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*Imperial Responsibility: The Exploitation of  
Indigenous Forces in Modern Empire Building*

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## *Abstract*

Wars involving either Russia or the United States have been a mainstay of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, since the end of World War II, in their search of hegemonic dominance over the international world order. This search for supremacy has generated numerous questions regarding whether Russia or the United States should be viewed as Empires. When the question of Empire arises it tends to focus on how the indigenous populations that reside in these war zones may be affected. However, the question of how indigenous forces are used as a way to examine if states accept or deny imperial responsibility/empire is not a widespread topic. Therefore, this thesis is intended to answer that question. In the process it examines three case studies per country. First, looking at Russia's case studies: Afghanistan, Chechnya, and Crimea. Second, examining the United States' case studies: Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. The research conducted for this thesis has provided a number of key findings regarding both countries. It has demonstrated, on the one hand, that Russia has created a framework for *imperialization*, which can be tailor fitted to the socio-cultural landscape of any state they desire to add to their imperial body. Consequently, this state should instead be viewed as the Neo-Russian Empire; a state that is willing to manipulate and use indigenous forces, and populations, in place of their own soldiers to wage wars of imperial conquest in order to expand their imperial body. Most notably, however, the tactics the Neo-Russian Empire wield, although incredibly effective, demonstrate a clear disregard for international human rights conventions. While the United States, on the other hand, has demonstrated a denial of imperial responsibility/empire through their continued use of the neo-liberal interventionist policy of democratization. This has resulted in the *imperialization* of states as a result of America's unwillingness to accept the socio-cultural frameworks of other states, and in turn use indigenous forces to fight in place of their own military.

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# ***Chapter 1: Introduction***

The Russian Federation and the United States have long been seen on the international stage as geo-political rivals, stemming both conventional and asymmetrical conflicts throughout the globe. Many of these conflicts can be seen as a means for extending the power of these states. Although focus is usually placed on their conventional forces, the indigenous populations where conflicts arise are just as involved, if not more so. Therefore, this thesis is on the surface an examination of the differing strategies involving indigenous forces used by the Russian Federation in Afghanistan, Chechnya, and Crimea, and the United States in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan in their bids for hegemonic dominance.

David Chandler's work regarding 'Empire in Denial' argues that the world currently sees power wielded in a transformative capacity. Altering the relationships that already exist between Western and Eastern states and the societies that inhabit them (Chandler, 2006: 8). In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and perhaps beyond, the current international order seeks to deny their empires, while the actors who wield imperial "power seek to deny accountability for its exercise" (Chandler, 2006: 8). Chandler also argues that the United States, even when it wields the power of empire in a traditional manner fails to exercise the responsibility that comes with conquering its adversaries. This thesis is an attempt to answer one specific question. Can the Russian Federation and the United States' acceptance or denial of imperial responsibility/empire to those they conquer be recognized and better understood through their manipulation and use of indigenous forces. It is imperative to answer this question for two reasons. First, it may present fundamental reasoning for why Russia acts in a more recognizably imperial fashion, since the fall of the Soviet Union, and identifies its future desires. Second, answering this question explains why the United States has failed to resolve the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the process providing the answers necessary to conclusively end at least one or possibly both of these conflicts, in an acceptable fashion for the United States.

First, I hypothesize, that the Russian Federation is the exception to David Chandler's argument, Russia has developed a fundamentally sound way of

conquering and adding to its imperial body. It is through this distinct and fluid process of *imperialization* that the question to the thesis will be answered regarding the Neo-Russian Empire. Second, I hypothesize, that the United States remains much as Chandler states: an empire in denial. Unlike the Neo-Russian Empire, the United States has long been a proponent of the neo-liberal institutionalization of democracy. Consequently, the United States continues to play the harbinger of democratization for countries that it believes require Western Democracy. An examination of these socio-political processes helps to answer the question identified above, and explains why the United States continues to deny its imperial responsibility to those it has conquered.

The first section explains the term “Neo-Russian Empire” used instead of the Russian Federation through a historical examination of the Russian population and the ideologies of compatriotism created and espoused within Russian controlled states. This further shows that the Neo-Russian Empire sees the yoke of imperial responsibility as a burden it is proudly willing to carry. The next section examines why the United States has no right to deny its empire or the imperial responsibility that comes with it to those they have conquered. Employing another historical examination of American policies that have influenced the United States’ foreign relations. These are ‘Manifest Destiny’, the ‘Monroe Doctrine’, and finally ‘American Exceptionalism’.

### ***Russia’s Imperial Yoke: A Proud Burden***

Since the emergence of the Russian Federation in the early 1990s and following its conquest of Chechnya it has become increasingly evident that Russia adopted an imperial approach to its policies on foreign relations. This is substantiated by Agnia Grigas who states: “Since the early 2000s Russia has consistently sought to maintain and regain influence as well as has reinvigorated its efforts to expand its territory in the former Soviet Union republics” (Grigas, 2016: 2). Grigas’ work shows that the Russian Federation’s drive for expansion has occurred in a number of different fields. These range from “foreign policy, economy, political systems, and energy sectors...[including]...the story of Russian ‘compatriots’ (Grigas,

2016: 2). Emil Pain (2009) believes that the Russian Federation is suffering from what he has coined the “imperial syndrome” (Pain, 2009: 73). For the current Russian Federation, under the guidance of Vladimir Putin, the ‘imperial syndrome’ is intended as a way to “regenerate and reconstruct the entire imperial system...[through the creation of]...the ‘imperial body’” (Pain, 2009: 73). For the Soviet Union this originally meant taking control and spreading its ideology in all places that it could, as seen with their attempts in Afghanistan. While, for the current Russian Federation, it instead translates into controlling all congruent areas of land that the Russian Empire, and the subsequent Soviet Union controlled, including Chechnya and the Ukraine (Pain, 2009: 73).

History demonstrates that multiple great powers have existed upon the European and Asian continents, with many such powers transitioning into empires during the period of colonialization. According to Dominic Lieven (1999: 163): “Russia was a European great power and had unequivocally enjoyed this status since the mid-eighteenth century”. This factor plays directly into the responsibility that the Russian Federation feels and accepts according to Grigas, and is linked to “an undeniable historical continuity between present Russian imperial projects and past projects of the Romanovs and the Soviets” (Grigas, 2016: 3). Two factors stand out most prominently Grigas notes. First, the Russian Federation shares “similar ideological, cultural, security, and geopolitical drivers that have been rooted in the centuries-long imperial experience” (Grigas, 2016: 3) of Russia in all its variations. The second and most important factor that Grigas makes note of is the consistency of Russian policies towards those individuals and collective groups that have co-existed and assimilated within the Russian Empire over the centuries (Grigas, 2016: 3). This is a factor noted by Lieven who states that “[i]nitially, Russian imperial expansion was very different. No clear institutional distinction was made between metropolis and colony, and the Russian aristocracy happily intermarried with Steppe elites of non-European and non-Christian origins” (Lieven, 1999: 180). Lieven, Andreas Kappeler, and Hans Kohn all note that Russians were so akin to those they defeated and ruled that an air of superiority or elitism did not exist between the conquered and conquerors

(Kappeler, 2013; Kohn, 1962: 48; Lieven, 1999: 180). Kappeler notes that “[t]he very first lines of the...[Russian]...imperial title...refer to the most important stages of Russian expansion and the heterogenous nature of the Russian empire” (Kappeler, 2013: 114). Kappeler goes on to further state that the Russian Empire due to “a result of centuries of expansion was characterized by great ethnic, religious, social, economic, administrative and cultural diversity” (Kappeler, 2013: 114). It was as a result of this extreme diversity that the Russian Empire became a multi-ethnic empire in which “numerous aspects of foreign social, economic, and administrative structures and independent non-Orthodox and non-Russian cultures survived within the framework of the Russian empire” (Kappeler, 2013: 114). Heinrich Storch in his work *Historisch-Statistisches Gemälde des Russischen Reiches* (1797) wrote that the multi-ethnic Russian Empire was a thing of marvel, something that all individuals would find interesting for its sheer ability to have crafted a state, which relies on all of its individual parts to create a whole “in which all modifications are visible” (Storch, 1797: 302).

The assimilation of populations brought into the Russian Empire and Soviet Union is one of the main reasons behind Russia’s current desire to reassert itself as an imperial power. This concept finds itself directly associated with Russia’s notion of “empire...[which]...is strongly wedded to the Russian national psyche so Russian imperialism...[which]...is wedded to Russian nationalism” (Grigas, 2016: 11). A speech made by Vladimir Putin, and published by the Kremlin in 2005, states:

[W]e should acknowledge that the collapse of the Soviet Union was a major geopolitical disaster of the century. As for the Russian nation, it became a genuine drama. Tens of millions of our co-citizens and compatriots found themselves outside Russian territory. Moreover, the epidemic of disintegration infected Russia itself (Putin, 2005).

It can be discerned that Putin, himself, and the Kremlin speaking on behalf of the Russian people see that the dissolution of the Soviet Union is the Russian Empire having been forcibly torn apart. In a second speech, which holds great credence for this thesis, Putin addressed the State Duma after the annexation of Crimea. In this speech Putin is quoted: “[T]he Russian nation became one of the biggest, if not the biggest ethnic groups in the world to be divided by borders” (Putin, 2014). Extrapolating on these statements made by Putin, the Russian Federation perceives that it has never relinquished its right to Empire, but instead it has had it forcibly removed from its possession. “Russia realized that it was not simply robbed, it was plundered” (Putin, 2014).

The current Neo-Russian Imperial State stands in contrast to its forebearers. It is an imperial state intent on reuniting the lands which its ‘compatriots’ have been forcibly dispersed to, enabling it to protect the rights of those compatriots, if it is required (The Kremlin, 2015: 2). The Soviet Union’s expansion of the Russian state, which continued, just as it had during the empire, was a way to spread the new ideological beliefs that had taken hold during the Bolshevik revolution. For the Neo-Russian Empire, however, the very concept of imperial responsibility is interlinked to the multi-ethnic origins of both the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. Kappeler states that the fictitious idea of a Russian nation state began to be summarily applied to Russian history, an interpretation he notes was incorrect (2013: 157).

Whereas it is true that the imperial state, the Muscovite and the ‘Russian empire’...were distinct in terminological terms for the ethnos ‘Russian’...it cannot be denied that the concept ‘Russia’...assigned a special role to the ethnic group of the Russians, and that ideology of the state also absorbed certain aspects of Russian ethnic consciousness (Kappeler, 2013: 157-8).

Kappeler expands further on this concept delving into the religious orthodoxy of the Russian Empire, and its importance for the people at this period of time. Kappeler concludes that these two aspects played an immense integrational role

within the Russian empire, however, they were not the key factors (Kappeler, 2013: 158). What was, however, is that the Russian Empire was founded on the primary principle of “[l]oyalty to the tsar and his dynasty...[which]...served to link this varied assortment of territories and societies” (Kappeler, 2013: 114).

For the Soviet Union, the ideals they espoused in the late 1910’s and early 1920s were much the same as the Empire; consolidate the population in order to retain control over the Russian holdings, and attempt to maintain control of the multi-ethnic population of the country. Canadian Prime Minister Diefenbaker’s address to the United Nations on Sept. 26, 1960 noted that the Soviet Union was still acting in this same fashion. Diefenbaker made it clear that although Khrushchev had just advocated for the release of colonies by their colonial masters to the United Nations, the Soviet Union had in fact done no such thing (Diefenbaker, 1962: 601-3). To Diefenbaker and other members of the United Nations it was clear that the Soviet Union, under the guise of liberation in some cases, took control over and subjugated many populations and regions within its grasp (Diefenbaker, 1962: 601-3), the Russian Federation’s actions following the dissolution of the Soviet Union were similar.

Nevertheless, the importance of these two institution’s history for the Neo-Russian Empire is that loyalty to the state was imperative and above all else. Both entities not only assimilated with the populations that they ruled, but they embraced the cultural ideals of these populations. This enabled the Russian state to implement already existent cultural phenomena from areas of the empire into its ruling policies, thereby providing more effective ways to govern. This policy of implementation garnered the loyalty of this multi-ethnic population to the state. It is this concept which is fundamental for how the Russian Federation is currently carrying itself regarding its imperial responsibility/empire. The Russian Federation has begun to “idealize and look back nostalgically at the Russian multi-ethnic empire, whose geographical borders and intellectual horizons far exceeded those of the ethnic nation states” (Kappeler, 2013: 392). In doing so, the Kremlin has deemed itself the champion of those populations with which it

integrated; everyone became Russians. The policies employed by both the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union laid a perfect framework on which the Neo-Russian Empire could begin re-imperialization (Grigas, 2016: 4; Pain, 2009: 1).

### ***The Ambivalence of American Imperialism***

The American desire for empire is something that has always been open for debate. In light of the United States' past with 'Manifest Destiny', the Monroe Doctrine, and 'American Exceptionalism', it is a hard argument to make that the United States is not an imperial power in some form. 'Manifest Destiny', is an intriguing concept that developed as an ideology among the settlers of the Americas, and was given life by John Winthrop in his work a "Modell of Christian Charity". Winthrop states: "wee must Consider that wee shall be as a Citty upon a Hill, the eies of all people are uppon us" (Winthrop, 1630). It is through these words that Winthrop set the very foundation for the way in which the concepts of 'Manifest Destiny' and 'American Exceptionalism' would come to drive United States forward. However, it would be John L. O'Sullivan in 1845, who constructed the idea that it is the United States' "manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions" (O'Sullivan, 1845: 5). Although written about the Westward expansion of America, the words were clearly grasped by the United States in a different manner. Therefore 'Manifest Destiny' could originally be defined as this: the predetermining factor which permitted the United States as a nation the right to conquer the Western land on its own continent. When, linked to 'American Exceptionalism', which is an ideological set of principles that codified a belief that American values rest above all else, however, this destiny would be slightly altered and heavily reinforced. According to Walter Nugent two things became apparent. First, that 'Manifest Destiny' "was the urge, the conviction and the process of westward expansion across the continent that initiated and inured us into the imperial habit" (Nugent, 2007: 23). Second, having been changed and strengthened by the concept of 'American Exceptionalism' this 'Manifest Destiny' came to mean that which "rest[s] on a persistent set of beliefs, most

fundamentally the exceptionalist conviction: that this nation has been divinely or providentially favored and stands for a morally good polity, worthy of export” (Nugent, 2007: 7). Simply, ‘Manifest Destiny’ and ‘American Exceptionalism’ when intertwined became the drivers which promoted a clear view that the United States is an Empire. I define Empire as an international sovereign state ruled by a centralized government with control over both its original territory and those states it has conquered. With that comes a duty to provide security and governance that allows for both good and functional governmental processes to be accessible to all individuals, tribes, parties, ethnicities, etc. found within its Empire.

An expansionist mindset intermixed with ‘American Exceptionalism’ developed within the United States, which was followed closely by the Monroe Doctrine due to the link created to view “expansion and empire as normal and natural” (Nugent, 2007: 23). It is this doctrine, which is perhaps one of the most damning arguments against the United States’ case that they are not an imperial power. In President James Monroe’s address to congress on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1823, he set the very foundation on which the United States would, and in many respects still, conducts foreign policy to this day (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2017). In his announcement Monroe made two major points:

2) [The United States]...should consider any attempt on...[another States]...part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety...4) Governments who have declared their independence and maintain it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States (Monroe, 1823).

The second point of this doctrine is demonstrably imperative to understand for it is the framework by which the United States claims imperium over the Western Hemisphere. The fourth point establishes that though the West is under the protection of the United States it is not responsible for the direct control of the individual territories. This works hand in hand with the policy of democratization, which will be covered later, helping to establish the United States as an imperial power, albeit one that shirks the responsibilities of empire, preferring instead to allow territories to be run by governments that are already in place, unless they go against the American way.

