





# TU DELFT DEBATING CLUB

*A work in progress*



## **The debating casefile**

General source of topics for BP debating

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## Clashing

A clash is a **question which has to be answered** by both sides of the bench. Depending on the motion, their relevance becomes more valuable. The same question will have different answers from either bench. The debate revolves around finding the **key differences** between both sides (eg. status quo vs proposed change).

- ◇ Believe
  - Whether  $x$  is **true**.
  - Whether  $x$  is **justified**.
  - Whether  $x$  has a **significant impact**, positive or negative.
- ◇ Regret
  - Whether the existing **harm** is/has/will be there, locally or globally.
  - If there are **self-correcting** mechanisms.
  - The consequences on **the act** of regretting (ie. the message it might send).
- ◇ Would (policy)
  - Whether  $x$  is **urgent** or necessary.
  - Whether  $x$  is **justified**.
  - Whether  $x$  is **effective** at solving the problem.
  - If there are **side-benefits** (ie. the subtle consequences).
- ◇ Supports
  - Whether  $x$  is **solving** the problem intuitively.
  - Whether  $x$  is **necessary**.
  - Whether  $x$  has **exclusive** large benefits.
  - Whether  $x$  is in line with the **value(s)** of the *actor* supporting it.
    - \* With *actors*, it should be proved that **their involvement** is necessary.
- ◇ Preferred to
  - Whether  $x$  or  $y$  provide a **better solution** to the common problem.
    - \* Is either: (more) self-sustainable, faster, has a larger group to impact, more cost efficient, or *principally* more correct than the other.
  - Whether  $x$  or  $y$  give more benefit than the other in the **short/long term**.
- ◇ Bring more harm than good
  - Whether the **nature** of  $x$  gives more substantial harm than good.
    - \* Whether the harm/good is **replaceable**.
    - \* A weigh-off between **size vs quality** of the impact (ie. war casualties: civilians vs soldiers)
  - Whether the nature of  $x$  gives more **likelihood** to harm than good.
  - Whether the nature of  $x$  gives more **relevance** to harm than good (note that both sides will have to do such comparison on their own terms.)



# Chapter 1

## Social

### 1.1 Drugs

#### 1.1.1 War on drugs

Its latest iteration can be traced to **George W. Bush**.

#### Consequences

#### 1.1.2 Homeopathy

“Faith can move mountains, but sugar water can’t cure cancer”, ? ].

It’s the most popular alternative medicine. It’s working principle is the following:

- ◇ ‘like cures like’, remedies for fever use sources of fever.
- ◇ ‘potentializer’. Ingredients dilute the concentration of the ailment source (orders of  $1:10^{20}$ )
- ◇ The concentration is so low it’s often stated that the **essence** of the ailment is still within the homeopathic medicine.

Doing no harm was better than actually harming, which is why it became the most popular alternative medicine

Modern medicine has performed enough tests and reviews to prove that homeopathy statistically doesn’t directly provide any cure for diseases. All it provides is **placebo**.

#### Who cares why it works

There’s personal evidence going around of people who felt better after placebo treatments. **Trust** and **time** have enough of an influence on how people feel

- ◇ Animals and kids react to the trust their guardians have on the cure
- ◇ Human bodies cure their own diseases. Medicine treatments strengthen their systems enough so that they’re cured faster.

#### Homeopathy as big pharma

- ◇ they have absurd profit margins
- ◇ they have lobbying power
- ◇ \$17B expected industry for 2030

#### Side effects

Trusting in homeopathy multiplies the perception that traditional medicine aren’t effective. (Antivaxxers)

This makes people doubt whether to get the treatment for themselves (or **their children**)



## Modern medicine vs Homeopathy

Modern medicine is overcrowded and impersonal. Patients moving from doctor to specialist feeling scared for their lives or invisible.

Modern medicine can learn from the personal treatment that homeopathy have on their patients, which talk personally about the lives of their patients.

### 1.1.3 Big pharma

Wall Street wants growth but that's hard to do in a business

## 1.2 Religion

## 1.3 Race

## 1.4 Education

### 1.4.1 Learning process

When a student is presented with knowledge they can have any of these reactions:

- ◇ They think they know it
- ◇ They don't pay utmost attention
- ◇ They don't recognize how what was presented differs from their own pre-conceptions
- ◇ They don't learn anything new
- ◇ They get **more confident** in the ideas they were thinking before

### 1.4.2 Pos-modern education

A good future proof education system would

- ◇ Ask the student of their current world view
- ◇ Actively present them with incorrect statements that make them question their own understanding of the topic
- ◇ Show the accurate representation of the facts, so that they **rebuild their concepts** based on understanding misconceptions.

The process is very personalized, and interactive websites or charter schools should be able to fit these new ways of education.

### 1.4.3 Charter schools

### 1.4.4 Developing countries

*If I can't directly produce value from what you did, then it's of no use to me.*

Try to develop professionally in an environment where those in power are too selfish and uneducated to use its privileged position, and those below are barely making ends meet.

