Questions in Politics

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE

Georgia Political Science Association

Volume VIII 2021

Questions in Politics Editorial Team

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Georgia Political Science Association

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Volume VIII

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Preface

Volume VIII of *Questions in Politics*, like most other things in 2020 and 2021, is a testament to the human spirit. Like previous issues of *QiP*, the articles appearing in these pages were first presented at the 2020 Georgia Political Science Association annual meeting. However, unlike any GPSA meeting before, the 2020 meeting was virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to the incredible leadership of Keith Lee and others who helped him organize the Zoom-based conference, the meeting was a clear success. In a moment where there would have been every reason to call off the meeting entirely, GPSA persevered and had an excellent meeting with great political science being presented and discussed.

While we are thrilled to present Volume VIII, we have bittersweet news as well. The long-time copy editor of *Questions in Politics*, Dr. James Larry Taulbee, is stepping down from the *QiP* editorial team. Dr. Taulbee began his association with GPSA at the second meeting. He made the motion to begin having the "annals" (*QiP*'s predecessor) printed by UGA Press and, in 1973, made the motion to initiate a journal for GPSA. As he stated in his letter to us announcing with departure:

> *As a faculty member at Emory, the GPSA really did not offer any career advancement opportunities for me, but I truly connected with people who wanted to advance the footprint. They were friends and scholars. The GPSA has been blessed with leadership with vision. That had to happen within the University system. But, as a true outsider, I have been an observer of progress and tried to keep a connection.*

There is no doubt GPSA and *QiP* are better for having Dr. Taulbee's engagement and leadership. On behalf of GPSA, we thank Dr. Taulbee for sharing his expertise and time with us and wish him luck and good health in his future in endeavors.

About the Issue

The first paper is entitled, "Are Pandemics Petri Dishes for Regime Change? Were the Spanish Flu and Other Diseases Correlated with Autocratization or Democratization?" by John A. Tures, Caleb Tyler, Olivia Hanners, Andrew Valbuena, Taren McGhee, Casey Evans, Kristina Calixto, and Maalik Baisden. This paper explores the association between pandemic events and their effects on regime types. Using data from the Spanish Flu, Asian Flu, and Hong Kong Flu, the authors find that regime change is not generally correlated with pandemics. They explore this further by using case studies and make connections to the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, this paper is timely, relevant, and readable.

The second paper, "Blogs and Podcasts: A Study of the Use of Significant Learning Experiences to Spark Global Engagement," by Eleanor Morris and Tamra Ortgies-Young, is a SoTL piece exploring the connection between "significant course experiences" and student engagement. Using surveys with both close- and open-ended responses to capture students' attitudes, the findings in this paper suggest that "pushed students to engage more deeply with their own cultural biases and allowed them to think more deeply about how their attitudes color their views of the world and that of others." The results in this paper are notable because the student-subjects are situated in very different institutional contexts, but the effects of the course experience were notable in both settings. Evidence in this paper will help anyone looking to deepen their students' engagement with course materials and their own cultural contexts.

The third and final paper is "The Culture Gap: The Role of Culture in Successful Refugee Resettlement," by Chelsea Riley. Riley's paper is the Pajabi Award winner for best undergraduate paper award at the 2020 annual meeting as voted on by the Pajabi committee. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods, Riley examines refugee events in numerous cases between 1970 and 2016. Using history, cultural factors, and refugee integration policies and process, Riley shows that cultural distance is negatively associated with education, employment, and sanitation of living conditions, while it is positively associated with xenophobia within the country of resettlement. These findings are important because they highlight the extent to which culture and its associated effects matter in refugee resettlement programs.

Thanks to the Reviewers

As always, we are deeply indebted to the reviewers for Volume VIII. We received an excellent slate of papers for this volume, which—of course—required us to find an excellent slate of reviewers. In addition to ourselves, each paper received a peer review from a scholar whose expertise could speak to the quality and significance of the submitted manuscript. Our reviewers' expertise and suggested edits and revisions certainly increased the quality of the work you see in this journal. Being a journal reviewer is often a thankless task, and—while it may not be much—we want to extend our heartiest "thank you" to our reviewers. For those who were not asked to review in 2020 and 2021, do not fear: your time will come.

The reviewers and their affiliation for Volume VIII of *Questions in Politics* are as follows:

Charity Butcher
Kennesaw State University

Joseph Trein
University of Geneva

Lorraine McIlrath
NUI Galway

John LeJeune
Georgia Southwestern State University

Jonathan Schwartz
SUNY New Paltz

To close, we are thrilled that the 2021 GPSA conference will—once again—be back in Savannah. For those who present, please consider submitting your work to *QiP.* To find more information about submitting to *QiP*, please consult the GPSA website. The deadline for submissions for Volume IX is December 31, 2021.

Sean Richey & Ben Taylor

Questions in Politics

Official Journal of the Georgia Political Science Association
Volume VIII

Are Pandemics Petri Dishes For Regime Change? Were the Spanish Flu and Other Diseases Correlated With Autocratization Or Democratization?

John A. Tures[1] **and Caleb Tyler, Olivia Hanners, Andrew Valbuena, Taren McGhee, Casey Evans, Kristina Calixto and Maalik Baisden**[2]

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ABSTRACT

Many arguments in the media, and even in academia, assume that the Spanish Flu weakened, even upended, governments. Some presume that authoritarian regimes deal with diseases better due to their greater coercive capacity to enforce policies. Our analysis looks at the three deadliest pandemics of the 20^{th} Century: Spanish Flu (1918-1920), Asian Flu (1957-1958), and Hong Kong Flu (1968-1969). Using Polity IV data, we find that regime changes are rare in all three pandemics and less likely to occur than for a control group of comparable periods without the significant disease. For the few cases of government change emerging during the Spanish Flu, the trend was toward democracy, while the reverse happened for the other two outbreaks. A closer look at the Western Hemisphere during the 1918-1920 Influenza showed that the country hit the hardest experienced the most significant regime change. Our analysis of the current pandemic shows that while many repressive regimes cracked down on freedoms in 2020 in ways unrelated to stopping the Coronavirus, the trend toward autocracy has been happening over the last 15 years, long before the advent of COVID-19.

Introduction

The view that pandemics topple governments permeates the media and scholarship like a virus. Some infected by this notion believe that authoritarianism is better suited to stop a pandemic than democracy. It begs whether a country needs to adopt the "China Model" of Xi Jinping to be more effective against COVID-19.

My students and I evaluate whether the three most lethal pandemics of the 20^{th} Century (the 1918-1920 Spanish Flu, the Asian Flu of 1957-58, and the Hong Kong Flu of 1968-69) were associated with regime change in general and autocratization in particular. We find that changes in government during these disease-ridden eras are less likely to occur, even compared to a control group of comparable countries in non-pandemic years. We also discover that the country hit hardest by the Spanish Flu in the Western Hemisphere did see a longtime dictator ousted, replaced by a more democratic government. As for COVID-19, the authoritarian surge predates this pandemic. Regime change and autocratization are neither inevitable nor highly likely, in response to a health crisis.

Do Pandemics Promote Authoritarianism?

In the literature on pandemics, Rosenthal and 't Hart (1991) contend that crises contain several distinct features, namely the severity of the threat, the critical factors of the crises remain relatively opaque as well as difficult to discern, and firm pressure to solve the crisis happens in a short period. These disease crises can expose weaknesses in leadership and can bring down regimes (Boin 2008). The question is whether they have done so in prior pandemics and during the time of COVID-19.

Did The Spanish Flu Bring Down Governments And Boost Authoritarianism?

A narrative about the Spanish Flu claims that the illness was responsible for subsequent authoritarianism. "The Spanish Flu and the economic depression that followed led to a wave of nationalism, authoritarianism, and another world war," writes the staff of *The Week* (2020). Opal and Opal (2019) even blame the flu for felling President Woodrow Wilson and several American delegates to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, [1] preventing a lasting peace and stopping Wilson from blocking crippling

[1]Opal and Opal (2019) write that after grappling with flu-like symptoms requiring bed rest, President Woodrow "Wilson was not the same man. He tired easily and quickly lost focus and patience. He seemed paranoid, worried about being spied upon by housemaids. He achieved some of his specific goals but was unable or unwilling to articulate a broader vision for a better world. In other words, he acted like a man with residual neurological problems stemming

reparations on Germany.[2]

Authors of "Preparing For A Post-Pandemic World" in the *Daily Kos* (2020) also connect the Spanish Flu and authoritarianism. "As Colin Kahl and Ariana Berengaut write, '[I]f we want to understand the even darker direction in which the world may be headed, leaders and policymakers ought to pay more attention to the two decades after the influenza pandemic swept the globe. This period, often referred to as the interwar years, was characterized by rising nationalism and xenophobia, the grinding halt of globalization in favor of beggar-thy-neighbor policies, and the collapse of the world economy in the Great Depression. Revolution, civil war, and political instability rocked important nations. The world's reigning liberal hegemon — Great Britain — struggled, and other democracies buckled while rising authoritarian states sought to aggressively reshape the international order in accordance with their interests and values (*Daily Kos* 2020).'"

Morrison's (2020) column interviews Spanish Flu researcher Laura Spinney, who points to world-shaking political consequences in the aftermath of the Spanish Flu, and autocratic actions from South Africa to South Asia.

An oft-cited study from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York examines how the "Spanish Flu" supposedly reshaped Germany's society and political system between 1918 and 1920, as reported by *The Independent* (Lovett 2020). "It showed that voting behaviour was changed in cities with the highest number of influenza fatalities, often in favour of the Nazis."[3]

There was some wartime censorship during the Spanish Flu,[4] and Western leaders like Woodrow Wilson engaged in heavy-handed tactics during the war. But did the influenza of 1918-1920 trigger a wave of authoritarianism?

Contemporary Concerns Over COVID-19 And Autocracy

Bieber (2020) is concerned with the potential for nationalism to produce authoritarianism in the wake of COVID-19. In such scenarios, "governments suspend or reduce democratic freedoms and civil liberties, the rise of biases against some groups associated with the pandemic, the rise of borders and deglobalization, and the politics of fear (Bieber 2020, 1),"[5] though the author does not conclude that such a fate is inevitable.

Trein (2020) compares today's Coronavirus lockdowns in democracies to the 1884 Cholera epidemic. During that time epidemic, people we would identify in today's world as health care providers went to peoples' homes and took the people who were infected away to a secluded area. These healthcare providers had weapons and took these people with force. The place they took them was called a death house. These people did not receive the health care they needed and died very quickly. This is just one example of how cracking down on policies to keep other people safe can ruin a democracy (Trein 2020).

Robie (2020) claims that "many governments have been responding with panic, paranoia and creeping authoritarianism, especially in relation to the freedom of information, media independence, and constructive and active communication, so vital in these crucial times."

In their study of United Kingdom adults, Hartman et al. (2020) find "large scale epidemics of fatal diseases present serious obstacles to social order by producing 'fear, panic, stigma, moralizing, and calls to action.' Effects are most pronounced when a disease is "new, unexpected or particularly devastating (Hartman et al. 2020, 2)." This also has the effect of giving oxygen to xenophobes. "[T]here have also been reports of far-right political groups using the pandemic to promote anti-immigration and anti-Muslim attitudes (Hartman et al. 2020, 3)."[6] In her book *Pale Rider*, Laura Spinney claims the Spanish Flu helped produce apartheid in South Africa and anti-colonial feelings in India, stoked by the ineffective British response for the Indian people (Morrison 2020) and generated the targeting of Jews across Europe.

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from a recent bout of Spanish flu. Over the next crucial weeks, Wilson lost his best chance to win the peace by agreeing in principle to draconian terms favored by France. The final settlement punished Germany with a formal admission of guilt, enormous reparations, and the loss of about 10 percent of its territory."

[2]This ignores the fact that America was up against more revenge-minded European nations, and the USA was incapable of imposing its demands on its allies, much less the defeated.

[3]Of course, the Federal Reserve study does not explain why, if the Spanish Flu was so prevalent, why more countries did not "go Nazi," or why it took Germany more than a decade to make the transition to totalitarianism. A stronger case can be made for Italy, which had a Spanish Flu death rate almost 2.5 times higher than Germany (Johnson and Mueller 2002), and had a Fascist rebellion begin during that influenza outbreak, culminating in Benito Mussolini's rise to power by 1922, and declaration of dictatorship by 1925 (History.com Editors 2009).

[4]Spain's Monarch did come down with the Spanish Influenza (Morrison 2020), and the country's death rate was higher than the average of Polity IV countries, with Johnson and Mueller's (2002) data.

[5]Bieber adds that such nationalism is not the consequence of the pandemic; the Coronavirus merely reinforces this nationalism, which was present before 2020.

[6]The RWA (right-winged authoritarians) and social dominance orientation (SDO) are two "individual-level-right-wing dimensions, as robust, independent predictors of prejudice and intolerance" (Hartman et al. 2020, 3). These groups believe that the government should have more control. This vastly contradicts many peoples' views and desires. Therefore, after observing these two groups, Hartman hypothesizes that "The (COVID-19) threat will moderate relationship between RWA and ethnocentric attitudes, particularly nationalism and attitudes toward immigrants" (Hartman et al. 2020, 6). Hartman believes that the threat of COVID-19 will moderate the division between those who want more government control (RWA) and those who do not want more government control (ethnocentric). SDO impacts were also less than RWA increases during COVID-19.

A Contrast In Pandemic Crisis Management in China: SARS and COVID-19

There are claims that China could be the bigger winner in the wake of the Coronavirus. Coflan (2020) contends that Xi Jinping will be able to emerge from the pandemic stronger than ever due to the power of the state-owned enterprises, nationalist sentiment, and the ability to portray America's stumbling response as an incompetent rival. *The Economic Times* (2020) claims that Xi Jinping was "arguing that the party's success in containing the virus shows the superiority of its authoritarian system." Moreover, others touted the Chinese measures to combat the spread of COVID-19, claiming they were better compared to the United States (Castanon and Esomonu 2020), though it assumes China's data on the virus and victims are more accurate than the regime's initial propaganda regarding the outbreak (FP Editors 2020).

Beliefs in China's success predate Xi Jinping's tenure. Jonathan Schwartz (2012) examines Taiwan and China and the SARS epidemic. He begins with this question: why do some countries more effectively respond to crises than others? He focuses on the "authoritarian advantage," China possessed. This variable is broken into three parts: centralized decision-making powers, public support, and control of the mass media.

During the first outbreak of SARS in Taiwan, the country did an extremely effective job at containing and limiting the virus. The second outbreak was much worse than the first. A hospital closed, and all of the patients went to other hospitals, spreading the virus. Schwartz (2012) uses a graph to show Taiwan and China cases of SARS. China had 349 dead while Taiwan had 37 dead. However, Taiwan had more deaths per capita and was an island, so it should have isolated itself better from the pandemic.

Schwartz (2012, 315) praised China's SARS response. "China's regime was able to effectively centralize decision-making powers, rally public support and control the message presented by the mass media with the result an effective pandemic response." He even concluded that compared to other arguments about effectiveness in the SARS response, "The authoritarian advantage argument carries more weight."

"Globally, [this] raises inevitable comparison with more authoritarian governments such as China that exercise far tighter control over the production and regulation of data and the digital realm," write Dodds et al. (2020). "Will all this provoke demands for a more Chinese state monopoly capitalist model of governance rather than the state-assisted free-market of the United States?"

Yet Schwartz does not conclude that all countries must be authoritarian to fight disease. "However, the problems associated with taking strong, centralized and coercive actions does not necessarily doom democratic regimes to failure in the face of infectious disease outbreaks (or other crisis situations). Rather, the priority must be to ensure that the state, when faced with a potential crisis, has developed options that compensate for the authoritarian advantage (Schwartz 2012, 330)."

For states like Taiwan and other democracies, Schwartz has in mind to engage their publics better and develop clear control lines over policy. "The state must educate the public about the advantages in crisis situations of a centralized decision-making process with clear bureaucratic lines of control that facilitate smooth and rapid decision making, coupled with public cooperation. As part of this education, the state must enhance public trust by developing mechanisms to increase government transparency and interaction with the public. Much of this public trust can be achieved through providing the media with greater access to the leadership, coupled with a concerted effort by the state to reach out to the public (Schwartz 2012, 330)."

However, supporters of Xi Jinping's China response may discover that the current leader of the CCP did not fare as well as his predecessors did in the wake of SARS. Lampinen (2020) questions whether China's response displayed any "authoritarian advantage." For those who claim that authoritarians can respond better to crises due to their centralized decision-making, control of information, cover from public demands, and ability to take coercive measures, COVID-19 exposed the weaknesses of Xi Jinping's China. Unlike previous governments, which took on SARS publicly and mobilized an adequate response, Xi Jinping's political climate inhibited the flow of information and created a culture of fear among government officials (Lampinen 2020).

Unlike the consistency in China's anti-SARS campaign, Xi Jinping's regime shifted from controlling the spread to promoting social stability to prioritize casualty mitigation. Economic growth from travel and celebrations of the lunar New Year received greater priority, and little effort was made to quell meetings in Wuhan of congresses and delegate conferences, as well as party events (Lampinen 2020). When Wuhan doctors shared their concerns about a possible new SARS, they were harshly censored. However, the ability of the Chinese people to follow the trends of new forms of private communication showed a discrepancy with the public information that discounted human viral transmission, though evidence existed to the contrary. Though the WHO and China's government praised the country's lockdown of Wuhan, which had its problems (five million fleeing the planned lockdown, producing further transmission), such extreme measures would not be necessary if the government's earlier response had not been so inept, Lampinen (2020) argues.

"This opens up for discussion whether it is at all relevant to speak of a single 'authoritarian advantage' (or 'disadvantage,' for that matter) in crisis management," Lampinen (2020) writes. "Different political systems simply have different inherent strengths and weaknesses, which leads them to handle crises in different ways without necessarily being 'advantaged.'"

The Case For Post-Coronavirus Political Rights and Civil Liberties

Pandemics could challenge democracies, especially when it appears that the best methods of fighting the disease involve taking steps that may restrict a number of freedoms that citizens enjoy. Moreover, politics are often at the heart of border controls, quarantining population, and public information management.

"The decision to impose border controls, the quarantining of population, the management of public information and attitudes towards others are never free from such things," Dodds et al. (2020) write. "The measures were severe: the right to move, to assemble, to demonstrate and to attend religious services was quashed."

However, democracies have been able to solve these very dilemmas, preserving rights while protecting their people. "We have witnessed some liberal democratic states such as Iceland and New Zealand being praised for their decisive action and expressions of collective solidarities (Dodds et al. 2020)."

In the meantime, Russia and China have attempted to exploit the situation via medical supply diplomacy. Nevertheless, in their attempts to demonstrate a greater degree of authoritarian competence over democratic disarray, these undemocratic countries have failed.

"China sent facemasks, PPE and expert medical advice to heavily affected countries such as Italy," writes Dodds et al. (2020). However, "Italian journalists are warning their readers that Russian and Chinese medical assistance is not being properly scrutinized and that there is a real danger." The charm offensive to demonstrate proof of Chinese manufacturing prowess failed in Northern Europe too. "Others such as the Netherlands have also pointed out the prevalence of defective masks and publicly rejecting Chinese products as inadequate."

In addition, countries with authoritarian systems had more restrictions than liberal democratic-style governments. Countries with more intensive restrictions had higher death tolls (Trein 2020). Sokhey (2020) provides the example of Russia's Vladimir Putin. "Often touted as a model of authoritarian stability, Putin's Russia is battling a seemingly bleak future with dealing with COVID-19. In addition to the pandemic, pension problems, underfunding health care, and the "healthcare system struggles to provide adequate care, elites often prefer to be treated abroad, domestic observers note (Sokhey 2020)."

Could Free States Handle Pandemics Better? The Literature Is Mixed.

