior from the United States. Professor Graham Allison cites a statement from a top general in the Israeli Defense Forces who supports the deal, even if he believes it has some flaws.¹³⁰ Professor Burns, a former U.S. ambassador to NATO, also believes the deal has some flaws, but is overall sufficient. Burns adds Trump's withdrawal from JCPOA to a list of other diplomatic exits, such as the exit from the Paris Climate Change Accord. He believes this withdrawal can isolate the United States from European allies. In addition to Professor Graham Allison's reference of an Israeli general, a former Israeli National Security Advisor, Chuck Frelich called the withdrawal from the deal "a historic error".¹³¹ Others called it "a reckless strategic mistake of immense consequence"¹³² and "the most consequential foreign policy blunder yet from an administration that appears determined to undermine U.S. influence around the world".¹³³ Throughout the *Belfer* report, the most reoccurring theme is that the United States has put itself into conflict with its European allies and it has damaged its credibility and standing around the world. The one statement in support of the Trump administration's decision came from Nawaf Obaid, a visiting fellow of *Belfer*, in the intelligence and defense section department. He was equally critical of the Obama administration in signing the deal as the other scholars were of the Trump administration for withdrawing.¹³⁴ His concern is with the expiration dates on the deal and taking advantage of using sanctions to pressure Iran further.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

3.3. Methodology

There is not yet an expansive amount of information available on the specific impact the JCPOA withdrawal will have on various countries. The strongest sources available were analyzed in order to gather the opinion of scholars, government spokespersons, authors, diplomats and others. The relevant data is put into a historical context and current events chronology in order to more meticulously understand the overall point of view of the respective countries. In order to achieve this perspective, a large variety of secondary sources were separately assessed as well.

3.4. Results

Uncertain Future: The JCPOA and Iran's Nuclear and Missile Programmes: In this source, a sufficient history of recent U.S.-Iranian relations is explored. There is also a thorough explanation of JCPOA itself. Crucially for this Thesis, it is noted that the UK, Germany, and France had been negotiating with Iran for some time. This further explains their adamant support for the deal. These are all the countries whose top leaders visited Trump when he decided to withdraw from JCPOA. Israel is given a particular amount of attention due to its ongoing conflict with Iran. Israel is said to be staunchly opposed to JCPOA, as are Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates. These countries have bitter feuds with Iran, and they have formed a partnership in response.¹³⁵ For Israel and Saudi Arabia to form any type of partnership whatsoever speaks to how much they both fear Iran becoming a nuclear power. The emphasis on

¹³⁵ Salama, Vivian. "An Open Secret: Saudi Arabia and Israel Get Cozy." *NBCNews.com*, NBCUniversal News Group, 20 Nov. 2017, www.nbcnews.com/news/mideast/open-secret-saudi-arabia-israel-get-cozy-n821136.

the concern from these four Middle Eastern countries is an important result to analyze because it reveals support for JCPOA withdrawal, in opposition to most of the region. We also learn that while China and Russia are both ostensibly in support of JCPOA, they seem to be more supportive of Iran than are the other parties involved in the deal. Russia and China are the two countries known to be most directly challenging the U.S. led liberal world order, so their willingness to support Iran is expected. Russia's position is not surprising in light of its self-interested position in alignment with Iran in supporting Syria's Assad regime.

Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit (Congressional Research Service): Learning further details of the transition from JPA to JCPOA helps to better illuminate the intent on both sides of the negotiation. There was a build up to JCPOA over many years. JPA was an accomplishment but JCPOA was an even bigger accomplishment. In what follows, further emphasis is placed on the remaining parties' opposition to U.S. withdrawal from the deal.

It is revealed the Trump administration initially supported JCPOA, but then changed positions in 2018. It might be worth looking at why that was the case, because the 2016 Trump campaign was notably opposed to the deal.¹³⁶ Nonetheless, European allies and the P5+1 were not pleased with the final result. The EU, U.K., France and Germany's persistence to maintain the deal despite U.S. withdrawal proves the importance of the deal to those countries. Trump said he would try to work something out but nothing ever came to fruition. He insisted that the European allies needed to fix the deal --a move that put further strains on the Trump administration's

¹³⁶ "Donald Trump's Top 10 Campaign Promises." *PolitiFact*, www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/article/2016/jul/15/donald-trumps-top-10-campaign-promises/.

diplomacy. It is a double negative to withdraw from a deal that was so difficult to accomplish and then demand that your allies fix it in order to satisfy a re-entry.