The group of people that can **experience** the correlation of "higher education leads to a better standards of living" is quite narrow.

Thus, you get an underclass that don't believe in the reforming power of education and hard work, easily fall pray to *shortcuts* to improve their lives; at best, populist measures from weak political

institutions looking for re-election or at worst, a personal economy reliant on drug trafficking.

## 1.5 International education

10 years ago, 10% of students weren't Dutch. Now 22% are international.

Numbers are good for international Rankines

- ◇ Importing brains.
- ◇ Good for the university.
- ◇ Good for the economy of the Netherlands.

The dean of TU Delft says that *We need to have some control.*

Some questions pop-up: Is it legal to set quotas?

### 1.5.1 Internationalization compromises quality of education

Without the quality of policies:

- ◇ Number of students
- ◇ Open without borders.

There's structural issues with the university. The bigger issues are about managing it. TU Delft is a public university, so they handle this burden by raising the price for students away from the EU.

You can compensate with scholarships.

Talent has no nationality and deserves good education. Budgets are limited.

Identity is something that isn't acquired. If you have a majority of cultural, there's

no guarantee of identity, in the core should there be a *Delft Identity*.

The *Delft way* exists. The standard is maintained as a mixture of publishing and working. The spirit of engineering should come from wherever. The university wants you because you can contribute to it.

Every profession needs to give lectures. It's a pre-requisite.

### 1.5.2 Actors

- ◇ Dutch students that can't speak English well.
- ◇ International students that want to study in TU Delft.
- ◇ The city that can't house the number of students.

### 1.5.3 Nationality as criterion for admission

It reinforces the idea of *birth lottery*. It becomes an extra thing to consider into CVs. This goes against **values** of science and dutch society.

What happens with quota. We should select quality. Education is about improving society.

[What about Dutch students. Are you going to accept them all?] [What about Europeans that come to liberate pressure of the national education]

Morally it sends a message, which might create a slippery slope.

2/3rd of the university is paid by public money (both Dutch and from the EU). If we give a minimum quota to Dutch

students, that would ensure the public money is used into the population.

On the long run, the Netherlands will benefit from foreigners studying in the Netherlands which **stay in the country**, as the nature of the country.

### 1.5.4 Should the University invest in Integration

An easy answer is yes, but a more nuanced would be to:

- ◇ Enforce Dutch courses or integration (not economical)
- ◇ The university already invests enough with the OWEE and the IP, but the burden should be to the student societies.

Go and integrate! not just in your own culture.

### Language

Language is used to share ideas, but also it's used to convey/retain culture.

Each field's identification to language isn't the same (Dutch studies, Law and Engineering have different linguistic needs).

## 1.6 Feminism

### 1.6.1 Privilege

It's often overlooked that the fight that feminism gives in the public spheres are usually fights for urban populations, which aren't the people that need the most help.

This lack of impact that first world feminism is reasons to forget that **feminism is about women who fight**. Those who day in and day out face from series of micro-agressions to structural blockades to their personal and profesional development.

*a*

### 1.6.2 Abuse

Unbalanced systems of power lead to all forms of abuse.

- ◇ The abuser does as they please
- ◇ There's little chance of reprimands
- ◇ Abusers are **typically** white, straight men.

### Not coming forward

- ◇ Because at the time it wasn't clear to the victim that abuse had taken place.

*He was my friend, and didn't hit me. Was it rape?*

- ◇ For fear to being repressed
  - People won't believe me*
  - I won't get another job after being labeled 'troublesome'*
  - I might be abused again*

- ◇ Because public response might minimize the case, and **shift the blame**.

*'You knew what/who you were getting into'*

*'You slept with your boss, got a promotion, and now you're coming forward'*

# Chapter 2

## Technology

### 2.1 Big data

#### 2.1.1 Smart cities

No longer a thing of the future. Data collection for the purpose of measuring the state of altercations in public locations are good for effective (less intrusive) policing.

Examples:

- ◆ Songdo, South Korea
- ◆ IBM Control Center, Rio de Janeiro
- ◆ Google in Toronto
- ◆ Stratumseind Eindhoven, Netherlands

Because of the **Personal Data Protection Act** people should be notified in advance of data collection and the purpose should be specified – but in Stratumseind, as in many other “smart cities”, this is not the case. The argument given is that these measures keep track of **crowds, not individuals**.

“We often get that comment – ‘Big brother is watching you’ – but I prefer to

say, ‘Big brother is helping you’. We want safe nightlife, but not a soldier on every street corner.”

City traffic sensors pick up your phone’s wifi signal even if you are not connected to the wifi network. The trackers register your MAC address. The city council wants to know how often people visit Enschede, and what their routes and preferred spots are.

Only those who mine the small print will discover that the app creates “personal mobility profiles”, and that the collected personal data belongs to the company Mobidot.