Schwartz's critique of Taiwan's handling of SARS is hardly the only example of a democratic country struggling with a transborder disease. Reeskens and Muis (2020) find that democracies may have high support from the governed and high expectations from the public. Moreover, a gap between demands and the achievement of goals can certainly hamper an effective response to the pandemic. During COVID-19, the initial burst of support for the regime was more about an emotional response to the existential threat. There are concerns that such a national response will be temporary, giving way to civil unrest and challenges as the public tires of such restrictions on freedom (Boin and 't Hart 2020).

Fukuyama (2020, 26) claims, "It is already clear why some countries have done better than others in dealing with the crisis so far, and there is every reason to think those trends will continue. It is not a matter of regime type. Some democracies have performed well, but others have not, and the same is true for autocracies."

His main argument involves determining what factors make a country more susceptible to collapse amid a pandemic. He argues that based on the current COVID-19 pandemic, collapse does not depend upon government as much as it does on the "state capacity, social trust, and leadership." (Fukuyama 2020) In each of these sections, he explores countries that handled each aspect well and poorly. For example, under state capacity, he praised nations such as China and other Asian countries for decreasing cases and restarting their economy. Moreover, he criticizes leaders who attempted to downplay COVID-19's severity.

"The stress has been so hard that very few are likely to pass." Fukuyama (2020, 31) reveals. "To handle the initial stages of the crisis successfully, countries needed not only capable states and adequate resources but also a great deal of social consensus and competent leaders who inspired trust. This need was met by South Korea, which delegated management of the epidemic to a professional health bureaucracy, and by Angela Merkel's Germany."

Boin and 't Hart (2020) find that democracies that handled the pandemic better in 2020 are not only accountable, as well as adaptable. They found that New Zealand was an early success story due to their focus on early pandemic eradication and testing, not just for their island status (as Taiwan discovered during SARS). Canada received mixed reviews; while the country did focus on getting its citizens back and managing the crisis, they put off the strict restrictions until later. Though Tellier (2020) gives the Canadian response to the economic fallout stronger marks than the Great Recession period (Great Financial Crisis or GFC), Brock and Turnbull (2020) fault the parliamentary system for a well-intentioned bipartisan compromise that reduced legislative oversight and accountability.

Boin and 't Hart (2020) give strong negative reviews to the United Kingdom's "herd immunity" failure that led to so many casualties, as well as the weakness of the National Health System (NHS), a victim of austerity programs. They also fault Brazil and the United States for poor performances, the latter owing to Trump's delegitimization of experts (Boin, Lodge and Luesink

2020), and point to poor polling for the U.K., USA, and Brazilian leaders. At the same time, the authors show strong public support in surveys for New Zealand and the Netherlands, and Scotland. Though Boin, Lodge, and Luesink (2020) find all regimes struggling with testing, tracking, and tracing, experts needing better information, and some groups being ignored, they find that effective messaging can overcome these problems if the regime's words provide clarity, empathy, actionable advice, and good timing, able to connect to multiple audiences.

Perhaps this accounts for Lampinen's (2020) discovery that no one type of regime (democracy or autocracy) has an inherent advantage in pandemic response, and each type of government has its types of strengths and weaknesses. However, our research examines whether this is the case or not.

Theories and Hypotheses

This section details the theories and hypotheses from the literature concerning regimes in a pandemic, then and now. We evaluate whether regime change is correlated with the severe spread of disease, and autocratization is also correlated with the presence of these pandemics.

Our first theory, based on the literature, is that pandemics are associated with regime change, as such viral events are highly disruptive events, capable of undermining governments with strains on the health care systems with many cases and deaths, as well as social disruption from economic downturns as people stay indoors to avoid catching the disease.

Our second theory is that such pandemics are likely, in general, to generate autocratization. This is because authoritarian states, with stronger measures of coercion, can more effectively impose restrictions to reduce the spread of the virus and clamp down on any social unrest or rebellions against authority than democracies can, where ingrained freedoms of assembly and expression are hard to roll back even to battle a pandemic.

From this pair of theories, we can derive several hypotheses.

- Our first hypothesis is that we should see a higher number of cases of regime change correlate with the presence of a pandemic.
- Our second hypothesis is that we should see a correlation between the rise of autocracy in regimes during the presence of a pandemic.
- Our third hypothesis is that we should see a higher number of regime changes correlate with a pandemic than with a similar time length from an era without a pandemic.
- Our fourth hypothesis is that countries with higher infection rates from a pandemic should be correlated with a regime change.

In the next section, we look at how the hypotheses were tested, using regime type data, the three most severe pandemics from the 1900s, and a series of control groups of comparable periods from the same time frame that did not have a significant disease outbreak. Finally, we look at death rates from the Spanish Flu and investigate cases of regime change to see what role the pandemic may have played in such a transition.

Results

Democracy & Disease Data

To test this assertion about regime type and pandemics, we looked at data from the respected Polity Project.[7] "The Polity…dataset covers all major, independent states in the global system over the period 1800-2018 (i.e., states with a total population of 500,000 or more in the most recent year; currently 167 countries)," write the creators of this historical data on regime type. Countries with a positive regime score are democratic, while those with a negative score are authoritarian.[8] It is the same dataset employed by Renske Doorenspleet (2000) in an analysis of democratic waves.

We relied on data from the *World Atlas* (Sen Nag 2018) on the three deadliest epidemics of the 20^{th} Century for our choice of pandemics. This includes the 1918-1920 "Spanish Flu," which affected 500 million and led to an estimated 50 million to 100 million deaths, between 2.5% and 5% of the world's population, more deadly than World War I, lasting from 1918 to 1920 (Morrison 2020). That *World Atlas* study reveals the other two deadliest pandemics of the 1900s: the 1957-1958 "Asian Flu,"

[7] "The Polity scheme consists of six component measures that record key qualities of executive recruitment, constraints on executive authority, and political competition. It also records changes in the institutionalized qualities of governing authority (Center for Systemic Peace 2017)."

[8] "The 'Polity Score' captures this regime authority spectrum on a 21-point scale ranging from -10 (hereditary monarchy) to +10 (consolidated democracy). The Polity scores can also be converted into regime categories in a suggested three-part categorization of "autocracies" (-10 to -6), "anocracies" (-5 to +5 and three special values: -66, -77 and -88), and "democracies" (+6 to +10). (Center for Systemic Peace 2017)."

which originated from Guizhou, China, killing nearly 70,000 Americans and between 1 and 4 million people, as well as the deadly H3N2 strain of the Influenza A virus, dubbed "the Hong Kong Flu" due to its origins (Sen Nag 2018).

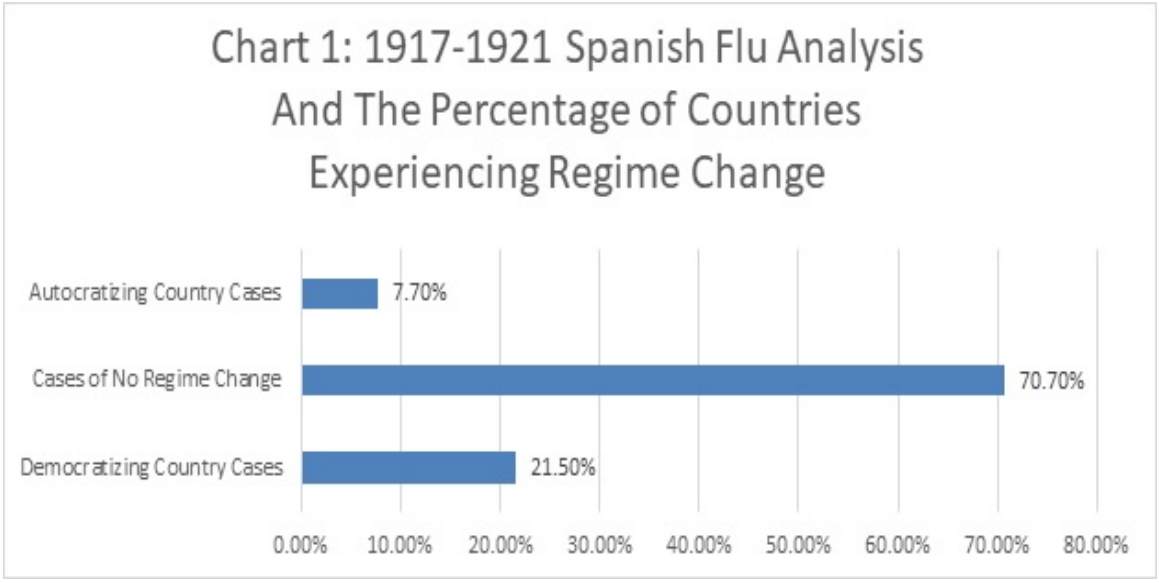
To analyze the pandemics, we look at the cases from one year before the disease began to the year after the pandemic concluded. We examine a regime's status the year before the onslaught of the disease with the year afterward. Thus, for the Spanish Flu, which occurred from 1918 to 1920, we look at 1917 and 1921. We do the same for the Asian Flu of 1957-1958 (looking at 1956 to 1959) and the Hong Kong Flu of 1968-1969 by looking at 1967 to 1970.

Testing Three Pandemics and Political Regime Type

In this original research, my students and I compare the regime data of 1917 (one year before the Spanish Flu) to 1921 (one year after the Spanish Flu), using Polity Democracy scores. Only one country (Peru) shifted from democracy to authoritarianism, with the already undemocratic Venezuela became even less democratic during this time.

Meanwhile, Austria and Guatemala transitioned from autocracy to democracy, while new countries (Czechoslovakia, Latvia) started democratically. Greece and Haiti moved from instability (no definite regime score) to democracy. Several countries became even more democratic (Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, Luxembourg, Spain, Uruguay) or less authoritarian (Bulgaria, Hungary) during this 1917-1921 period. Germany emerged as a democracy too. The world shifted more in favor of democracy, not autocracy. The pandemic was not the sole cause of these changes, as these government shifts occurred after World War I and Wilson's 14 Points, a democratizing trend.

Chart 1 shows, while most (46) of the 65 countries (70 percent) did not change their regimes during the Spanish Flu, democratizers (14) outnumbered autocratizers (5) by nearly a 3:1 ratio.



Our results correspond to Trein's (2020) findings somewhat. He uses similar methods and determines that "it is unlikely that this historic pandemic contributed significantly to the decline of democracy." The only difference is that our findings are slightly stronger for democracy.[9] However, the modal category of our analysis is still "no regime change."

For the case of the Asian Flu of 1957-1958, again, we found more than 75 percent of countries kept their regime type unchanged from 1956 to 1959 (70 of 93), as posted in Chart 2. Autocratizers did slightly outnumber the democratizers by a 13-to-10 margin. It is a similar story during the Hong Kong Flu (1968-1969). From 1967 to 1970, 72 percent of the countries in our study kept their Polity scores and had no regime change. More countries became less democratic (20) than more democratic (15), as Chart 3.

Given that both pandemics occurred in an era frequently defined as part of a "counterwave" against democracy (McGlinchey 2018; Motadel 2016), it is surprising that more countries did not turn toward authoritarianism. However, as Doreenspleet (2000) finds, the evidence for such a counterwave is slighter than expected. The number of democracies increased from the late 1950s through the early 1970s; the era is only considered a counterwave because the percentage of democracies declined, owing to the increase in new countries. "No second reverse wave is really apparent," writes Doreenspleet (2000). "Rather, the period from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s may be characterized as one of relatively trendless fluctuation."

[9]Trein (2020) looks at 20 years before and afterward. While such an analytical effort is laudable, it runs into the problem of events before or afterward affecting regime type without being related to the Spanish Flu itself. For example, Nazi Germany may alter the regimes of East Europe and Scandinavia in cases unrelated to influenza. Our analysis is designed to look at the immediate impacts in the interrupted time series.

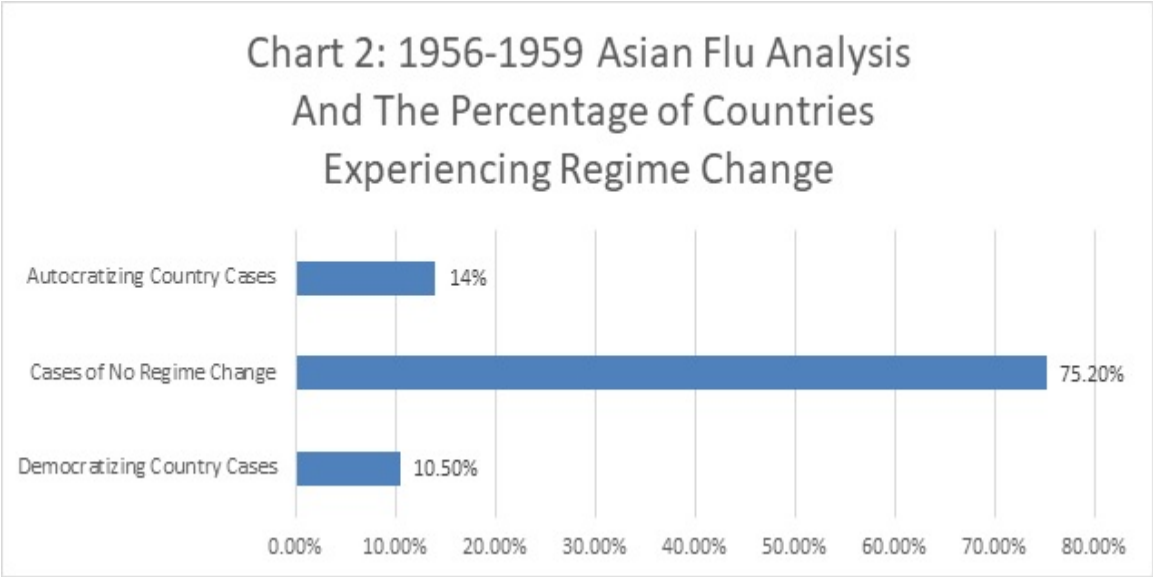


Chart 2: 1956-1959 Asian Flu Analysis And The Percentage of Countries Experiencing Regime Change
Autocratizing Country Cases
14%
Cases of No Regime Change
75.20%
Democratizing Country Cases
10.50%
0.00%
10.00%
20.00%
30.00%
40.00%
50.00%
60.00%
70.00%
80.00%

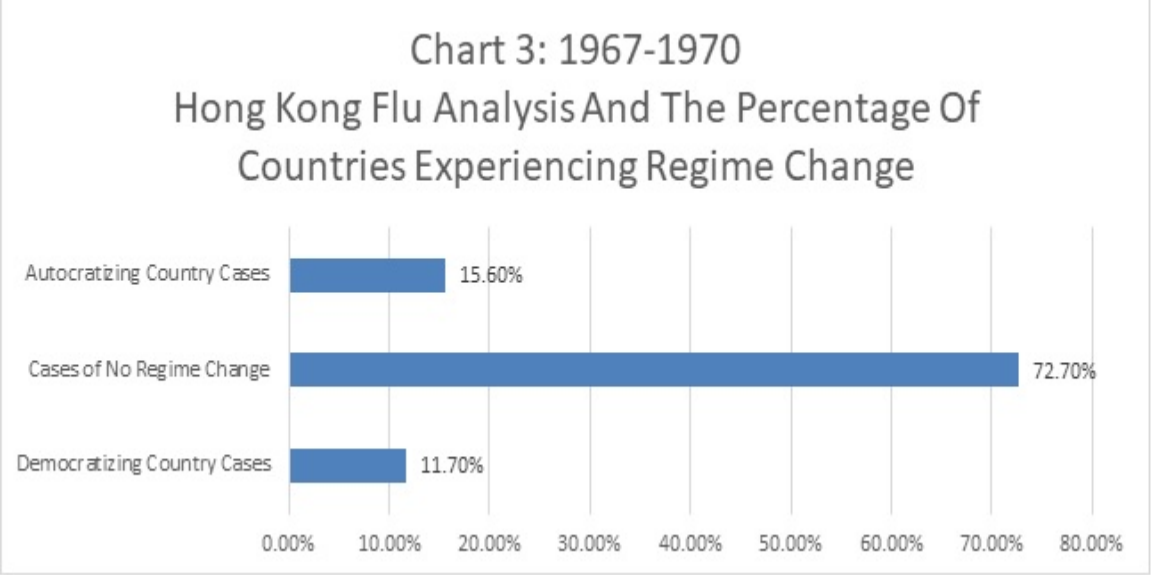
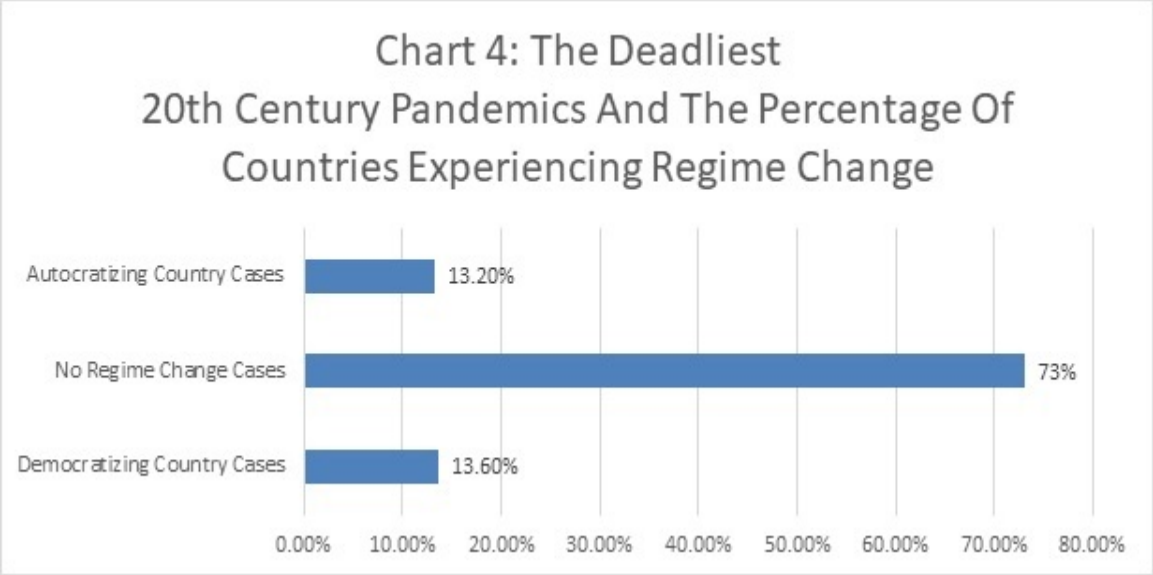


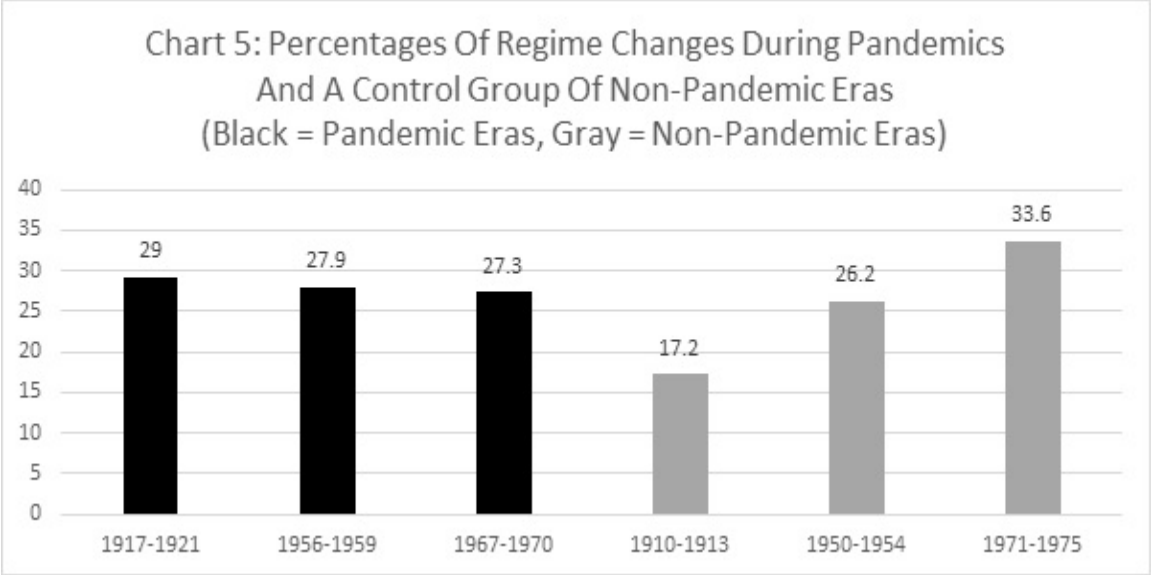
Chart 3: 1967-1970 Hong Kong Flu Analysis And The Percentage Of Countries Experiencing Regime Change
Autocratizing Country Cases
15.60%
Cases of No Regime Change
72.70%
Democratizing Country Cases
11.70%
0.00%
10.00%
20.00%
30.00%
40.00%
50.00%
60.00%
70.00%
80.00%

Overall, our study shows that 39 countries in the three pandemics became more democratic, while 38 became less democratic. Almost 75 percent (209) experienced no change in their regime type, using Polity IV scores. See Chart 4.