The economic incentives for particular countries rest on a foundation of security issues that are a concern for the entire international community. This could help to explain why the Trump administration was so willing to withdraw from the deal, but other partners did not follow. If the United States was an important trade partner of Iran, then President Trump wouldn't be as willing to pull out of the deal. The following discussion will analyze specific economic implications for the countries that are opposed to the United States withdrawal from JCPOA.

Impacts of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) On the United States Interest and the Military Balance in the Middle East (Hearings Before The Committee On Armed Services, United States Senate, One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, First Session): Russia and China are arguably the two most important countries from an American perspective. Russia and China's desire to sell weapons to Iran proves they have additional motives besides security. As a consequence, it is in their best interest to help prevent Iran from getting sanctioned by the United States. In China's case, they are doubly incentivized because they are the top importer of Iranian oil.¹³⁷¹³⁸

The discussion of the impact on Israel is also revealing. The proceedings confirmed Congress' insistence upon insuring Israeli security and this suggests that Israel's position towards JCPOA was taken into consideration by the United States when the Trump administration decided to

¹³⁷ Meredith, Sam. "Here's Why China and India Will Remain Defiant amid Threat of U.S. Sanctions for Iranian Oil Imports." *CNBC*, CNBC, 23 Apr. 2019, www.cnbc.com/2019/04/23/iran-oil-sanctions-china-and-india-will-remain-defiant-against-us.html.

¹³⁸ China has been able to continually import from oil from Iran because they received an exemption from the United States.

withdraw. It is also made known in this hearing that it is allegedly not just the Israeli government and Israel's head of state who opposed the deal, but it encompassed a broad spectrum of the Israeli people. There are outliers revealed in the research that will be discussed next, but Israel is reportedly near unified in opposition to JCPOA.

Russia's disapproval of Iran becoming a nuclear power is something also taken into consideration during the hearing. Russia is in a particularly unique situation in their relationship with Iran. They are probably closer to Iran than any of the other P5+1 countries. Despite being close with Iran, Russia is ostensibly in favor of JCPOA. However, some secondary sources that will be assessed in the discussion show Russia may have other additional motives including a potential weapons deal with Iran.

The comments from Professor Walter Russell Mead are incredibly insightful. He points out that the United States will keep a military presence in the Middle East notwithstanding the shale gas revolution in the U.S. That is because the U.S. will seek to protect its allies' access to oil, which underscores the economic necessity that some European countries also might have in supporting JCPOA. As noted in an article from *The Guardian*, Europe gets a lot of their oil from unstable countries in the Middle East.¹³⁹ Iran was not one of the countries mentioned, but it shows that Europe is clearly more in need of oil than the United States is.

¹³⁹ Neslen, Arthur. "Europe's Oil Imports 'Dependent on Unstable Countries'." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 12 July 2016, www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/jul/12/europes-oil-imports-dependent-on-unstable-countries.

Belfer Center Experts on U.S. Withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Deal: In this source it is surmised that the majority of experts interviewed were opposed to the Trump administrations withdrawal from JCPOA. Most of the statements are explicit.

There is also evidence that at least some members of the Israeli security establishment were opposed to the withdrawal. Both a top Israeli general and a former Israeli National Security Advisor staunchly opposed the U.S. withdrawing from the deal. This shows that there is some dissent against the Netanyahu administration's support for the withdrawal. As noted earlier, other sources in this Thesis confirmed that Israeli intelligence revealed Iran has pursued nuclear weapons in the past, an intelligence effort that was motivated by a desire to stop Iran nuclearization.