Most cases however, **cities don’t know what’s being collected** by companies.

#### 2.1.2 Anonymizing data

It’s often argued that personal ID gets scrambled and lost between the massive amounts of other people (anonymizing through pseudonyms)

But **pseudonymised personal data is still personal data**. “The process is not irreversible if the source file is stored,” Moreover, if you build personal profiles and act on them by targeting an individual person, you are processing personal data and need to comply with data protection law.

#### 2.1.3 Ownership of data

Who owns data that is collected in a public space? Because public authorities are increasingly outsourcing tasks to private companies, most municipalities don’t bother setting controls for management.

When contracts are made, companies dictate the terms, and cities say they can't share the contracts because it contains "competition-sensitive information".

Ultimately what happens is that **A smart city is a privatised city**

## 2.2 Bitcoin

# Chapter 3

## Economy

### 3.1 Automation

The desire for constant improvement has pushed productive systems to be more effective with resources (time, people, materials).

Automation is the natural path for improving the working space

It makes processes

- ◇ Safer
- ◇ Faster
- ◇ Less requiring of skill labor

It comes at a cost of low skill workers

#### 3.1.1 Low skill workers

asdf

### 3.2 Piracy

#### 3.2.1 Consumer goods

#### 3.2.2 Knowledge through piracy

*Knowledge is power*, and when certain people hold the keys to information, this leads to abuse or an **uneven sharing** of data. Examples of such players could be:

- ◇ Publishing houses.
- ◇ Big pharma, who can charge as they please.
- ◇ Companies with monopolies on technology.
- ◇ Governments that don't want knowledge in the hands of foreign players.

Free sharing of knowledge will lead to a more competitive economy in the long run. It could also encourage shifts market in favor of those players with the most experience in the application of said knowledge. *Just because you have the knowledge, means you can apply it.*

**Examples** of such cases:

- ◇ Tesla released their patents on electric charging.
- ◇ Commercial software being offered as service. (Adobe Suite, Fusion 360)

### 3.3 Publicly traded company

On the market, a company can be publicly tr

An **IPO** stands for a 'Initial Public Offering', which means that's the value a

company when it goes public, it offers to buyers.

This can be done by small, young companies looking for capital **to expand** (such as Facebook, GoPro, Tesla), or by large private companies looking to be publicly traded.

Why go public:

- ◇ You get access to more money
- ◇ You can use that money to acquire smaller players in the same market
- ◇ You're currently growing, which is a sign that you'll keep growing. Public investors would be knocking at the doors.

◇

There's **risks** to being a publicly traded company.

- ◇ For investor, it is tough to predict what the stock will do as there's little historical data.
- ◇ For company, it now will have to report to all their NET evaluation, comprised of:
  - *growth*, the change of value
  - *revenue*, the income from sales/production.
  - *operating costs* like salaries (OPEX)
  - *capital costs* like properties (CAPEX)

◇

### 3.3.1 Death spiral

When a publicly traded company goes into a death spiral, all future predictions show that the company will go **bankrupt**

A company is likely to be on a death spiral because of a combination of either of

these:

- ◇ Getting *flanked* by other competitors with better products/services at a more competitive prices.
- ◇ The market changing around you so that your product/service is no longer relevant
- ◇ Changing of strategy/structure/key members which makes the organization lose legitimacy or effectiveness at operating
- ◇ Layoffs, closing divisions or selling of assets with the hope of *bouncing back*.

## 3.4 Bankruptcy

Is a legal proceeding involving a person or business that is **unable to repay** outstanding debts. It is usually filled by the *debtors*, though less commonly by the *creditors*.

All of the debtor's assets are measured and evaluated so that they can be used to repay **a portion** of the outstanding debt.

Bankruptcy offers an individual or business a chance to start fresh by forgiving debts that simply cannot be paid, while **offering creditors a chance to obtain some repayment** based on the individual's or business' assets available for liquidation.

In theory, the ability to file for bankruptcy can benefit an overall economy by giving persons and businesses **a second chance to gain access to consumer credit** and by providing creditors with a measure of debt repayment.

Upon the successful completion of

bankruptcy proceedings, the debtor **is relieved of the debt obligations** incurred prior to filing for bankruptcy.

### 3.4.1 Chapters of bankruptcy

In the US, there are multiple chapters of bankruptcy, the most popular ones being:

- 7 For individuals or businesses with few or no assets. They're forced to **liquidate** personal valuable assets such as heirlooms, house, vehicles, stocks or bonds. If they possess no valuable assets, then they **don't repay** their unsecured debt.
- 11 Mostly used by businesses to **reorganize** to later become profitable. It allows the chance to create plans for profitability, cut costs and find new ways to increase revenue. It allows the company to continue conducting its **daily operations without interruption**, while working on a debt repayment plan under the court's supervision.
- 13 Usually used by individuals who make too much money to qualify for Chapter 7. It allows individuals and businesses to **lower debt repayment** to create workable plans. In exchange for repaying their creditors, the courts allow these debtors to keep all of their property.
- 15 Is designed to make legal proceedings of **international bankruptcies** more predictable and fair for debtors and creditors. It also tries to protect the value of the debtor's assets and, if possible, financially rescue the business.