Based on this ideology, the desire to remain a non-imperial power for the United States is nigh impossible. According to Michael Ignatieff “empire abroad has been seen as the republic’s permanent temptation and its potential nemesis” (Ignatieff, 2003). This as a direct result of ‘Manifest Destiny’, the ever present ‘Monroe Doctrine’ dictating the way in which foreign policy was conducted, and ‘American Exceptionalism’ which makes the United States think it must bring its views to those outside the West.

America’s empire is not like empires of times past, built on colonies, conquest and the white man’s burden. We are no longer in the era of the United Fruit Company, when American corporations needed the Marines to secure their investments overseas. The 21<sup>st</sup> century imperium is a new invention in the annals of political science, an empire lite, a global hegemony whose grace notes are free markets, human rights and democracy, enforced by the most awesome military power the world has ever known. It is the imperialism of a people who remember that their country secured its independence by revolt against an empire, and who like to think of themselves as the friend of freedom everywhere. It is an empire without consciousness of itself as such, constantly shocked that its good intentions arouse resentment abroad. But that does not make it any less of an empire, with a

conviction that it alone, in Herman Melville's words, bears 'the ark of the liberties of the world' (Ignatieff, 2003).

Ignatieff's view of America, both past and present, is a vital assessment, however, David Chandler would argue that though the United States may bear the world's "ark of liberties" it rejects its responsibility to uphold it. Chandler's stance on 'Empire in Denial', as the name suggests, is one that sees the power and the responsibility for such supremacy as being entirely rejected by the imperial power that wields it (Chandler, 2006, 8). There are two contrasts regarding the Neo-Russian Empire which are evident from this quote. The first, and perhaps more important of the two is related to the line: "a people who remember that their country secured its independence by revolt against an empire" (Ignatieff, 2003). This concept is intrinsically important as the Neo-Russian Empire does not share a similar experience to the United States. Consequently, the Neo-Russian Empire does not retain a negative view of empire. To the Russian people the existence of their Empire was the golden age of Russia. Because the American people were liberated from an empire, they may perpetuate a rejection of imperial responsibility/empire. The second distinction apparent here is the Neo-Russian Empire's willingness to accept responsibility for those they conquer and bring into their imperial body. This attitude is strikingly different to that of the United States which speaks only about "'capacity-building' and 'empowerment' in the cause of the non-Western Other" (Chandler, 2006: 9). This is seen with the new stance taken by the United States in 2013, when then Secretary of State John Kerry addressed the Organization of American States stating:

Today...we have made a different choice...[regarding the Monroe Doctrine and its reinforcement in the Western Hemisphere]...The era of the Monroe doctrine is over...The relationship that we seek and that we have worked hard to foster is not about a United States declaration about how and when it will intervene in the affairs of other American states. It's about all of our countries viewing one another as equals, sharing responsibilities, cooperating on security

issues, and adhering...to the decisions that we make as partners to advance the values and the interests that we share (Kerry, 2013).

The new stance taken by the Obama Administration can be argued to have moved away from the Monroe Doctrine, as they stated. Extrapolating Kerry's words: the United States "seeks to take the easy way out...[regarding empire, focusing entirely on]...hiding behind the therapeutic codes of empowerment and the depoliticized regulations of law and administrative etiquette" (Chandler, 2006: 194). This has enabled America to retain its regional hegemony, articulating that it only desires to help empower others.

### ***Key Definition***

I find that I must briefly define what a *low-capacity undemocratic regime* is within the context of this thesis, due to its use throughout the thesis to delineate a specific form of state. Providing this definition allows for a clear, but brief understanding of the type of culture present within Afghanistan, Iraq and Chechnya. The application of this label is a result of the research conducted during this thesis. Charles Tilly (2006) provides the definition for what low-capacity undemocratic regimes are, defining them based on a population that adheres to a strict code of honor. Honor and the associated codes that individuals in a society such as this conduct their lives are the principal ways in which oaths are enforced between individuals and groups due to the lack of an overarching (non)governmental authority who are able to make these guarantees on their behalf (Tilly, 2006: 93). "[B]lood feuds...often arise as a means of dispute settlement among distinct kin groups" (Tilly, 2006: 94) because of the distinct relationship that honor and social status hold for one another in regimes such as these.

### ***Overview***

#### *Chapter 2: Methodology*

Chapter 2 is the methodology of the thesis. This chapter is intended to present the research design of the overall project, its pattern for research, the reasoning

behind why case studies were chosen, and the limitations faced during both the research and writing process of this thesis.

### *Chapter 3: Literature Review*

The literature review is intended to help establish the placement of this work in the existing body. In doing so it shall examine the existing literature and help to elucidate on the relevance of the question presented in the introduction of this thesis. There exists a dichotomy regarding the concept of *Imperialism* or *Imperialization*. This distinction is found specifically regarding the theoretical (*Imperialism*) vs. the practical (*Imperialization*) application of this overarching concept. Therefore, this review looks at the three different forms that the writers of theoretical *Imperialism* strive to place each manifestation within.

### *Chapter 4: The Neo-Russian Empire: A Strategy of Re-Imperialization*

Chapter 4 is an examination of the pattern of *Imperialization* using indigenous forces that the Neo-Russian Empire has developed and successfully implemented, due to its failures and successes in Afghanistan as the Soviet Union; Chechnya in the First and Second Chechen Wars, and Crimea as the Neo-Russian Empire. Soviet involvement in Afghanistan is examined to determine why the Soviets failed in their conquest of the people and the state as a whole. This case study is also intended to demonstrate the Neo-Russian Empire's first shift in re-learning how to use cultural relativity to its advantage when adding to its imperial body. The Neo-Russian Empire's involvement in the First Chechen War will briefly be examined to demonstrate how its pattern of *imperialization* came to exist, while the Second Chechen War will be examined more closely. It is during the Second Chechen War that the Neo-Russian Empire can be seen developing an understanding of cultural relativity and its present strategy of *imperialization*. The final case study of chapter 4 is on Crimea, which supports the answer to this thesis question.

### *Chapter 5: The United States: A Strategy of Imperialization*

Chapter 5 focuses on the failures of the United States to make use of indigenous forces in its strategy of *imperialization* within the Vietnam War; the Iraq War; and the War in Afghanistan. The concept of democratization is covered first in this chapter to provide context for how it came to be the United States' preferred nation-building process. Second, The Vietnam War is used to provide further context for democratization's failure as a nation-building process and its inherent flaws. The case study of Iraq focuses on how democratization was inherently problematic as an effective strategy involving indigenous forces. The final case study regarding the War in Afghanistan addresses the continued failure of the United States to exploit and make use of indigenous forces.

### *Chapter 6: Final Analysis, Conclusions & Policy Recommendations*

Chapter 6 includes a synthesis of the case studies as well as a critical analysis and conclusion. Therefore, this chapter is designed to do two things. First, it answers definitively whether or not the Neo-Russian Empire and United States deny or accept their imperial responsibility for empire to those they have conquered through their manipulation and use of indigenous forces and what this means in the study of *imperialism* and *imperialization*. And finally, it provides policy recommendations regarding the use of cultural relativity and indigenous forces that would work while not violating human right's conventions.

## ***Chapter 2: Methodology***

The research design of this project is built around an analysis of academic literature, journals and open source material relevant to the examination of the primary thesis question. It presents case studies and the initial research was largely qualitative in nature. The qualitative work was conducted to expand the information related to the case studies. As information was gathered bibliographies provided supplemental information. The thesis' theoretical approach is founded on the neo-realist tendencies of states to seek out their own interests at the expense of other states and neo-liberalism's belief that the members of the international community can function as one unit for the betterment of all. Field research was impacted due to access restraints.

Open source material, such as: credible news websites; Governmental websites; Non-governmental Organization websites; Academic literature; Academic journals; and finally, Governmental publications were used. Although statistics are presented and discussed in the texts when available, this is not a quantitative project. Within this thesis I relied primarily on an approach of deductive reasoning that helped to answer the overarching question and related hypotheses of this thesis. Did the research material support the assumptions I presented in the thesis questions, why or why not and what did that mean for the strength or weakness of my analysis? In other words, the goal was to test the hypotheses developed using the available research material and determine if they were validated or not by the examination of the data.

The best examples of conflict that the Russian Federation and United States have been involved in over the last 60 years informed the selection of case studies. Each case study was chosen due to its importance for the country involved and the relatively shared timeframe. But most importantly each case study was chosen because it involved the use of indigenous forces by the Russian Federation or United States. Vietnam and Afghanistan were chosen because they represent two of the greatest failures in military history for the United States and Russia respectively. Chechnya was chosen because of its importance in shaping Russia's *imperialization* strategy following the fall of the Soviet Union, while

Crimea was selected due to Russia's ongoing involvement in this area of the Ukraine. Iraq and Afghanistan were selected as case studies for the United States because it is technically on-going and the United States Government and Military are still involved in some capacity within both countries.

Several limitations were encountered researching. The most significant was the lack of access to elite level individuals within the Russian Federation or United States Government or Military. This coupled with a lack of data-sets regarding the use of indigenous forces by either country resulted in the thesis being wholly qualitative relying on the research based format discussed above. Bias also addressed. First; what degree of bias for or against individuals, strategies, or was contained in the documents. Second, my personal biases associated with being raised as a citizen of the United States. There were occasions where I had to check myself on being too harsh or too easy on individuals, strategies or the countries being researched. This was done so as not to come off as overly supportive of one or the other of the *imperialization* strategies being examined in this work. Finally, the amount of information that is openly available to me as a civilian researcher focused on a distinctly military subject matter also created limitations. This has made gathering information distinctly difficult, even in an age of open source and declassified government and military information.

# *Chapter 3: Literature*

## *Review*

The literature review makes a distinction between the theoretical and the practical. According to 'Imperialism' by Matthew Stephen (2012) in the *Encyclopedia of Global Studies* there exist two distinct types of *Imperialism* which are prevalent in the world of International relations today: 'Old' and 'New' *Imperialism*.

However, there also exists a third, but much older variation, which is 'Ancient' *Imperialism* (Garnsey, 1978). Consequently, this literature review covers these 3 stages of *Imperialism*. First, 'Ancient' *Imperialism* is discussed and how authors such as Thucydides and Caesar have shaped the framework of theoretical imperialism in the past and present. Second, 'Old' *Imperialism* or *Colonialism* is examined to provide context with regards to how mercantilism and colonialist tendencies came to change the fabric by which *Imperialism* functioned. Finally, the capitalistic tendencies related to 'New' *Imperialism* are surveyed to see how theoretical imperialism has come to exist in its current form, and its relation to Practical *Imperialism*.

### ***'Ancient' Imperialism***

Theoretical concepts of *Imperialism* start with Thucydides closely followed by *Julius Caesar*. Thucydides' Melian Dialogue is the cornerstone for many realist and neo-realist theoreticians as it represents the first time the international system was defined (Bagby, 1994; Doyle, 1990: 223; Gilpin, 1984: 287-304; Keohane, 1977: 42; Morgenthau, 1978: 38; Viotti, 1987; Waltz, 1959: 159; Waltz, 1979: 127 and 186-7). Laurie M. Johnson Bagby (1994) and Michael Doyle (1986) argue that Thucydides' work did more than just lay the framework for the realist argument of the international system. According to Doyle (1986: 30) the Melian Dialogue demonstrates how other nations should view an empire. Of significant importance is Doyle's (1986: 40) differentiation between a hegemonic power (control over the foreign policy of controlled nations), and an empire (control over both the domestic and foreign policy of controlled nations) as presented by Thucydides. Thus, Thucydides' work helps to establish perhaps one of the earliest dichotomies between the functional capabilities of an empire and a hegemonic power.

*Iulius Caesar* is one of the most brilliant strategic, operational and tactical minds of history, and his work, specifically the *Bellum Gallicum*, cannot and should not be ignored within a literature review on the theoretical concept of *Imperialism*. Although the conquest of Gaul would not have been the first instance of imperial conquest by the Roman Republic it was the first fundamental step to the creation of the Roman Empire by *Caesar*. Therefore, when conceptualizing the concept of *Imperialism* the *Beluum Gallicum* is the starting point of theoretical *Imperialism*. Bey IV's *Caesar's Conquest of Gaul Re-examined* (2015) and A.N. Sherwin-White's "Caesar as an Imperialist" found in *Greece & Rome 4.1* (1957) both hold that *Caesar* entered Gaul not intending to fully pacify and conquer it or its inhabitants. As a result *Caesar's* failure to conquer the tribes of Gaul, underestimated their resolve and ability to decisively fight against the Roman War Machine. He miscalculated how to effectively utilize the tribes and indigenous population in this campaign of *imperialization*. Sherwin-White believes the failure made *Caesar* focus on the implementation of *Imperialism* within Gaul. *Caesar's* answer to his failure can be seen as a "strategic response with three main facets: first, empowering the hegemons...second, stabilizing the overall tribal structure by strengthening and reassuring individual tribes; and third, and finally removing" (Bey IV, 2015: 52) enemies to the stability of this new Gallic State controlled by Rome. The *Bellum Gallicum* is a key example of a successful strategy of *Imperialization* for those embroiled in a conflict and making use of indigenous forces.

### ***'Old' Imperialism or Colonialism***

The conceptual framework by which 'Old' and 'New' *Imperialism* find themselves a part of is synonymous with the economic structures which Empires utilize at that period in history. 'Old' *Imperialism* finds its roots in the concepts of mercantilism and colonialism alongside the discovery of the "New World", and the three G's: Gold, Glory, and God (Snyder, 1962: 1). The trend of 'Old' *Imperialism* or *Colonialism* refers to the first phase of expansion by European countries, from the mid-1400s to the mid-eighteenth century, in the economic and

political systems of other world regions (Snyder, 1962: 1; Stephen, 2012: 885). It was a phase, which provided the Colonial powers a chance to increase the size of their markets, thus allowing for a larger accumulation of power for their Empire (Borocz, 2012; Hobsbawm, 1989; Lenin, 1917; Stephen, 2012: 885). It was a form of *Imperialism* that permeated the western world so thoroughly because it empowered all individuals in an Empire (Hobsbawm, 1989, 71; Lewis, 1973: 582). *Colonialism* allowed the Empires to not only extol themselves in “the triple triumphs of science, technology and manufactures...[but it provided them to the chance to glorify]...in...[their]...colonies...[and]...the idea of superiority to, and domination over, a world of dark skins in remote places” (Hobsbawm, 1989, 70). There is a general consensus that ‘Old’ *Imperialism* in a theoretical sense was a means of domination (Dietler, 2010; Hobson, 1902; Kohn, 1962; Lenin, 1917), by which a colonial power utilized its holdings to expand its trade lines and in many cases made “imperial subjects by means of objects, via the manufacture of desire and the commodification of need” (Comaroff 1998: 1).

Kohn distinguishes the differences between *Imperialism* and *Colonialism* in ‘Hans Kohn: The Meaning of Imperialism, Colonialism and Their Variations, 1958’ (1962). The first is that the United States “distinguish[ed] between ‘legitimate’ expansion across land masses and ‘colonial’ expansion across separating waters” (Kohn, 1962: 48). This distinction allowed for the United States to declare “that colonial ‘empires’ are established by sea powers, whereas expansion into contiguous land masses does not produce ‘empire’ colonialism” (Kohn, 1962: 48). The labeling process undertaken by the United States not only afforded it the non-imperial title, but it granted Russia similar measures (Kohn, 1962: 48). The second point is that as long as the United States refuses to see itself as an empire Russia cannot be seen as one from its viewpoint either. This is key for Russia, who is, also given free reign to expand into Asia because it “do[es] not appear to Asian nations as imperialistic powers, nor...[its]...subject peoples as the victims of a new colonialism” (Kohn, 1962: 49). This was due to the view that Asian nations shared commonalities with Russia, such as “its

attitude toward authority and government...its agrarian backwardness, and in the lethargy of its church and its masses” (Kohn, 1962: 48).