Former U.S. Ambassador Burn's (an ambassador to NATO) testimony is highly credible when it comes to assessing diplomatic implications. He made clear that the withdrawal can damage relations with European allies. Specifically, he stated that the withdrawal could potentially isolate the United States from its European allies. This is further strong evidence that leans in favor of Trump's withdrawal from JCPOA having a negative impact on American reputation and diplomacy.

3.5. Discussion

Uncertain Future: The JCPOA and Iran's Nuclear and Missile Programmes: The Trump administration has made many decisions that have sowed doubt in the minds of leaders around the world about the ability of the United States to keep their word. As the results from *Uncertain Future* show us, France, Germany, and the UK were all opposed to Trump's withdrawal. There

are a multitude of factors why these countries were more supportive of the deal than the Trump administration. European countries have to deal with figuring out ways to maneuver around the sanctions. One of these mechanisms is called the Instex trade vehicle, which is run mainly by these three European countries:

*The UK foreign secretary, Jeremy Hunt, said: “The entity will facilitate legitimate trade under European and international law. Its immediate focus will be on enabling trade in goods where the immediate need of the Iranian people is greatest, ie foodstuffs, pharmaceuticals and consumer goods.”*¹⁴⁰

The Instex trade vehicle is not the only means by which European countries are trying to assist Iran in sustaining their economy despite U.S. sanctions. France has just recently proposed a 15 billion dollar bailout for Iran in order to help them deal with the losses from sanctions.¹⁴¹ However, unsurprisingly, the Trump administration’s strategy is diametrically opposed to any sort of bailout for Iran, as the United States is trying to put as much pressure on Iran as possible. Europe wants to help Iran buffer this pressure, but it is still unclear if the bailout will ensue since there is a risk that European finance and banking companies who may participate in the bailout could end up themselves being sanctioned by the United States.

Of course, Europe’s assistance of Iran is not strictly due to their good will. As previously discussed, European countries are much more dependent on oil imports than are the United States. For example, the French oil company Total S.A, signed an oil deal with Iran in 2016 to buy hundreds of thousands of barrels of crude oil per day.¹⁴² This clearly gives France and the

¹⁴⁰ Wintour, Patrick. “Europe Sets up Scheme to Get Round U.S. Sanctions on Iran.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 31 Jan. 2019, www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/31/europe-sets-up-scheme-to-get-round-us-sanctions-on-iran.

¹⁴¹ Sanger, David E., et al. “France Dangles \$15 Billion Bailout for Iran in Effort to Save Nuclear Deal.” *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 3 Sept. 2019, www.nytimes.com/2019/09/02/world/middleeast/iran-france-nuclear-deal.html.

¹⁴² Dalton, Matthew, and Inti Landauro. “Iran to Sign Oil Deal With France’s Total.” *The Wall Street Journal*, Dow Jones & Company, 28 Jan. 2016, www.wsj.com/articles/iran-to-sign-oil-deal-with-frances-total-1453988040.

EU extra incentive to allow Iran to sell its oil, and this is not the only deal between Iran and European countries. Additionally, the EU is largely dependent on oil imports, particularly from Russia. The EU imports 69 percent of all their natural gas and 37 percent of that gas comes from Russia.¹⁴³ It is sensible that Europe would not want to let the market get smaller by withholding Iranian oil, especially when the country that dominates the market is one that is often at conflict with NATO and European countries. However, European support for JCPOA did not prevent them from condemning Iran's recent alleged coordinated attack with the Houthis against Saudi oil facilities.¹⁴⁴ This European need for oil could also influence how Russia might manipulate the JCPOA. Although Russia ostensibly opposes United States withdrawal from JCPOA, sanctions on Iran might lead to Russia exporting more oil to Europe. The fewer potential energy providers there are on the market, the greater potential that creates for Russia.

Russia may have other important motivations. Russia and China seem to be in a significantly different position from other parties signed onto the deal. As noted in the results, Russia and China seem to be more supportive of JCPOA than the other parties. As previously mentioned, this is partially due to the increasing ideological conflict between Chinese and Russian nationalism and a United States led liberal world order. Iran has joined the side of China and Russia on more issues than just JCPOA. Not only are Iran and Russia allied with Assad in Syria, but now Iranian, Russian, and Chinese military forces have joined in combined exercises. For the first time since the 1979 Iranian revolution, they are holding joint naval exercises together in the

¹⁴³ Kottasova, Ivanna. "Europe Is Still Addicted to Gas from Russia." *CNNMoney*, Cable News Network, 5 June 2018, money.cnn.com/2018/06/05/news/economy/russia-europe-gas-dependency/index.html.