## 4.2 Crime and punishment

Punishment has certain goals:

- ◇ Prevention
- ◇ Deterrence
- ◇ Rehabilitation
- ◇ Retribution

## Chapter 4

# Judicial

### 4.1 Prison

#### 4.1.1 Pleads

The most used option for justice systems that are overloaded with cases. About **95% of cases in the US** are solved through pleas.

#### People requesting pleas

- ◇ Innocent people with no resources to have a long legal battle
- ◇ Guilty people who can get a better deal (shorter sentences, or walking away)

#### 4.1.2 Unsolved cases

Once a person has been prosecuted, the case is considered closed and goes to the backlog. Whether the person is guilty is not relevant.

#### 4.2.1 Prevention

We lock people who're a danger to society to stop them from doing it again.

However, harder punishments **don't lead** to larger prevention. Once a person has been locked up, there's little reason for them to commit the same crime after their time is up.

#### 4.2.2 Deterrence

To stop those people who have yet to commit crimes. The decision of being a criminal can be objectively weighed inside the mind of **rational potential criminals**.

- ◇ "If I steal something, a \$100 fine stop me from stealing \$1"  
(Harsher punishment leads to larger deterrence)
- ◇ "How likely am I to be caught?"  
(For those recurring criminals this is an important factor)
- ◇ This doesn't stop impulsive criminals from committing crimes.

Whether the punishments are too hard, (Philippines' death penalty to all drug users) they are effective at **changing the mind** of people on the dangers of being associated with these crimes.

Rehabilitation change Take them out of

the environment that lead them to be criminals, so that they can change

Retribution Justice from the victims "If you did something wrong, something should be done to you" "Restore the balance of the society which you have done wrong to" Should the justice system strive for higher retribution [Principal argument] : Balance of rights. Certain rights are infringed > they take your freedom > they should repay you

Goals for the justice system Fairness "Should poor and rich be punished equally?" "Should hate crimes be punished heavily?"

Tradeoffs between goals In debates you will have to compare say, deterrence is more important than retribution "higher deterrence harms the criminals by not letting them rehabilitate, thus the benefits from higher retribution is not justified"

Find the right balance for justice Reoffending criminals In many countries (UK, US, etc), these people can't become good working members of society. Criminals not know what society is like Society doesn't want them (stigmatization) There's thing we can do: Training, accommodation, education for criminals This doesn't work everywhere

This can only work in certain societies US, Latam societies have harsher criticism of criminals

Labels are important "Rapists", "Perpetrators" makes them sound worse Punishment in "2 years" doesn't sound harsh, as in "700 days"

If people rescind in crime you get BACKLASH This backlash can lead to worse society state

Prison societies Echochambers within prisons In order to survive prison time, you enter into gang society Gang societies prevent you from getting back into society

More guards doesn't ensure the fight not enough guards guards take bribes still have drug smuggling

Private vs public prisons US, UK and AUS have Private

This has competition to reduce re-offend rate

Private = innovate with little accountability. Some have worse violence The worst prisons in the world are Private.

Public = are accountable, though less effective

Private prisons have political capital California blocked legislation that would limit number of prisoners.

Data on types of prisons Scandinavian Lowest recidivism Maximum 21 years prison sentence They can still add additional sentences afterwards

Some societies consider

benefits are exclusive to natives

Population is increasing Not enough space renting space in the Netherlands

Latam prisons Overcapacity 320 Honduras 7000 are incarcerated and only 1000 are released This leads to bad services If a fire breaks, a lot of people die

Incarcerated Due to drug crimes. Most of them are due to low level crimes

Rehabilitation is non-existent

Society has a harsh view on criminals The media portray criminals as violent,

animalistic beings

People are put into detention before any form of trials 60-70 on panama, vs 20

Most people spend more time waiting for trial than the actual punishment

Change is overall too slow, as the justice systems are overwhelmed

US prisons 5Minimum sentences and minor drug sentences Drug possession + owning a firearm even if not criminally linked together, get punished as if they were linked

- ◇ They get placed into fishing boats (east asia) or constructions (qatar) with no ability to escape (no passport / identification)
- ◇ They're forced to work under terrible conditions, few food, and little to no pay.

Example with corrupt police forces:

- ◇ A poor person gets put into jail (local law enforcement)
- ◇ Before their documented into the system, they're offered to the local human traffickers for a bid

## 4.3 Human trafficking

Defined as the inducing a person by force, fraud, or coercion to perform acts of involuntary servitude, sex work, debt bondage, or slavery.