A Comparison To A Control Group Of Non-Pandemic Cases

In most cases during the pandemic, only a minority of countries experienced even the slightest shift in their regime scores. However, how many regime changes occurred in a 4–5-year period when there was no pandemic? To determine this, we look at a control group of cases of a similar length of time and era when a significant pandemic did not happen. We look at three time periods relatively close to when a pandemic emerged but did not have a significant disease: 1910-1913, 1950-1954, and 1971-1975. These are also of similar lengths of time to the three deadliest 20th Century pandemics themselves.



As you can see, a little more than a quarter of all countries during a pandemic experienced some form of governmental change. Among the three control groups, the results were more varied. However, the average number of regime changes in each period (pandemic and non-pandemic) averaged roughly 25 percent of all cases. A difference of means test between pandemic eras and non-pandemic eras reveals that the two means of regime changes were not statistically significantly different (see Table 1).

Table 1. Comparing Pandemic Eras With A Control Group

Cases	Pandemic Cases	Non-Pandemic Cases
% of Countries Experiencing A Regime Change	28.07%	25.67%
Other Statistics	2.4% (Mean Pandemic - Mean Non-Pandemic)	t = 0.5 (not statistically significant)

More Potential Impacts Of The Spanish Flu

Did Spanish Flu Deaths Lead To A Greater Likelihood Of Regime Change?

In addition to testing whether regimes changed during the Spanish Flu, we also looked at whether countries which experienced higher death rates during this influence pandemic of 1918-1920 were more likely to be the ones also experiencing regime change.

To determine this, we looked at all Polity IV cases, which are part of Johnson and Mueller's (2002) revised updated dataset for death rates from all countries that reported such results. Using Johnson and Mueller's (2002) data, merged with Polity IV, we find 29 cases overlapping both datasets.[10] Of these, 24 experienced no regime change during the Spanish Flu (their regime score stayed the same from 1917 through 1921). The average death rate of these countries was 9.577 deaths per 1,000 residents.

Of the five countries where the regime experienced a change in Polity IV scores, their death rates were higher: 13.12 deaths per 1,000 residents. Despite the higher death rate associated with regime change, the t-ratio in the difference of means test was not statistically significant, even at the .10 level (see Table 2), showing that we could reject the hypothesis that such casualties from the pandemic were correlated with regime change.

Table 2. The Average Death Rate in Countries with Regime Changes and Without Regime Changes during Spanish Flu Pandemic (1918 - 1920)

	No Change in Regime	Change in Regime
Cases	24	5
Avg. Death per 1000	9.577	13.12
Diff. of Means	-3.533	
t-Ratio	-0.72	
Note: Diff. of means not signficiant at .10 ratio.		

A Spanish Flu Exception: The Case Of Guatemala's Cabrera Regime

Guatemala is a different story from our overall findings. Their longtime dictator, a man who made "fake news" a form of policy long before today's tyrants and would-be authoritarians, may well be the only regime overthrown by the Spanish Flu, though scholars have not previously made the connection.

In 1898, Vice-President Manuel Jose Estrada Cabrera became Guatemala's President when Jose Maria Reina Barrios was assassinated (University of Central Arkansas, n.d.). Legend claims that he returned from Costa Rica and burst into a cabinet meeting debating the presidential succession wielding a revolver, demanding he be selected (Ackerman et al. 2008). He had the Guatemalan Constitution changed so he could run for reelection and used this several times to stay in power.

In an interview with an American journalist, he boasted one of the largest armies in the world as a percentage of the population (Ackerman et al. 2008), a number difficult to believe. In addition to treating the country's income as a personal bank account, the eccentric dictator decided to "establish a cult to Minerva in Guatemala, with Greek-style 'Temples of Minerva' built in many cities throughout Guatemala (Ackerman et al. 2008)." He frequently denied undeniable facts. "In 1902, President Manuel Estrada Cabrera, a character whom Isabel Allende might have contrived, issued a decree denying the eruption of the Santa Maria volcano, which was at that moment raining ash and flaming debris on the capital (Cullather 2002)."

As you might expect, this was not the kind of leader who might recognize the danger of the Spanish Flu or encourage his country to take precautions to combat this deadly disease. Scholars have speculated on many reasons for the fall of one of Latin America's longest-serving dictators. They have overlooked the role the Spanish Flu may well have played in his ouster.

[10] One reason that there are only 29 is that while Johnson and Mueller (2002) list more cases, many of them are colonies or countries otherwise not included as independent states in the Polity IV dataset.

Kit (1990) evaluates the role that the U.S. State Department played in the crisis that crushed Cabrera, but claims "the activities of a broad coalition of students, labourers, professionals and wealthy merchants was much more important (Kit 1990, 105)." Cabrera's reluctance to accept a new opposition, the "Unionist" Party, led to domestic and international pressure for change, leading to his cabinet and the legislature to oust him on charges of mental incompetence, a move backed by much of the military. The U.S. deployed a pair of Navy ships to Guatemala, while the U.S. Ambassador brokered an agreement for Cabrera to step aside following killings during the uprising (from *Associated Press*, 1920; Ackerman et al., 2008; and University of Central Arkansas, n.d.).

However, these details fail to explain why this particular uprising of 1920 succeeded, whereas so many before had failed (*Associated Press* 1920). Cabrera's ham-handed response to a pair of earthquakes in 1917 and 1918 is usually cited (Kit 1990). However, scholars may have overlooked another culprit, which spelled the beginning of the end for the dictator who had dominated Guatemala for more than 20 years.

Research by Johnson and Mueller (2002) on death rates due to the Spanish Influenza reveals that Guatemala suffered 39.2 deaths per 1,000 residents. That figure is nearly four times higher than the world average from our study of Polity IV cases and death rates, and almost twice as high as Mexico's, dealing with the conclusion of the Mexican Civil War (see Table 3). Guatemala had the second-highest death rate globally from our study of Polity IV countries, topped only slightly by South Africa (44.3 per 1,000 residents). Perhaps the findings show a correlation in deaths and regime change, but only for the most extreme casualty cases.

Table 3. Spanish Flu Death Rate, Western Hemisphere

Country	Death Rate	Polity IV Change
Guatemala	39.2	-9 (Autocracy) to 2 (Democracy)
Mexico	20.6	
Chile	11	
Brazil	6.8	
United States	6.5	
Canada	6.1	9 (Democracy) to 10 (Democracy)
Uruguay	1.4	
Argentina	1.2	

Note: Data from Polity IV and Johnson and Mueller (2002).

The Case of COVID-19

The Myth That Dictatorship Is On The Rise Today Because Of The Coronavirus

Today, you will hear plenty of stories about countries becoming more authoritarian in the wake of COVID-19. Davies (2020) has reported on the rising authoritarianism across the world in the coronavirus era. In March, Hungary's Parliament gave President Viktor Orban to rule by decree, likening it to Germany's 1933 Enabling Act that cemented Adolf Hitler's authority.

"While the new law in Hungary is the most marked example of national leaders using the coronavirus pandemic to consolidate their power, the unprecedented lockdowns in countries around the world to help stop the spread of the disease, which has no vaccine or known cure, has posed concerns for civil liberties and human rights campaigners," writes Davies (2020).

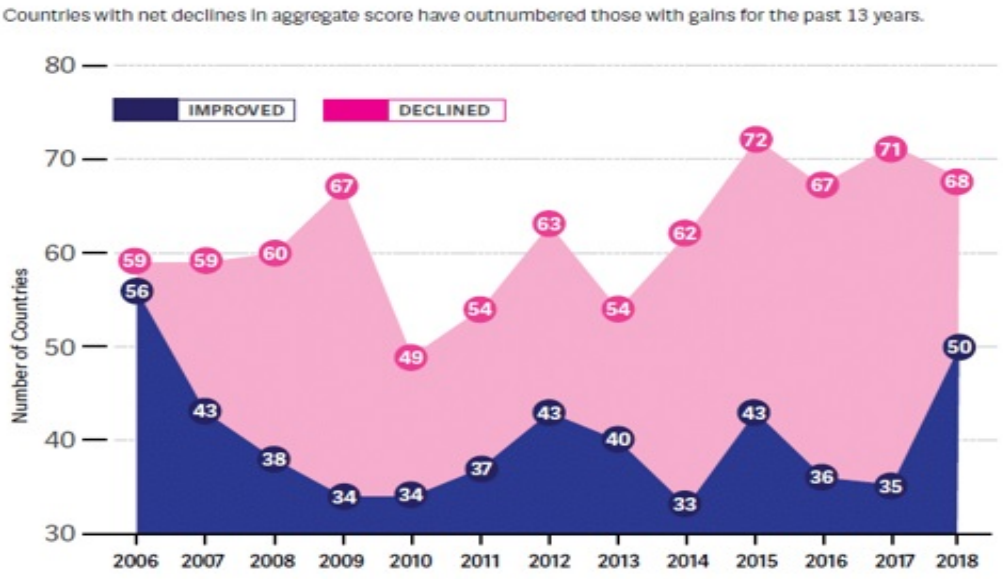
He goes on to draw a difference between democracies that have temporary measures and those authoritarians like President Duterte of the Philippines or presidents in Nicaragua and El Salvador (Cuadra 2020), all of whom now have more draconian powers and an easier path to keeping these powers after any pandemic has passed.

Pandemics Do not Create Autocracies, But They Do Make Them Worse.

Those who contend that the pandemic has created worldwide autocracy ignore the evidence that this shift in authoritarianism has been occurring for years before the advent of the virus. Indeed, Freedom House (Repucci and Slipowitz 2020) recorded the 14^{th} straight year of declines in civil liberties and political rights across the globe, with countries shifting to Partly or Not Free designations away from freedom. See Marsh's (2019) findings in Chart 6.

Freedom House (Repucci and Slipowitz 2020) did analyze how government responses to the spread of COVID-19 have further eroded freedom worldwide. It is essential to identify what the Coronavirus is doing to freedom across the world. People frequently cite government curfews and restrictions on public gatherings that impact restaurants, bars, churches, and schools (Gutfeld 2020), though these are more clearly identified with stopping the spread of the disease. Additionally, churches and

Chart 6: Freedom House Data (Marsh 2019)[11]



schools may still meet virtually, and patrons can still go out to eat or drink, though certain behaviors must be enforced. Wearing a mask and keeping your distance does not assist a government in maintaining political power any further than preventing further cases and deaths, which could generate a health emergency that could overwhelm the regime. States can perhaps make a legitimate case for quarantine detentions and fines for not wearing a mask or throwing a "COVID party."

However, there are troubling signs that party and not free states are engaging in activities that have little to do with stopping the pandemic from spreading and are more about using the pandemic as an excuse to consolidate power. There is "new Freedom House research on the impact of COVID-19 on democracy and human rights, produced in partnership with the survey firm GQR. Based on a survey of 398 journalists, civil society workers, activists, and other experts, as well as research on 192 countries by Freedom House's global network of analysts, this report is the first of its kind and the most in-depth effort to date to examine the condition of democracy during the pandemic (Repucci and Slipowitz 2020)."

Freedom House (Repucci and Slipowitz 2020) found that 42 percent of the countries had their freedoms suffer due to the COVID-19 virus, while only one country (Malawi) became freer from January 2020 to August 2020, as Table 4 demonstrates.

Table 4. Condition Of Democracy January 2020-August 2020

Weaker	**About the Same**	**Stronger**
80 Countries	111 Countries	1 Country
Note: Repucci and Slipowitz 2020		

These anti-freedom activities uncovered by Freedom House (Repucci and Slipowitz 2020) were frequently unrelated to stopping the spread of the Coronavirus. These included electoral disruptions, interrupting the meetings of freely elected legislatures, restricting the reporting by the press, stopping any protests, arbitrary arrests, and the use of violence by security forces against dissent.

Freedom House found "Most of the violence occurred in less democratic settings, with 49 percent of Partly Free countries and 41 percent of Not Free countries under review experiencing such abuses." However, Free states were not immune from taking advantage of the situation, as the United States and a handful of European countries engaged in the spread of misinformation from government officials and restrictions upon media reporting (Repucci and Slipowitz 2020). In the case of the USA, unprecedented attempts to overturn the electoral outcome and invalidate legally cast ballots were stymied by courts and local governments (De Vogue and Vazquez 2020). This happened despite receiving support from the leaders of the executive branch and some national legislators (Solender 2020). A slew of cabinet members or government officials were fired, forced to resign, or were marginalized in the bureaucracy in the wake of the election for claiming that there was no widespread fraud or corruption (Sheth 2020). This again supports the argument that no one regime has a monopoly on best practices in

pandemic responses.

A Closer Analysis Of China's "Superior" Pandemic Response

The Western coverage of the COVID-19 response often implies that the virus caused the autocratic wave. However, that is not the case, as Freedom House demonstrates. In their *Freedom in the World 2019* report, the authors write, "In 2018, *Freedom in the World* recorded the 13^{th} consecutive year of decline in global freedom. The reversal has spanned various countries in every region, from long-standing democracies like the United States to consolidated authoritarian regimes like China and Russia."

As for China, this undemocratic regime is often held up as an example of how to combat COVID-19. "Unpopular, difficult decisions are for public safety. Authoritarian governments, as we have in China, can enact rigid quarantines and do so quickly while handing out severe punishments for violating government directives," writes Douglas R. Satterfield (2018) in "Lessons from the 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic."

Becket Adams' (2020) critique of Western fawning over China's response included this line. "How uncomfortable is it," NBC News's Chuck Todd asked last weekend, "that perhaps China's authoritarian ways did prevent this? Meaning, had China been a free and open society, this might have spread faster?" he writes. Adams also notes that *The New York Times* published an opinion piece titled "China Bought The West Time. The West Squandered It." Western countries mismanaged their responses, but China did no favors with their complicity in the spread of the Coronavirus, in the way a more democratic country might have given other nations the tools and tactics to mitigate COVID-19 better (FP Editors 2020).

Sreemov Talukdar (2020) quotes Jim O'Neill, the chair of Chatham House and former Goldman Sachs chief economist, who praised China's rapid response. Talukdar (2020) effectively disputes O'Neill by documenting China's fumbling missteps, attempts to hide the problem, denial of both the disease and the spread of it. He also points out how the more democratic Taiwan and South Korea responded much more effectively to the virus. Only in self-congratulatory propaganda did China seem to show any effectiveness.

Conclusions About Contagion And Control Of The State

None of our four hypotheses were supported. Our first hypothesis that we should see more regime changes than cases of no regime change correlation with a deadly transnational disease was not supported in any 20^{th} Century pandemic. Moreover, we saw little support for the second hypothesis that claimed we would see more autocratization than democratization correlated with the occurrence of a pandemic. We also did not see a significantly higher number of regime changes in pandemic eras than a control group of non-pandemic eras from comparable time frames, a finding contrary to our third hypothesis. Finally, our fourth hypothesis that claimed we should see countries with higher infection rates as more likely to be correlated with more regime changes was similarly rejected, despite the remarkable Guatemalan exception.

Neither the Spanish Flu, Asian Flu, Hong Kong Flu, nor COVID-19 produced a wave of authoritarianism. The influenza of 1918-1920 was slightly correlated with democracy, as fascism emerged long afterward in Germany after a massive economic downturn. Today's undemocratic wave long predates the presence of the Coronavirus. There are also shortcomings to the claims of "Chinese superiority" in its response to COVID-19.

Pandemics cannot be used to justify autocracy, though we found that dictatorships are apt to try and link the two. If the Western media buys into the myth, readers today would be left with the false impression that extreme government methods are necessary to tame the Coronavirus, spelling danger for the remaining free states in East Asia, West Europe, and the Americas. Moreover, that would make supporters of democracy sick to their stomachs.

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Blogs and Podcasts: A Study of the Use of Significant Learning Experiences to Spark Global Engagement

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ABSTRACT

This project measures student engagement in political science classes by asking students to participate in a significant course experience. Students were asked to listen to a podcast throughout the semester and respond weekly to professor-given prompts in a blog format so they could publish their thoughts and respond to each other. Also, students were asked to create a mini-podcast to present information about another complex international event. The project aims to enhance student engagement in course material and international politics and augment students' cultural competency. The results of the project are compared across two institutions to compare the results in diverse learning environments. In order to assess students' global engagement and cultural competency, students were asked to complete pre and post surveys, and this paper will discuss this data.

Introduction

As recent political events across the globe have shed light on the fragility of democratic values, the university's role in creating a framework for civic education becomes more urgent. Creating an informed, caring, and engaged citizenry must be a goal of higher education. Taylor (2017) suggests that the role of universities is to strengthen public reason while protecting private reason. Taylor notes, "in order to realize a civic function for the university in the 21st century, the university has the challenge of living outside in. ...it should take its bearings from the wider society....more to the dimensions of democracy, of the public sphere, of social justice, and societal belonging" (p.33). This re-energizing of the university as the bedrock of social enlightenment mobilizes educators to design courses and programs to accomplish this essential task better. Watson et al. (2011) have compiled historical evidence of the movement of engaged universities around the globe to tackle community problems and re-engage with a social purpose.

The goal of this project was to create a course-long significant learning experience that would inspire students to think critically about issues in a way that might be transformational in their connections with the global community. Fink (2013) has coined the term *significant learning experiences* – "teaching that resulted in something truly significant in terms of students' lives" (p.7). For learning to be significant, it must do more than help students temporarily remember academic content. Studies have shown that students often cannot recall course content immediately after the term ends. Significant learning instead meshes the learning with how students live their lives and alters attitudes and actions. More widely known as high-impact practices or HIP, these interventions include undergraduate research, everyday intellectual experiences, and collaborative assignments to promote student engagement and learning outcomes (Hatch et al. p. 12). Rather than defining a separate list of practices, Hatch and associates offer the idea of high-impact practices as an invitation to continue the work to "identify and verify those practices that are indeed the best..." (p. 16). Kezar and Holcombe note high-impact practices "can take many different forms depending on learner characteristics as well as institutional priorities and contexts" (p. 34).

An added benefit of significant learning designs is political engagement. Colby (2007) suggests that being politically informed is closely related to being politically engaged. Citizens that possess political knowledge and reflective judgments can inform future political behavior. Moreover, Colby notes that "the acquisition of educational credentials, especially a college degree has been linked to the attainment of essential elements of citizenship including "knowledge of principles of democracy, political leaders, and other political concepts and information: political interest and attentiveness; frequency of voting; participation in high-political activities; and essential democratic values such as tolerance" (p.49).

In addition to civic skills, political and cultural competency is transferable to the workplace. Cultural competency is a multifaceted set of skills and attitudes. Caliguiri (2012) argues that culturally agile professionals succeed in multicultural, international, and cross-cultural situations by navigating the required and differing cultural responses. Caliguiri suggests that

these responses will allow a professional to work with people from other cultures and in other cultures by mastering such skills as reading and responding in an appropriate cultural context (p.5).