¹⁴⁴ Al Jazeera. "Germany, UK, France Blame Iran for Saudi Oil Attacks." *News / Al Jazeera*, Al Jazeera, 24 Sept. 2019, www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/09/france-germany-britain-leaders-iran-saudi-oil-attack-190923201421030.html.

Northern Indian Ocean and the Oman Sea.¹⁴⁵ As Chinese power increases, China's allies become bolder, knowing that American dominance is now starting to be challenged by China.¹⁴⁶ This new naval alliance is an example of political partnering to undermine U.S. leadership.

The U.S. withdrawal from JCPOA holds importance for Israel, Saudi Arabia, the U.A.E. and Bahrain for reasons other than those espoused by the U.S. The other countries involved in the study consider the withdrawal to have a significant impact on their affairs, but from a negative standpoint. The Middle Eastern countries seen through the lens of this particular source believe the withdrawal from JCPOA will have a positive impact. None of them seem concerned with anything other than how JCPOA ostensibly affects their national security. The security concerns of the Middle Eastern countries are prioritized more than any other party. The United States withdrawal is based on a perceived security strategy as well, but the United States is in a less pressured circumstance than are the Middle Eastern countries simply because of geography. The Middle Eastern countries are in closer proximity to Iran. They are also engaged in conflicts related to Iran that are very close to, or in, their own countries. This is a different dynamic for them than that of the United States, because all military conflict with Iran occurs near their borders, not in the West.

The relations between the Gulf-states,¹⁴⁷ Iran and Israel are volatile. As noted in the literature review, Israel has created a precedent of striking nuclear reactors. They struck reactors in both

¹⁴⁵ O'Connor, Tom. "Can Iran Get China and Russia's Military Support? U.S. Rivals Play a Cautious Game in a Dangerous Spot." *Newsweek*, 23 Sept. 2019, www.newsweek.com/iran-russia-china-military-support-ties-1460850.

¹⁴⁶ There is significant evidence of a Chinese challenge to American hegemony. One major factor is China's Belt Road Initiative (BRI). BRI is a global development project that has been rapidly signing on new countries to the project. China recently signed Iraq into the BRI, further signaling a potential change of leadership in the Middle Eastern region.

¹⁴⁷ Qatar is an exception because they trade with Iran. This is also why the other Gulf-states as well as other countries imposed a blockade against Qatar.

Iraq and Syria. Israel and Iran have been threatening each other for years. There are plenty of threats between the United States and Iran as well, but it doesn't feel quite as urgent and visceral as the feud between Iran and Israel. Most Americans don't fear an invasion. The same cannot be said for the citizenry of Israel, Iran, and the Gulf-states. For Israel, and the Gulf states, the JCPOA didn't go far enough in restricting Iran from building nuclear weapons and other armaments.

Iran Nuclear Agreement and U.S. Exit (Congressional Research Service):

In this report, emphasis is placed on the Trump administration's concern with JCPOA's narrow scope of sanctions, such relief giving Iran the ability to pursue nefarious activity. The Trump administration also stresses its concern with Iran's capability to produce ballistic missiles without restriction. Thus there is a pattern of broad based opposition to withdrawal from the deal related to security and support for the deal related to strategic or economic advantage.

The Trump's administration's concern over Iran's ability to produce ballistic missiles is unreasonable and not in line with historical precedent. Throughout history, countries usually only submit to being permanently disarmed if they have been defeated in war.