### 4.3.1 How people are trapped

Example for sex workers:

1. Young women are tricked into relationships (by either men or women).
2. They get them drugged, and force them into sex acts from which they can get blackmailed.
3. This blackmail is used to push them into more sex acts.
4. In some cases they get shipped into other parts of their country.

Example for slave labor:

- ◇ A young person, often poor gets a lucrative job offer.
- ◇ Once they're working, they get drugged/kidnapped

### 4.3.2 Economies of traffic

Usually, it's the job of people to follow the networks of money. Trailing behind:

- ◇ Sequential deposits in short periods of time
- ◇ Shipping services which are underloaded or overpaid
- ◇ Purchasing of expensive jewelry which acts as a form launder

With **machine learning**, banks and NGOs can discover this patterns much easier.

If law enforcement and banks become more prepared, this only pushes criminals into acquiring better technology. **Cryptocurrencies** are a way for black market to move large sums of money without the need for the involvement of formal banks.

### 4.3.3 Data

By gender, 75% are women, and 25% are men.

Money involved:

- ◇ It's a 150 billion USD industry. (for reference, Apple 2017 made 50 bn in profits)
- ◇ 66% to sex workers
- ◇ 33% to forced labor

Number of people:

- ◇ Forced labor (16 million)
- ◇ Sexual workers (5 million)

Forced labor:

- ◇ Construction, mining or manufacturing (50%)
- ◇ Domestic work (25%)
- ◇ Agriculture (11%)

# Chapter 5

# Political

## 5.1 Populism

Populism is a political philosophy supporting the rights and power of the people in their **struggle against a privileged** elite. Critics of populism have described it as a political approach that seeks to disrupt the existing social order by solidifying and mobilizing the animosity of the "commoner" against "elites" and the "establishment".

Populists can **fall anywhere** on the traditional left–right political spectrum of politics and often portray both bourgeois capitalists and socialist organizers as unfairly dominating the political sphere. The term has also been used as **a label for new parties** whose classifications are unclear

- ◆ Jeremy Corbin (right wing)
- ◆ Bernie Sanders (left wing)
- ◆ Hugo Chavez (left)

### 5.1.1 Criticism

The terms "populist" and "populism" as pejoratives against their opponents. Such a view sees populism as demagoguery, merely **appearing to empathize** with the public through rhetoric or unrealistic proposals in order to increase appeal across the political spectrum.

In developing economies, these tend to be misused for gathering attention of people uninformed voters and those unhappy with the current political system.

Be aware of a **distinction**. Populism and authoritarianism has historically gone hand in hand (Nazis or Venezuela), as their framing relies on "rising and changing the status quo for what they believe is their (better) world view". This speech **doesn't guarantee the continuity** of democracy or its institutions, which is troublesome to investors or allies.

### 5.1.2 Policies

Populism has been an important force in Latin American political history, where many charismatic leaders have emerged since the beginning of the 20th century, as the paramouncy of agrarian oligarchies had been dislocated by the onset of industrial capitalism, allowing for the emergence of an industrial bourgeoisie and the activation of an urban working class.

Examples of this

- ◆ Venezuela
  - Nationalization of oil
- ◆ Mexico
  - Nationalization of oil (1974),

now open.

- Government appropriation of land (*ejidos*) to give to farmers ('The land is owned by those that work it')

This lead to less government control of rural Mexico, and less services like education or policing (source of **narcos**)

- ◇ These ports are used to move art. . This art is used as a way of collecting wealth by shady buisness.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWH5vyi31Tk>

## 5.2 Sovereign free territories

Nations can decide which territory their laws can apply.

### 5.2.1 Embassies

National police can't enter, laws of the host don't apply (Except some special cases like the UN HQ in USA).

Embassies aren't sovereign territory. Host country can close them if they repeatedly violate the host's laws.

These are ultimately, "**special areas with special laws**"

### 5.2.2 Free ports

Used for shipping goods, through jurisdictional exemptions put them in free ports where they can be sorted before they moved to their final destination.

- ◇ If moving from Rotterdam to Jamaica, cargo may stop in Canada

This way the shipper doesn't have to pay taxes in Canada, as these territories have no nation.

## 5.3 Anarchy

It's the condition of a society, entity, group of people, or single person to reject hierarchy.

Anarchy could be linked to a desire for freedom.

### 5.3.1 Peaceful anarchy

See, Leo Tolstoy, a Russian farmer turned writer from the 1900's who labeled himself as a *Christian anarchist*. Believed that novels as tools for social change and that structures of power such as governments should be eliminated **by their own course** and natural social development.

Examples of these:

- ◇ Usage of *civil disobedience* by Gandhi

The opposite of this movement would be **violent anarchy**. Movements such as these have only been successful in remote places in the world, or small communities, where the levels of influence are minimal.

When a violent anarchist movement removes a head of state, or dissolves governmental institutions, a game of *action and reaction* takes place among those who are in the immediate spheres

of power trying to fill a vacuum.