### ***‘New’ Imperialism***

The conceptual framework on which the theoretical ideas behind *Imperialism* in both its older and newer iterations rest is related directly to the economic situation facing the Empires of that period. Whereas ‘Old’ *Imperialism* fundamentally relied on mercantilism and colonialism in order for it to progress ‘New’ *Imperialism*’s very existence is due to its symbiotic relationship with the effects of Capitalism (Chilcote, 2000: 11). According to Ronald Chilcote the theoretical constructions of imperialism during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were manifestly linked to the ideas of advanced Capitalism and monopoly of the capitalist market (Chilcote, 2000: 11). Authors such as J.A. Hobson, V.I. Lenin, Joseph Schumpeter, and Rosa Luxembourg have all written variations of what they see as *Imperialism*. However, each links the decisions of the empires back to Capitalism in some distinct way. This is the ‘New’ Imperialism.

Hobson saw the expansion of empires as related to two issues that are fundamentally linked to capitalistic states. The first was to provide their markets a new source for expansion; this would deliver “new outlets for the investment of our surplus and for the energies of the adventurous surplus of our population” (Hobson, 1902: 76). Second, was the desire to annex other nations so that the “development of the world...[was not left]...to other nations, who will everywhere cut into our trade” (Hobson, 1902: 78). For Hobson “[i]mperialism is...seen to be, not a choice, but a necessity” (Hobson, 1902: 78). Thus, Hobson’s work is most easily interpreted as dealing with the underconsumption of Empires, which is the originator for the need to expand to new markets (Hobson, 1902). Unlike ‘Old’ *Imperialism* that was focused on colonial control, Hobson’s interpretation of ‘New’ *Imperialism* demonstrates that Empires were now determined to mold the cultures and people existing within them to more accurately reflect the Empire whose market they exist within. A prime example of

this is the expansion of democracy carried out by the United States through their neo-liberal policy of democratization through intervention.

While Hobson saw Imperialism as a consequence of a very specific issue within a capitalist market. Lenin's *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, examines the emergence of *Imperialism* as it pertains to capitalistic society citing that "capitalism only became capitalist imperialism at a definite and very high stage of its development" (Lenin, 1917: 105). Lenin defines *Imperialism*:

Imperialism is capitalism at that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun, in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed (Lenin, 1917: 107).

According to Lenin the only outcome for this type of *Imperialism* is warfare (Lenin, 1917: 118). It is the only answer "to overcome the disparity between the development of productive forces and the accumulation of capital on the one side, and the division of colonies and spheres of influence for finance capital on the other" (Lenin, 1917: 118). Both the United States and the Neo-Russian Empire have vied for control of the world's market leading to proxy wars being fought in places such as Afghanistan and Vietnam.

Where Hobson dealt with underconsumption by Empires and Lenin focused instead on the creation of *Imperialism* due to the existence of Capitalism, Luxembour (2000) focused on the accumulation of Empires. Luxembour's theory is simple. "Capitalism needs noncapitalist social strata" (Luxembour, 2000: 100) for three key things: "surplus value...a source of supply for its means of production and as a reservoir of labor power for its wage system" (Luxembour, 2000: 100). Luxembour's main aim was to show that *Imperialism* was due to a lack of means of production by an imperial power in its home state. For Luxembour, *Imperialism* was a means to an end, it was the starting point

where imperial powers were able to lay claim to new land and markets, whereby they provided themselves with accumulation. Accumulation in turn was followed by new methods of production and surpluses in revenue, which came to provide the imperial nations with capital. The final theoretical *Imperialist* examined in this literature review is Schumpeter whose work can be seen as a piece of social commentary. However, Schumpeter endeavors to make a direct link to the “history of mankind...[and]...its purely instinctual inclinations toward war and conquest” (Schumpeter, 2000: 106). In attempting to accomplish this Schumpeter examines *Imperialism* from a historio-social standpoint, which identifies traits that help to predict the future. These are based on what he believes is an interwoven marriage to Capitalism. Schumpeter’s work ends with two conclusions. First, *Imperialism* only exists because it is an artifact of the autocratic regimes of the past, while in the same instance finding a home in the persistent ideologies of militarism and nationalism, which exist in the present. Schumpeter’s second point harkens back to Lenin: “imperialisms will wither and die” (Schumpeter, 2000: 114). The result of the death or relinquishment of monopolistic tendencies by imperial states who over time or through revolution would end these methods of capitalistic exploitation (Schumpeter, 2000: 114). However, Schumpeter notes that the tendency for war, and the maintenance for “a sense of constant danger of war, with the war machine forever primed for action” (Schumpeter, 2000: 114) will always continue to exist.

‘New’ *Imperialism* as a theoretical concept is one that is entirely reliant on the Capitalism to exist in its current form. Without Capitalism and market-based economies it is fair to say that Empires would inherently not exist. As Lenin, Luxembour, and Schumpeter all note the very existence of ‘New’ *Imperialism* will lead to the existence of conflicts when states vie for power on the international stage.

*Chapter 4: The Neo-  
Russian Empire: A  
Strategy of Re-  
Imperialization*

### ***Indigenous Imperialization: Failure and Success***

I hypothesize that the Soviet Union and its successors in the Russian Federation do not follow David Chandler's model for the denying Imperial responsibility/empire. The Russian Federation in its current form is an exception to this argument. This examination will consist of three case studies: The Soviet Union in Afghanistan; The Neo-Russian Empire in Chechnya; and The Neo-Russian Empire in Ukraine/Crimea. In each case study an analysis of how indigenous forces are utilized demonstrates the Russian state's willingness to accept responsibility for its imperial body. The analysis of these case studies establishes how the Russian Federation has learned from its failures as the Soviet Union, and the early days as the Russian Federation and in the process transformed itself into the Neo-Russian Empire, a capable state builder, albeit one willing to violate human rights. The Russian Federation was and is willing "to bear the responsibilities for power" (Chandler, 2006: 9) in Afghanistan, Chechnya and now Crimea, or any other former Soviet Satellite state.

Each case study starts with a brief backgrounder to explain the distinct importance of each state to the Neo-Russian Empire, and why it chose to add each state to its imperial body. This is followed with a concise evaluation of the traditional life and state structure dominating each states' cultural landscape and the Neo-Russian Empire's exploitation of them. In Afghanistan, it was too little too late and resulted in failure, while in Chechnya and Crimea exploitation has brought these areas under Russian "control". Second, an examination about why the Russian Federation is not "eager to deny they have interests or deciding influence" in these regions as they see them as a part of their own country (Council of Europe, 2003; Feifer, 2003; Myers, 2002; Trotter, 2013). Finally, a review is provided of the Russian Federation's attempts to accomplish this through a system of *Imperialization*, that "play[s] up the authority, rights and interests of those subordinate to them" (Chandler, 2006: 9).

## ***Afghanistan***

### ***Afghanistan – Brief Background***

According to the Institute of War (ISW) (2018), Soviet Russia's interest in Afghanistan was predominantly focused on maintaining control of the singular piece of the Middle Eastern map they had not yet lost. Afghanistan was a vital location for the Soviets to obtain as it had once been "a great crossroads for trade and travel between the Near East and India...[and constitutes according to the Soviet Union]...an ethnologically imperfect nation" (Carman, 1950: 141). Its interest in retaining a communist proxy within the nation was a means to an end. E. Day Caraman (1950) notes that Russia had three fundamental interests for retaining control of Afghanistan for the Soviet Union. First, was the ability for the Soviets to decide where the borders between the Union and Afghanistan met (Carman, 1950: 142-3). Second, was simply the possible exploitation of the oil found within the country for the Soviet market (Carman, 1950: 144). Third, and most importantly according to Carman, was that Afghanistan was a superhighway to India "which is...a potential field for Communist development" (Carman, 1950: 144). There is also a fourth factor at play here, it was and is still a path to areas of Russia, and a "sanctuary to Chechen rebels, Central Asian militants, and other whom Moscow deemed as a threat" (ISW, 2018).

### ***Afghanistan – The Initial Failures of Imperialization***

This case study shows Russia's failure to functionally utilize indigenous forces in a strategy of *imperialization*. It reveals a clear difference between the Soviet approach to a military conflict in a low-capacity undemocratic regime compared to the Neo-Russian Empire's approach. The Soviets failed in Afghanistan. They invaded the country under the belief that Afghanistan functioned in the same capacity as those they had defeated, so easily, with conventional warfare (Galeotti, 1995; Westermann, 1999). This, however, was not the circumstance, and Moscow learned that "the Afghans were not urbanised Westerners like the Czechs and Hungarians, but still raw in warlike vigour, a people for whom blood

feud and banditry were a way of life...and for whom civil war was as much a national sport as *buzkashi*" (Galeotti, 1995: 4).

The first failure of Soviet *imperialization* in Afghanistan was the initial failure to create parallel institutions within the country. Instead, the Soviets relied entirely on backing one individual party, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). The issue according to Mark Galeotti was that Moscow had no choice but to "recognise the new regime...[one that had stolen]... power in an effective and truly 'Leninist'" coup." (Galeotti, 1995: 4-5). This prevented the Soviets from hand-picking the leader of the ruling party, and forcing them into recognizing two leaders; "Nur Mohammed Taraki, Chairman of the Revolutionary Council, and Hafizullah Amon, his Prime Minister" (Galeotti, 1995: 4). It drove the Soviets to back "an avowedly pro-Soviet socialist movement" (Galeotti, 1995: 6). The alliance between the Soviets and the PDPA was not successful. With the PDPA's stance in Afghanistan placing the Soviets at odds with the Afghan population who were fundamentally traditional in their customs and laws, lived predominantly in rural areas, and were distinctly Islamic (Galeotti, 1995: 6). Thus, the Soviets reliance on the initial decisions of the PDPA lost the war; the Soviets entered Afghanistan having already "violated religious laws, traditional customs and...[with]...the very balance of power between the...[PDPA]...and the localities" (Galeotti, 1995: 6) in complete disarray.

According to Galeotti three key factors led to the Soviets taking full control of the conflict brewing in Afghanistan. First, was the "the revolt in the western city of Herat...[which]...stimulated the first serious contingency for intervention...and conditioned attitudes in Moscow to the 'savages' of Afghanistan" (Galeotti, 1995: 7). This massacre saw the deaths of "100 soviets, including the wives and families of military advisers, hacked to death by the mob" (Galeotti, 1995: 7). The second factor was the mass desertions from the PDPA's forces, which "more than halved the government army, from 90,000 to 40,000 as entire brigades began to join the rebels" (Galeotti, 1995: 7). With the final noted reason being the assassination of Taraki by Amin, forcing the Soviets to fully

invest in the conflict as they now had to “install a more stable and reliable leader, rebuild the Afghan army, enforce a new alliance on the various wings of the PDPA and overawe opposition to the regime” (Galeotti, 1995: 15).

Consequently, the second failure of the Soviets in Afghanistan was the PDPA’s inability to function as a result of the hatred it acquired since taking power, the massive number of desertions from their forces to the *mujahideen*, the current lack of leadership, and its inability to unite as a factor of both political and ethno-cultural differences, its forces “proved both unable or unwilling to fulfill their allotted role” (Galeotti, 1995: 15). This catastrophe meant that the use of indigenous forces in this conflict amounted to little. Requiring the Soviets, in the PDPA’s place, to employ 150,000+ men of their own forces in a conflict that they “were neither trained nor equipped” (Galeotti, 1995: 15), and in a conflict that they had already lost.

### ***Afghanistan – Aerial Coercion – A Failure in Understanding***

The Soviets’ final failure as an imperializing force in Afghanistan is linked to their inability to directly apply the concept of cultural relativity to their invasion strategy of the country. Defined simply, cultural relativism is the view that all cultures and the sociological traits, views, beliefs, and laws inherent in a specific culture are valid and should be understood in their cultural context. By ignoring the traditional laws governing the country, the Soviets placed themselves at a distinct disadvantage from the start of their campaign. This promoted the rise of the *mujahideen* within the country, in part due to the blood feuds created between Afghani, Pashtu, and other tribal people seeking revenge against Soviet forces.

Rafael Reuveny and Aseem Prakash (1999: 696) note that multiple scholars, such as O.L. Sarin and Lev Dvoretzky, made the comparison that Afghanistan for the Soviet Union was much like Vietnam for the United States. Because the Soviet Union failed outright in Afghanistan this campaign is relevant. This failure can be traced to the Soviets reliance on Air Superiority, and unwillingness to make use of or rely on indigenous forces which put undue strain on Russian forces deployed in Afghanistan.

The idea behind Russian victory in Afghanistan can be attributed to a display of air power backed by destruction, death, and fear. It was in this capacity that the Soviet's believed they would pressure the population of the country to join their side.

The nine-year occupation of Afghanistan included the employment of the full spectrum of Soviet conventional weapons and a diverse range of their chemical weapons in an attempt to defeat the *mujahideen* (Afghan freedom fighters)...airpower constituted the single most important means for separating the *mujahideen* from the population while attempting to coerce the population (Westermann, 1999).

It is not surprising then that the Soviets lost this conflict. The specifics behind why this strategy failed and the ways in which the Russians learned from it are important.

Soviet forces entered Afghanistan with the intention of *imperialization* in connection with a quick victory, in a similar fashion to Czechoslovakia in 1968. However, "life rarely runs so smoothly...and the rebels were possessed of an extraordinary will to resist, a passion for a fight and the traditions of  *Jihad* " (Galeotti, 1995: 15). As the Russians would soon come to learn the Afghans, specifically the Pashtu, would not give in without a fight. As Monstuart Elphinstone wrote of the Pashtu people in 1815: "Their vices are revenge, envy, avarice, rapacity, and obstinacy; on the other hand, they are fond of liberty, faithful to their friends, kind to their dependents, hospitable, brave, hardy, frugal, laborious and prudent" (Elphinstone, 1815: 253). As Max Boot (2013: 175) states, the strategies of reprisals utilized by the British in Afghanistan from 1897-1947 did not break the morale or douse the fire of the Pashtu or Afghani people. Similarly, the Russian bombardment strategy utilized in Afghanistan did "what no less than a personage than Field Marshal Lord Roberts described as...[leading to]... 'a rich harvest of hatred and revenge' and...[a]...future...[of]...uprisings" (Boot, 2013: 175).

Soviet forces relied entirely on air superiority in their failed strategy hoping that the relentless threat of death would coerce and intimidate the Afghan people to their side (Westermann, 1999). However, this strategy was doctrinally lacking having been based entirely on the conventional wars Russia faced in Europe or its borders (Galeotti, 1995: 204). Westermann, in fact, notes that the Russian forces in the Afghan conflict demonstrated a key “unwillingness to dismount from their vehicles...reflect[ing] a desire by these forces to avoid close combat in favor of a reliance on air and artillery strikes” (Westermann, 1999). This was a strategy with little success in Afghanistan. Russia’s inability to apply cultural relativism to their strategy in fighting in Afghanistan, and the multiple ethnicities, specifically the Pashtu, cost them this conflict. More explicitly, Moscow disregarded the traditional laws found within Afghanistan dealing with honor, most important of all the *Pashtunwali*. The International Legal Foundation (ILF) stated that though the *Pashtunwali* is imperative to Afghani honor based laws it should be viewed “merely as a snapshot of certain customary laws rather than as a comprehensive academic description of the complex and diverse customary laws of Afghanistan” (ILF, 2004: 4).