This source discusses the position of the European countries as well. The EU opposes Trump's withdrawal partially because it has an economic incentive. The EU is one of Iran's top-three trade partners.¹⁴⁸ Notably, the other two top trade partners are China and the United Arab Emirates. The UAE's opposition to the deal, in the context of being a trade partner with Iran

¹⁴⁸ "European Commission Directorate-General for Trade." *Iran - Trade - European Commission*, May 2019, ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/iran/.

conflicts with my Thesis (which posits that the U.S. opposed the deal because they have less to lose) in that UAE opposes the deal when its security is much more threatened. China and the EU are economically incentivized to encourage easier trade with Iran and support JCPOA, but the United Arab Emirates is also economically incentivized and it opposes JCPOA. This can most certainly be attributed to the exceedingly sour relations between Iran and the United Arab Emirates, despite being top trade partners.

The UAE's opposition to the JCPOA highlights the complexity of intra-regional conflict in the Middle East, and undermines a simplistic single or dominant factor theoretical assessment of the US motivation to withdraw that is focused on in this Thesis. If relations deteriorate to the point of war then war will often get in the way of trade, as countries at war would often impose a blockade against one another. The UAE obviously has a heightened geographic risk of attack from Iran, and it could be expected that the UAE would want the sorts of further limitations on Iran military proclivities (e.g., restrictions on anti ballistic missiles) articulated by the Trump administration. Notably Saudi and Emirati forces are fighting against Iranian backed Houthi forces in Yemen. So, this is somewhat different from being in a real war, but highlights that economic incentives and the degree of risk of injury, are independent variables to be assessed in judging what factor or factors still slightly disproves part of this Thesis (that the US withdrawal is influenced by the remoteness of risk). The UAE's trading partner status with Iran is not enough to outweigh its need for security and its efforts to broaden support among affected nations. It shows that economics are not necessarily a core incentive, standing alone, in supporting or opposing the deal.

Impacts of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) On the United States Interest and the Military Balance in the Middle East (Hearings Before The Committee On Armed Services, United States Senate, One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, First Session): The most essential piece of information derived from this source was that Russia and China have an interest in selling weapons to Iran. China is already a major trade partner with Iran, particularly with oil. Russia already has a strategic alliance with Iran in Syria. Also, all three countries are opposed to an American led liberal world order. Adding a weapons partnership to this mix forms a tripartite alliance. Putting the issue of security aside, this information clarifies that Russia and China have the most to lose of all the P5+1 parties involved in the agreement.

However, there have been reports of Russia possibly being incentivized to support Trump's withdrawal. An article from *Foreign Policy* magazine opines that the Russian-Iranian partnership is currently tenuous, but Trump's withdrawal from JCPOA could possibly help to strengthen the strategic relationship between Iran and Russia.¹⁴⁹

According to an article from *The National Interest*:

“ [Russian] Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov was in chain talks with European leaders discussing ways to save the deal without the United States. But Moscow was the least vocal among the dissatisfied—since no Russian vital interests are at stake and some actual benefits emerge. Consider this: after America's abrupt exit, Iran suddenly looks good. Uncertainty over tensions force oil prices to go up. Europe is now more distrustful towards Washington and turmoil among NATO allies is inevitable.”¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ Erlich, Reese. “Trump Is Driving Iran into Russia's Arms.” *Foreign Policy*, 29 May 2019, foreignpolicy.com/2019/05/29/trump-is-driving-iran-into-russias-arms-nuclear-deal-putin-rouhani-sanctions/.

¹⁵⁰ Sushentsov, Andrey. “A Russian View on America's Withdrawal from the Iran Deal.” *The National Interest*, The Center for the National Interest, 18 May 2018, nationalinterest.org/feature/russian-view-americas-withdrawal-the-iran-deal-25836.

Thus according to the aforementioned sources, Russia's position on Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA is specious. The perspective that Russia is currently friendly with Iran, so it would oppose the withdrawal, is based on a normative assessment. The perspective that Russia would support the withdrawal is a situation that entails more scrutiny of Russia's strategy. Both perspectives are possible: Russia could be secretly supporting the withdrawal for all the aforementioned reasons (trade benefit, political support of its ally) or they could be sincerely opposing it, it is not possible to make this conclusion.

Belfer Center Experts on U.S. Withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Deal: There was further evidence of the withdrawal being bad for diplomacy with European allies. However, the more poignant piece of information was the two different accounts of Israeli security officials who opposed Trump's withdrawal.