In this comparative study, we were most concerned with cross-cultural competency and ethical values such as tolerance. Anderson (2013) writes that "to be relevant, education must provide young people with the necessary knowledge and skills to become responsible global citizens who can take joint actions." Anderson also notes that "in order for education to be truly transformative and cultivate global citizens with a shared concern for the world, various strategies must be pursued" (p.1). Anderson's essential skills for global citizenship include critical thinking, human and physical competencies, reasoned judgment, community orientation, communication skills, information literacy, and content knowledge, all of which were addressed when designing this course plan.

For example, addressing Anderson's call for communications and community competencies, blogging was assigned as a mechanism to share weekly podcast prompt reflections. On blogging, Poth (2016) writes, "Regardless of the course one teaches, or the content being covered, it is important to provide opportunities for students to practice their literacy skills...Blogging is a means for teachers to encourage students to express themselves, to be creative, to build literacy skills, to become more confident in their writing" (n.p.). Bouldin et al. (2005) note that reflection is essential for deeper learning but the challenge to get students to think reflectively outside the course. Reflective journaling is often used in teacher education and humanities courses, but students may see such activities as "busy work" (p. 1). However, when reflection is framed as a web blog journal, the appeal harnesses "student enthusiasm from communicating through electronic media such as email, listservs, announcement pages and instant messaging." (p. 2). Boudlin reported that Pharmacy students who participated in a reflective blog assignment could apply class concepts and demonstrate deeper learning (p.7). Wyk (2013) suggests reflection is fundamental to advancing surface learning to deeper learning and found that blogs can enhance student teachers' reflective practice in distance learning settings (p. 1).

Similar essential learning outcomes are highlighted in a 2008 report by the American Association of Colleges and Universities by George Kuh entitled "High-Impact Educational Practices." The report, which is part of the Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) initiative, includes a list of outcomes including knowledge of human cultures, the physical and natural world, intellectual, practical and reasoning skills, personal and social responsibility, and integrative and applied learning. Our course exercises focused on developing cultural competencies and reasoning skills through two major course assignments and, additionally, explored the thorny issue of personal responsibility in a crisis. The activities were designed to build skills in two key ways. First, the course assignments required that students engage with and master specific course content as outlined in the course(s) learning objectives. Additionally, through the creative use of podcast and blog posts, students also honed their listening, problem-solving, and writing skills throughout the semester of instruction.

When asked about twelve essential skills, a survey of employers in Kuh's study reported the recent college graduates were not well-prepared in global knowledge, self-direction, writing, critical thinking, or adaptability. Kuh suggests that high-impact practices can be incorporated into universities to promote the Liberal Education Goals (LEAP) and address new graduate readiness concerns. High-impact practices demand that students devote a considerable amount of time to purposeful tasks. The effort to achieve these tasks often requires daily investment in the activity and a commitment to college. Kuh reports that deeper learning through high-impact practices is meaningful because students in these settings earn higher grades and retain information at higher rates. The course design in this study incorporates high-impact practices precisely to harness the power of these techniques, including everyday intellectual experiences, writing-intensive courses, undergraduate research, global learning, and collaborative activities.

Finally, based on two world politics classes, this study incorporates some of the hallmarks of the scholarship of teaching and learning in political science (McCartney, Bennion, & Simpson, 2013). Two instructors conducted this study at two different institutions yet saw very similar outcomes across the student populations. The study was conducted over successive terms, and the assessment relied on pre and post-experience student surveys as the context for analysis.

Project Description

A common problem for all teachers is the struggle to make the material interesting, meaningful, and engaging. In political science, this struggle is compounded by the feeling among most professors that students also need to use their political science classes to think carefully and analytically about national and world events to live a life of sustained civic engagement and competency. This project was born by a desire to create an assignment that allowed for deep and sustained engagement in a particular problem to facilitate a significant course experience and compare the outcomes of the assignment across diverse college settings.

To do this, we identified an eleven-episode podcast on a timely, international event and asked students to listen to each episode weekly and to respond to professor-generated prompts. The podcast that we selected, *Serial 2,* tells the compelling story of controversial Bowe Bergdahl's departure from his military post in Afghanistan, his capture by the Taliban, and the subsequent prisoner exchange to get him returned to the United States. Each episode of the podcast benefited from being very

complex and thereby allowed us to ask students' questions that required them to listen carefully and to pull information from the podcast to think about the intricacies of real-world international problems. For example, instead of exposing students to the terrorist group Al-Qaeda as a monolithic group, the podcast introduced students to the various factions within the group, therefore demonstrating the challenges of creating an effective strategy to combat the group's goals. In the prompt related to this episode, the students were asked to engage deeply with whether Al-Qaeda is best understood as a single group or as a disparate set of actors that outsiders label as a single group for simplicity's sake. Because the length of the podcast corresponded roughly with the length of a semester, students listened to and responded to the podcast weekly. The weekly, routinized nature of the assignment was designed to encourage students' progress in the course and to challenge and interest them for several months. While class time was not explicitly devoted to discussion of the podcast, many topics overlapped and reinforced each other, prompting additional student engagement and learning.

The culminating capstone experience of the course required students to create their mini-podcast of six to seven episodes about a different, but no less controversial, international event. In this case, we selected the bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Benghazi, Libya, as the event, as the timeline, actors, and circumstances surrounding the event were and remained contested from various angles. The fundamental question that students were to answer in their podcast was, "What happened? And who is responsible"? In designing their podcast, students were given the responsibility of choosing and justifying the topics of each of their episodes and sifting through many credible and less credible sources. The issue of effective national and international sources to explain and justify assertions made in their podcast proved a critical educational moment that deepened the engagement with the final project. Finally, on the last day of class, students were asked to present their findings to their classmates and explain the complicated events that led to the bombing of the U.S. embassy in Benghazi.

Critical to student success in any course design is student engagement. The choice of timely, controversial, and headlining subjects and the use of media that many millennial students use and enjoy in their daily lives were integral to student outcomes. Students could easily pop in their earbuds and listen to the Serial 2 podcast while walking across campus, driving in their cars, or working out in the gym. Also valuable for student engagement was that both the Bergdahl and Benghazi headlines remained active in the news when these course assignments were used, with trials, hearings, and reports underway, which added relevance and excitement to the coursework. Blogs and podcasts added a contemporary vibe to the activities designed to resonate with millennial culture.

In order to assess student learning and engagement before and after this course experience, students completed pre and post surveys about their levels of international engagement. This paper will explain the results of this data and give an overview of some of the key findings in doing this project for multiple semesters at two very different institutions.

Student Scaffolding for Success

While the educational settings at which the assignments were used are different, both institutions support many first-generation and low-income college students. The courses in which the assignments were deployed are introductory political science courses taken primarily by first- and second-year students who may or may not have any interest, at least at the outset, in political science. Therefore, serious efforts were made to include scaffolded assistance and learning to support and ensure students felt they had a viable path to a positive learning outcome, irrespective of their previous learning and interest in domestic or international politics. Specific support elements included training/videos in how to build a blog, library guides with research and sourcing instructions, an embedded librarian for student questions and database search training, frequent and swift assessment with feedback, and regular checkpoints for the larger, capstone projects to ensure progress and proper direction in assignment requirements. Students reported that these resources and checkpoints helped them stay in the course while building confidence in assignment outcomes and new material.

Comparing the Settings

Before we examine the assignment itself, it will be helpful to know a little about the diverse environments in which we teach and the students we interact with. This is important, in part, because the venues in which our assignments were deployed are very different, and yet, the assignments were received by students similarly. On the one hand, one college in which the assignment was used is a small selective, private liberal arts college with an increasingly diverse student body, while the other is a public two-year access institution. The small college's student body is just under 1000, mainly traditionally-aged students, almost one half of which are under-represented minorities. By contrast, the two-year college is an urban multi-campus member of a state university system with just over 24,000 students. The public institution is a majority-minority student population institution with a large contingent of first-generation, immigrant, nontraditional, and students with college-readiness challenges.

Data

As noted and as found in Appendix II, we designed and administered a survey to our students at the beginning and end of the semester in order to gauge students' perceptions of their learning and engagement with the world before and after the significant

course experience - listening to and responding to prompts about a podcast and then creating their own. As is evident by the survey questions found in our Global Civic Engagement Values Survey in Appendix B, the questions were adapted from other long-standing values surveys from the AAC&U Values Rubrics and the NSSE and CSSE Survey Questions. The responses follow a similar pattern for each question, with responses marked A being most open and in agreement with the prompt and D least. For example, in Question 1, students were asked to circle the response that best describes their attitudes about cultural diversity, and responses ranged as follows:

1. I am willing and able to adjust my cultural attitudes and beliefs when presented with new information about other cultures. I am willing to promote friends', families' or peers' engagement with the new information I learn about cultural diversity.
2. I am reflective about my own cultural attitudes and beliefs. I am curious about learning more about diverse cultures and communities.
3. I am aware that my cultural attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures but I have little curiosity about learning more about diverse cultures.
4. I am only knowledgeable in my cultural perspective and do not value acquiring knowledge about diverse communities or cultures.

From the example above, it is clear that a pattern exists in the responses, with response A reflecting the most receptive to cultural diversity and D the least. Each of the questions on the survey followed this same pattern making it easier to notice trends over time in the survey responses.

Results

For this analysis, a discussion of the combined data is most instructive, as it augments the sample size considerably.

Letter A responses: Overall, from the beginning of term versus the end of term increase by 14.81%

Letter A results across classes at both institutions are in agreement. Questions one and five had significant increases in both classes and represented the largest increases, with question five at 23.21% and question one at 21.22%. Results are less pronounced across institutions for the remaining questions, though gains for questions six and two are still noteworthy, with A responses on questions six marked by an overall increase of 14.87% and question two at a 12.83% gain. Questions three and four had less consistent gains at 8.93% for question three and 7.82% for question four.

Letter B responses: Overall, from the beginning of term versus the end of term decrease by 7.06%

Letter B combined results are pretty in line with the individual class results though the results are less dramatic than for Letter A responses detailed above. To some degree, this makes sense, as A responses reflect the most open position and B responses are slightly less open than A. In other words, students would likely choose A over B in most cases. B responses to questions two and three were inconsistent across institutions, but all other B responses showed a decrease across classes and institutions, as we expected. Question five had the most significant change at a 20.25% decrease, followed by question one at 17.36% decrease and question four at 10.06% decrease. Finally, question six had a 6.31% decrease.

Letter C responses: Overall, from the beginning of term versus the end of term decrease by 4.82%

Letter C responses decreased or saw very slight gains on a question-by-question basis. Questions four and five saw extremely slight increases at 1.52% for question four and 1.80% for question five. Question two had a significant decrease at 15.13%. Question six decreased by 7.27%, question three had a 5.79% decrease, and question one had a 3.86% decrease. Similar to Letter B responses detailed above, we expected to see decreases in Letter C responses as students moved from letter C to either A or B as they learned more throughout the course and felt more and more comfortable with cultural diversity.

Letter D responses: Overall, from the beginning of term versus the end of term decrease by 2.93%

The combined numbers across institutions for letter D responses are relatively low. This is also not surprising because it reflects students' perceptions of themselves as relatively open and culturally curious. For example, question one had no letter D selection, creating a 0.72% increase. Question three had a significant decrease at 9.29%. Question five had a 4.75% decrease. Questions two and six had small decreases at 2.67% for question two and 1.29% for question six.

Discussion

Overall, it is clear from the survey results that students responded well to the significant course experience, which matches our anecdotal conversations with students about the projects. Some results stand out, however, and are noteworthy. The most promising results come with the significant increase in A responses given (14.8%) that appears to show us that by the end of the term, students believed themselves to be much more open to cultural diversity and their attitudes, as well as more aware of how their attitudes can impact change in their communities. As political science professors, this is precisely the sort of attitude and engagement change that we would hope to see after a course in political science, regardless of the specific course topic. Responses labeled B, C, and D saw decreases over the semester, best explained by changes to A over time. Still, it is essential to note that D responses decreased the least at only 2.93%. Instead of students moving responses from D to C, B, or A, it is likely that this slight decrease is more of a function of the low numbers of students that rated themselves D at all, even at the beginning of the semester. The outcomes from the two divergent colleges (one elite private and one access public) were similar. The fact that students came from differing backgrounds and levels of college readiness did not appear to affect the outcomes of this study. This was a promising finding in that levels of student engagement were moved across the board by significant learning experiences.

In addition to data from the surveys, it is equally important to note that in course evaluation comments and casual conversations with students during the semesters in which the assignments were used, there was a marked uptick in chatter and excitement in the courses. Many times, for example, we would find students discussing the details of the latest podcast episodes in the minutes before class started. Also, we noted that students seemed much more interested in bias with their sources. Due to the highly politicized nature of the Benghazi hearings, in particular, students fretted over and studied whether or not they included sources from a range of political opinions. Interestingly, some students even dedicated an entire episode of their final projects on Benghazi to sources to explain and argue that no one would ever really know what happened due to the highly charged way most aspects of the events were reported and repeated. We also noticed students were much more likely to attend office hours to chat about world events and to seek out our opinions on all sorts of political topics. In our view, they began to see that world politics is relevant to them and worth puzzling over in a critical way.

Conclusion

The survey results, as well as the open-ended space for comments (not included), seems to indicate that the significant course experience deployed in the very different learning environments described above pushed students to engage more deeply with their own cultural biases and allowed them to think more deeply about how their attitudes color their views of the world and that of others. Additionally, the survey results suggest that after engaging in the significant course experience, students considered themselves more likely to reflect on their ethics and communities. Students from different backgrounds and levels of readiness appeared to benefit from the intervention. Still, the results presented here have limitations. For one thing, the data presented here are all students' perceptions of their growth, which may be overestimated. It would be helpful to link the survey results with the professors' more objective views of student growth in a similar study. This could be achieved via a specific rubric in assessing the change in podcast responses over time and by designing an initial written assessment compared with the final project. Taken together, such results could definitively show the utility of significant course experiences for student growth and engagement.

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Resources

Serial, Season II Website https://serialpodcast.org/season-two/listening-guide

AAC&U Value Rubrics https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics

AAC&U High Impact Practices Chart https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/HIP_tables.pdf

The Culture Gap: The Role of Culture in Successful Refugee Settlement

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ABSTRACT

Globally, the displacement of persons is reaching record numbers, including millions of refugees seeking safety outside of their native countries. The existing literature on factors of successful refugee settlement lacks specific quantitative analysis, and most of the available information on the role of culture is limited to psychological and social research. I expect that large perceived differences in the culture of the refugee and the culture of the country in which they settle will cause a combination of xenophobic public responses and restrictive government policies, and therefore will be negatively related to successful social integration of those refugees. I assess the role of culture in settlement by analyzing quantitatively the relationship between cultural distance - the gap between the culture of the refugee and the culture of the country in which they settle - and successful settlement in society. I expect that cultural distance will be negatively associated with achievement of legal status. I also analyze prominent refugee crises between the late 1970s and 2016 to qualitatively assess the role of culture in integration. The case study section discusses the history, cultural factors, and integration of Syrian refugees in Germany, Venezuelan refugees in Colombia, Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, and refugees from El Salvador to the United States. I find that cultural distance is negatively associated with education, employment, and sanitation of living conditions, and positively associated with xenophobia within the country of settlement.

Introduction

Globally, the displacement of persons is reaching record numbers, including millions of refugees seeking safety outside of their native countries. The existing literature on factors of successful refugee settlement lacks specific quantitative analysis, and most of the available information on the role of culture is limited to psychological and social research. I expect that large perceived differences in the culture of the refugee and the culture of the country in which they settle will cause a combination of xenophobic public responses and restrictive government policies, and therefore will be negatively related to successful social integration of those refugees. I assess the role of culture in settlement by analyzing quantitatively the relationship between cultural distance - the gap between the culture of the refugee and the culture of the country in which they settle - and successful settlement in society. I expect that cultural distance will be negatively associated with achievement of legal status. I also analyze prominent refugee crises between the late 1970s and 2016 to qualitatively assess the role of culture in integration. The case study section discusses the history, cultural factors, and integration of Syrian refugees in Germany, Venezuelan refugees in Colombia, Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, and refugees from El Salvador to the United States. I find that cultural distance is negatively associated with education, employment, and sanitation of living conditions, and positively associated with xenophobia within the country of settlement.

How and to what extent does the difference between the culture of a refugee and the culture of the country they settle in affect the successful social integration and settlement of the refugee? "Refugees" refers to a specifically classified type of migrant, legally defined by the 1951 Refugee Convention as:

"someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion."[1]

Refugees are often suddenly uprooted from their homes and undergo significant change in their lives. They have to learn and adapt to live in the cultural context of the country in which they settle. Residents of countries where refugees settle experience this change from the other perspective, watching their country's demographics change, sometimes very quickly and dramatically. Thus, culture affects many aspects of behavior and thinking, providing a cognitive reference point for perceiving the world and making choices. Culture also provides a sense of identity and a distinction between who is "us" and who is "them."

Often, countries accepting refugees find themselves overwhelmed and lack sufficient infrastructure to accommodate them, leading to a difficult and strained transition for all parties involved. There are a wide variety of factors that may influence

[1]United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees," 1951, 3.

this transition period and affect the ability of refugees to successfully integrate into their new country of residence. I expect that large differences in the culture of the refugee and the culture of the country in which they settle causes a combination of xenophobic public responses and restrictive government policies, and therefore is negatively related to successful settlement of those refugees. This study demonstrates how culture acts as a factor affecting refugee settlement.

Nationalism and radical right political groups have gained traction in recent years, advocating for restrictive border policies and often promoting xenophobic views of refugees and migrants. These groups have the power to influence public policy or frame the issue and can bring about lower acceptance rates and poorer treatment of refugees, as well as less legal protections for them. Nationalism comes from a sociocultural identity that can be constructed based on language, race, religion, and more. Changing demographics can create a cultural shock that challenges this sense of identity, resulting in protective and isolationist responses.

Migration is on the rise worldwide as a result of conflict, climate change, political instability, and poverty. Migration and refugees are inherently global, cross-border issues, yet states must individually decide on their policy responses. When it comes to refugees, international law is also involved, providing specific protections. Furthermore, international organizations like the United Nations (UN) and humanitarian groups are present in various capacities to provide guidance and support for refugees and for states. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is specifically tasked with protecting refugees and aiding them in the resettlement process. The issue of refugee integration is thus politically important at the state and international level, involving multiple actors and overlapping policy areas and affecting the global movement of people.

Policymakers in those countries to which refugees flee have a vested interest in the successful integration of refugees. Refugees can provide a labor force and bring their own skills and education to a country. Refugee policy is very visible on the international stage, and policymakers must consider the image that their refugee policy projects to other nations and to domestic constituents. Policies to accommodate refugees in the long-term can put a strain on national resources, but short-term policies are inefficient and fail to integrate refugees. Policymakers must identify not only the most politically viable response but also the most effective in order to mitigate potential future problems.

Refugee integration is relevant and currently the subject of much academic study, with the number of people displaced due to conflict rising. Refugee flows involve policy at every level; international, national, regional, and local. There is little consensus on what the most effective policies are or what should be done internationally to most efficiently aid refugees, and data on refugees remains limited. There are many interesting cases of refugee flows and state responses, which vary widely in outcomes and have complex historical backgrounds. Academically, the study of refugees is not new, but the scope and depth of analysis is increasing.

The idea that cultural factors influence refugee or migrant settlement has been explored in sociology and political science, yet there is no agreed-upon set of factors that are known to influence settlement in certain ways. The way a country responds to refugees is intrinsically linked not only to culture and national identity, but also to history, geography, and current events. Furthermore, policy responses change over time and can have mixed outcomes. Countries are also constrained by their limited capacity to accept refugees and to accommodate them in society. Researchers are constrained by the limits of the existing data, as collection of data concerning refugees is done inconsistently by the state and non-governmental organizations. Additionally, refugees' choices are constrained by the circumstances in which they find themselves. This field of research is clearly complex, yet in need of development. It is highly salient to decisions and policy that could improve the outcomes for the receiving countries and the refugee populations.