The “*Pashtunwali* means ‘doing Pashtu/being Pashtu’” (LandInfo, 2011: 6), and as Thomas Barfield (2003) points out is a form of honor based law that resides within low-capacity undemocratic regimes. Barfield states that *Pashtunwali*

is a code of conduct that stresses personal autonomy and equality of political rights in a world of equals. Thus it is more than a system of customary laws, it is a way of life that stresses honor above all else, including the acquisition of money or property. It is a code that is practically impossible to fulfill in a class-structured society or in areas where governments prohibit such institutions of blood-feuds. (Barfield, 2003: 5).

*Pashtunwali* is built on the foundation of “[d]ignity, honor...[and]...shame” (LandInfo, 2011: 7). It is a code of honor that is predominantly focused on the

protection of ones autonomy, property, and family, especially that of female relatives. According to a LandInfo document published in 2011 the *Pashtunwali* “balances between two main characteristics: 1) *Tura* (sword) – Courage, aggressiveness and readiness to engage in self-sacrificing war/battle...2) *Aql* (reason) – Reason and social responsibility (LandInfo, 2011: 8). These characteristics are what determine if a Pashtu man elects to restore their honor in society by seeking “revenge (*badal*) (LandInfo, 2011: 8). For any individual within an honor based society, and as will be shown within the Chechnya case study, not seeking revenge or failing to carry it out usually dictates that the “whole kinship groups...[will now be]...seen as lacking in moral character” (LandInfo, 2011: 9). The resulting fall out of this is the loss of the both honor and status for the individual and their kinship group within the overarching societal structure.

The Soviet Union through their aerial campaign and indiscriminate use of violence against urban and rural centers created blood feud driving a wedge between the population and the PDPA. According to Westermann (1999) and Hassan Kakar (1995) this was a government that relied on the support of their population, especially the minorities, and the now targeted, urban centers to retain control. This choice of strategy may have also pushed many Pashtu men to join the *mujahideen*. According to David Kilcullen, the Pashtu people are devoid of holy fanaticism, instead they are usually motivated by economic self-interest” (Kilcullen, 2009: 84) and a “desire for revenge (*badal*) and anger arising from the loss of relatives in the fighting or from killing of bystanders and destruction of property through ‘collateral damage’” (Kilcullen, 2009: 85). The reasoning behind why Pashtu men may have joined the *mujahideen*, in the same fashion they would later go on to join the Taliban, can be attributed to the Pashtu male population’s desire to carry out blood revenge, despite interviews conducted by Kilcullen that point to many prominent Pashtu men believing that the radical ideas espoused by these groups and forced onto their society are in opposition to the traditional principles of the *Pashtunwali*.

Based on the way in which the Soviet Union, and Neo-Russian Empire conduct *imperialization*, this failure was directly linked to the Soviet's inability to functionally rely on the forces of the PDPA. Instead of trusting in the customary laws and social strata of the nation to work for them, they relied on and failed to use aerial superiority to break a population and nation that is viewed as the graveyard of empires. Though the failure to understand cultures may have been the deciding factor for the Soviet failure in Afghanistan, it was also an important lesson.

## ***Chechnya***

### ***Chechnya- Brief Backgrounder***

Chechnya's importance to the Neo-Russian Empire is two-fold. The first reason is simple, the desire to reunite a country traumatized by civil war and reintegrate it with the rest of the Neo-Russian Imperial body and in the process regain a vital economic locale. The second is preventing the loss of a key politico-cultural ally, in the Kadyrov Clan. The current head of Chechnya and the Kadyrov Clan, Ramzan Kadyrov holds a position of enormous power, and one of distinct leverage for the Neo-Russian Empire in helping to control a large portion of their Muslim population. Kadyrov's position is something that ostensibly provided Moscow with the loyalty of the Chechen population and control over the minority Muslim population throughout their empire as well. The loss of Chechnya would mean the loss of Kadyrov, and that is not something that the Russian's could easily afford. This case study demonstrates that the Neo-Russian Empire has successfully employed a strategy of *imperialization* by taking a more nuanced look at the application of cultural relativity in a strategic context.

### ***Chechnya – The Exploitation of Chechen Blood Feud***

Blood feud, or the resultant creation of it between Chechen and Russian Forces during the First Chechen War, and its capacity to enhance violent mobilization is a characteristic factor equated to the loss of the Russian Federation in their first attempt at pacifying Chechnya from 1994-1996 (Souleimanov, 2015: 14). At the

start of the Second Chechen War in 1999 Russian Forces needed to understand the nuances of this violent ritual in order to successfully add Chechnya back to their imperial body. This was done through expert and strategic exploitation of cultural relativity in order to cash in on the inherent weaknesses of low-capacity undemocratic regimes.

A brief synopsis on the First Chechen War is required to appreciate the nuances of the Second Chechen War. It starts with an examination of the Neo-Russian Army's primary tactic called *zachistka*. The *zachistka* can be seen in two separate ways. First, as the shelling of an indigenous city, town or village by artillery or aircraft (Souleimanov, 2016: 6). Understandably, aerial bombardment is easy to comprehend as addressed above. While the second way to view *zachistka* is as a sweep operation (Souleimanov, 2016: 6). A sweep operation is defined as

House-by-house identification checks to sift insurgents from noncombatants once a targeted neighborhood, village, or city has been blockaded by soldiers....[usually]...sweeps...involved several hundred soldiers and lasted between three and five days on average, although on rare occasions a few unfortunate villages were 'swept' for as long as four weeks (Lyall, 2010: 3).

This definition is vital due to its lack of specificity, leaving ground forces with no strict doctrinal process for how to conduct *zachistka*. As a result, the operations of the Russian forces during the First Chechen War were “driven by motives other than strict utilitarian logic” (Lyall, 2010: 3) and the indiscriminate nature by which it was used “became synonymous with excesses by both Russian forces and, later their pro-Russian Chechen allies” (Lyall, 2010: 3). *Zachistka* during the First Chechen War is, consequently, best described as indiscriminate and wanton abuse of human rights.

*Zachistka* as a tool was under used during the First Chechen War with Russian forces choosing to rely on the “simplistic but once prevalent assumption – that conventional military superiority necessarily prevails in war” (Mack, 1975:

177) a similar mindset to that held during the invasion of Afghanistan. However, its use during the First Chechen War provided the Russians with two key lessons. First, it proved to be an effective and practical short term tactical tool upsetting “the resources (and the social and economic base) of...[the]...insurgent group...[in turn]...alienat[ing] local populations, who blame the insurgents for the suffering inflicted upon them” (Souleimanov, 2016: 8). The second, and most important lesson was that if it were to be used effectively in the long term it would need to be used by pro-Russian indigenous Chechen forces as opposed to Russian soldiers. The cultural phenomena of blood feud inherent within Chechen society, discussed intra, bolstered the ethno-nationalist separatist ranks to an incredible degree. Emil Aslan Souleimanov noted that there were around “4,000 men at the onset of war...reaching 12,000 to 18,000 during the latter phases of the armed conflict” (Souleimanov, 2015: 14). The indiscriminate use of *zachistka* against the Chechen population by Russian forces fueled Chechen hate and the desire for revenge with “most avengers soon...[coming]...to regard all Chechnya-based Russian troops as potential targets of blood revenge-driven violence” (Souleimanov, 2015: 13). As a direct result “Russian troops were ‘so busy just trying to ensure their own security’ that they ‘almost never encounter[ed] the guerillas” (Kramer, 2004/5: 9 as quoted in Souleimanov, 2016: 8). The loss that the Kremlin faced in the First Chechen War as a result of *zachiksta* proved itself another great lesson. Following failure in Afghanistan and Chechnya, the Kremlin came to understand that it could not rely on its troops to carry out *zachistka* if it were to be effective in the long term. *Zachistka* as a tactic had to be utilized in a newly refined and applicable way to the Chechen cultural landscape. This would provide the Neo-Russian Empire with a policy of *imperialization* by which it could secure Chechnya for its imperial body.

The process of *imperialization* utilized by the Neo-Russian Empire to conquer Chechnya is known as Chechenization (Dannreuther, 2014; Lyall, 2010; Souleimanov, 2016; Ware, 2009). Chechenization is defined as “the radical devolution of power to one clan group and local leader in Chechnya” (Dannreuther, 2014: 388). It is a process formulated to involve two interlinked,

albeit separate, steps. The first step is the creation of parallel institutions in the targeted area in which they plan to take over. The second step of Chechenization is the utilization of indigenous Pro-Russian co-ethnic Chechen forces. Addressing the second step first demonstrates the process of manipulation used by the Neo-Russian Empire to employ indigenous forces and the cultural phenomenon of blood feud to staunch the civil war and wipe out the Chechen insurgency that was manifest in the republic.

Within the Caucasus, more specifically in Chechnya, blood feud should be defined as a violent ritual that is tied intensely to: honor, reciprocity and equality and is a “context-bound form of revenge – that is the desire to kill an offender or his (usually patrilineally delineated) male relatives in retaliation for a grave offense committed against oneself or one’s relatives” (Souleimanov, 2015: 2). It is a ritual that relies on an overt declaration of blood revenge made by an individual or collective group and targeted at a specific individual or collective group. Therefore, it is the responsibility of Chechen individuals or collective kin groups to seek revenge for an act of blood. Failure is not a tolerated option in the Chechen culture or other honor based societies. If failure occurs the social standing of the individual who declared revenge is lost as is the station of his collective kin group (Souleimanov, 2015: 4; “Aslan” as quoted in Souleimanov, 2015: 12).

The dynamics of Chechen blood revenge/feud assists an understanding for how Russia utilized the indigenous co-ethnic Chechen forces to pacify the republic. The Russian Federation successfully established five neo-imperial co-ethnic Chechen battalions through the efficient and effective implementation of Chechenization. All five of these battalions were intended to fight this newly minted civil war on behalf of and in place of Russian Forces (Souleimanov, 2015: 15; Ware, 2009: 157). The battalion that is imperative to know is the *Kadyrovsty*. A battalion originally deployed under the leadership of Razman Kadyrov to protect, his father and, their leader Ahkmad Kadyrov (Smid, 2015: 652). The *Kadyrovsty* was a part of the ethno-nationalist insurgency that rose during the

First Chechen War before coming to serve the Neo-Russian Empire as noted by Roland Dannreuther (2014), Jason Lyall (2010), Ekaterina Sokirianskaia (2008), Tomas Smid and Miroslav Mares (2015) and Souleimanov (2015; 2016). This was a result of the loss of the newly minted Russian Federation in the First Chechen War coupled with the social, political and religious cleavages faced by the republic during the inter-war period between 1996-1999 that forced them to side with the Russians in the Second Chechen War (Dannreuther, 2014: 380-1).

The practicality of Kadyrov for Moscow and Putin was immediately evident because his clan and the relationships he held in Chechnya were powerful (Dannreuther, 2014: 383; Sokirianskaia, 2008). The *Kadyrovsty* became an imperial tool for Moscow due to the hierarchical structure used to maintain their organization, with Kadyrov at the helm. It is a structure fundamentally based on a “concept of personalized leadership” (Smid, 2015: 653) that relies on “[c]lan and family bonds” (Smid, 2015: 653). For Putin and Moscow this meant that Kadyrov served two purposes for the Neo-Russian Empire. First, Kadyrov would prevent desertion from those who had sworn loyalty to him and his clan. Second, he would fuel the fire of blood feud already existent within the country.

Kadyrov’s use of “draconian counter-defection mechanisms” (Souleimanov, 2016: 16) made this first task simple. He and his clan became a tool for the Neo-Russian Empire, one that guaranteed the loyalty of any ex-insurgent who joined Kadyrov, and in doing so ensured their allegiance to Moscow. Kadyrov’s methods for retaining loyalty were broken into two distinct methods. The first was his exclusive right to kidnap, rape or murder any relatives of alleged or defected insurgents, whereby the socio-cultural traditions of collective responsibility within the kin group would activate (Souleimanov, 2016: 11). The threat of these methods not only deterred the defection of those in the *Kadyrovsty*, but it ensured their loyalty and the loyalty of the populace. Kadyrov also made use of these same threats in an effort “to exert pressure on hundreds of insurgents with the aim of forcing them to defect” (Souleimanov, 2016: 12). Kadyrov employed whisper campaigns and initiations through blood as the

second method by which he maintained the loyalty of the *Kadyrovsty*. To join the *Kadyrovsty* an applicant had to demonstrate loyalty to their brothers, and Kadyrov, himself, by taking the blood of their enemies (Souleimanov, 2016: 13). The process by which blood was taken upon oneself was ordered to be carried out by the individual or the *Kadyrovsty* as to ensure that a blood feud was started between the initiated *Kadyrovsty* and the offended party. This act of blood taking was then publicized in whisper campaigns by Grozny to Chechnya, to bring to light the actions and identities of the newly cast counterinsurgents (Souleimanov, 2016: 14). What Kadyrov did was to systematically exploit Chechnya's young male population, in turn creating "a class of murderers, who have no way back" (Souleimanov, 2016: 13). Therein turn creating a population which was "as Chechens say 'bound by blood' to the Kadyrov clan" (Souleimanov, 2016: 13). These two tactics sat the Kadyrov clan on the side of the Neo-Russian Empire in the Second Chechen War, but also placed a large number of Chechens now firmly in the grasp of Moscow. In essence, Kadyrov was now pledged to see that the Russian backed and Chechen led counterinsurgency saw victory (Souleimanov, 2016: 21).

The Neo-Russian Empire successfully exploited the violent ritual to secure the loyalty of not only a leader, but an entire population. This result enabled it to systematically eliminate the existing Chechen insurgency. Differing opinions exist with regard to the exact size of the *Kadyrovsty*, however, the two most prevalent are presented by Souleimanov (2016) and Smid and Mares (2015). According to Souleimanov's research Kadyrov had "around 7000 members in total, this translate[d] into at least 100,000 Chechens, or 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the entire population being now related to the Kadyrov Clan" (Souleimanov, 2016: 13). However, in 2015 Smid and Mares observed that Kadyrov is estimated to have control of "10,000 to 30,000 armed men suitable to fight" (Smid, 2015: 671). This would mean that around 40% of Chechnya's population is in some form or another linked or loyal to Moscow through either Kadyrov or the hierarchy that dominates the *Kadyrovsty*. As a result of this new loyalty Russia came into possession of an incredibly competent and ruthless tactical fighting force in the

guise of the *Kadyrovsty* (Smid, 2015: 672). The successful exploitation of Chechen blood revenge/feud by the Neo-Russian Empire ensured the loyalty of Kadyrov, the loyalty of his people, and garnered a new fighting force. Chechenization, by which indigenous forces are used to seize control of the territory for the Neo-Russian Empire, provides the Russians with a brutally effective tool (or model) to be utilized in the reclamation of the rest of their imperial body, as can be seen in the next case study on Crimea (Dubnov, 2016; Souleimanov, 2014).