## **Chapter 6**

# **Africa**

### **6.1 Congo**



# **Chapter 7**

## **America**

### **7.1 United States**



# **Chapter 8**

## **Asia**

### **8.1 China**



# Chapter 9

## Europe

### 9.1 Russia

Elections in 12 Days. Putin going for 3rd time as president.

An enigmatic country. The largest country in the world.

**Putin's Russia - by Prof. Evert van der Zweerde (March 6th 2018)**

#### 9.1.1 3 Remarks

'I love Russia'. The language, people, culture, food. The people are great, despite its dark sides. 'Loving Russia doesn't mean you **don't** love the rest of the world'

People are very critical to Russia. Namely: Syria, Domestic politics and Election meddling. Being 'for' or 'against' Russia is not what we're for. As academics we try to make sense of the world we live in, without *judging* ourselves.

The approach of the speech is about using philosophical, using accurate facts

and history to back them up. 'Why do we even hold elections in Russia anyway', but then you could go as far as to ask 'why do countries even have elections'.

**Democracy** has been the standard for the 90+% of countries after WW2 (Even NK claims to be democratic)

#### 9.1.2 Vladimir Putin

Depending on who you ask, he could be said to be a new **tsar**, a new **stalin**, new **hitler**, or an excellent statesman who is what Russia of today needs.

Putin is sober, unlike our concepts of what Russians are.

#### 9.1.3 Power and politics

*Reality* consists of entities with **powers to..**

- ◇ to go
- ◇ to eat
- ◇ to order
- ◇ to kill

These are **potentialities** (P1). These powers interact with each other, being in one person or between many people. (self conflict) or among institutions, government, organization (horizontal interplay).

The interaction of power implies the **possibility** of conflict, not reality. This is the *political*, the ubiquitous possibility of real (lethal) conflict. This can happen within one person and / or groups.

Politics, means about **power over..** This is the vertical exertion of power. This implies an *asymmetrical relation*. This relation implies a level of **acceptance of**



**authority** . The acceptance of authority can always be **withrdawn** (disobedience, civil war). Every good ruler should be afraid of the eventuality of the power.

Theres a higher level of power, namely as **soverignity**. This is consider as (P3).

9.1.4 Democracy and Legitimacy

Democratic politics is about dealing with power in a democratic way. Its acceptance of constellations of P1, under a P2, and eventually reaching a P3.

The usage of low level powers, gives legitimacy to the higher powers.

- 1. democratic legitemcay. If there's a historical/cultural awareness of your society
- 2. governcance legitimacy. Majors tend to have more legitimcay as they directly solve problems of cities, unlike senators.
- 3. Instituinal legitimcay. Consider how we have always done things in a way (follwoing traditions.)

9.1.5 Ideology

- 1. Politcal: liberalism, anarchism, fasism,, socialism
- 2. Legitimazing ideology.
- 3. Hegemoic. When we **normalize** it to the point of it being part of our confort zone.

In any political context, theres ideloges. There usually connected to poliitcial powers. This is linked to the **powr to convince people** (this is a form of horizontal, P1).

Note that political parties, by the word party, implies a division of power encomassed in the form of dcision of society. Any functional division of power, requires a funtional consellation (*regime*) among each partition of society.

Example: Communism (I1) becalme I2 after the Bolsheviks sized 1918. The Soviet ideolgy (I3) became hegemonic.

9.2 West vs Russia

Table 9.1: west vs russia

	west	russia
consumerism	x	x
indivisuallism	x	
collevtimsism		x
P3 (state)	weak	strong

9.2.1 Geography and Demography

Russian Federation is the largest countyu in the world. 17M km<sup>2</sup>. While Canada has 10M km<sup>2</sup>.

Its dictrubtion of population shows that the majority live in the european side. Theres plenty of **migration** from siderbrai into the european side (getting progressively more empty).

Its a federal reppublic comprised of 83 *subjects* which have some “autonomos regions” with their own territory and languages.

Problems

Its geographically **vulnerable**

- ◇ large territory, not a lot of people (economic)
- ◇ Flat, and open on all sides (little agriculture, prone to invasion)
- ◇ Little access to sea (fear of encirclement > Crimea)

### Socially

- ◇ Afraid of being overrun from Asian population into Siberia.
- ◇ It had breakaway tendency in the 1990s, Siberia at some point had its own currency, until it got its shit together. It **centraized** itself with political powers “Why did Siberia join Russia instead of selling directly to Asia?” Russia used its sovereign state (P3) headed by the Kremlin (I2).

Many people consider that the only way having a stable Russia is by a *united Russia* (I3)

They're trying to move away from oil dependency, but **corruption** is hard to tackle. It's heavily tied to the economic (P1), the political (P2) and the power protected by a sovereign state (P3).

### Sanctions

A blessing in disguise.

The sanctions pushed many Russian people to work and develop their production industries for food (more in provinces than in cities).