Israel has probably been most vocal country in their opposition to JCPOA, and therefore their support for America's withdrawal as well makes sense. Learning in this source that there are high-ranking voices of dissent begs the question of how exactly to determine a country's position on JCPOA. Is it based on government's view only, and if so then which parts of government? Is it based on citizenry? Here, it is important to learn of the voices of dissent against Israel's position on JCPOA but for sake of simplicity it is best to mostly consider the government's position, as that is the one that most directly impacts the policy positioning.

3.6. Conclusion

Each of the countries are different in terms of their positioning and orientation toward JCPOA America's withdrawal assessed in this Thesis. The Middle East countries that are opposed to the deal as well as the United States are mostly concerned with security related issues. However, the security implications for the Middle Eastern countries are objectively more existential than they are for the United States. The European countries are concerned with security as well, but they are also motivated by an intention to see to it that limitations imposed on Iran do not damage it. There was some evidence provided that the European countries could possibly have economic incentives as well. They undoubtedly have more of an economic incentive than does the United States. The United States has had sanctions on Iran since Clinton signed an executive order imposing them in 1995.¹⁵¹

Then there are those countries, in terms of their relationship to Iran, that challenge US for world leadership. Russia and China also have incentives to support JCPOA; both countries have intentions of selling weapons to Iran, and China is the top importer of Iranian oil. There is a possibility Russia is secretly and strategically supportive of the U.S. withdrawal from JCPOA. However, with an alliance with Iran in Syria, JCPOA is more important for Russia than the United States.

The ramifications of JCPOA are important for everyone connected to the deal and potentially for the entire world. There is a significant amount of importance for the United States, but it

¹⁵¹ Purdum, Todd S. "CLINTON TO ORDER A TRADE EMBARGO AGAINST TEHERAN." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 1 May 1995, www.nytimes.com/1995/05/01/world/clinton-to-order-a-trade-embargo-against-teheran.html.

mostly is based on security issues. All the other countries have security concerns as well as other concerns, or their security concern was objectively higher than that of the United States.

The United States withdrawal has affected the U.S. to a lesser extent than other countries: it has affected the dynamics of United States military interactions with Iran and by damaging American diplomatic credibility in general and with JCPOA partners in particular. It does not directly affect the United States economy and the American homeland is not in immediate danger. This is not the case for the rest of the countries analyzed in this report. Russia is the country that comes closest to the United States in terms of JCPOA holding little significance to its agenda, but its partnership with Iran in Syria and its desire to sell weapons to Iran is enough to show that there is more that Russia is concerned with than just the potential of an Iranian nuclear state.

Overall, the evidence reviewed here conclusively shows that of all the countries analyzed in this report, the deal was least important for the United States. The United States is primarily concerned with the potential of an Iranian nuclear state. This is why it was so easy for Trump to withdraw from the deal.

This research did lead to a potential for other topics. Something that would be interesting to look at would be how Trump's withdrawal from JCPOA affected other countries that were not analyzed in this report. The countries analyzed in this report were arguably the most relevant, but it is an important issue for many other countries as well.

3.7. Thesis Portfolio Conclusion

3.7.1. Chapter I

In Thesis I, the impact that American military policy in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria has on Muslim public opinion was explored. A general conclusion on all the countries combined was given: these military activities have a negative impact on Muslim public opinion. However, the assessment of each country had slightly different results.

Negative, positive, and indifferent results were categorized. Of the data that was assessed, a majority was negative. In Afghanistan, a significant percentage of people were recorded to have preferred economic assistance as opposed to military assistance. Whether Afghans supported the war effort or not, 35 percent rated the progress of reconstruction as fair and 32 percent rated it as poor. It should be noted that it is perhaps incomplete to assess data pertaining to reconstruction of a war that has not yet fully ended, but the data is still reliable.