The thesis is organized as follows. In the first section, I present the literature review and important key concepts, including social identity theory, acculturation, and cultural distance. In section two, I present my theory, which asserts that cultural distance determines refugee integration at both the group and state level. Social identity theory supports the use of the characteristics of the refugees as the main explanatory factor. I present two hypotheses, one focusing on state-level legal integration and one focusing on group-level social integration. In the third section, I discuss my research design. This thesis is based on mixed-method research including quantitative analysis substantiated by qualitative case studies. These case studies include the Syrian refugees in Germany, Venezuelan refugees in Colombia, Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, and refugees from El Salvador to the United States. In the fourth section, I present my analysis and results and finally, in section five, I offer my conclusions.

Literature Review

Given the importance and stakes of refugee policy, much research exists on this topic. A large amount has been written on the psychological and sociological processes involved. Political scientists have conducted research as well, though there is little written on why refugees are or aren't successful and on the effect of culture. There is also a lack of quantitative research compared to the more common qualitative research on particular national or regional refugee situations. The main themes I identified in the relevant literature are social identity theory, the attitude of the host country, acculturation and integration, the attitudes of refugees, and the role of policy.

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory focuses on the identity of the migrants as the key factor influencing the reaction of the host country. Sniderman, Louk, and Prior note that the national identity of the immigrant is the most important factor to predict an exclusionary reaction, more than economic considerations or perceived threats to safety.[2] This is important, as many political considerations for refugee policies rhetorically prioritize these economic or safety concerns. The authors asked Dutch respondents whether or not they thought it was good for a new group of immigrants to come, based on either economic or cultural traits such as their ability to speak Dutch and to 'fit in' with Dutch culture, and the cultural traits were much more important.[3] This research supports the idea that with refugees, as with immigrants, the social identity (or culture) of the refugee is the key factor eliciting a negative response, rather than security or the economy.

Additional research supports social identity theory as it pertains to migrants, with a study of American prejudice towards Cuban, Mexican, and Asian immigrants. It assesses not only realistic and symbolic threats, but also intergroup anxiety and negative stereotyping.[4] According to the authors, symbolic threats represent in-group values and a sense of superiority over others, which would correlate to social identity theory in that the group identity is the primary determinant.[5] Symbolic threat and hostilities stem from perceptions that the out-group has values that threaten or contradict in-group values.[6] Thus, group identity and perceptions of identity and cultural values affect the prejudice exhibited by those in the country of settlement. Importantly, the authors also found that the salience of symbolic threat is reduced if the two groups have friendly past relationships, positive contact, extensive knowledge about each other, etc.[7] This is what I will attempt to capture using qualitative case study analysis.

Even the effect of the media is framed by social identity. Media has a framing and gatekeeping effect on public opinion, setting the agenda of what issues are important as well as how they are discussed. Therefore, the media has the ability to prime the public to have strong positive or negative opinions on immigration. According to Brader, Valentino, and Suhay, ethnic cues influence emotional reactions to media coverage of migration, and even when the costs of immigration are portrayed identically, hostility is elicited according to ethnic group cues.[8] The authors write that anxiety triggers opposition of newcomers based on how different they are, and migration discourse is group-centric.[9] This supports social identity theory and shows that culture and identity matter even given the perceptions framed by the media.

Attitude of the Host Country

The attitude of the public within the host country is important in the way that it shapes the experience of refugees seeking asylum in that country. In Germany, media-shaped discourse was shaped by moral norms and the historical-cultural context of Germany.[10] Merkel's policies embraced refugees, explicitly encouraging a "culture of welcome," or "Willkommenskultur;" however, there was a social and political backlash leading to the rise of the xenophobic Alternative for Germany party. Conrad and Aðalsteinsdóttir write that a social constructivist viewpoint helps explain this reaction as an attitude shaped by national identity and historical context.[11]

Furthermore, migration has a multidimensional nature, meaning that immigrants' decisions in where they choose to settle are influenced by different types of feedback from potential countries of settlement, while these potential countries of settlement in turn may be discouraged from accepting refugees due to various factors.[12] This two-way street involves the ideas that each group holds about themselves and each other. Miholjcic argues that norms and ideas such as xenophobia and intolerance of ethnic diversity rooted in history can negatively affect settlement.[13] Segal confirms that both the perspective of the migrant and the perspective of transit and destination countries are important to understanding how refugees settle.[14]

Segal adds that ethnicity often contributes to and challenges the world view of the receiving state, which has implications for the societies in which refugees settle, including implications for the delivery of services important to refugees.[15] Quantitative research supports the idea that cognitive factors primarily predict attitudes towards asylum seekers, and affective factors are secondary predictors.[16] This is important to show that cognitive factors - beliefs formed about a particular group, including

[2] Sniderman, Hagendoorn and Prior, "Predisposing factors and situational triggers: Exclusionary reactions to immigrant minorities," 35.
[3] Ibid., 43.
[4] Stephan, Ybarra and Bachman, "Prejudice Toward Immigrants 1," 2222.
[5] Stephan, Ybarra and Bachman, "Prejudice Toward Immigrants 1," 2222.
[6] Ibid., 2223.
[7] Ibid., 2232.
[8] Ibid., 975.
[9] Brader, Valentino and Suhay, "What triggers public opposition to immigration? Anxiety, group cues, and immigration threat," 960.
[10] Conrad and Aðalsteinsdóttir, "Understanding Germany's Short-lived 'Culture of Welcome': Images of Refugees in Three Leading German Quality Newspapers," 1-2.
[11] Ibid., 1-2.
[12] Miholjcic, "What Is Preventing Successful Immigrant Integration in the Central and Eastern European Societies?" 15.
[13] Ibid., 21-22.
[14] Segal, "Globalization, Migration, and Ethnicity," 136.
[15] Ibid., 135.
[16] Segal, "Globalization, Migration, and Ethnicity," 243.

prejudice based on perception threat and competition - affect attitudes towards refugees more than other factors such as personal experience or feelings.[17]

Group-level analysis shows that out-group/in-group dynamics, which can be related to cultural differences and prejudices, are also of importance in shaping the attitudes people hold towards refugees.[18] Attitude towards refugees can be explained by studying holistically the combinations of cognitive, affective, and behavioral factors.[19] Such research has concluded that cognitive factors primarily predict attitudes towards asylum seekers, and affective factors are secondary predictors.[20]

Acculturation and Integration

John Berry provides foundational work on the acculturation of migrants. Acculturation as Berry defines it concerns "the cultural changes resulting from these group encounters."[21] In 1997, he wrote on the question: what happens to individuals, who have developed in one cultural context, when they attempt to live in a new cultural context?[22] According to this work, the cultural characteristics of the country of origin and of the country of settlement matter, at both the group and individual level.[23] Berry specifically denotes the difference between two cultures as "cultural distance."[24]

Phillimore later builds on Berry's work on acculturation, and finds that personal, cultural, policy and experiential factors combine to influence settlement experiences, potentially causing psychosocial stress that impacts refugees' levels of integration.[25] Phillimore found that refugees' ability to integrate were negatively affected by experiences at the time of arrival, such as the asylum process and poor-quality accommodations, and by experiences during the process of trying to settle and integrate, such as lack of employment opportunity and poor health care services (coupled with psychological needs such as post-traumatic stress disorder).[26] Thus, Phillimore discusses integration in terms of their legal and social opportunities, which I will later build upon in my definition of integration.

Cultural distance comes up again in Campbell's work on genocide. Campbell refers to cultural distance as "cultural diversity, or differences in the content of culture."[27] According to Campbell, cultural distance is necessary but not sufficient for genocide, and genocide will be greater in conflicts between more culturally distant ethnic groups.[28] Group-level attitudes towards refugees are affected by the level of cultural distance, and a higher distance will lead to increased conflict and lower ability to integrate. While this research is focused on genocide rather than social conflict and integration, the lessons may be applicable; this research supports the general idea that high cultural distance decreases successful integration of one group into another through the mechanism of higher conflict. Campbell's work supports my group-level theory and my use of cultural distance as a variable.

Attitudes of Refugees

It is important to consider the agency and perspective of refugees and migrants, not only as people that happened to move from one location to another. Based on the extensive records kept by the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Office of Refugee Resettlement, refugees choose where to settle based on different factors than non-refugee immigrants.[29] Immigrants as a whole tend to settle where other immigrants are, but refugees are sensitive to welfare generosity.[30]

A study conducted in 2003 emphasizes the lack of research done on the perspective of the targets, and asks, how do refugees experience prejudice against foreigners living in South Africa? South African refugees believed that the main reason for the anti-foreigner sentiment they experienced as resulting from the view that foreigners are perceived to be prospering illegitimately in South Africa.[31] This perception of resource scarcity, influenced by the culture created by a history of Apartheid, created a hostile situation for refugees. Resource scarcity provides a different explanation than the idea of national security threat as a discursive reason for xenophobia.[32]

[17] Ibid., 238.
[18] Croucamp, O'Connor, Pedersen, and Breen, "Predicting Community Attitudes towards Asylum Seekers: A Multi-Component Model," 580.
[19] Ibid., 243.
[20] Ibid., 238.
[21] Berry, "Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation," 6.
[22] Ibid., 6.
[23] Ibid., 15.
[24] Ibid., 16.
[25] Phillimore, "Refugees, Acculturation Strategies, Stress and Integration," 578.
[26] Ibid., 577-578.
[27] Campbell, "Genocide as Social Control," 161.
[28] Ibid., 162.
[29] Zavodny, "Determinants of Recent Immigrants Locational Choices," 1017.
[30] Ibid., 1014.
[31] Warner and Finchelescu, "Living with Prejudice: Xenophobia and Race," 43.
[32] Ibid., 42.

The Role of Policy

Government policy may be shaped by perceived cultural distance and the attitude of constituents within the country of settlement. Policies shape refugee identities, stereotypes and interactions in ways that affect "community welcome."[33] In particular, integration is supported by naturalization policies which can provide economic and social opportunities for immigrants.[34] Large differences between immigrants and the native population along sociocultural dimensions have been found to make social integration more of a challenge, and therefore the determinants of social integration should be understood in terms of policies.[35]

Hynie finds that successful integration requires a social context that leads to inclusion and participation, which can be supported or hindered by appropriate policies at the local, regional, national, and international levels.[36] State policy affects discourse, as refugee situations are often framed either in terms of national security and public safety or in terms of humanitarianism or human rights.[37] Policy also determines the ability of refugees to apply for and obtain legal status, and the rights and opportunities available to people of various legal statuses.

Bogen and Marlowe propose policies be put in place to support social work to advocate for asylum-seekers and to change the discourse around them.[38] They conduct an analysis of policies put forward by the New Zealand government starting in 2013 and of the relationship between state policy and the UNHCR policies put in place for refugees.[39] Using five criteria to define the attitude of the host country - concern, hostility, consensus, disproportionality, and volatility - the authors conclude that New Zealand does not have an attitude of moral panic concerning refugees, but that continued policy may encourage that attitude.[40]

Summary

There is significant psychosocial research on how refugees integrate into a host country, with an emphasis on social identity theory. Social identity theory supports the idea that the characteristics - such as ethnicity and culture - of the migrant are the key motivator behind the response of the general public. It is also evident that attitudes on both sides are important to successful integration, as is the policy context. These factors all appear interconnected, but their exact relationship is complicated to define. Thus, social identity theory forms the basis of my research – the idea that the migrant's identities can have an impact on how well they are received by others.

There is a lack of quantitative research and of political science research concerning factors that affect how refugees generally integrate, although much has been written by political scientists on the role of policy. Many studies are regionally or nationally focused and qualitative in nature. My research addresses these limitations by providing a qualitative, cross-national study of factors affecting refugee integration.

Theory

My research question is, how and to what extent does the difference between the culture of a refugee and the culture of the country they settle in affect the successful integration of the refugee? I expect that large differences in the culture of the refugee and the culture of the country in which they settle will cause a combination of xenophobic public responses and restrictive government policies, and therefore will be negatively related to successful settlement of those refugees.

Refugees constitute a highly vulnerable group, often without financial resources, stable housing, or any certainty about the future. Refugees often seek asylum from political oppression, such as genocide and state-sponsored violence. States are bound under international law to provide certain protections to refugees that have been granted asylum status; however, the method of determining this status varies from state to state. This is different from other forms of migration, as migrants can be any person moving between countries. Migrants, in contrast to refugees, are not a defined group protected by international law.[41]

I draw upon social identity theory, which asserts that a migrant's social identity, including their nationality or ethnicity, is the key determinant for the reactions of the country of settlement. National identity, more than any other perceived economic or security threat, causes people to react with restrictive and exclusionary policies.[42] This theory supports the relevance of the country of origin when attempting to explain negative reactions to refugees. The perspective of this research is focused on the characteristics of the refugee, as opposed to other research perspectives focusing on media narratives, crime and national security, or perceptions of economic threats.

[33] Laurentsyeva and Venturini, "The Social Integration of Immigrants and the Role of Policy–A Literature Review," 267.
[34] Laurentsyeva and Venturini, "The Social Integration of Immigrants and the Role of Policy–A Literature Review," 289-290.
[35] Ibid., 285.
[36] Hynie, "Refugee Integration: Research and Policy," 273-274.
[37] Ibid., 108.
[38] Bogen and Marlowe, "Asylum Discourse in New Zealand: Moral Panic and a Culture of Indifference," 105-110.
[39] Ibid., 105-110.
[40] Bogen and Marlowe, "Asylum Discourse in New Zealand: Moral Panic and a Culture of Indifference," 106-107.
[41] "UNHCR Asylum and Migration," 2019.
[42] Sniderman, Hagendoorn and Prior, "Predisposing factors and situational triggers: Exclusionary reactions to immigrant minorities," 35.

John Berry defines cultural distance as "how dissimilar the two cultures are in language, religion etc.," or essentially how different two cultures are from each other.[43] I expect that a high cultural distance will be associated with poorer indicators for successful integration: lower employment rates, lower rates of legal status, less enrollment in education, and lower access to sanitation. Large perceived differences in the culture of the refugee and the culture of the country in which they settle will cause a combination of xenophobic public responses and restrictive government policies, and therefore will be negatively related to successful social integration of those refugees.

Perceptions of cultural distance affect integration at both the group and the state level. The process of acculturation involves the changes that occur when two differing cultures interact.[44] At the group level, high cultural distance will encourage "us-vs-them" attitudes and in-group/out-group behaviors among the population of the host country, creating a hostile environment not conducive to smooth integration (as opposed to a welcoming environment). Xenophobic incidents will function as a measure of this group attitude. At the state level, politicians will respond to the changes in attitude and behavior of their constituents and to perceived socioeconomic strain or security threats by adopting policies that are less oriented towards long-term social integration, including policies which restrict the number of refugees accepted and policies which prevent access to legal status and therefore the legal opportunities available to refugees. I expect that, if there is a higher cultural distance, then there will be higher levels of xenophobia, legislation will be less conducive to long-term integration, and these mechanisms will cause the refugees to experience less successful integration.

I define refugee settlement according to the work on acculturation and integration presented by Berry and Phillimore. Successful settlement is contingent on the legal integration and the social integration of the refugee, which may overlap or be tied to one another. Legal integration involves policy and occurs at the state level; legal integration includes policy to provide legal status for refugees, to provide assistance or barriers to entry to the country, and to determine the types of activities that refugees of different legal statuses can pursue (such as employment).

Social integration involves the actions of the population and occurs at the group level. Social integration can be measured by xenophobia and incidents of hate speech or violence against refugees – or the lack thereof – and prejudiced beliefs about the personality or intellect of refugees, which are driven by out-group/in-group thinking and are reflected by exclusion of refugees from integration into aspects of society. Social and legal integration may be tied together in areas like employment and education, but social integration can be differentiated by looking at how refugees are actually willing and able to participate in legal activities/opportunities. In Chart 1, I demonstrate the causal mechanisms by which cultural distance impacts variations in integration.

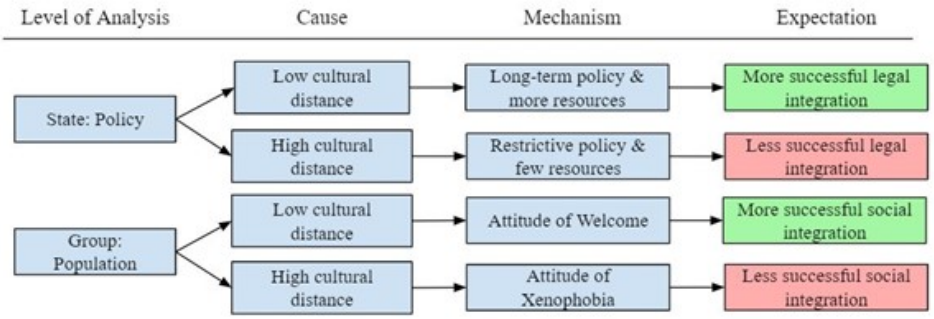

Figure 1. Chart 1

H1: If there is a higher cultural distance, then refugees will experience less successful integration by legal measures.

I expect that, at the state level, governments that are faced with an influx of refugees that do not speak the language and have different religions and customs will provide less public resources to refugees and implement legislation focused on short-term management rather than long-term settlement. This might involve implementing increased border security or decreasing acceptance rates of asylum applicants. Meanwhile, when refugees have more cultural similarities, I would expect that the government will enact more policies to encourage employment, education, legal status and long-term housing. For example, countries in which legislators seek to discourage refugees from entering and staying might set up temporary refugee camps, whereas countries where legislators seek to integrate refugees into society might provide legal status and access to housing. I assess this hypothesis with the quantitative analysis.

[43] Berry, "Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation," 23.
[44] Phillimore, "Refugees, Acculturation Strategies, Stress and Integration," 578.

H2: If there is a higher cultural distance, then refugees will experience less successful integration by social measures.

I expect that, at the group level, the populace of a country in which refugees that are entering the country have much different cultures will react with in-group/out-group behavior and general xenophobia. In contrast, refugees that speak the language, share the same religion, and/or have similar customs will not cause high levels of xenophobia among the population in which they are settling, because there are less factors to differentiate the groups. I expect that refugees settling in a state with a very different culture will not successfully achieve employment at similar rates to the rest of the country, will live in a lower quality housing situation with low access to sanitation, and enroll in public education at lower rates. I assess this hypothesis with case study analysis.

Research Design

I conduct a mixed-methods study to include both quantitative statistical analysis and qualitative case studies. Specifically, I use the nested analysis strategy of conducting large-N statistical analysis, then selecting cases for small-N, in-depth investigation. Nested analysis as a tool for comparative research in political analysis is based on the premise that combining the two approaches improves the quality of measurement and the confidence in the findings, while also better analyzing rival explanations.[45] It involves a preliminary large-N analysis to assess the robustness of the results, then proceeding to small-N analysis. The statistical analysis is meant to assess as many of the hypotheses as is possible with available data; here, the data limitations only allow for statistical analysis to test hypothesis 1 – that high cultural distance will lead to less successful refugee integration by legal measures.

Meanwhile, the case study analysis uses a small number of cases to assess the questions left unanswered by the statistical analysis.[46] The case studies attempt to test hypothesis 2 – that cultural distance will lead to less successful refugee integration by social measures – and make up for data limitations by providing context and assessing potential rival explanations. This nested analysis addresses the lack of quantitative analysis on this subject, while dealing with data limitations and accounting for historical and contextual factors. The quantitative analysis first determines the effect of cultural distance on causing restrictive policy responses which inhibit successful legal integration, then the case study analysis holistically addresses how cultural distance affects social integration of refugees for four cases.

Quantitative Data

My population is all states that have experienced any incoming asylum seekers or that are the country of origin of asylum seekers, as recorded by the UNHCR in 2018.[47] I removed from my population any cases with unknown numbers or zero asylum applicants. I also removed cases in which either the country of settlement or of origin are countries not included in the World Values Survey (WVS). That left 609 unique cases. The unit of analysis is country-year, where each case constitutes the refugee flow from one specific country to another specific country in 2018. For example, one case is of all Ghanaian refugees to Australia in 2018, for which the UNHCR recorded the total number of refugees, the number of refugees who applied for asylum, and the decisions made on those asylum applications. I use an OLS regression with fixed effects for country.