This doesn't mean that sanctions aren't effective, but to the groups of people who live away from the European Russia, the sanctions have not had negative effects. They have plenty of resources, but have historically not been motivated to change their economic model that relies on mineral resources.

## 9.2.2 Economy

At the 12th place of the GDP.

It doubled between 1990 and 2005. By 2014 it already tripled from the 1990. This means that people who were young have seen their country state **develop greatly**. This only gives more **legitimacy** the governance of Russia.

### Oil dependency

Historically, from the 1990's its GDP has always been dependent on the price of oil.

60% of the exports from Russia is in mineral products. and 75% are hydrocarbons.

### Rule of law

The quality of the exercise of law has improved, in comparison with the 90's. Far more accountability is seen when civil prosecution. This doesn't mean that the state law is fair, as power disparities and corruption easily bend the rule of law in the courts.

This increases the difficulty of middle class people from improving the quality of life.

Russia traditionally has beautiful laws, and regulation, but people ignore them regardless.

The older generations, typically have come to accept the *status quo*, as a way of the politics and law to being the way

they are.

The only cases prosecuted, are to smaller cases in small provinces, considered to be forms of **political theater**.

## 9.2.3 Modern History

In the 1900's

Despite its progressive ideology (I1) the soviet revime was plitically reactionary when it comes to civil rigehe and livbertittes. It was culturall conservative (L3). I t naver calimed to be a communist society. It did clami to conctruct socilamim in one contry on the way to a global communism and it pretend t obe guidedby a marxist-Leninist ideology.

The history of russia is a history of human tragedy

- ◇ Revoution 1905
- ◇ WW1
- ◇ Feb Rev 1917
- ◇ Oktob rev 1917
- ◇ Red terror and Civil war
- ◇ Holdomor 1932
- ◇ Stallin purges
- ◇ WW2 and stallingrad

## 9.2.4 Putins Russia

Russia is a country with a relative authoritarian state, but not totalitarian. It's far more free than the USSR ever was.

Its considerad an authoritarian oligachy with a 25 ish number of busines tycoons with Puti as the **chief manager and arbitr**. He is an independtent (candidate) that doesnt directly get the dirt of the buisness tycoons. The **white tsar**.

## Why elections

BEcause it provided a legitimace. Their team want a 70% of votation with a 70% representation which means that theres a **hard representation** of close to 50% of the population.

## Whats expected

Putin is afer a new balance of **internal** power.

War talk is for external offensive. If they work on

On the external, compared to Trump, he's likely to be a far more rational character in the international scene, which would only increase his legitimacy inside the country.

## Crimea

Georpahycally, Crimea si very cvaluable. (no isolation)

NATO and EU action on the border might have ben mistaken as a provocation. Russia wants a buffer zone between them and Russia.

Its stratigially one of the few accesible ports for Russia, specially for deploying forces (u-boats).

From the internal point of view, of Russians and Crimeans, they themselves believed to be part of russia. They consider it to be **rightful**.

It used to be part of turkey, but it became part of

### **Young generation**

The first group of people that haven't had the memories of the USSR will start voting en-mass.

The 1990's were times of terrible life. Infrastructure and safety has improved. The older people have accepted the current rule, as they have memories of a far worse country.

Both on the big cities, and smaller provinces, the younger generation have the notion of change, but it would take time.

### **US Election Intervention**

The current Russian government is looking to destabilize governments abroad.

NATO and EU have historically provoked and humiliated Russia, to the point in which they want to have the same kind of

Russia, like any country wants:

- ◇ Buffer zones
- ◇ Military strength
- ◇ Negotiation power

Once the hegemony of the US, disappears, the Russian sentiment of not wanting to be humiliated and playing on an even ground with the rest of the world, justifies them from the measures they take.

US has a longer history of destabilizing both allies and enemies all around the world for its own convenience

- ◇ Latin America



# Chapter 10

## Middle east

### 10.1 Iran

### 10.2 Syria

#### 10.2.1 Rojava

Kurds in the North were left alone (Bashar Alassad focused on the the cities from the west), so they started defending their turf. (2014)

The kurd fighters were the most effective at fighting ISIS

The organization of this region was provided by the YPG political party (which has historically supported the PKK, a recognized terrorist organization which has attacked cities in Turkey)

After the Kurds started making progress in the north of Syria, United States provided military support to the forces to defeat ISIS.

Now that ISIS is gone with the country still divided, the Syrian Democratic Forces stablished a new territory, of

independent governance from Syria, named Rojava. US has stopped helping the SDF, and now Turkey is attacking Rojava, as its goverment (YPG) because:

- ◇ YPG is claiming part of Turkey's territory as theirs
- ◇ YPG has been a supporter of the PKK
- ◇ US can't intervene in favor of the Kurds, as Turkey is its ally.