Another perspective that was considered in order to help indirectly determine how negative Muslim public opinion about American military policy is viewed was to consider support for Al-Qaeda in some different countries throughout the Middle East. Support for Al-Qaeda is not strong relative to assessing other normal types of data, but when considering the popularity of a violent extremist group, lower numbers held a stronger bearing than they usually would and were still deemed to be negative. Support for Al-Qaeda and Osama Bin-Laden was between fourteen to 27 percent, except for higher numbers in Egypt and Palestine whom 44 percent and 56 percent have a positive or somewhat positive view of Osama Bin-Laden.

In assessing the Syria-related data it was discovered that a significant percentage of Muslims throughout the Middle East oppose U.S. coalition bombing of ISIS. To confirm that this disapproval was not mostly made up of extremists or extremist supporters who happened to be polled, general support for ISIS was lower than was opposition to U.S. coalition bombing. Within this same data, 73 percent found American foreign policy to be either negative or somewhat negative. Other ISIS related data was looked at as well; a majority of those polled who supported ISIS did so for a military or political reason. A very small percentage claimed religious motivation as their reason for supporting ISIS.

Additionally, when Muslim respondents were polled about a host of issues from opinion on American drone usage and President Trump's foreign policy to the chance for peace democracy in Iraq, the responses were largely negative. There was some positive and indifferent data, but not as much as the negative. Therefore, the conclusion did support the hypothesis.

These findings showed that while many factors can influence a negative impact on Muslim public opinion, American military policy was the strongest factor. Muslim public opinion evidences that American led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are highly unpopular. American drone activity was not assessed from a standpoint of drone activity in each respective country, but in total usage it tended to be largely opposed by Muslim countries. This means that not only are more formal wars that include ground troops and traditional weaponry opposed by Muslim public opinion, but strict drone warfare was opposed as well.

Hypothetically, there is a lot that can be done with information such as this. It can be used to directly influence government policy. However, the government has most likely already reviewed this data. There is only one other way in which this data can be used: it can be added to the collection of similar data and used to help inform the general population. It can be made available to high school students as well as university students. It can be made available to local libraries; or, it can be made available to an online network of sorts which regular people have access to. The reason for doing this would be to attempt to use information to help allow for a better-informed public regarding foreign policy decisions in the Middle East. Realistically, it doesn't seem feasible that this would really happen or achieve the intended result. The data would need to have a sense of unique credibility-which it does not have-in order to trigger the motivation necessary for such a distribution effort. Additionally, even if the information did become easily accessible and widespread, it would most likely not have a major impact upon the population.

3.7.2. Chapter II

Thesis II explored the causation of anti-American rhetoric in the Middle East. Specifically, it compared the spread of American culture-which was labeled "Western cultural diffusion"- to American foreign policy. In order to determine which had a stronger influence on anti-Americanism, relevant literature and sources were analyzed.

The piece of literature most directly supportive of Western cultural diffusion as the main catalyst for anti-Americanism was Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations*. He references wars that seem to be divided between cultural lines and religious conflicts in order to prove his theory. He also points to ideological divides as well.

In an academic study that directly assessed *Clash of Civilizations* titled *Islam and the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Theory*, the researchers discover results that are mixed. The researchers determined in this report that a cultural clash does exist, but it is not the main causation of conflict between the East and West. The researchers considered that to be a simplistic way of viewing the situation.

In Edward Said's *Orientalism*, there is a strong overlap between western cultural diffusion and western foreign policy. He emphatically acknowledges western cultural diffusion, but considers it a product of imperialism and colonialism. Since the cultural diffusion is a byproduct of imperialism and colonialism and can be more related to foreign policy, *Orientalism* was determined to be overall supportive of the thesis statement.

One of the most telling sources analyzed was Osama Bin Laden's *Letter to America*. The letter included accusations lodged against both American culture as well as American and Western foreign policy. However, it was determined that Osama bin Laden placed an emphasis on his dislike of foreign policy much more so than on his opposition to American or Western culture.

Another notorious antagonist of America, Hassan Nasrallah-the leader of Hezbollah, was also assessed. The book *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* is an entire book dedicated to the notorious leader's writings, speeches, and interviews. In it, he continually expresses contempt for Western foreign policy-particularly Israel and America, but he does not once speak of an opposition to western culture. So, it was straightforward that foreign policy is the leading contributor towards anti-Americanism within Hezbollah.