Independent Variable

The independent variable is a continuous numerical value representing cultural distance, where a larger number represents a higher cultural distance. Based on the precedent set by Inglehart and Welzel, I measure cultural distance using data from the WVS.[48] I use the most recent data from Wave 6, conducted between 2010 and 2014. I add the distance between the means of both emancipative and secular values of the country of asylum and the country of origin. For example, Germany has a cultural distance of 0.4 from Iraq, and a distance of 0.12 from the US.[49]

Emancipative refers to a type of self-expression value, which emphasizes freedom of choice and equal opportunity, such as gender equality, liberty, and personal autonomy. Secular values are more liberal, with less importance to traditional values and wider acceptance of things like divorce, abortion, euthanasia, and suicide.[50] Traditional values are the opposite of secular values and are indicated by low secular scores. Traditional countries are more conservative, emphasizing religion, traditional family roles, deference to authority, and nationalism. I chose emancipative and secular values because they provide data for most countries and each capture the most general level of cultural aspects.

[45] Lieberman, "Nested Analysis as a Mixed Method Strategy for Comparative Research," 436.
[46] Ibid., 440.
[47] "Asylum Seekers (Refugee Status Determination)," n.d.
[48] Inglehart and Welzel, "Changing Mass Priorities: The Link Between Modernization and Democracy," 554.
[49] Inglehart et al, "World Values Survey: Round Six - Country-Pooled Datafile Version," 2014.
[50] "Findings and Insights," n.d.

Dependent Variable

My dependent variable is the rejection rates of asylum seekers. The dependent variable is based on the UNHCR data. The UNHCR captures the country of origin, country of residence or asylum, the number of applicants in a year, and the number recognized and in what way, rejected, or otherwise closed, as well as the total pending at the end of the year and the total number of decisions made that year.[51] Because of the variety of ways a case can be closed, left pending, or recognized, I use the number of rejected applicants out of the total number of decisions made on asylum applications that year. This continuous numerical value will be used for the dependent variable measuring unsuccessful integration, as refugees without legal status can be said to have poorer prospects for integration than refugees with legal status. This variable is not wholly representative of integration and only shows one facet of policy, but reliable cross-country data for other social indicators has not been collected for enough of these cases. Rejection will demonstrate restrictive policies by lawmakers and will approximate poor legal integration of refugees. Low rejection rates indicate more acceptance of refugees and more willingness to provide legal status. I therefore expect that higher cultural distance will lead to higher rejection rates.

Control Variable

I control for GDP (per capita, PPP) of countries of asylum, using data from the World Bank.[52] This is an important control because the wealth of the country receiving refugees will affect their capacity to accept refugees. If a country is receiving refugees of similar culture, but their infrastructure and resources are overwhelmed, that will negatively impact the decisions about how many refugees to accept and what legal and social resources to provide, therefore prohibiting successful integration of the refugees. Additionally, the countries of asylum are not homogenous; while many are large countries with extensive resources, some are not. Controlling for GDP ensures that any results take into account the possibility that financial capacity can outweigh cultural distance as a determinant of integration.

Case Studies

In addition to this quantitative analysis, I conduct a qualitative case study of refugee flows in four pairs of countries. For this, the cases are: Syrian refugees in Germany, Venezuelan refugees in Colombia, Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, and refugees from El Salvador to the United States. These four pairs are good because they include a broad geographic area - Latin, Central, and North America, South Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. They also each represent different types of refugee crises: Venezuela is experiencing political and economic turmoil, Syria continues to face an ongoing war, countries in the Northern Triangle have high levels of gang violence, and the Rohingya in Myanmar are fleeing ethno-religious violence. Finally, the countries of asylum present variety in wealth to help control for the effect of GDP: the United States and Germany are highly developed, while Colombia and Bangladesh are developing. By employing case-based pattern finding, I analyze these four cases to show how cultural distance is realized and influences refugee integration. The cases I include are diverse but show common processes, which I highlight in my research.

For each case, I research the history and origin of the refugee crisis itself. I then place it in the context of the cultural similarities and differences of each country, making note of any historic ties between them. To determine cultural distance, lacking a comprehensive indicator such as the World Values Survey, I use data from the CIA World Factbook to describe the dominant religion, ethnicity, and language of each country, as well as its geographic location, GDP per capita (PPP), and type of government. I also use Freedom House scores, an index of how free a country is based on political rights and civil liberties, and the United Nations Development Program's Gender Inequality Index (GII) which measures from 0 to 1 how unequal women are, with 1 being the least equal.

I go on to analyze the response of the country of settlement at the group level and at the state level, including any significant events, policies, and how the situation changed over time. Finally, I assess the level of success of the refugees, attempting to find information on social integration indicators like employment, access to education, and housing, which varies in availability. The independent variable is the level of cultural similarity or difference, while the dependent variables are the indicators of social integration.

I use these case studies in order to assess the relationship between culture and settlement as well as the mechanism by which culture might affect settlement. They provide more holistic analysis on the impact of cultural distance on integration and take into account the histories and particularities of each case. They also provide support for and help explain the results of the quantitative analysis and the influence of other factors such as wealth of the country of asylum.

[51] "Asylum Seekers (Refugee Status Determination)," n.d.
[52] "GDP per capita, PPP (current international $)," n.d.

Analysis

Quantitative Results

Descriptive Statistics

There were 52 unique countries of origin and 28 unique countries of asylum, with a total of 58 different countries. With each case consisting of a refugee flow from one country of origin to another country of asylum, my data included 609 cases out of a population of 3,242 cases. In 2018, a total of150,420 asylum-seekers were denied asylum out of 362,786 decisions made, while the average rejection rate was 41.65%. Out of these, the most decisions made was on Iraqi refugees to Germany at 36,207 cases, and the least amount of decisions was 5 decisions each, which occurred for 154 cases. The average GDP per capita PPP was $16,444.92 for countries of asylum and $8,801.56 for countries of origin. This shows that refugees tend to originate in less wealthy countries and seek asylum in more wealthy countries. The smallest GDP for all countries was Rwanda at $773 and the largest was Qatar at $68,794.

Table 1. Add caption

Variable	**Name**	**Obs.**	**Avg.**	**Min.**	**Max.**
Independent	Cultural Distance	609	0.25	0.01	0.79
Dependent	Asylum Reject.	609	41.65	0	100
Control	GDP per cap. PPP (countries of asylum)	52	16444.92	835	68794

Note: Asylum rej. is in percentage; GDP is in dollars.

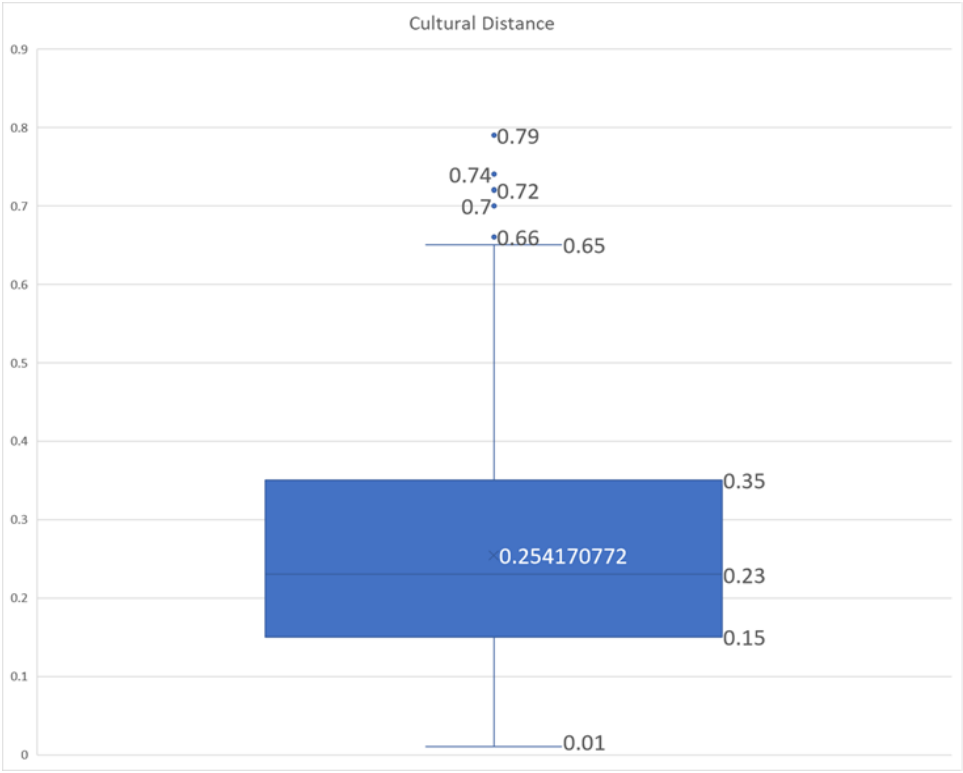

Figure 2. Chart 2

The minimum measurement of cultural distance is 0.01, between Colombia and Ecuador. The maximum cultural distance is 0.79, between Jordan and Sweden. The average distance is 0.25, and the standard deviation is about 0.14. This means that 68% of measurements are between 0.11 and 0.39. This data is left leaning, showing that countries tend to have more similar cultures as measured by the WVS data.

The average rate of refugees rejected to total decisions made was 41.65%. The highest rate of rejections was 100%, which occurred in 81 cases with distinct countries of origin and of residence/asylum. The lowest rate was 0% which occurred for

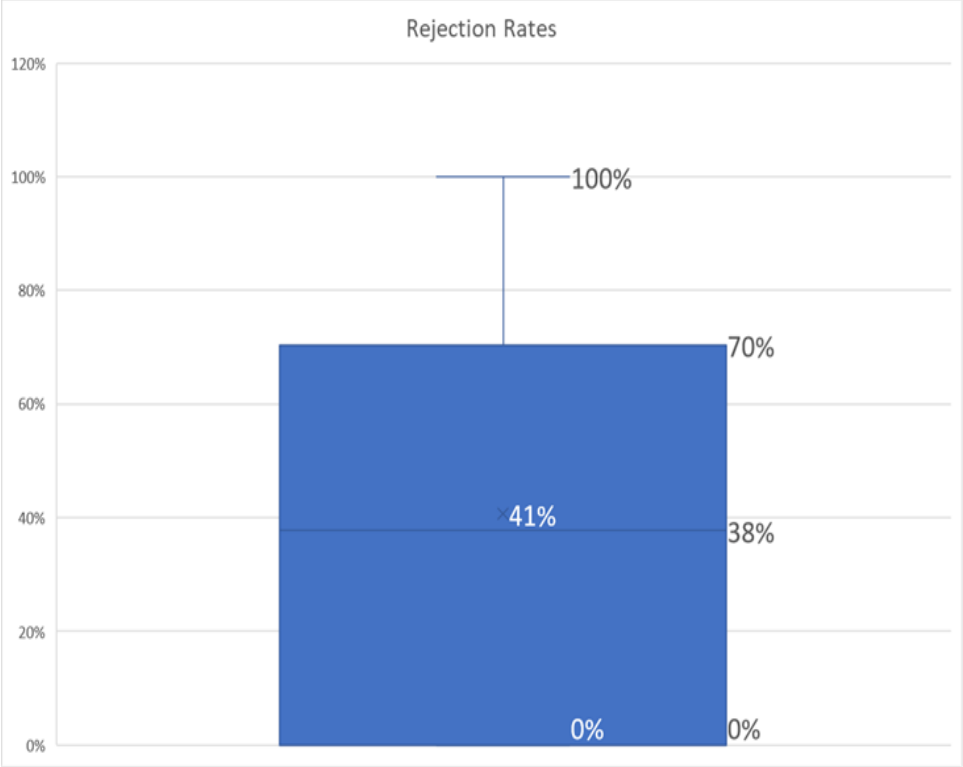

Figure 3. Chart 3

almost 200 cases. Notably, in 2018, Turkey rejected zero Iraqi asylum seekers out of 31,974 applicants. The standard deviation for the rejection rate was 36.46%, meaning that 68% of all cases had a rejection rate between 5.19% and 78.11%. This demonstrates that rejection rates tend to lean on the lower side.

Statistical Regression

My independent variable, cultural distance, is named "CULDIS." "Asylum_GDP" is the control variable, representing the GDP per capita PPP of the countries of asylum. I attempt to establish a relationship between cultural distance and "Rejection" – the rejection rate of asylum seekers. The coefficient for cultural distance is negative and small, with a p-value of 0.072 which is significant at the 10% level and a standard error of 0.12, indicating the average distance that values fell from the regression line. For the control variable, the coefficient is negative and extremely small, with a standard error of 0.00013 which means that on average, most values fall very close to the regression line. The p-value, however, was 0.943, which is not significant.

Table 2. Regression Table

	Rejection (1)
CULDIS	-0.22*
	(0.12)
Asylum_GDP	-9.3 e-06
	(0.000)
Constant	0.07
	(0.50)
Observations	609
R-Squared	0.044
Note: *p<0.10; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

The regression analysis shows that, even when controlling for GDP per capita (PPP), cultural distance has a weak but

significant and negative effect on asylum rejection. This would imply a relationship in which, as cultural distance increases, the rate of rejection decreases slightly. I expected a positive relationship in which an increase in cultural distance leads to an increase in the rate of rejection. GDP also has a negative, very weak, and not significant effect on asylum rejection. This does not support the first hypothesis, that higher cultural distance will lead to less successful legal integration.

This analysis is limited in that it only looks at legal factors of integration and relies on asylum rejection data alone. One barrier to this analysis was the lack of cross-national, reliable data on multiple measures of legal integration such as legal ability of refugees to gain citizenship, employment, and housing. The case studies to follow provide much more detailed information on non-legal measures of integration and use the data available for each case.

Case Studies

Case 1: Salvadoran Refugees to the United States

In the first case, I take a look at the refugee flow from El Salvador to the United States, which occurred largely between the mid-1970s and the mid-1990s, yet which persists to present day.[53] I first discuss the independent variable, cultural distance, then provide in-depth context, including the circumstances in El Salvador that caused migration. Then I investigate the mechanisms of integration by looking at the state-level and population-level reactions in the United States. Finally, to assess the social integration of refugees, I look at brief snapshots of refugees that worked with the International Rescue Center, one in-depth literary first-hand account from the book *Unaccompanied*, and numerical indicators of successful refugee integration.

Salvadorans generally identified as "very different" from the typical American, which reflects the high cultural difference between El Salvador and the United States. El Salvador was not included in the World Values Survey, but there are identifiable cultural differences. According to the CIA World Factbook, Salvadorans are primarily Spanish-speaking, 50% Roman Catholic and 36% Protestant.[54] El Salvador is a presidential republic with a Freedom House score of "Partly Free" and a GII score of 0.40.[55] The GDP per capita in 2017 was $8,000, with the fourth largest economy in Central America.[56] Meanwhile, 78.2% of Americans speak only English and are 46.5% Protestant and 20.6% Roman Catholic. It has a Freedom House score of "Free" and a GII score of 0.18.[57] The US GDP per capita was $59,000, and it is a constitutional federal republic in North America.[58] This information indicates that there are some similarities but significant cultural differences between US and Salvadoran culture.

In the late 1900s, political unrest in the Northern Triangle – Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala – led to millions of persons becoming displaced.[59] In El Salvador, inequality and military-oligarchy rule had led to a civil war, and fraudulent elections in 1972 led to widespread protests and the emergence of guerrilla warfare through organized rebels.[60] Between 1979-1982, there was a series of reform-minded but ultimately unsuccessful military juntas, and the Salvadoran national security agencies were violently suppressing rebellion including private paramilitary "death squads."[61] The United States maintained support for centrists but failed to pull military aid to the repressive government, despite international outcry and the 1981 massacre of largely children, and facilitated the election of Duarte.[62] Refugees first fled to nearby countries like Costa Rica and Honduras, but once those countries filled up, they sought refuge in the US, Mexico, and Canada.[63] While the United States hosted the largest number, there was significant anti-immigrant backlash in the 1980s in the form of restrictive policy. Under both the Reagan and H. W. Bush administrations, the US attempted to deny that Salvadorans were truly refugees, thereby failing to offer adequate protections.[64]

In 1981 the UNHCR recommended that all Salvadorans that fled since 1980 be considered refugees due to political displacement and likelihood of suffering if forced to return. The 1983 non-binding Cartagena declaration defined refugees as "persons who have fled their country because their lives, safety, or liberty have been threatened by generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violations of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order."[65] However, the United States continued to consider migrants from the Northern Triangle as economic migrants rather than refugees, in part to avoid the legal responsibilities to protect refugees and in part to avoid admitting to fault in having

[53] Garciìa, "Seeking Refuge: Central American Migration to Mexico, the United States, and Canada," 1.
[54] "CIA World Factbook – El Salvador," 2020.
[55] "Global Freedom Scores," 2020; "Human Development Data (1990-2018)," 2019.
[56] "CIA World Factbook – El Salvador," 2020.
[57] "Global Freedom Scores," 2020; "Human Development Data (1990-2018)," 2019.
[58] "CIA World Factbook – United States," 2020.
[59] Ibid., 1.
[60] "CIA World Factbook – United States," 2020.
[61] "CIA World Factbook – United States," 2020.
[62] Garciìa, "Seeking Refuge: Central American Migration to Mexico, the United States, and Canada," 22-25.
[63] Ibid., 1.
[64] Ibid., 10.
[65] Ibid., 31-32.

provided military aid for so long.[66] In El Salvador, the guerrillas and government agreed to a settlement in 1991 turning the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) into a legitimate presence in the legislature; however, the party of the death squad leaders continued to dominate politics.[67]

The US political response failed to adequately protect refugees. There was significant Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) interference with the right to apply for asylum reported.[68] In the 1980s and 90s, anti-immigrant backlash led to several restrictive bills, though there was a significant pro-refugee response by American civil society and especially by the Catholic church, who provided sanctuary for refugees.[69] The Reagan and Bush Sr. administrations supported safe haven for nonconvention refugees verbally but excluded Central Americans from such consideration in practice, and from 1983-1990 only 2.6% of Salvadoran asylum applicants were successful. The INS was encouraged to expedite deportation, bail bonds were increased from one hundred dollars to up to $7,500 USD, and detention centers filled up in which abuses were common. Abuses included sexual abuse of women and children, theft, and denial of access to legal counsel and translated legal documents; some refugees were even drugged to coerce them to sign forms.[70] The INS was sued several times and ruled against, but they continued to violate court rulings.[71] Actions and lawsuits by nongovernmental organizations achieved some concessions and a 1987 Supreme Court ruling which slightly broadened standards for asylum; however, deportations were intentionally sped up under Bush Sr.[72] It was only in 1990-1991 that court settlements and legislation truly improved the ability of Salvadorans to gain legal status, though it is important to note that these changes were often limited to Salvadorans and not extended to Nicaraguans and Guatemalans seeking asylum.[73]

The International Rescue Center (IRC) provides resources for refugees in the US including resources for seeking legal status but also employment and education. Valentina is a Salvadoran who was a senior college student with a major in psychology when she left El Salvador and entered the US under the Central American Minors program to reunite with her family, including her father who had temporary protection status.[74] She describes how gangs practiced indiscriminate violence and extortion, and how gang members targeted her mother for extortion. The IRC provided legal assistance for her and her father, who was also threatened by gang members. Individual accounts of refugees are very important to understand the nature of migration. They show how difficult it can be to find and settle in a new country.

The IRC also assisted Tomas, who qualified for legal status because Hurricane Mitch decimated parts of El Salvador in 1998. He married a Salvadoran woman and visited her, and due to her pregnancy and escalating gang violence where she lived, Tomas sought help from the IRC to help his wife get protected refugee status. According to the IRC, the Trump administration announced in 2018 that the Temporary Protected Status program for Salvadorans would end in 2019, a move which has been blocked by the courts but is under appeal and leaves refugees like Tomas and Valentina in a state of uncertainty.[75] These accounts show a lack of consistent and positive policy for legal integration by the government and a positive impact by civil society, as the IRC attempts to help refugees navigate legal barriers.