### ***Chechnya – Chechenization an Imperial Foothold***

By exploiting the violent cultural system of Chechen blood revenge and blood feud the Neo-Russian Empire gained a key ally within the Republic. While secondary, it assists an understanding of how Chechenization occurs. The first phase of Chechenization as was stated above is the creation of parallel institutions to cement the Neo-Russian Empire's imperial foothold in Chechnya. Dannreuther defines the process of Chechenization as “the radical devolution of power to one clan group and local leader in Chechnya (Dannreuther, 2014: 388). This process plays directly towards the Neo-Russian Empire's mode of governance, which focuses “on a personalized, neopatrimonial and factional basis” (Dannreuther, 2014: 389). Moscow vested direct interest in the Kadyrovs and the *Kadyrovsty*'s hierarchy akin to the colonial period of the Russian Empire where the Kremlin placed power behind local elites who managed their territories, people, and governments on behalf of and in their interest (Burbank, 2010: 233). The Kremlin's investiture in local elites ensured draconian control of the Republic, based on its assimilation “as a local element in federally centralized bureaucratic structures” (Ware, 2009: 159).

Chechenization's policy of parallel institutions functioned in the beginning as a way to staunch a war that was seen from Moscow's point of view “as being all but an internal issue: an ‘anti-terrorist campaign,’ whose aim was merely to restore peace and order to integral part of Russia's sovereignty” (Souleimanov, 2015: 95). This policy of *imperilization* enabled the Kremlin to hand pick who ran

the Republic on its behalf, ensuring the best future for this part of the empire. Souleimanov stated that Moscow and the Kremlin maintained complete and total control, power, and oversight within the Chechen government, with the “coexistence...of civil-administrative and military-security institutions...hav[ing] been put into place intentionally” (Souleimanov, 2015: 104). Meaning Chechnya is by all means a Republic run from the Kremlin. Implying that initially Kadyrov’s position in the country was nothing more than an ornament (Souleimanov, 2015: 103-4), the death of Ahkmad Kadyrov, however, changed the dynamics of the Kremlin’s relationship with Chechnya ever so slightly with the rise of Ramzan Kadyrov.

In 2008 Ramzan consolidated the power of his clan with the help of the Kremlin (Ware, 2009: 160). For the Neo-Russian Empire this sealed its decision regarding the autonomy of Chechnya, and helped Russia decide Chechnya’s fate as a semi-autonomous Republic. It allowed the Neo-Russian Empire to effectively bring “the North Caucasian republics under Moscow’s bureaucratic power by ceding nearly complete local control and large economic subsidies to local elites in exchange for their loyalty to the Kremlin” (Ware, 2009: 161). Robert B. Ware proclaims that this provided Kadyrov, the *Kadyrovsty’s* hierarchy, and Kadyrov’s administration with “conditions that approach autonomy” (Ware, 2009: 161). The state of autonomy for Chechnya matters little, however, for Kadyrov had already given over the loyalty of his people and as a result the loyalty of most of Chechnya in exchange for the power that he and local elites in his administration now wield locally. As result and “at the expense of Chechen autonomy” (Ware, 2009: 168) Chechnya has been successfully turned into an appendage of the Neo-Russian Imperial body.

## ***Crimea***

### ***Crimea – Brief Background***

The discussion on the Ukraine, more specifically Crimea, at least regarding its importance to Russia, is akin to discussing the importance of Scotland or Ireland

to the United Kingdom. Although they may view themselves as different nationalities, they share a similar history, and many individuals throughout the world view them as being from one common place (Szporluk, 2000: 72). According to V.V. Pokshishevksy “in central Asia and the Caucasus Ukrainians have traditionally functioned as Russians’ ‘fellow travelers’ or ‘satellites’, and are considered Russian by the indigenous population” (Pokshishevksy, 1969: 6 as cited in Szporluk, 2000: 73). In 2000, Roman Szporluk stated that the Russian Federation would soon begin to focus its attention on “the political assimilation or ‘naturalization’ of...[Russian speaking Ukrainians in an attempt to]...slow down or reverse the process of a national identity shift” (Szporluk, 2000: 103). In 2014, that became a reality when Russian President Vladimir Putin on March 18, made clear that the Ukraine, Crimea and Sevastapol are “historically Russian land...[and]...its interests.” (Putin, 2014). For the Neo-Russian Empire the Ukraine, Crimea, and all the cities found in both locations are still in technicality a part of Russia, at least from the Russian standpoint. Much like Chechnya, Crimea also provides a unique opportunity for allies due to the rise of indigenous paramilitary forces and their leader Sergei Aksyonov, providing the Neo-Russian Empire with a chance to re-entrench itself firmly within the borders of Eastern Europe once again.

### ***Crimea – Reclaiming the Historical Homeland***

The annexation of the Crimean peninsula, unlike Chechnya, presented the Neo-Russian Empire with significantly more complexity due to international regulations regarding the Ukraine and the Neo-Russian Empire’s interference in another country’s sovereignty. However, this did not stop the Neo-Russian Empire. Within Crimea and the Ukraine the Neo-Russian Empire’s approach to implementing control was to focus on their ‘compatriots’ (Grigas, 2016). Grigas states that the “compatriot policies perform an integrative function – a unification of the Russian peoples combined with potential to unify with the motherland the territories where they reside” (Grigas, 2016: 3). However, much like Chechnya, Crimea is seen as another location that the Neo-Russians have imperial

responsibility. It is a strategic socio-cultural location which afforded Moscow the prospect “to opportunistically grab land and gradually rebuild its historic empire...[by strategically seeking]...influence over the Russian and Russian-speaking diaspora by offering them Russian citizenship and passports and eventually calling for their military and legal protection” (Grigas, 2016: 9). Where Grigas focuses on what she calls “Russian reimperialization policy trajectory...[ a seven step process, which includes]...(1) soft power and continues to (2) humanitarian policies, (3) compatriot policies, (4) information warfare, (5) ‘passportization,’ (6) protection, finally (7) annexation” (Grigas, 2016: 10) I instead, due to its shared similarities with Chechenization, call it ‘Crimeanization’.

The Neo-Russian Empire has specifically tailored Crimeanization to function within Crimea based on the socio-cultural environment present. Crimeanization and Chechenization are, therefore, intricately similar, yet distinctly different from one another. Whereas Dannreuther defined Chechenization as a “the radical devolution of power to one clan group and local leader in Chechnya” (Dannreuther, 2014: 388), Crimeanization is the radical devolution of power to one paramilitary organization and local leader in Crimea. Crimeanization therefore is broken, as Chechenization, into two separate but interlinked parts. Crimeanization relies first on the creation of parallel institutions within the country to establish the presence of the Neo-Russian Empire. The second step of Crimeanization is the backing of a suitable candidate to carry out the Neo-Russian Empire demands, in return for power. The establishment of a proxy to work on its behalf enabled the Neo-Russian Empire to establish a firm grasp on Crimea through a referendum to its constitution, thus allowing for Russia’s annexation of the territory.

As with Chechenization, the process of Crimeanization has a standard layout. This helps the Neo-Russian Empire to accurately target what it must accomplish if it desires to conquer a new territory. It begins first with the creation of parallel institutions within the territory in order for the Kremlin to both take

control, and guarantee some form of stability in the government and leadership. All of this must be done before further investiture is placed in this new imperial appendage. Crimeanization's first step, making it distinctly Crimean, has appeared in three different forms, all of which harken back to protecting and supporting 'compatriots' abroad. The first came in the form of compatriot organizations, the second is when the Neo-Russian Empire began providing individuals with citizenship and passports in Crimea and the Ukraine, and the final step is military training and funding of separatist organizations provided by the Neo-Russian Empire.

The Neo-Russian Empire firmly ingrained itself within the fabric of the Ukraine, due to a number of factors ranging from religion, cultural practices, language and ancestral homeland. However, the Kremlin also successfully created parallel institutions within the Ukraine and Crimea that allowed for the Neo-Russian Empire to add to its imperial body. In Juahn Kivirahk, et al.'s *'The Humanitarian Dimension' of Russian Foreign Policy* "Ukraine has 14 official non-governmental organizations of Russian compatriots. In addition, there are 4 parties created as parties of Russians in Ukraine" (Kivirahk, 2009: 256) all of which are a part of the "Coordinating Council of Russian Compatriots...[created]...[i]n October of 2008" (Kivirahk, 2009: 253). The activities of these compatriot organizations included involvement in "state politics of Ukraine and its regions...[as well as]...working closely with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP)...[which holds a place as]...one of the most important components of the unity of the Russian World" (Kivirahk, 2009: 258). Russian compatriots it appeared worked closely to ensure that "a Russian naval base remains forever in Sevastapol" (Kivirahk, 2009: 258). The existing compatriot movement holds a desire to retain a Russian presence in Crimea, fundamentally demonstrating an overall commitment to Moscow, and its desires for the future. This desire, coupled with the institutions and activities, presented Moscow with a distinct advantage when it invaded Crimea, because as Sergey Tsekov stated in 2009: "Now the Russians in the Crimea are gaining strength here, and in the coming years a strong national cultural movement will be

formed” (Tsekov as quoted in Kivirahk, 2009: 259). Through the activities of non-governmental organizations Moscow created parallel institutions providing one of the necessary footholds for the annexation of Crimea.

Another phase of Crimeanization is what Agnia Grigas terms “passportization”. As the name prefaces this policy is quite straightforward, however, its importance is far reaching.

In Ukraine, Russia started handing out citizenship and passports to members of the Russian minority in Crimea during the 1990s, and amplified its policies in the 2000s. In addition, discharged officers of the Black Sea fleet would...[illegally]...obtain Ukrainian citizenship and remain in the country...The rapid passportization of the Crimeans was a reflection of Russia’s successful implementation of...the reimperialization trajectory (Grigas, 2016: 121).

Passportization provides clear cut proof that the Neo-Russian Empire began the process of Crimeanization long before it had the ability to successfully add and retain this piece of territory in its imperial body. It is perhaps one of the purest demonstrations of parallel institutions being created by an imperial power within another state organization, and thus incredibly important to demonstrate the Neo-Russian Empire’s acceptance of imperial responsibility for Crimea.

The third part of Crimeanization is funding organizations and separatist groups within Crimea and the Ukraine as a whole. According to the article ‘Donetsk separatists were preparing for war since 2009’ (2014) written by Sirgis Inform it is believed that the Neo-Russian Empire had been funding the training of separatist groups in the Ukraine since at least 2009, and perhaps even earlier (Grigas, 2016: 118; Inform, 2014). This demonstrates three things that were taking place with the help of the Neo-Russian Empire in Ukraine before Crimea was annexed. First, that even with Viktor Yanukovich in power, a man who was overthrown for supporting Russia, the Neo-Russian Empire was in the process of funding groups who would help it “split Ukraine” (Inform, 2014). Second, the

Donetsk People's Republic, a group funded by the Neo-Russian Empire, had "openly declared their own purposes" (Inform, 2014) for separatism from the Ukraine having been allocated through "continuous subversive activities...from the Russian Federation, which have been conducted over the past 7-8 years" (Inform, 2014). Third, the publication of this open-source material, alongside the process of passportization, which had been taking place from 1990 into the 2000s, enables the creation of a timeline for which to base the intentions of the Neo-Russian Empire's desire to reclaim parts of its empire. It is also worth noting that financing the DPR falls in line with financial activities that were traced back to Moscow by the Security Service of the Ukraine in an attempt to produce a Subcarpathian Rus (Kivirahk, 2009: 259). The illegal financial funding of these groups demonstrates the willingness of Moscow to accept responsibility for empire, in part because of the usefulness organizations like this play in helping Russia create 'civil wars'. It also helps to validate that the Neo-Russian Empire was trying to parse out the loyalty of paramilitary and separatist organizations, and their leaders for a long period of time before it decided to annex Crimea. This revelation supports both the Neo-Russian acceptance of imperial responsibility towards Crimea as well as the presented definition of Crimeanization.

### ***Crimea – A Learned Exploitation***

Using lessons learned from the mistakes of Afghanistan and the First Chechen War, and the success in the Second Chechen War, the Neo-Russian Empire is successful in Crimea. This came in two steps, the first ensuring the loyalty of the indigenous population through the exploitation of the shared lineage between Russians, Ukrainians and Crimeans, and second, was using pro-Russian indigenous Crimean forces led by Sergei Aksyonov.

The link between Russians and Ukrainians is deep, and in many cases they are seen as the same people. This is reinforced by Putin who stated "I think that the Russian and Ukrainian peoples are practically one single people, no matter what others might say" (Putin, 2014). Grigas explores this notion further through an examination of the compatriot policies Russia implemented directly before the

annexation of Crimea (2016). Although “the Russian government promulgated more than twenty policies, programs, and laws to both conceptualize and assist compatriots...between 1994 and 2015” (Grigas, 2016: 92) the most crucial to their policies of empire began in 2010 (Grigas, 2016: 89). From 2010 to 2014 the view of compatriots shifted in drastic and important ways to allow Russia to more easily define a compatriot. This allowed for easier exploitation of compatriot groups for the Neo-Russian Empire’s own interests; thus, providing the Kremlin the opportunity “to acquire territories where they reside” (Grigas, 2016: 92). Grigas states: “Under Putin, the compatriots...[have been]...increasingly conceptualized as a resource for Russian foreign policy and geopolitical ambition in the near abroad (Grigas, 2016: 93). Their misuse is a means to an end for the Neo-Russian Empire, it is through them that it accepts its responsibility for empire in Crimea, the Ukraine, and other parts of the Empire it once held. As a result, the Neo-Russian Empire has found a resource that serves its interests and plays “a key role in the reimperialization trajectory, which aims to maintain neo-imperial influence over and regain territory in the former Soviet republics” (Grigas, 2016: 93).

The Neo-Russian Empire’s use of parallel institutions successfully enables it to take full advantage of the compatriot ideology instilled within the Ukrainian and Crimean populations. As a result of this empowerment, the Kremlin has successfully employed indigenous forces within Crimea. Crimeanization allows the Neo-Russian Empire to employ indigenous forces to fight on its behalf in both the Ukraine and Crimea, and in the process create a ‘civil war’ like conflict (Katchanovski, 2016: 483). The creation of ‘civil wars’ by the Neo-Russian Empire, alongside the implementation of parallel governmental structures within a territory it desires to annex, presents a clear picture for how the Kremlin carries out its strategy of *imperialization*. The Neo-Russian Empire successfully utilizes civil war as justification to intervene as shown in Chechnya and Crimea, and in the process add to its imperial body. As many have noted “the Kremlin created an ersatz civil war...portraying the Kiev government as a ‘fascist’ regime and the

separatists...[they have been funding]...as freedom fighters” (The Economist, 2017). Ivan Katchanovski verifies this stance having stated:

[T]he Russian government and the media present the war in Donbas as a civil war that followed an attempt by the Ukrainian government forces and far-right paramilitary formations to suppress, by military force, a popular uprising of the Donbas residents against the Maidan-led government which was installed and controlled by the US...Vladimir Putin referred to this part of Ukraine as ‘Novorossiya’ (New Russia), the region’s historical name when it belonged to the Russian Empire (Katchanovski, 2016: 476).