Rojava prooved to be a very **promising young democracy** in the middle east

- ◇ Gave equal represenstation for men and women in goverment and military
- ◇ Functional elections
- ◇ The kurds, after the war, have accepted people from different faction in their territories.

## 10.3 Reporting from the Middle East

Reporters are our eyes and ears in the world.

Foreign reporters don't cover one topic, like just politics or just economics. They shift from topic to topic tackling the most relevant topics

At the beginning, the correspondents were the ambassadors, who bring the foreign lands, gossip.

As the profession of a correspondent became established, the position would be filled in by elite (straight, white, middle aged men) people and located in elite cities (new york, berlin, etc).

Africa, latin america or SEA are few, while EU, USA have far many, which **narrows our perception of the world**. Foreign correspondents are expensive to maintain from the point of view of a

### 10.3.1 Foreign-Foreign Correspondence

Nationals who are paid to report to a company

### 10.3.2 Parachute correspondents

Deployed in some time

### 10.3.3 Free lance correspondents

A good way to research, but the exclusivity is reduced.

We need experts to find what regimes do.

The middle east, Israel and Palestine is one of the most complicated regions to cover.

### 10.3.4 Tel aviv

Tel aviv is expensive, and nice place to live in. Cost of living there is in the orders of california, and when you're there you don't feel that conflict is going on.

Israel is comprised of:

- ◇ 8 million people
- ◇ 75% jews
- ◇ 20% muslim (who have israel passports and speak hebrew). They usually have issues with palestinian family members.

In Gaza

- ◇ 2 million
- ◇ 99.7% muslim
- ◇ Blockaded by walls and marine stops. Only few can move freely (medical emergencies or rich people)
- ◇ Very densely populated. **Same order of Hong Kong**, but with far less resources and destroyed.

On the west bank:

- ◇ 3 million
- ◇ Walled up
- ◇ 85% muslim
- ◇ 15% Jew

### 10.3.5 Gaza strip

Living is complicated:

- ◇ Destroyed
- ◇ No energy security

- ◇ No

Very young

- ◇ Average age is 21 years old
- ◇ In the 80s had a large population boom (4 kids per family)
- ◇ High unemployment, 50% in an underperforming economy.
- ◇ Social pressure: men need jobs to be fulfilled.

## Migration

Young people without perspective have nothing to lose. People would fill the streets with nothing to lose.

## Fatah

A political party that lost control of Gaza to Hamas.

The EU and US pay the salary to former members of political parties after they were fired.

This was done with the purpose of keeping them in social stability.

## Hamas

The currently controlling political party. It's a Palestinian Sunni-Islamic fundamentalist organization. It also governs Gaza independently of the Palestinian Authority.

- ◇ Women are oppressed, headscarf, no sex before marriage, forced companions.
- ◇ People are expected to have sex after marriage.
- ◇ If you don't have a job, you can't get married.

- ◇ Huge sexual repression

## Who is Hamas

It's a political party in power. An organization that does charity work and helps society. Israel calls them terrorists, but from the Gazan perspective, they do more good than bad.

The western news coverage hardly covered the layers from the perspective of Hamas.

## Egypt and Gaza

There are networks of underground tunnels that connect these regions.

People and cars can fit inside.

This border became a complicated region. They create weapons and smuggling tunnels.

During the war, both Egypt and Israel wanted this area stopped, as it would also provide weapons to other Muslim extremist groups. Egypt closed its borders and flooded the tunnels.

The **contribution of Egypt** in this war is often overlooked.

## 10.4 The war

On a simple sequence:

1. On June 12, 2014, a murder of a couple of Jewish kids in the West Bank. Israel army blamed Hamas.
2. Some Jewish kids took a kid from Palestine, and burned him as a form of **revenge killing**.



3. This lead to arrests and demonstrations on both sides.
4. Then, israelis and palestinians started bombarding eachother.
5. Small attacks through tunnels from palestinans would be done to Israel.

This whole escalation happened in a matter of days.

The Israely population wanted the war to end quickly. With their superior military power they invaded.

### **The green zone**

Its a section that was agreed to be peaceful.

This is where journalist live, as both Hamas and Israel know that is convenient to both countries to have journalists engaged in the conflict.

Freelance journalists in war torn areas get payed absurdly large sums of money for covering the war. This could induce a **conflict of interest**, a lack of empathy to the pain of the people, doing no throguh investigation on the context of the events.

It's hard for journalists to stay unbiasad in this conflict when communication departmens from Israel are far more

prepared and can easily bias the information that journalists receive. Hamas, don't have these resources, so there's no correction. It requires very prepared foreign correspondents that speak all languages, and are ready to get out of the protected cliques of Israel.

### **What has changed**

Nothing. The war officially lasted 2 months, but there has been no change

since then.

The state of the people are still delicate.

1. Palestinians are still frustrated with their limited future.
2. Trump wants US embassy in Jerusalem.

A **similar conflict** such as the one that started could be on the horizon.



# **Areas of improvement**



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