Unaccompanied was written in 2018 by Javier Zamora, a Salvadoran refugee, about his journey from El Salvador to the United States when he was just nine years old.[76] Zamora writes that he feels he can never return and that he felt pressure to marry for papers against his wishes, which shows how legal barriers can create hard choices and social pressure.[77] He writes how his experience with violence as a child, both familial violence and gang violence, led him to have violent episodes when he became intoxicated as an adult.[78] This is a psychological impact of trauma that ideally, the government of the country of asylum would create policy to mitigate.

Zamora also describes his experience with integration and the legal system. About receiving a deportation letter, he writes "The words Notice to Appear flap like a monarch trapped in a puddle. Translation: ten years in a cell cold enough to be named Hielera."[79] He describes "waiting in that line at the US embassy when I tried and tried for a visa like Mom like Dad like aunts and we all got denied" and that his whole family was "working, Mom Dad Tía Lupe Tía Mali working under different names."[80] These experiences account for the difficulty and fears involved in obtaining legal status to live and work in the US.

[66] Garciìa, "Seeking Refuge: Central American Migration to Mexico, the United States, and Canada," 33-34.
[67] Garciìa, "Seeking Refuge: Central American Migration to Mexico, the United States, and Canada," 42.
[68] Ibid., 84.
[69] Ibid., 86, 98-99.
[70] Ibid., 91.
[71] Ibid., 92.
[72] Ibid., 109-110.
[73] Garciìa, "Seeking Refuge: Central American Migration to Mexico, the United States, and Canada," 112.
[74] "In El Salvador, you don't know if you'll make it home alive at the end of the day," n.d.
[75] "What TPS means for a young Salvadoran family," n.d.
[76] Zamora, *Unaccompanied*, 1-80.
[77] Ibid., 27.
[78] Ibid., 69.
[79] Ibid., 71.
[80] Ibid., 79-80.

About the desire to fit in, Zamora says that he "was ready to be gringo speak English own a pool Jeep convertible," but that he had "always known this country wanted [him] dead."[81] He writes that "more than once a white man wanted me dead a white man passed a bill that wants me deported wants my family deported."[82] There is a desire to integrate and even assimilate, but a feeling of alienation by the government and the people around him.

As of 2013, Salvadorans spoke more Spanish at home than other Hispanic people living in the United States.[83] Salvadorans also had lower levels of education and annual personal earnings than other US Hispanics and the overall US population. Foreign born Salvadorans were less likely to have earned a bachelor's degree or higher than US-born Salvadorans. The poverty rate of Salvadorans is higher than the overall US rate but lower compared to other US Hispanics. Salvadorans have less health insurance and lower homeownership than all Hispanics and the US population. Meanwhile, approximately half of Salvadorans see themselves as "very different" from typical Americans, while close to one-third see themselves as typical Americans. This compares to about half of Hispanic adults who see themselves as a typical American and 44% who see themselves as "very different." Finally, the US overall employment rate in 2013 was 8.4%, while it was 9.9% for Hispanics, 14.6% for US-born Salvadorans, but only 6.8% for foreign-born Salvadorans (which may be due to Visa requirements for legal status or be due to characteristics of immigrants and refugees in general).[84] These statistics paint a generally negative picture of social integration outcomes. The cultural distance is high and the social integration is poor, which supports the second hypothesis.

Case 2: Syrian Refugees to Germany

In the second case, I discuss the refugees displaced by the Syrian Civil war to Germany between 2011 and now.[85] First, I describe the cultural distance, then provide the context and background behind the Syrian refugee crisis. I then describe the German state-level and population-level responses. Finally, to determine the social integration of Syrian refugees, I summarize how language barriers create barriers to health, two accounts by refugees from the book *Cast Away: True Stories of Survival From Europe's Refugee Crisis*, and the available measures for successful integration.

The official language of Germany is German, with several official minority languages, and the country is 27.7% Roman Catholic and 25.5% Protestant. The country is "Free" according to the Freedom House and has a very low GII of 0.08.[86] The GDP per capita of Germany was $50,800, and it is a parliamentary republic located in Europe.[87] Syria, meanwhile, is located in the Middle East, with a 2017 GDP per capita of $2,900.[88] Syria is 87% Muslim, which is the country's official religion, and the official language is Arabic.[89] Syria also has a highly authoritarian presidential republic, with a Freedom Score of "Not Free" and a GII of 0.55.[90] There is clearly a high degree of cultural difference.

The Syrian refugee crisis was fueled by civil war that has been ongoing since 2011 and escalated in 2014-15. The war began with anti-government protests which escalated into a larger conflict between anti-government forces, including militants from the Islamic State, and the repressive Bashar al-Assad regime.[91] By the end of 2014, about 7.6 million people were internally displaced with 3.7 Syrians having fled Syria.[92] While the vast majority of Syrians resettled in the region, about 6% sought asylum in Europe, North America, and the Asia Pacific between 2011 and 2014.[93] The long-lasting nature of the conflict has created unique challenges for Syrian refugees, including tensions among host community populations and difficulty meeting their basic needs.[94]

In 2013, Germany began a new program to admit Syrian refugees, and granted asylum to the largest number of Syrians from 2012 to 2014 – about 40,000.[95] However, the magnitude of the crisis was overblown both in comparison to previous migration levels[96] and the 3.7 million registered refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, and Turkey.[97] Merkel opened the country strategically, both as a way to repair Germany's reputation with refugees and to overcome stagnant population growth to increase the size of the work force.[98] Syrian refugees were unique in that they were much more educated than other refugee

[81] Ibid., 78.
[82] Zamora, *Unaccompanied*, 78.
[83] Lopez, "Hispanics of Salvadoran Origin in the United States, 2013," 2013.
[84] Ibid.
[85] "History of UNHCR Syria," n.d.
[86] "Global Freedom Scores," 2020; "Human Development Data (1990-2018)," 2019.
[87] "CIA World Factbook – Germany," 2020.
[88] "CIA World Factbook – Syria," 2020.
[89] Ibid.
[90] "Global Freedom Scores," 2020; "Human Development Data (1990-2018)," 2019.
[91] "Syria: The Story of the Conflict," 2016.
[92] Ostrand, "The Syrian Refugee Crisis: A Comparison of Responses by Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States," 255.
[93] Ostrand, "The Syrian Refugee Crisis: A Comparison of Responses by Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States," 264-65, 267.
[94] Ibid., 256-7.
[95] Ibid., 268-69.
[96] Streitwieser et al, "The Potential and Reality of New Refugees Entering German Higher Education: The Case of Berlin Institutions," 232.
[97] Ostrand, "The Syrian Refugee Crisis: A Comparison of Responses by Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States," 269.
[98] Streitwieser et al, "The Potential and Reality of New Refugees Entering German Higher Education: The Case of Berlin Institutions," 233-34.

groups and, while most did not speak German, many spoke English, which could be a factor making social integration easier.[99]

Germany also invested significant resources in the integration of Syrian refugees, including university scholarships, access to government assistance, language training programs which included German culture and history.[100] The government policies were overall positive and aimed towards long-term integration of refugees, with heavy investment in their success. However, there are aspects in which the German response was lacking. The routes to legal status were complicated, numerous, and unequal, with recognized refugees receiving full protections and benefits while refugees that entered under different means, such as through state programs, did not receive the same protections.[101] Furthermore, despite excluding anyone with a criminal history and screening for and prioritizing asylum-seekers that already spoke German and were expected to integrate easily,[102] Germany saw xenophobic anti-immigrant responses. Germany experienced anti-immigrant protests and a sharp increase in the number of verbal and physical assaults against refugees, along with an increase in electoral successes by far-right parties running on anti-immigrant platforms.[103] This shows exactly what I expect: high cultural distance leading to xenophobic responses which in turn influence the government.

2016 interviews with Syrian refugees reveal that language barriers create barriers to adequate healthcare for Syrian refugees. A large number of Syrian refugees in Germany experienced some degree of trauma and need mental health care.[104] Refugees expressed concern about making appointments and understanding directions from pharmacists. Many reported that they often had little interactions with locals and were isolated with limited options for transportation and therefore did not have the frequent opportunity to practice language skills and pick up cultural cues. The government provided free German courses; however, these were effectively inaccessible due to very long waiting lists.[105] In this way, the positive policy intent of the government was not realized.

Cast Away: True Stories of Survival From Europe's Refugee Crisis includes the personal stories of many Syrian refugees, two of whom set out for Germany. Sina, a Chemical Engineer, arrived in Greece with her infant son and registered there with the plan of waiting for her husband before making her way to Germany, having received a scholarship to study for a Master's degree.[106] However, her husband died in transit. Sina decided to make a visa appointment in Germany, but a lawyer at a local charity warned her that her son may not be granted a visa, as Sina had not been able to get a death certificate proving her husband's death.[107] Fearful, Sina decided to contact a smuggler, and for 400 euros, she was transported across Europe. Having stopped in Sweden and received warm treatment and assistance from both the government and local residents, Sina decided to stay and applied for asylum there, never making it to complete her degree in Germany.[108] This demonstrates how the legal barrier, a requirement of death certificate for her husband, deterred settlement to the point where she never even made it to Germany, even though the government attempted to encourage integration by providing scholarships.

Meanwhile, Nart Bajoi, age 34, arrived in Munich. He recalls hearing other Syrians often referring to "Mama Merkel," who sought to welcome refugees and overcome Germany's history with xenophobia and racism.[109] However, Nart arrived before these welcoming policies, and was given a deportation order in 2014 to go back the way he came, to Bulgaria. He had an old sports injury that became aggravated by his journey to Germany via Bulgaria and over mountains. The German immigration service stayed his deportation due to his medical treatment, leaving Nart in a state of uncertainty as he sought to appeal his deportation. He attended German lessons and volunteered, but could not work.[110]

In 2015, Merkel suspended the Dublin Regulation, meaning that Nart could stay, but he only received temporary suspension of deportation and faced the risk of being forced to leave at any time. He was allowed to work with a permit, but thought, "Why would someone hire me?...Why would they make a contract with me when perhaps tomorrow or the day after tomorrow I would be sent back?" He eventually got a job at a US Army base, but had to leave when they asked for his passport after several months. The author wrote that "the rules seemed to be changing every month, and Nart had no idea what to do or how to try and build a life."[111]

After a while, Nart attempted to return to Syria, unable to work, in a state of legal uncertainty, and with his injury aggravated by the cold. He took a bus to the border of Austria. However, Hungary had erected several border walls and heavily restricted

[99] Ibid., 235.
[100] Streitwieser et al, "The Potential and Reality of New Refugees Entering German Higher Education: The Case of Berlin Institutions," 239.
[101] Tometten, "Resettlement, Humanitarian Admission, and Family Reunion: The Intricacies of Germany's Legal Entry Regimes for Syrian Refugees," 187–203
[102] Ibid., 193-94.
[103] Ostrand, "The Potential and Reality of New Refugees Entering German Higher Education: The Case of Berlin Institutions," 244-45.
[104] Ibid., 242-43.
[105] Green, "Language Barriers and Health of Syrian Refugees in Germany," 486.
[106] McDonald-Gibson, "Cast Away: True Stories of Survival From Europe's Refugee Crisis," 234-35.
[107] Ibid., 249.
[108] Ibid., 249-258.
[109] McDonald-Gibson, "Cast Away: True Stories of Survival From Europe's Refugee Crisis," 237.
[110] Ibid., 238.
[111] Ibid., 238-39.

refugee travel through the country, which had the unintended effect of preventing Nart from returning to Syria, and Nart turned back to remain in Germany.[112] He eventually got a job at a gas station after several months and thousands of emails to potential employers.[113] Nart's story demonstrates the negative impact of inconsistent policies on settlement, despite significant effort by the refugee.

There is limited accessible data on social indicators that is specific to Syrian refugees to Germany. The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) did publish a survey of refugee religious practices in 2020. According to this survey, 87.3% of Syrian refugees practice Islam, and 75% of Muslim refugees to Germany said that religion is important or very important for their happiness and well-being, although only 28% of Muslim refugees reported attending a religious event at least once a month compared to 67% of Christian refugees.[114] According to the report, lower participation could be due to a lack of suitable religious infrastructure such as an Arabic-speaking mosque community. This shows how a key cultural difference may lead refugees to find it more difficult to integrate into society, lacking a spiritual community to join.

A separate BAMF survey of all refugees in 2016 provides several relevant social indicators, and in 2016, Syrians made up about 56% of all German refugees and 17% of all German asylum seekers.[115] Given the limited data, I generalize the outcomes for all refugees to Syrian refugees. The BAMF found that refugees had more in common with the German population than with the populations of their countries of origin.[116] Refugees that had lived in Germany longer reported better proficiency in German.[117] The report notes that 2/3 of the respondents had attended at least one type of language course, such as those offered by the German government. Analysis also found that there was a positive correlation between language proficiency gains and education levels and living in private accommodations rather than refugee shelters; however, the correlations were negative for women respondents.[118] This illustrates that for most refugees, improvement in German language skills led to better social integration as indicated by housing. However, for women, this may be indicative of additional barriers to housing for refugee women that the government did not account for.

14% of respondents were employed, 1/3 of whom were employed part time. Employment rates were higher for refugees that had arrived earlier and had thus lived in Germany longer. 55% of respondents were still waiting for a decision on their asylum claims, which may have impacted their access to the job market.[119] Additionally, refugees were more satisfied with their health than non-immigrants, though the report points out that refugees had a much lower age demographic. The BAMF also found that refugees suffered more from loneliness and depression than non-immigrants. Finally, only 10% of refugees reported having experienced discrimination "frequently" and 36% reported having "seldom" experienced discrimination. Furthermore, refugees living in shelters encountered discrimination more frequently than those living in private residences, and refugees whose asylum application was approved felt discriminated against less often. However, interestingly, refugees with a better proficiency in German felt discriminated against more often.[120] These social measures show mixed prospects for refugees' social integration, with a positive outlook for employment and physical health but negative indicators for mental health and discrimination. The cultural distance was fairly high and the social integration is good, which does not support the second hypothesis.

Case 3: Burmese (Rohingya) Refugees to Bangladesh

The third case concerns the Rohingya refugees fleeing Myanmar due to ethnic violence, the majority of whom now reside in refugee camps in Bangladesh. While this crisis has its roots in the 1982 Citizenship Law which denied citizenship to the Rohingya, the violence causing mass refugee flows began in 2017 and has continued to present day.[121] First, I lay out the cultural distance between the Rohingya and Bangladesh, then I provide a brief history of the ethnic violence against the Rohingya. I determine the success of refugee integration using three first-hand accounts from refugees in Camp 18 in Bangladesh, collected by Doctors Without Borders in 2018, and several numerical indicators of refugee integration.

Bangladesh is also not included in the World Values Survey, nor is Myanmar. Bangladesh is 89.1% Muslim and 10% Hindi, with 98.8% of the population speaking the official language of Bangla. The Freedom House classifies it as "Partly Free," and it has a GII score of 0.54.[122] Bangladesh is part of South Asia and a parliamentary republic with a 2017 GDP per capita of $4,200.[123] Myanmar is a parliamentary republic with an official language is Burmese. 87.9% of the population is Buddhist and only 4.3% is Muslim, though the refugees fleeing to Bangladesh are Rohingya Muslims. Myanmar is "Not Free" and has

[112] McDonald-Gibson, "Cast Away: True Stories of Survival From Europe's Refugee Crisis," 266.
[113] Ibid., 268.
[114] Siegert, "Religious affiliation, religious practice and social integration of refugees," 2020.
[115] "History of UNHCR Syria," n.d.
[116] Brucker, et al, "Forced migration, arrival in Germany, and first steps toward integration" 2016, 1.
[117] Ibid., 8.
[118] Brucker, et al, "Forced migration, arrival in Germany, and first steps toward integration" 2016, 9.
[119] Ibid., 9.
[120] Ibid., 14-15.
[121] "Rohingya Refugee Crisis Timeline," n.d.
[122] "Global Freedom Scores," 2020; "Human Development Data (1990-2018)," 2019.
[123] "CIA World Factbook – Bangladesh," 2020.

a GII score of 0.46.[124] Myanmar is part of Southeast Asia and had a GDP per capita of $6,300.[125] The two countries have similar levels of wealth, are within the same region, have somewhat high gender inequality, and are not "Free." Rohingya Muslims share the same religion that is dominant to Bangladesh, and both countries have official state languages. Both are parliamentary republics, though the Burmese government is increasingly dominated by military authorities. There are some differences between the two, but significant cultural similarities, prominently religious.

The Rohingya are an ethnic group located in Myanmar, largely concentrated in the Rakhine State to the west. The country is majority-Buddhist, and the Rohingya are a Muslim minority group. Myanmar was conquered by Britain in 1824 and ruled until 1948. During this period, many Muslims from Bengal migrated into Myanmar. After British rule ended and post-WWII, the British promised the Rohingya an autonomous state for their help in the war. This autonomous state never materialized, and the majority Burmese Buddhist population has fostered resentment for the perceived invasion.[126]

Myanmar was under military rule for decades, throughout which the Rohingya and other ethnic and religious minorities faced discrimination and abuse, until an election in 2015. Despite the high hopes for this election and the new President, Nobel Peace Prize democracy champion Aung San Suu Kyi, persecution of the Rohingya as well as military power and influence continue. Long-running ethnic violence against the Rohingya was escalated in 2017, when satellite images were released showing evidence of villages in Myanmar being burned down.[127] The Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army launched attacks on security force posts, to which the Myanmar military responded by targeting villages, with what Amnesty International describes as a deliberate and intentional pattern of burning targeting Rohingya homes and mosques. There has been arrests and tortures of Rohingya men and boys as well as massacres and rapes. Amnesty International has labelled the state violence as ethnic cleansing, as has the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.[128]

Doctors Without Borders, or Medecins Sans Frontieres, is a medical humanitarian aid organization working within the refugee camps in Bangladesh. They published first-hand accounts including translated video interviews with three Rohingya refugees living in Camp 18, one of 22 camps in the Kutupalong-Balikhali area in Bangladesh, which provides shelter for over 29,300 refugees[129]. The refugees interviewed are Mohamed, Hasina, and Fatima. Mohamed is 45, a father, and a daily laborer. He arrived with 7 other family members, including his wife and children, after one of his sons went missing in Myanmar. Doctors Without Borders says that, because aid distribution is sometimes unequal, those refugees that are able to find casual work do better for themselves. Mohamed works occasionally and bought a phone to contact his brother who is in hiding in the forest in Myanmar. He is near a water point; according to Doctors Without Borders, families in newer camps find wells and latrines few and far between.[130]

Hasina is 35 and a widow who arrived in Bangladesh with five children. The closest water point to Hasina is non-functional, so she has to walk to the next-closest one. She also has to go out to the forest to collect firewood for cooking, a process that can take up to three hours. Some refugees were given small gas stoves, but Hasina was one of the many who were not. Hasina is worried about the monsoon season causing the destruction of her shelter, which is constructed of bamboo and plastic sheeting. The supplies and instructions are provided by aid workers, but refugees construct the shelters themselves. In the video interview, Hasina said, "We didn't come here for the food. We came because the Buddhists were killing and setting on fire our parents and brothers. ...We endured constant oppression for so long. We came to this country to seek justice and the freedom to practice our religion."[131]

Fatima is also a widow, and a mother of four. She couldn't construct her shelter herself and relied on the Rohingya leader in charge of her section to gather volunteers to help her build it. Fatima had fled Myanmar in 1992 to avoid forced labor and returned 2 years later, rebuilding her life, but was forced to leave Myanmar for Bangladesh again in 2017. According to Doctors Without Borders, there are 5 hospitals, 10 health posts, and 2 health centers in the camp. Fatima's son was diagnosed with mumps at one of the camp's clinics. Fatima reported that "When it became so dangerous again, we came here. It's a Muslim country, we can hope for justice here. This country has given us shelter. We are grateful to them...We're receiving more help than when we were here last time. Last time, we weren't given floor mats or anything. This time, they've given us a floor mat, clothes, utensils, and food, rice, oil."[132]

The interviews from Doctors Without Borders demonstrates a lack of investment from the Bangladeshi government, which is strained for resources. The majority of integration efforts seem to be coming from international organizations. The interviews also show how the ability to find work, which the government has restricted, can be very important. They also show that current

[124] "Global Freedom Scores," 2020; "Human Development Data (1990-2018)," 2019.
[125] "CIA World Factbook – Myanmar," 2020.
[126] Blakemore, "Who are the Rohingya people?" 2019.
[127] "Mapping Myanmar's Atrocities Against Rohingya," 2018.
[128] "Mapping Myanmar's Atrocities Against Rohingya," 2018.
[129] "Life in Camp 18: First-hand Accounts from Rohingya Refugees," 2018.
[130] Ibid.
[131] "Life in Camp 18: First-hand Accounts from Rohingya Refugees," 2018.
[132] Ibid.

resources are insufficient and inconsistently distributed. Furthermore, two of the interviewees mention that being in a Muslim country has been a positive factor for them, indicating that on the specific cultural similarity of religion, there is a positive effect on the refugees.