Although referring to Donbas, having called this area Novorossiya it gives the Neo-Russian Empire the opportunity to implant itself within the struggle. This is carried out because the Neo-Russian Empire considers the conflict to be occurring within its borders, and between its own people, much like in Chechnya. This state of affairs enables Moscow to make use of the indigenous population to fight the war on its behalf, with possible help from Russian special forces and strategic thinkers, in a limited capacity. The ongoing conflict in Donbas, following the annexation of Crimea has given the Neo-Russian Empire a foothold from which to take further control of the country, while promoting the use of indigenous forces to fight in place of imperial forces. This can be seen in two distinct instances. First, according to the Economist (2017) a man named “Igor Girkin, a former Russian military officer...sneaked across the border into Ukraine’s Donbas region with a few dozen men and took control of the small town of Sloviansk” (The Economist, 2017). This man’s sole drive in carrying out this mission, “masquerade[ing] as a member of Russia’s special forces” (The Economist, 2017) is to see the restoration of Novorossiya to the Neo-Russian Empire (The Economist, 2017). The second instance of indigenous forces participating in this ‘civil war’ can be seen in Simon Shuster’s TIME article published on April 23, 2014 entitled ‘Exclusive: Meet the Pro-Russian Separatists

of Eastern Ukraine'. Shuster sheds light on a man named Alexander Mozhaev a "fighter suspected of being a Russian government operative" (Shuster, 2014) who operated within the separatist movements of Donbas. In the same article Shuster claims that the Neo-Russian Empire was accused of having direct military involvement within Ukraine following the annexation of Crimea. This, however, may not be the exact situation, with Moscow instead making further use of the indigenous Ukrainian population as well as "war veterans, itinerant pro-Russian nationalists and ethnic Cossacks from across the former Soviet Union...[to fill]...[t]he ranks of the so-called 'green men'" (Shuster, 2014). Although the Neo-Russian Empire has not directly ordered these individuals to conquer territory on its behalf, the indigenous forces associated with the Empire feel it is their obligation to add to the imperial body of Russia (Shuster, 2014). Therefore, the Neo-Russian Empire has in a circuitous way accepted responsibility for empire, even if it is added illegally by indigenous separatist forces.

The final part of the second phase of Crimeanization became clear in 2014. When the Neo-Russian Empire decided that the annexation of Crimea was to take place it invested power in a local leader capable of carrying out its orders. This man is Sergei Aksyonov, a "former semi-professional boxer" (Japan Times, 2014), also known as the "Goblin" from his days as a member of the criminal underworld (Haddon, 2014; Japan Times, 2014; Kyiv Post, 2014; Potter, 2014). According to a number of open sources exactly how a man who led a political party of separatists, "whose political party won 4 percent of the vote...in 2010" (de Carbonnel, 2014) came to control an entire territory is a difficult question to answer. However, according to Sergei Markov, who is quoted by Reuters, it is actually quite simple: "Moscow always bet on Yanukovich. But after the coup in Kiev on Feb. 22...Moscow decided it need to back the secession of Crimea from Ukraine. Then they looked for who could be its leader...[t]hey chose Aksyonov" (Markov, 2014 as quoted in de Carbonnel, 2014). What happens next is well reported, "Aksyonov started to form an army on the Crimean peninsula" (Shuster, 2014). Much like the Kadyrovs, Aksyonov perceives himself more as a "peacemaker" (Japan Times, 2014) with regards to the Crimean imbroglio.

Keeping in line with this same comparison to the Kadyrovs, his past, although disputed, allows him to make use of tactics that are forbidden to the Neo-Russian Empire by international human rights conventions. Aksyonov's dubious credentials intertwined with his newfound paramilitary organization and the support of the Neo-Russian Empire are what allow him to perform what the Neo-Russian Empire cannot, on their behalf.

In 2014, Aksyonov was ordered to annex Crimea, carrying this out on behalf of the Empire who decided it was time to reclaim imperial responsibility for a land long thought to be part of the motherland. Aksyonov and those under his command stormed Crimea's regional parliament and demanded the referendum that allowed for secession of Crimea to Russia from the Ukraine (Shuster, 2014). Shuster writes that during this process they were "[c]alling themselves defenders of the ethnic Russian majority in the Crimea" (Shuster, 2014). This statement solidified Aksyonov as the Empire's most important ally in Crimea, having already established himself as the champion of the Russian population in Crimea, and the most dire threat to Ukraine's stability. While Aksyonov believed the "leaders...[of the revolution in Kiev], he says, are part of a fascist force intent on disenfranchising the ethnic Russian majority in Crimea, and without the armed intervention of his 'self defense forces,' they would have sent their troops to bring the peninsula to heel" (Shuster, 2014). Aksyonov, according to Shuster, views the Ukraine and Crimea as "an unjustly severed appendage of Russia" (Shuster, 2014), and fully in support of reattaching it to Russia no matter the cost. As a result, he invested in the creation of self-defense militias, therefore bringing an already loyal contingent of armed forces to the Empire, to use as it deems fit. As the self-proclaimed defender of Russians in Crimea and the Ukraine, Aksyonov's appointment and recognition by Putin is simple and clear to understand. Consequently Aksyonov's role could be considered a copy of Kadyrov's, presenting the Neo-Russian Empire with the indigenous voice to sway the people, and bringing with him the established and guaranteed loyalty both within the population and from the forces that he commands within the country.

*Chapter 5: The United  
States: A Strategy of  
Imperialization*

The model of ‘Empire in Denial’ promoted by David Chandler can be directly linked to the United States of America. The United States not only denies that they are an imperial power, but in doing so they deny their imperial responsibility to those they conquer. Unlike the Neo-Russian Empire, the United States, since the failure in Vietnam, has systematically avoided the responsibilities associated with acquiring and ruling imperial territory. Three case studies: Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan, show that the United States, although utilizing methods of intervention whereby territory is added to its imperial body, is unwilling to accept responsibility for these conquered areas. Like the Neo-Russian Empire case studies, an analysis of how the United States uses or fails to make use of indigenous forces, and the associated cultural phenomena inherent within their societies is enlightening. An examination of these interlinked social facets establishes why the United States finds a way to pass off responsibility for empire once they declare victory.

These case studies demonstrate that the United States has opted for the use of democratization rather than *imperialization*, which does not work. They elucidate how the United States has fundamentally failed to utilize indigenous forces demonstrating their inability to understand the cultures their army has partnered with, while at the same time providing a key understanding why democratization is a neo-liberal failure to accept the responsibility that comes with interventionist tendencies employed by the United States.

### ***Democratization: An Imperilizing Strategy***

The process of empowerment the United States champions is distinctively and “uniquely American” (Carson, 2003: iii), and directly linked to the process of democratization. It is a process which sets the United States distinctly apart from the Neo-Russian Empire, because where the Neo-Russian Empire incorporates indigenous forces as a replacement for their own combat troops, the United States cannot, as a result of democratization. This is further explained by both Col. Jayne A. Carson (2003) and David Chandler (2006) in this section.

Col. Carson notes: “The United States conducts nation-building in a distinctive style that seeks first and foremost to democratize other nations or peoples” (Carson, 2003: 2). The process of democratization for the United States laid out by Col. Carson is based not only on its benefits towards the national security of the United States, but due to ‘American Exceptionalism’ which is seen as a representative part of the United States. Col. Carson does differentiate, however, between what is considered ‘rendering aid’ and ‘democratization’. ‘Rendering aid’ tends to primarily be concerned with “providing economic support and humanitarian aid” (Carson, 2003: 2) and can be a part of the democratizing processes. However, she notes that “[t]he fundamental difference between rendering aid and...[democratization]...is the desired outcome” (Carson, 2003: 2). For the United States, the vain process of democratization that it forces onto conquered lands is intended “to fundamentally change the existing political foundation of the state” (Carson, 2003: 2), imperiling those states.

However, democratization as a process brings into question what the United States can convey to places such as Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. It is a question that David Chandler cites as “an unsettling one for Western governments and international institutions” (Chandler, 2006: 190) requiring them to answer that question and provide evidence regarding their abilities and motives concerning the power they claim to wield on the international stage (Chandler, 2006: 190). Democratization, as a product to be exported, existed before 1993, but it was given life in 1993 by American National Security Advisor Anthony Lake. Lake believed that democratization promoted a move away from containment, and its expansion would allow the United States and her allies to “be more secure, prosperous and influential, while the broader world will be more humane and peaceful” (Lake, 1993). Yet this process of democratization is a fallacy of sorts, as it is usually carried out “at the point of bayonets” (Schmidt, 1971: 118). The choice for democratization is not one that is given by the United States, it is a vision promoted through military occupation (Peceny, 1999: 13). This policy of forced or coercive democratization is directly linked to the inability of the United States’ to accept imperial responsibility/empire. Here the egotistical Western

process of neo-liberal interventionist state-building practiced by the United States presents itself as highly evasive in nature (Chandler, 2006: 190). According to Chandler it is an exaggerated policy that is less interested in “the problems of regulation, or even the needs and interests, of failed states than it is with the more central question of the evasion of political responsibility” (Chandler, 2006: 191). Chandler concludes: “To have the power of empire but not to have a social project makes the position of holding political power even more problematic” (Chandler, 2006: 194). Consequently, the United States fails to accept imperial responsibility/empire as a result. Democratization as a process is a failure, one in which “American policy makers have engaged in a relentless struggle to reconcile realist imperatives with American liberalism...[by]...assert[ing] its hegemony over other states but infus[ing] its foreign policy with liberal purpose” (Peceny, 1999: 230). It is a contradictory amalgamation that has created a “framework of therapeutic and empowering forms of exercising power...[while disregarding]...representational politics and traditional frameworks of self-government” because they do not function within the acceptability of American cultural norms (Peceny, 1999: 39). Democratization inhibits the United States from accepting imperial responsibility/empire, resulting in the *imperilization* of ‘failed states’ that are resigned “to play a largely administrative role” (Chandler, 2006: 193) within their own countries, while relying on the United States to provide them with good governance. The same state that is also trying to find a way to pass on this responsibility if things go wrong (Chandler, 2006: 193-4).

## ***Vietnam***

### ***Vietnam- Brief Backgrounder***

The United States intervened in Vietnam for a number of debatable reasons according to Heather Stur; Two are enlightening. The first is directly linked to the issue of democratization and the parasitic nature that it held with communism, following the end of World War II. President Dwight D. Eisenhower on April 7, 1954 in a press conference made clear what ‘domino theory’ was to the United States:

[Y]ou have the possibility of many human beings pass under a dictatorship that is inimical to the free world. Finally, you have broader considerations that might follow what you would call the ‘falling domino principle. You have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly. So you could have the beginning of a disintegration that would have the most profound influences...[W]ith respect to more people passing under this domination, Asia, after all, has already lost some 450 million of its people to the Communist dictatorship, and we simply can’t afford greater losses...[when]...you are talking really about millions and millions and millions of people...the possible consequences of the loss are just incalculable to the free world (Eisenhower, 1954).

According to Stur this concept was one adopted by both Presidents Kennedy and Johnson moving forward and was then intertwined with the United States’ desire to democratize and build a nation (Stur, 2017). The second reason for the United States’ entry into Vietnam was their failure to successfully institutionalize democracy within the country in the first place (Carter, 2008: 7; Stur, 2017). Stur states quite simply that: “America’s decision to go to war in Vietnam did not involve a Pearl Harbor or Franz Ferdinand moment. U.S. intervention was a gradual process that included economic aid, diplomacy, politics, presidential personalities and military force” (Stur, 2017). It was a “process of building and rebuilding, of inventing and reinventing, continued over the whole of American involvement” (Carter, 2008: 9).

### ***Democratic Intervention in Vietnam: Americanization a Failure of Responsibility***

Democratization in South Vietnam began in the 1954 with the purpose of creating a functional democratic state in Indochina as a buffer to the spread of Communism throughout the region. It was a USD \$1.5 billion dollar effort that intended to install not only a president and ministers that support them, but an

industrial base, a modern transportation network, telecommunications, and the infrastructure to support the populace (Carter, 2008: 6). Democratization as a process, however, was a failure because it “disrupted Vietnamese society, created an unstable political environment, and kept the economy in a constant state of shock” (Carter, 2008: 9). At the same time it justified intervention as means of propping up or at least attempting to salvage the investment the United States made to democratize Vietnam. Democratization failed because it could not support a government or back an individual who had the skills and ability “to deal with the needs of the people...[and]...reach out to those in the countryside and make itself legitimate during the relative peace of the late 1950s, much less during the fullscale war that existed by the mid-1960s” (Carter, 2008: 10). Even though the individual chosen by the United States was Ngo Dinh Diem, originally, and later Nguyen Van Thieu, both of whom focused their efforts during the war as an attempt to keep Vietnam functioning based off “a liberal, humanistic way of life sustained by cultural traditions and economic prosperity” (Tho, 1980: 160). Their rule was heavily marred by nepotism, inexperience and ineptitude. Another distinct feature, in Vietnam which sets them apart from the Soviets and the Neo-Russian Empire, is that “there was no self-sustaining state in the South for the United States to support...only U.S. military force could maintain the fiction that there was” (Anderson, 1991: 208-9). This demanded that the United States take on the full burden for the war and governance in Vietnam, thus structuring the Vietnamese government in Saigon to fail from the start (Carter, 2008: 10). The inability to accept that democratization did not work is what prompted American involvement and at no stage during “American involvement there did the Saigon experiment become a viable, independent state capable of standing on its own without substantial American aid” (Carter, 2008: 13).

The failure of the United States to accept imperial responsibility for its empire lies directly in its initial persistence to institute democracy in Vietnam. This process left the Vietnamese both culturally alienated and reliant on the United States government for survival. Much like their Soviet counterparts in Afghanistan, the inability to functionally make use of the indigenous population

to fight the war is perhaps one of the key reasons why the United States failed. According to Max Boot:

What made things worse was another major difference between the U.S. role in the Banana Wars and in Vietnam. In the Caribbean, and in the Philippines, U.S. officers had been in direct command of locally recruited soldiers. Likewise, during the Korean War, South Korean forces reported directly to U.S. commanders, who had the power to remove incompetent or corrupt officers. In Vietnam that was not in the cards. Washington did not want to ask for American field command, and Saigon would not grant it, because to do so would have given credence to the communist claim that the Americans were ‘neocolonialists’ come to replace the French. As a result, command of the South Vietnamese armed forces was turned over to officers usually chosen less for their professional competence than for their political allegiance to, and often family links with, the ruling oligarchy (Boot, 2002: 288-9).

Not only was the United States failing the Vietnamese by trying to enforce democratization upon those people in the South, but it failed them by not taking field command of the conflict from the outset. Here field command means direct command of South Vietnamese forces, not replacing these forces with American soldiers. Two results occurred because Americans would not lead. First, the lack of effective leadership promoted an ‘eye for an eye’ scenario in Vietnam. This specific scenario occurred due to the inability of the South Vietnamese and U.S. army to correctly target the North Vietnamese forces, instead relying on indiscriminate collective punishment for whole areas where the guerilla forces were possibly located (Boot, 2002: 289). With Lt. Col. John Paul Vann noting in 1963, as many have done with counter-insurgency conflicts, that in Vietnam “‘every time we killed an innocent person we lost ground in our battle to win the people’” (Vann, 1963 as quoted in Boot, 2002: 289). The use of indiscriminate collective violence by foreign fighters, as noted in the Russo-Afghan and Neo-

Russo-Chechnya case studies, did not work. The United States Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) in 1962 emphasized that “[t]he indiscriminate use of firepower...cannot be condoned in...[counter-insurgency]...operations” (Hawkins, 2006: 96) as a means of curtailing support for the insurgency present within Vietnam.

The second result was a refusal to understand the resiliency of the Vietnamese population. This came in the form of a 3.5 year aerial bombardment campaign initially known as ‘Flaming Dart’ and later as ‘Rolling Thunder’ (Boot, 2002: 289; Drew, 1986). Much like the Soviet Union from 1979-1989 in Afghanistan, the United States invaded Vietnam with two fundamentally flawed expectations. First, the United States would be able to successfully and conventionally annihilate the North Vietnamese forces with their superior airpower in a high intensity conflict. Second, the United States believed that they were fighting “a modern industrialized state” (Drew, 1986). Unlike the Soviets in Afghanistan, who would make use of indiscriminate bombing attacks, the United States “policy objective was not to destroy Vietnam or to limit its ability to continue as ‘industrially viable state’” (Drew, 1986). According to Col. Dennis M. Drew’s (1986) work, Operation ‘Rolling Thunder’ was a continued middle ground for the United States, enabling it to remain fundamentally out of the war on the ground, but involve itself fully through its Air Force. In the end this 3.5 year operation did not succeed strategically for “the North Vietnamese did not waver in their ability or will to continue. In contrast, the costs to the United States mounted and the American will to continue began to crumble” (Drew, 1986).