Media, Culture, and Society in Iran: Living with globalization and the Islamic State explored different aspects of society within Iran. The source itself did not discuss foreign policy much, but in assessing Iran's response to Western and American culture, the results were mixed. The assessment did not seem to clearly support the thesis or opposition to it.

Last, in a congressional hearing in which multiple politicians and academic experts spoke, more evidence was found to be supportive of the thesis than oppositional to the thesis. At one point in the hearing, it is even noted that American culture is highly appreciated in the Middle East in addition to American foreign policy being the main driver behind anti-Americanism.

A few conclusions can be drawn from the results of Thesis II. There is a distinction between what was labeled within the report as organic Western cultural diffusion and Western cultural diffusion that is a byproduct of foreign policy. The latter is certainly more deleterious but ultimately, neither is shown to be as deleterious as the direct influence of foreign policy.

As with Thesis I, there does not seem to be anything that this information can realistically be applied to in order to achieve any sort of political reform. However, it can be used in order to further propagate objective information to the general public.

3.7.3. Chapter III

Thesis III examined the implications that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) had on a multitude of relevant countries. Some countries are directly involved with the deal and others are countries are highly impacted by the deal. The thesis compared the implications of each respective country or group of countries to the implications of JCPOA for the United States. It ultimately concluded that the United States had significantly less to risk than did other countries connected to JCPOA. Other countries that were involved with JCPOA, or connected to the deal through relational concerns, had similar security concerns that the United States did, but also had multiple other concerns as well: Iran's well-being, economic relationships, weapons deals, and more immediate security concerns due to close proximity.

The main point that was drawn from this determination was that the United States had significantly less at stake- both from similar security angles in comparing Israel and the Gulf States as well as differing angles in comparing Europe, Russia, and China-than did other countries involved with or concerned by JCPOA. Therefore, it made it a lot easier for the Trump administration to oppose and withdraw from the deal. It was not only the fact that the United States had less at stake that led to the withdrawal, but also the isolationist style of diplomacy the Trump administration has implemented-as evidenced by this, as well as the large decrease in funding of the state department and the withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement, in addition

to generally a more aggressive approach to Iran that proves this stance. Ultimately, this means that the United States would not have withdrawn from JCPOA if either a different administration were in the White House or if the United States had more at stake concerning their relationship with Iran.

This comparative angle has not been discussed much at all. Trump's withdrawal from JCPOA is often explained as just Trump being either unhinged or tough, depending on the political perspective, but this thesis can be used to show that there probably was more strategy that went into the withdrawal than most would believe, whether one agrees with JCPOA or not. Perhaps this information can lead to more discussion of why exactly the United States would withdraw from such a lauded deal and how that withdrawal is impacting other countries.

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Vita

Education

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, Miami, Florida, B.A. May 2017

Bachelors of Arts, Asian and International Studies

Dean's list every full time semester since re-admission to University.

Johns Hopkins University, Washington D.C./online, M.A. Current.

Masters in Government

Experience

FIU MIDDLE EAST STUDIES, Miami, Florida September 2016 - December 2016

Research Assistant

Detailed research of ISIS attacks.

Detailed research of the refugee crisis.

Research of Iranian Tax Laws.

Searching and locating useful sources.

Analytical reports.

RETHINK ENERGY FLORIDA, Tallahassee, Florida May 2016 - August 2016

Policy Coordinator

Fundraising.

Public Speaking.

Organizing meetings to discuss environmental issues.

Getting petitions signed to influence legislature.

Analyzing environmental issues and writing reports.

Social media networking.

Event planning and coordination.

Meeting with local politicians to discuss environmental issues.

ANNETTE TADDEO FOR CONGRESS, Miami, Florida February 2016 - June 2016

Intern

Policy research on the local and national level.

Offered policy formulation that included suggesting sources and producing a report for those sources.

Donor research.

Produced the daily media telegram for the campaign's political network.

Assisted with an accumulation of social media topics.

Helped to organize and run political events in which many politicians were in attendance.

Phone banking.

Researched and enlisted professionals to give discussions on certain political issues in order to inform the candidate.