Bangladesh has created legal restrictions to discourage long-term settlement of refugees and has attempted to encourage repatriation several times.[133] This has included banning formal education in refugee camps, leaving refugees with access only to informal, non-certificate education 2 hours a day and 70% of Rohingya children out of school. Refugees are also denied access to formal refugee status and legal employment outside refugee camps.[134] The latter has led to a corrupt illegal economy in the camps and economic competition with local Bangladesh citizens, as Rohingya are willing to work for lower wages. This shows a somewhat negative reaction by the local population, though the reaction is more driven by the state of the economy than any apparent cultural factors. More importantly, the education and employment policies of the government are extremely negative and intended to discourage long-term integration, most likely due to economic considerations and a limited capacity.

Furthermore, the refugee camps provide living conditions that do not meet international standards, and there have been 420 cases of human trafficking of refugees from camps, especially women and children, between December 2018 and June 2019.[135] These incidents show a lack of ability or intent by the government to protect refugees and provide for their physical security. The lack of permanent housing is of primary concern. The cultural distance is very low and the social integration is poor, which does not support the second hypothesis.

Case 4: Venezuelan Refugees to Colombia

Finally, the fourth case concerns the Venezuelan refugees to Colombia. First, I compare the cultures of the two countries and summarize migration between Venezuela and Colombia, including the current crisis. I then analyze the social integration of refugees using first-hand accounts and indicators of refugee integration.

Venezuela has a variety of ethnicities, including European, Arab, African, and indigenous. The South American country's official language is Spanish, though there are some indigenous dialects, and 96% of Venezuelans are Roman Catholic.[136] It is a federal presidential republic with an increasingly repressive authoritarian leader, classified as "Not Free" by Freedom House.[137] Venezuela has a GII score of 0.46, and in 2017, had a GDP per capita (PPP) of $12,500.[138] Colombia is located in South America, sharing much of its eastern border with Venezuela. Colombia's official language is also Spanish, and 79% of the population is Roman Catholic (14% are Protestant).[139] Colombia is a "Partly Free" presidential republic with a GII score of 0.41 and a 2017 GDP per capita PPP of $14,400.[140] While Colombia is slightly more progressive and developed, the two countries are culturally very similar.

Colombia and Venezuela have a very intertwined history, beginning with their liberation from Spain under Simon Bolivar.[141] During the last half of the twentieth century, the two have had territorial disputes, tensions over Venezuelan support of Colombian terrorist group FARC, and contention with Colombia's military-antiterrorism Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA) with the United States.[142] Additionally, Colombians have long made up a significant portion of migrants to Venezuela, including undocumented or illegal migrants, and the two also have strong historical trade ties.[143] There was a period of restricted trade in the mid-2000s following the DCA, but the two nations have a free trade agreement and are both members of the Organization of American States, the Andean Community of Nations, and the Group of Three (G-3).[144] The two have also participated in a border commission in the 1990s which has helped reduce tensions, and the presidents both worked to restore relations in the mid-2000s.[145]

Venezuela has long been heavily dependent on oil exports, and a sharp decline in oil prices in 2013 created a rapid economic crash and rapidly spiraling inflation.[146] While the price of oil has since risen, production in Venezuela has continued to fall due to continued government mismanagement. This has been accompanied by serious infrastructure failures including frequent power outages. In 2017, the government created the Special Action Forces to respond to crime and drug trafficking, which has carried out extrajudicial killings primarily in poor neighborhoods.[147] Venezuelans have thus been fleeing not only due to the

[133] Shahid, "Assessing the treatment of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh," 2019.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.
[136] "CIA World Factbook – Venezuela," 2020.
[137] "Global Freedom Scores," 2020.
[138] "Human Development Data (1990-2018)," 2019; "CIA World Factbook - Venezuela," 2020.
[139] "CIA World Factbook – Colombia," 2020.
[140] "Global Freedom Scores," 2020; "Human Development Data (1990-2018)," 2019; "CIA World Factbook - Colombia," 2020.
[141] Haggerty & Blutstein, "Venezuela: a country study," 1993, 11.
[142] Hudson, "Colombia: a country study," 2010, lxxi, lxxvii-iii, 352-3.
[143] Haggerty & Blutstein, "Venezuela: a country study," 1993, 169; Hudson, "Colombia: a country study," 2010, 273.
[144] Hudson, "Colombia: a country study," 2010, xxxvii, xlii, lxxx,185.
[145] Ibid., 274, 276.
[146] Praag, "Understanding the Venezuelan Refugee Crisis," 2019.
[147] Ibid.

humanitarian crisis, but also due to political persecution and violence.

33% of Venezuelan refugees fled to neighboring Colombia, numbering 1.4 million as of August 2019 and making up the largest portion in comparison to other destination countries.[148] Furthermore, 46% of Venezuelans still living in Venezuela have considered leaving the country, meaning that the government of Colombia anticipates millions more refugees by the end of 2020. Over 400,000 of these refugees are native Colombians that originally sought refuge in Venezuela.[149] The Colombian government has committed to maintaining open borders for ethical reasons, but also out of reciprocity, noting that Venezuela took in approximately 2.5 million Colombian refugees in the past.[150] In this way, their shared history contributes to positive sentiment and policy response by the Colombian government.

Venezuelans are not conventional refugees, but like in the case of Salvadoran refugees, the UNHCR has called for the recognition of Venezuelans as refugees under the Cartagena Declaration.[151] Compared to similar crises, this has not received much support from the international community. International aid for the Syrian refugee crisis was significantly higher, amounting to about $1,500 per refugee, whereas for Venezuelans it comes out to $125 each.[152] This has resulted in significant strain on the host countries, including Colombia. Colombia's economic limitations may affect their ability to enact policies to invest in refugees. However, they have generally still made positive efforts.

The Colombian response has included relaxing entry regulations, creating the Special Stay Permit (PEP) to grant the rights to work, education, and healthcare, and over $230 million in credit lines to invest in infrastructure and more for areas with high densities of refugees.[153] Over half of Venezuelans have some sort of permit or visa, but 47% either entered through an unregulated port or overstayed their permit and do not have legal status. The Colombian government is committed to maintaining open borders and has developed a Comprehensive Migration Response Policy Agenda which includes the goals of providing access to healthcare and education, protecting vulnerable groups (indigenous people, women, and children), economic integration, and security and social cohesion. This shows a policy plan to provide for the successful social integration of refugees and create a framework for legal integration.

The existence of a comprehensive plan and government investment has helped integration, although the limited capacity in comparison to the large influx of refugees has led to gaps. Over 200,000 Venezuelan children are enrolled in school with 117,000 receiving school meals; however, there is significant need for investment in infrastructure, training for teachers, and psychosocial support.[154] The government is spending 3.2 million per month on emergency care for Venezuelans, including facilitating pregnancies of women that hadn't received prenatal care or vitamins and providing millions of vaccines at the border, especially to children. There are concerns about resurfacing of diseases such as measles and rising STDs, and deficits in water, sanitation, and housing in border regions.[155]

While most refugees have settled in urban areas, refugees in remote border regions have had difficulties accessing resources.[156] While Colombia initially provided temporary shelters and avoided building formal refugee camps, the UNHCR did build a shelter in Maicao, in the remote La Guajira desert where resources are limited, with a Red Cross clinic, a cafeteria, a day care, and experts providing psychological counseling and legal advice, all free. Refugees can only stay a month, but the free shelter and food provide an opportunity for refugees to save up so they can rent once they move out.[157] Thus, the response by the international community, while financially not comparable to other refugee crisis, has been positively supplementing the government's attempts to integrate refugees.

In interviews with World Vision, an organization providing food aid to refugees, Venezuelan refugee Mariairene describes her current situation in Colombia. Her oldest son was able to find work on a trial basis and earns $100 per month, and she says that for herself and the other 9 people living in a 3-room rental, "it is a challenge to survive on that income."[158] They cook over a wood fire, and plant food in the backyard. A different, unnamed refugee leading a group of other migrants, including children, says, "since we crossed into Colombia, people have been very helpful and kind to us."[159] These accounts demonstrate that there is existing support, and people are able to get by, but there are still significant challenges. Sandra Arriesta is a native

[148] Migration Policy, ""The Colombian Response to the Venezuelan Migration Crisis: A Dialogue with Colombia's Migration Czar," 2019; Praag, "Understanding the Venezuelan Refugee Crisis," 2019.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Praag, "Understanding the Venezuelan Refugee Crisis," 2019.
[152] Bahar and Dooley, "Venezuela refugee crisis to become the largest and most underfunded in modern history," 2019.
[153] UNHCR "Labor Market Access and Integration," 2019; Bahar and Dooley, "Venezuela refugee crisis to become the largest and most underfunded in modern history," 2019.
[154] Migration Policy, ""The Colombian Response to the Venezuelan Migration Crisis: A Dialogue with Colombia's Migration Czar," 2019.
[155] Migration Policy, ""The Colombian Response to the Venezuelan Migration Crisis: A Dialogue with Colombia's Migration Czar," 2019.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Otis, "Venezuelans Find Temporary Lifeline At Colombia's First Border Tent Camp," 2019.
[158] Reid, "Venezuela migrants share their stories about why they left" 2019.
[159] Ibid.

Colombian. She says, "I moved to Venezuela when times were bad here. I never thought I'd come back here."[160] Her story is a demonstration of the cultural and historical overlap between the two countries.

The indicators for social and legal integration are mixed for Venezuelan refugees, with a somewhat positive outlook. Over half have legal status, which provides the ability to find work, and for the most part have found settlement in cities rather than refugee camps. There is a high rate of vaccinations, and children are being integrated into the public school system. However, economic and infrastructure limitations, along with the severity of the crisis, mean that there are also poor outcomes. Diseases are of high and increasing concern, and refugees in rural areas do not have access to resources. The Colombian population, which was initially mostly in favor of accepting refugees, has an increasingly negative perception of the Venezuelans; although the government has recognized this and persists in maintaining welcoming policies. For the purposes of analysis, the outcome can be said to be slightly positive, as the Colombian government's efforts are paying off, albeit not all at once and with insufficient resources. The cultural distance is low and the social integration is fairly good, which supports the second hypothesis.

Results

The following chart breaks down the findings of the case studies. The case studies show mixed results for both the countries that are culturally similar and the countries that are culturally different. The chart demonstrates how policy responses and population responses interact with state capacity to create differing outcomes.

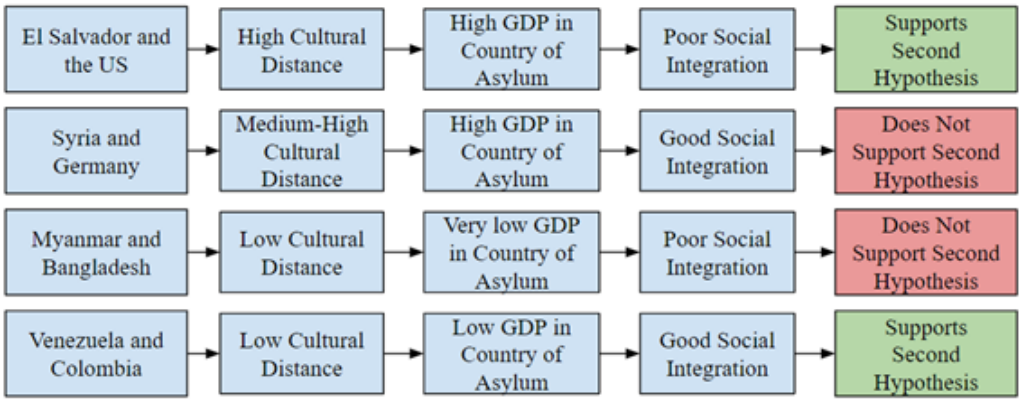

Figure 4. Chart 4

The case studies confirm that the countries' capacity to accept refugees is clearly a very large determinant of integration, which is made evident by the cases of Bangladesh and Colombia where limitations in economic and infrastructure capacities are preventing successful integration. In Bangladesh, the government and the people had a negative response, seeking short-term integration, and the only clear positive effect of cultural similarity has been that the Rohingya are experiencing newfound freedom to practice Islam. In Colombia, the government has had a very positive response, while the people had an initially positive but now somewhat negative response. Colombia has made efforts to integrate refugees dispersed throughout the country and provide legal status and ability to work, while in Bangladesh refugees are concentrated in camps with insufficient resources and low work prospects. A key difference in the cases is that, while both countries are developing, Bangladesh has a GDP per capita (PPP) that is lower than that of Colombia by $10,200.

Among the two case studies in which the countries of asylum have high capacity, the US had a negative government response and positive population response whereas Germany had a positive government response and negative population response, and Syrian refugees have much better outcomes compared to Salvadorans. Based on the case study information, the Syrian refugees to Germany were more culturally similar than the Salvadoran refugees to the US. There is some limited evidence supporting my hypotheses. Furthermore, the case of Syrians to Germany highlights how the existing cultural differences can spark a xenophobic public response, followed by a political shift towards more xenophobia, and make integration more difficult. The case of Rohingya in Bangladesh, meanwhile, highlights how, in a situation with very poor integration outcomes, the commonality of religion creates a tie that is positive for refugees.

It seems that there are certain circumstances in which culture is significant: a high capacity combined with significant government investment in the settlement of refugees can overcome the negative population response and a high cultural distance (Germany), whereas a high capacity and positive population response cannot similarly overcome a negative response by the government due to high cultural distance (US). When there is a low cultural distance, an extremely low capacity can completely

[160] Reid, "Venezuela migrants share their stories about why they left" 2019.

outweigh any cultural impact (Bangladesh), and the policy and population-level implications of a poor economy lead to very poor integration outcomes. However, when economic limitations are less severe, low cultural distance can directly lead to positive policy responses that produce better outcomes (Colombia).

Conclusions

This research intends to address the role of culture in refugee settlement, combining social psychology and with political analysis. I argue that when two cultures interact in the form of refugees settling in a new country of residence, the differences between those two cultures are an important predictor of how welcoming the country of residence will be as well as how policymakers will respond, ultimately determining the ability of the refugee to successfully settle in the country. Xenophobia and in-group/out-group thinking are very powerful, and when they determine the behavior and policy response to refugees, it can negatively impact the acculturation process and limit their access to important resources. When refugees have very different cultures from their country of settlement, I expect that people will respond negatively, rather than with a culture of welcome, and policy makers will focus on short-term management and restrictive policies, rather than long-term integration with social resources and legal protections.

There is insufficient literature on the role of culture in refugee integration and well-being, and data limitations have created a dearth of quantitative analysis. Political scientists have mostly focused on single case studies and have predominantly looked at economic and security factors and the role of policy. The research is inconclusive on what helps refugees integrate successfully. Meanwhile, social identity theory provides a basis for the characteristics of the refugees, including their ethnicity and culture, as a determinant of the public response to refugees. Psychology and sociology give context on refugee acculturation, confirming that the public response and access to resources are important for integration and providing the concept of cultural distance.

I chose to address data limitations and remedy the lack of quantitative research by relying on nested analysis as a tool for mixed-methods comparative research. This type of analysis allows synergy between small-N case studies and large-N statistical analysis where limitations exist, addressing more fully alternative explanations while allowing for more confidence in the findings. Data on refugee integration is very limited and inconsistent; the most reliable cross-country data is on asylum applications. This captures only the legal aspect of integration and serves to primarily assess the first hypothesis as well as to show preliminary significance of the independent variable. Cultural distance has been measured using data from the World Values Survey, based on precedent set by Welzel and Inglehart, while the dependent data measures the country of settlement's rate of rejections of asylum applicants in 2018 from individual countries of origin of refugees. This is the most reliable data on decisions made on asylum applications. Finally, the case studies that have been selected include a broad geographic range and include very different circumstances, allowing for more confidence in generalization of results.

The quantitative results did not support my first hypothesis, as the regression showed that, controlling for GDP, there was a significant relationship in the negative direction. This would mean that an increase in cultural distance resulted in lower rejection rates. The quantitative results may be explained in several ways. First, GDP may have such a strong effect as to completely outweigh the effects of cultural distance, which would be supported by the case study findings. Second, for those countries where refugees are extremely culturally different, that might show that those refugees have travelled farther distances, which may occur only when the refugee is fairly certain of their chances of receiving refugee status or only when the refugee crisis is extremely far reaching and thus more pressure is on countries to honor refugee status. Third, the aspects of culture that make integration more difficult may be attributable more to perceived, rather than actual, cultural difference, especially since xenophobia is not rooted in reality. This would mean that measurement of cultural differences that could lead to xenophobic responses should be rooted in perception and/or the visible aspects of culture such as attire, skin color, language and accent, etc, rather than more abstract aspects of culture rooted in individual people as the World Values Survey measured.

In future quantitative research on this topic, different aspects of culture should be paid attention to account for the perceptions of culture. Furthermore, my analysis was limited to 2018. Additional research could both incorporate more years and focus on analysis by country over the course of several decades. Another area of further investigation could include whether cultural differences impact any particular countries more than others: do democracies tend to be more welcoming because of their self-perception as pro-human rights, or less welcoming because the government is more responsive to a xenophobic public? Do culturally diverse countries tend to accept more cultural difference than more homogenous countries? Such questions could allow for explanations using more independent variables or theoretical mechanisms than I have presently explored.

The case studies somewhat support my hypotheses. They show that low cultural distance, when uninhibited by low wealth of the country of asylum, can result in positive outcomes, and that countries with very high capacity can be very influenced by cultural distance to have negative outcomes. The case studies show that wealth is an extremely significant factor, but not the sole predictor of outcomes, and that the population can have xenophobic responses both due to cultural distance and due to economic factors. They also show that high investment and policies geared towards long-term settlement can mostly overcome cultural distance; although this result shows that my independent variable is not a primary predictor of outcomes, this is a positive finding as it means that refugees fleeing to very culturally different countries are not doomed to poor outcomes.

Further research could also focus on how the role of culture changes over time with the impact of contact and of refugee adaptation. Additional case studies could identify ways in which refugees are culturally distinct from the population of their country of origin, and how government policies can account for and overcome cultural differences to better integrate refugee populations. Ultimately, this research and future research should seek to inform policy to make integration better for both refugees and for countries accepting refugees, reducing instances of unsafe or unsanitary conditions and xenophobic behaviors towards refugees while effectively investing in refugee integration as a way to positively impact society and the economy. The ability to make informed decisions will be key as climate and conflict create new refugee flows, for the well-being of refugees and the stability of all countries.

Author Acknowledgement

I would like to thank my mentor, Dr. Srobana Bhattacharya, for her encouragement and support, not only of this paper but also of my professional and academic endeavors.

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