### ***Vietnamization: The Final Failure***

Conceptually the United States failed in Vietnam from the outset with its intention of Democratizing the country. Vietnamization, thought up and implemented in 1969 by President Richard M. Nixon, was given the opportunity to play the saving grace to this failed nation building project. Vietnamization, much like Chechenization and Crimeanization, relied on creating parallel institutions within the country. These were intended, however, to provide direction and aid to the

South Vietnamese, thereby allowing them to take over combat responsibility in place of U.S. soldiers for the ongoing conflict (Clarke, 1992: 159; Huei, 2006: 287).

Richard Nixon's 1969 policy of Vietnamization was solely focused on making use of "loyal 'indigenous' Vietnamese soldiers" (Huei, 2006: 288) who would be trained and aided by the United States so that "the communists would never have a chance" (Huei, 2006: 288). Vietnamization as thought of by President Nixon therefore was an imperial policy that would be headed by the United States and executed to help the South Vietnamese become autonomous, much like the Chechens after their conquest by the Neo-Russian Empire. Vietnamization, however, was an imperial policy implemented too late for the dissenting voices back in the United States. This meant that the United States failed to accept its imperial responsibility/empire in Vietnam and failed the South Vietnamese population "[b]ecause the American people and their congressional representatives had become fed up with the war, forcing the executive branch to pull out" (Boot, 2002: 326). Additionally, Vietnamization was a democratically flawed strategy that "was a success not in Vietnam but in the United States...it had lessened opposition to the war in Congress and the news media by offering a program that promised a definitive end to American casualties...but American casualties had little to do with the military effectiveness of the armed forces of South Vietnam" (Haig, 1992: 273). Pang Yang Huei's 2006 work echoes this -- the "ineffected political leadership...[of South Vietnam]...and its lacklustre army...[are what]...haunt[ed] Nixon's Vietnamisation" (Huei, 2006: 292). Democratization is one of the main catalysts for the failure of South Vietnamese forces. A RAND report from 1971 written by Guy J. Pauker states that the "[p]ast U.S. policy had a negative effect on the Vietnamese armed forces because we were too eager to do the job for them and gave the impression that our strategic interest in the defense of South Vietnam was so great that we would defend them against a Communist takeover regardless of what they did for themselves" (Pauker, 1971: 47). General Creighton Abrams, in charge of the conflict, also prevented permanent Vietnamization (Huei, 2006: 292). In fact, "Abrams did not

work to change the existing...[South Vietnamese]...force structure and command organization” (Huei, 2006: 291) of corruption that ran rampant both in the government and armed forces. Nor did Nixon, whose own choice for head of South Vietnam, President Nguyen Van Thieu, made sure to promote and protect his friends through the use of secret files (‘Memo’, 1969 as cited in Hammond 1993: 55). What resulted is South Vietnamese forces being primarily treated as a joke, used only for the purposes of pacification and area security (Huei, 2006: 292).

Vietnamization appears as a policy that was intended to provide the South Vietnamese with the capabilities to end the ongoing conflict, and maintain themselves after the American withdrawal. However, General Abrams treatment of both the policy, and the South Vietnamese forces, that it limited the South Vietnamese’s ability to end the insurgency. This forced the South Vietnamese into a position of complacency, which made them more and more reliant on the United States to fight the war on their behalf (Boot, 2002; Carter, 2008; Huei, 2006; Pauker, 1971; Tho, 1980). Therefore, the failed implementation of Vietnamization demonstrates the failure of the United States to accept imperial responsibility/empire, which resulted in the inability of the South Vietnamese government to exist without an American presence (Boot, 2002: 313; Carter, 2008: 246). Had the United States taken control at the start and installed U.S. Commanders, who would not stand for corruption and complacency, things may have turned out differently.

Even though the Vietnam War came to a close on January 27, 1973 with the Paris Peace Accord, the reality is that the United States still lost the war with the fall of Saigon in 1975. This was because President Nixon decided that the policy of Vietnamization would be a ticket out for the United States. The United States’ failed to accept its imperial responsibility for and to their empire. Max Boot points out that the United States did not fail to accept this responsibility in “South Korea after the Korean War, or West Germany after World War II...[where]...the continuing presence of U.S. troops saved Seoul and Bonn”

(Boot, 2002: 312). So why did it fail in South Vietnam? The United States, having failed to implement a functional democracy and dealing with not only the “failures of the southern forces,...[their]...low morale, poor leadership, cowardice, corruption...[and]...incompetence” (Boot, 2002: 312) and incredibly high losses of its own population, decided no more. The United States failed to accept the responsibility of empire by abandoning the people of South Vietnam and making it clear that “[t]here would be no more U.S. troops, or even supplies, for South Vietnam” (Boot, 2002: 312). As a result, South Vietnamese commanders were never “weaned from their dependency on American military advisors. Moreover...[having]...never been tested alone on any significant maneuvers” (Huei, 2006: 296) they proved themselves not only incompetent, but wholly unable to function.

Therefore, the United States failure to accept imperial responsibility for empire in South Vietnam can be linked directly to two distinct shortcomings. First, its need to implement the process of democratization. Second, its failure to successfully apply Vietnamization in a timely fashion, and in a practical manner. Due to reliance on American guidance, supplies, and forces, the South Vietnamese did not stand a chance, because they were never provided with the opportunity to function in even a semi-autonomous capacity. The American policy of Vietnamization should have pursued an approach which relied on a small number of highly trained soldiers working in a consultancy capacity to help the South Vietnamese (Boot, 2002: 316; Huei, 2006). These consultants could have helped to curtail the corruption that ran rampant throughout the South Vietnamese ranks, and establish a framework of “indigenous security structures...[that]...could have put their emphasis on cutting off the guerillas from their population base instead of chasing the” (Boot, 2002: 316) insurgents throughout the country. However, in the end, Vietnamization prevented the South Vietnamese from functionally surviving without the United States’ presence. Unlike Chechnya under the Neo-Russian Empire, the indigenous population of South Vietnam was never given the support necessary to successfully end the

insurgency they faced in their own terms, because they were wholly reliant on American assistance.

## ***Iraq***

### ***Iraq – Brief Background***

The United States invaded Iraq on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2003 and by 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2003 successfully completed the task of “disarm[ing] Iraq of weapons of destruction...[, which did not exist, as well as bringing an]...end to Saddam Hussein’s support for terrorism, and...free[ing] the Iraqi people” (Bush, 2003) from an autocratic regime. President George W. Bush in his 2003 address discussing the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom accepted imperial responsibility for the wellbeing of the Iraqi people stating: “The future of peace and the hopes of the Iraqi people now depend on our fighting forces in the Middle East...[and we shall act accordingly to help the]...Iraqis achieve a united, stable, and free country...[which shall]...require our sustained commitment. Yet, whatever is required of us, we will carry out all the duties we have accepted” (Bush, 2003). This indicates a fundamental acceptance of imperial responsibility by the United States to Iraq and her people. President Bush also provides the United States with an escape from this responsibility through the process of democratization.

### ***Does the U.S. Owe Iraq Democracy or Something Else?***

This case study covers the failure of the United States to accept imperial responsibility in Iraq. It first examines how the United States failed to understand the tribal culture existent in Iraq and instead tried to force the rise of democracy in an attempt to rid the country of terrorists. The second part of this case study examines how the United States failed to rationally utilize the indigenous tribal population to systematically bring the conflict in Iraq to a close, much like the Neo-Russian Empire did through Chechenization.

According to Jesmeen Khan (2007), tribal communities within the area known as Mesopotamia pre-date the existence of the Iraqi state, and have

survived the onslaught of empires, monarchies, colonial occupation, and all forms of government. Around 150 tribal groups composed of about 2,000 smaller clans exist within Iraq (GlobalSecurity.org, 2005; Hassan, 2007: 1), it is a society “where different tribal, ethnic and religious groups appreciate the idea of a nation state but adhere to their own value systems” (Ibrahem, 2012: 84). Iraq, as a state, exists due to “a complex and unique combination of ‘national ingredients’...[, although it remains]...a difficult challenge...[to successfully form]...a homogenous and unified community” (Ibrahem, 2012: 93) within the country itself. Consequently, Iraqi Tribes should be considered the main societal mechanism of organization within the country, functioning in many cases throughout history as their own quasi-states (Hassan, 2007: 3; Khan, 2007). Phebe Marr in 1985 stated:

The historical importance of the tribes of Iraq can scarcely be exaggerated. In 1933, a year after Iraqi independence...[from the Ottoman Empire]...it was estimated that there were 100,000 rifles in tribal hands, and 15,000 in the possession of the government. The settled village community with its attachment to the land – the backbone of social structure throughout most of the Middle East – has been a missing link in Iraq’s social fabric (Marr, 1985).

Members of certain tribes estimated their strength at the beginning of ‘Operation Iraqi Freedom’ to be somewhere near 100,000 men who could be found throughout Iraq and called upon to act (Hassan, 2007: 3-4; MacFarquhar, 2003).

The importance of the tribal structure within Iraqi society is evident. These tribal structures made it impossible for America to implement democratization following ‘Operation Iraqi Freedom’. The United States’ Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), headed by Paul Bremer, outright “rebuffed a proposition from U.S. intelligence officers to form an alliance with certain tribes to counter al-Qaeda, citing that tribes were part of the past and an impediment to democracy” (Khan, 2007). This unwillingness to understand or work with a culture and the phenomena inherent within it placed the United States in a precarious position

with the indigenous population. The United States was unable to make sense why democracy would not function within a low-capacity undemocratic regime structure, like in the Iraqi state. Much like Chechnya, Iraq is a traditional society which functions based off of “tribal social and justice codes...[which demonstrate a]...continuing adherence to traditional cultural tribal conditions” (Khan, 2007). Similar to the Afghani and Chechen case studies in the above chapter, a custom of blood revenge or blood feud tends to exist within low-capacity undemocratic regimes. However, unlike the Neo-Russian case study of Chechnya the concept of blood revenge is unacceptable to a neo-liberal democratic mindset. The United States forced policy of democratization therefore becoming ostensibly impossible to implement due to the continued existence of the Iraqi tribal structure. Simply put, blood revenge/feud and neo-liberal democratic institutions do not work with one another.

### ***Iraqi Tribal Blood Feud: An Imperial Tool***

The United States did not invade Iraq with the tools of cultural relativity at its disposal like the Neo-Russian Empire’s Second Invasion of Chechnya. Instead, the United States ignored the importance of the tribes. In doing so, it limited its ability to successfully pacify the conflict in Iraq, which escalated after the initial success of the invasion against Saddam’s conventional forces.

It is evident the United States disregarded an institutional part of Iraqi society, one in which 75% of the population maintains ties with the 150 tribes in existence today (Khan, 2007). It is for this reason that “Arab states have had notorious difficulties establishing regularized and legitimate legal processes and in imposing them throughout their territories” (Carroll, 2011: 11). According to Falah Muradkan-Shaker, the project coordinator for the NGO WADI: “Sometimes customs and tribal laws are stronger than national laws” (Muradkan-Shaker as quoted in British Home Office, 2017: 16). Qasim Mohammed, a social researcher, opines: “The influence...[of the tribes has]...increased [even more] following 2003, when the Saddam regime fell, and the tribes have managed many government department by virtue of the ties that government officials running

these departments have with the tribes” (Mohammed, 2016 as quoted in British Home Office, 2017: 16). Katherine Blue Carroll observes that tribal law has filled the vacuum left with the fall of the Saddam regime, and in the process started “the promotion of reconciliation through traditional tribal processes” (Carroll, 2011: 12). Thus, tribes continue to fill a very important role, even on a daily basis, within the political, cultural and societal practices of Iraq, and the United States’ disregard of this long-founded institution was a mistake. The American choice to discount tribes and the importance they hold within a society, because they are not inherently synonymous with the democratic process, shows an unwillingness to accept the imperial responsibility of their empire.

Due to the tribal systems provisional capacity of governing, one that is not reliant on the national government, its mode of functionality enables a predetermined leader or council to settle disputes and administer justice or rulings based on customary tribal law (British Home Office, 2017: 18-20). Carroll (2011: 12) notes that “[t]here appears to be relatively little variation in the structure, specifics, or processes of law from tribe to tribe, and this facilitates the settlement of disputes between them”. This shared similarity empowers the Iraqi Tribal government, and offers them a shared method for dispute settlement. This process, by which blood revenge and blood feud are ended, is known as *Sulha*, which “may address premeditated or accidental injuries or killings as well as damages to honor...[it is an important institution]...[i]n a culture requiring that honor be restored after a wrong through the taking of revenge against the perpetrator or his extended family...[and]...helps the community avoid feuds” (Carroll, 2011: 12) known as *tha’r*.

Another limitation served to placate American decision making during the initial invasion of Iraq. These shortcomings are a result of the United States’ discounting of the central institution of the Iraqi Tribes. The United States, was unable to exploit the indigenous tribal population and their code of blood feud in an organized, cohesive and functional way to end the al-Qaeda and terrorist threat. Further, the United States put itself in the crossfire with which they created blood

feud during the initial invasion or from the previous Gulf War conflict. This is most notable in the Al-Anbar Province of Iraq where 2.5 million Iraqis reside, most of whom belong to the Dulaym Tribal Confederation (Khan, 2007). Having set aside the initial assessment by American intelligence officials, regarding the importance of Al-Anbar and the Dulaym Tribal Confederation, the United States allowed it to fall into the hands of al-Qaeda who were given not only land but “logistical support, safe-houses, and recruits” (Khan, 2007). Trudy Rubin wrote in 2007 that “Anbar tribes became even angrier when the Americans disbanded the Iraqi army” (Rubin, 2007). In the same article she interviewed a Sheikh, named Ali Hatem Suleiman, who says “[b]ecause of American behaviors Anbar people allowed al-Qaeda to come in” (Rubin, 2007). Based on this information the United States should have reassessed its initial disregard of the Iraqi tribal structure and utilized it accordingly. However, according to both Khan and Rubin it was not the United States who made that decision, it was the tribes of Iraq.

Initially, the United States prevented any chance of working with the tribes of Iraq and using their inherent phenomena. The United States was given a second chance during the ‘Anbar Awakening’ in Iraq’s al-Anbar province. It was through this ‘awakening’ that the tribes of Iraq proved themselves to be the most effective and efficient combatants to al-Qaeda. This is was due to a number of grievances. First, the al-Qaeda Salafi way of life did not coincide with the tribal resident’s way of life in Al-Anbar, with many coming to resent the organization (Input Solutions, 2007). This came in multitude of forms with the imposition of stricter Salafi law and courts headed by al-Qaeda’s own clerics (Input Solutions, 2007; Khan, 2007). Second, pressure and change became evident with the kidnapping, eviction and murder of local individuals taking place within their communities, eliciting blood feud (Input Solutions, 2007; Khan, 2007). With Khan citing that “[p]erhaps the most significant occurrence was when al-Qaeda members initiated a blood feud (*al-tha’r*) by wantonly killing people and assassinating tribal and religious leaders” (Khan, 2007). As badly as the United States failed to understand the tribes of Al-Anbar, al-Qaeda disastrously missed in

their assumption that by “eliminating the leadership...[of the tribes it]...would facilitate the absorption of the tribes into the insurgency” (Khan, 2007).

Although provided with a second chance, the United States squandered it and decided to use its own forces to continue the fight against al-Qaeda. Use of the tribesmen and their knowledge of the social milieu for intelligence proved to be effective, although a flawed misuse of the tribes proven capabilities (Khan, 2007). The result of this, as Khan points out in the conclusion of her article, is that the United States and the government backed in Iraq would need to “change tribal alliances at different periods of time...[or]...risk that collaborating with one tribe may make adversaries out of rival or neutral tribes” (Khan, 2007). Additionally, the United States as an imperial power should have accepted imperial responsibility for its empire at that time, and in doing so would have implemented a policy of Mesopotaminization. Mesopotaminization is the radical devolution of power to one clan and leader in Iraq who receives the support and backing of the United States. Had this policy been introduced it would have insisted on the use of indigenous forces both in a military and intelligence capacity to carry out and end the conflict in al-Anbar and perhaps the entire country. The United States, however, did not set up parallel political institutions within Iraq, nor did they back one political party, tribe, or individual who could successfully bring an end to the struggle against al-Qaeda or the new threat of ISIS. The United States in Iraq chose to neglect the Iraqi Tribal culture and the cultural phenomena that accompanies it. This route was chosen because America viewed tribal cultural values as the antithesis to democratic values. This was the failure of the United States. The goal sought by the United States – a neo-liberal form of governance in Iraq – irrespective of its practicality of success cost the United States. It lost a functional tool and weapon with which to not only wage war, but in turn promote peace.

## *Afghanistan*

### *Afghanistan – Brief Backgrounder*

The United States' interest in Afghanistan dates back to their support of the *mujahedeen* during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. However, current American involvement in Afghanistan is a direct result of the attack on American soil on 11 Sept. 2001. It was an invasion intended to disrupt and dismantle both the Taliban and al-Qaeda who had taken responsibility for the 9/11 attacks, and in the process find and kill Osama Bin-Laden, the mastermind behind the attacks. It was an invasion that has turned into what is now the longest American war in history, one with no definitive end in sight, perhaps as a result of American involvement.

### *Afghanistan: A Case of Being Pashtu*

The *Pashtunwali* should be considered what it means to be Pashtu. Its importance cannot be understated. The relationship that the *Pashtunwali* shares with honor falls very much in line with other low-capacity undemocratic regimes, especially those found in Iraq and Chechnya. The concepts of Chechen honor are well defined; focused around three main principles of courage, hospitality and generosity. The *Pashtunwali* is founded upon “[d]ignity, honour,...[and finally]...shame” (LandInfo, 2011: 7). In both Iraq and Chechnya its predominant focus is on the protection of the family, with a distinct emphasis placed upon the wellbeing of female relatives and any form of property, especially land. It is a tradition that finds itself balanced on the use of violence (*Tura*) and the ability to decide when that violence should be carried out (*Aql*) (LandInfo, 2011: 8). If honor has been damaged these two factors will help a Pashtu decide if they carry an obligation to carry out “revenge (*badal*)” (LandInfo, 2011: 8) so as to restore their honor and their family’s honor. Most low-capacity undemocratic institutions that exhibit traits of tribalism and honorific societies require individuals to take blood upon themselves if their honor is damaged. For the Pashtu if this is not

carried out honor and social standing can be lost for not only that individual, but his entire kinship group.

David Kilcullen's work *The Accidental Guerilla* (2009) helps to extend our understanding about why the tribal organizations of Afghanistan, specifically the Pashtu, mobilized against the United States' Counterinsurgency force in the country. The United States is not the first country to enter Afghanistan through the use of force. It is for this reason, much as it is for the same reasons in both Chechnya and Iraq that the "[i]nstability in Afghanistan is...[seen as]...a far broader problem than insurgency" (Kilcullen, 2009: 46). According to Kilcullen the socio-political and economic environment of Afghanistan has become a breeding ground for terrorist organizations such as the Taliban and al-Qaeda (Kilcullen, 2009: 46). This is a result of the 40 years of endemic conflict and associated decline of the struggles inherent within the country. Prior to the United States' invasion of Afghanistan "[t]he Taliban exploited this...[conflict ridden socio-economic landscape while]...posing as defenders of the local tribes against misrule" (Kilcullen, 2009: 51).

While there are many reasons for the behavioral radicalization and violent mobilization of a people, from grievances, ideology, and the social milieu that they find themselves surrounded by, the reasons for radicalization from one individual to the next differ quite dramatically. The failure of the United States in democratizing Afghanistan is due to the violent mobilization of Afghanistan, especially in Pashtu regions. While, this may be a result of the rise of organizations such as the Taliban and al-Qaeda radicalizing this population, it is also linked to two distinct factors that are prevalent within the country. The first is the socio-economic situation that has been exploited by the radical elements that play a direct role in driving the Pashtu people into organizations such as al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Much like the Chechen tribes, the Pashtu are a people "motivated by economic self-interest" (Kilcullen, 2009: 84) with a distinct lack of Salafi radicalism found within the existing population according to David Kilcullen.

Second, though the traditional values of the Pashtu are in opposition to the radical ideas of groups existing in Afghanistan, the insurgent groups offer the best option for carrying out blood feud. Comparable to the situation that arose in al-Anbar, in Iraq. A protracted campaign of aerial bombardment, like that conducted by the Soviets, did nothing but help violently mobilize the population against the United States. This was as a result of the increased loss of life and destruction of property caused by the Soviets and therefore a collective declaration of blood feud called against all Soviets in Afghanistan. Therefore, the need to carry out blood feud pushes the Pashtu people to seek out radical elements through whom they can target and seek to take blood from. For the United States, it is strategically limited in what it can do to bring an end to the existing conflict. What is apparent is the Pashtu people have not violently mobilized against the United States due to a radicalization of beliefs. Many have joined these radical organizations only to seek economic personal support and carry out the act of blood revenge in a targeted and collective fashion against the United States, much like the Chechens did in the inter-war period from 1996-1999.

A study conducted by the Council on Foreign Relations cites the failure to exploit the phenomena of blood feud by the United States is because “the United States and its allies do not want to be seen as meddling in the affairs of tribes and clans that have historically opposed outsiders” (Bruno, 2008). The United States, as an imperial power, one that denies responsibility for its empire and its imperial responsibility to the people of Afghanistan, will never exploit the existing cultural phenomena of blood feud found in the *Pashtunwali*. Nevertheless, the manipulation of this cultural phenomena for the purposes of conflict resolution is still available to the United States in Afghanistan. This is due in part to the situation in Pashtu controlled regions of Afghanistan, where based on an interview with an Afghan provincial governor, many Pashtu men are “fighting for loyalty or Pashtun honor, and to profit their tribe. They’re not extremists...[t]hey’re afraid that if they try to reconcile, the crazies will kill them” (Kilcullen, 2009: 39). Although this quote is 9 years old the situation remains the same and has perhaps worsened with a range of Salafi groups continuing to wage

a war against the United States from within Afghanistan (Jones, 2017). The Pashtuns, and the code by which they live, present a key tool for counterinsurgency and counterterrorism as they “are represented by dozens of major tribal groups (though two “super tribes,” the Durrani and Ghilzai, have historically been among the most influential) with hundreds of subtribes” (Bruno, 2008).

### ***How to End a Conflict: The Possibility for Resolution***

There remains a myriad of options still available within Afghanistan that could bring an end to the conflict created by the United States. A neo-liberal democratic mindset, however, will not employ tribal beliefs like blood revenge/feud. This is because the United States would be using the indigenous tribal population of Afghanistan in the same fashion as the Neo-Russian Empire in Chechnya and Crimea. If the United States is to succeed, not only in the pacification of Afghanistan, but in the acceptance of its imperial responsibility for the country, it must remove itself from waging the war on the ground. Instead, adopting a policy of Afghanization, as with each set of *Imperialization* policies before, this one would see the United States change its current military structure to that of parallel government structures. This would mean it needs “to support governance from the bottom up, since tribes, subtribes, clans, and local communities play an influential role in a country with a weak and sometimes unpopular central government” (Jones, 2017: 8). In doing so this would enable the United States to cast a net, allowing it to find a number of tribal leaders with whom to work. Once that work was completed and one individual stood from the crowd as the most likely to work on the United States’ behalf it could appoint this one distinct tribal leader as the leader of Afghanistan. In doing so this would enable it to make use of the tribal dynamics such as blood feud, and the Afghani tribal court systems to settle disputes in a culturally accepted way.

There is another important institution within Afghani tribal society. This group is known as *arbakis*, and they stand out from among the rest within the tribal populations of Afghanistan, for the purposes of conflict resolution and use

of indigenous forces and their customs and traditions. “In Ancient Aryan tribes, the Arbakai led groups of warriors in wartime and maintained law and order in peacetime” (ILF, 2004 as quoted in Bruno, 2008). This group of fighters has historically proven themselves adapt at fighting the Taliban and the Salafi ideologies promoted by them due its conflicting nature with the *Pasthunwali* (Bruno, 2008; AIHRC, 2012: 42).

The *arbaki* could perhaps be centralized through the process of *Afgahninization*. Centralizing this organization, or perhaps the Pashtu, similarly to how the *Kadyrovsty* were used in Chechnya, the United States could put command in a single tribal or local leader to resolve the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan on its behalf. This process of centralization would then allow the United States to establish the parallel institutions necessary to manage the country in a functional way. This action would be followed closely by the exploitation of the phenomena of blood feud inherent within the society, which may in some way also allow for the use of tribal courts to be accessed for the purposes of resolution following the end of the insurgency.

***Chapter 6: Final Analysis,  
Conclusions & Policy  
Recommendations***

I conclude first, and foremost that Russia has begun a process of state-building, allowing for the re-imperialization of their empire, founded on their long held belief that imperial expansion and empire bring with them a golden age for the Russian people (Kappeler, 2013: 114). Second, I conclude that the United States has limited their state-building capabilities, and failed to accept imperial responsibility, due to their vain desire to install democracy in ‘failed states’, before abandoning these states when things do not pan out as planned. However, the case studies in this paper have allowed me to identify two distinct differences between the Neo-Russian Empire and the United States, and their acceptance of imperial responsibility/empire regarding those they have conquered through their manipulation and use of indigenous forces

***Hypothesis 1: The Russian Federation is the exception to David Chandler’s argument, and they have developed a fundamentally sound way conquering and adding to their imperial body.***

This hypothesis can be said to be proven correct. Based on the research carried out in this thesis, I am able to state that the Neo-Russian Empire has found away to add to their imperial body through a tailored strategy of *imperialization*. This strategy of *imperialization* is due to the utilization of cultural relativity as a strategic tool by the Neo-Russian Empire. As a result, aiding the Russian exploitation of cultural phenomena already existent within the societies they are trying to conquer. Both *Chechenization* and *Crimeanization* enabled the Neo-Russian Empire, as is shown in the case studies, to successfully manipulate indigenous forces to carry out actions that in many cases violated human rights, but added these areas into the imperial body. Therefore, my contribution to the existing literature is this. I have proven that the framework of *Imperialization* created by the Neo-Russian Empire is an imperial device that allows Russia to manipulate and exploit specific socio-cultural conditions and phenomena present within countries in such a way as to garner the support of indigenous forces to fight on their behalf. Although it may seem counter-intuitive to some, and that tactics used may appear reprehensible to others, the Russians have proven these

tactics radically effective in both Chechnya and Crimea. What the Neo-Russian Empire employs is a dynamic tool of *imperialization*, which has been systematically honed over the course of 40 years to successfully bring old, and perhaps new additions, to the Neo-Russian imperial body. I am able to successfully state that not only is hypothesis regarding the Neo-Russian Empire proven true, but the answer to the overall thesis question is a resounding yes. The tool of *imperialization* the Neo-Russian Empire has created allows them to take up the yoke of responsibility that they so desire, perhaps allowing them bring about their once golden age of *imperium*, no matter what societal or international laws they must violate to do so.

***Hypothesis 2: The United States remains much as Chandler has stated: an empire in denial.***

The United States are “a people who remember that their country secured its independence by revolt against an Empire” (Ignatieff, 2003). They are a people who do not see the age of empire as a golden one, unlike the Russians, but a brutal time that required the sacrifices of patriots to throw off the yoke of an oppressive British empire. I am able to successfully conclude that the research conducted in this thesis shows that the United States overly rejects their imperial responsibility/empire to those they have conquered and in fact fails to manipulate or use indigenous forces correctly during invasions. This refusal is linked to their consistent stance of applying the neo-liberal practice of democratization through intervention. The United States, as is shown in each case study, excessively relied on their own forces in a otiose attempt to carry out democratization on their behalf. This narcissistic desire has prevented their use of cultural relativity on the strategic level. It is a symbiotic longing to provide good governance, mixed with the disregard for the actual needs and desires of these states, which results in both the avoidance of imperial responsibility/empire and *imperialization* of these ‘failed states’. I conclude that it is a two-fold failure. First, putting the United States in a precarious position within each culture, limiting their ability to successfully achieve victory in asymmetric and protracted campaigns involving populations

such as those in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. Second, because in their need to provide good governance the United States commits a heinous crime in thinking that the culture they promote is above that of all others. The unwillingness of America to accept other cultures abroad, no matter how radically different, has significantly limited their ability to make use of indigenous forces and in turn accept the imperial responsibilities that they take on to those they have conquered. Therefore, the hypothesis stated here is also proven true based on the research conducted and the case studies examined in the work. Although the answer to the hypothesis is proven correct, based on the research carried out the overall question of the thesis is proven to be false, the United States does not accept imperial responsibility/empire regarding those they have conquered through their manipulation and use of indigenous forces.

### ***Future Policy Recommendations***

I am unable to conclude this thesis by stating only that the Neo-Russian Empire has a systematic method by which they add to their imperial body, and the United States has thoroughly failed those they have conquered. Instead, I will conclude with two policy recommendations, one for each state.

First, regarding the Neo-Russian Empire, put simply the methods of *imperialization* that they practice violate human rights and the laws set forth by the international community. Consequently, the strategies which they employ must be refined and tailored to prevent atrocities such as *zachistka* from being used as an imperial tool if they continue this trend of re-imperialization. Nevertheless, I must clarify I do not support this trend of re-imperialization. Second, is my recommendation for the United States and their desire to provide good governance. If this wish remains then America must not rely on their own conventional forces to carry this out. They need to enhance the frameworks that already exist within states, instead of relying on this strategy of *imperialization* that they have created over the last two decades in the Middle East. In order to do this, however, they must first set aside the neo-liberal idea of democratization. This comes in two steps. First, accepting that they need “to support governance from

the bottom up, since tribes, subtribes, clans, and local communities play an influential role in a country with a weak and sometimes unpopular central government” (Jones, 2017: 8). Second, through the manipulation of blood feud within the country and subsequent use of the local tribes and kinship groups the United States may be presented with an opportunity to resolve ongoing conflicts. This may sound strange, but by exploiting this phenomena it may provide them access to important tribal court systems, which have been seen as key tools for conflict resolution in low-capacity undemocratic regime states (Carroll, 2011; CPHD, 2007; LandInfo, 2011; UNHCR, 2018). Tribes present the United States with a distinct opportunity for conflict resolution because they allow for specific ways of addressing reconciliation that is seen as culturally and religiously acceptable (Carroll, 2011: 29; CPHD, 2007: 91-92; LandInfo, 2011; MPI, 2005: 10). If the United States is meant to provide good governance the only way that this can be achieved is through a pro-longed process of *imperialization*. One that “reconnect[s] with the populations” (Interview from 2009 found in Carroll, 2011: 29) of these states, and has no intentions of abandonment, but instead a guarantee to remain and find a functional way to work within the socio-cultural framework that already exists within that low-capacity undemocratic state.

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