

Good example of syria behind the lines essay

[Philosophy](#), [Freedom](#)



In the Frontline special “ Syria - Behind the Lines,” the Syrian conflict is told through the eyes of two soldiers, one on either side - Ahmad, a freedom fighter for the Free Syrian Army, and a member of Assad’s police. There are several primary points made within this documentary of the Syrian conflict. First, the sectarian, political conflict takes human lives on a regular basis, turning the country into a warzone. Secondly, freedom fighting is the only way many of these Syrian citizens are allowed to participate in their own government. Thirdly, the sectarian violence is shown to stretch beyond the urban areas and into rural areas, where citizens have moved in order to feel safe. Fourthly, both sides are shown to have strong, passionate reasons for wanting to be in power, both believing that their causes are true. Finally, the West is shown to be ambivalent in choosing a side in the Syrian conflict, refusing to provide weapons or support to the freedom fighters.

These main points to “ Syria - Behind the Lines” underline several concepts that have been discussed in class. The first is protectionism, the idea of restraining trade between nations through tariffs and other regulations; the refusal of America and the West to supply Syrians with weapons or material support indicates a desire to stay out of the conflict. However, this may also end up creating more problems down the road for the Syrian economy, as imports and exports are likely a large part of their market income. Next, the documentary plays into the idea of participatory development, in which local populations are engaged in projects meant to promote national development. With all of this sectarian fighting, the country is tearing itself apart without the ability to involve the poor in efforts to better Syria; all civilians can do is hide and hope they do not get hurt or killed in bombings or

attacks. The third, and most active, concept explored in this documentary is the cold war, a conflict that comes without a formal declaration of war and typically occurs between nations. This is happening on a micro and macro level; within Syrai, Sunnis and Shi'ites engage in informal attacks and revolts, conflicts which contain incredible tension but little to no formal conflict. Outside of Syria, the intervention (or lack thereof) of the US seems to play into tensions that occurred after the Soviet Cold War, the US not wanting to provoke the ire of other countries in the region, such as Russia. Gordon, Sanger & Schmitt (2014), in their New York Times Article, discuss the idea of the Syrian War being used as a post-Cold War point of tension between the US and Russia, using this centralized conflict as a pawn in an international one. Because of Russia's support for President Bashar al-Assad, US harshly criticizes Russia's role in the Syrian civil war, particularly because they ostensibly support the efforts of the freedom fighters. Initially, the US and Russia cooperated in joint partnership for development and rebuilding in Syria, but tensions have risen because of the newfound support for Assad. The article also discusses the US's reticence to enter the conflict themselves, especially as other surrounding nations like Saudi Arabia are more than willing to provide weapons to the freedom fighters themselves. This information provides greater context to the Frontline video, as it allows the centralized, personalized conflicts the people profiled experience into a greater international context.

References

Gordon, M. R., Sanger, D. E. & Schmitt, E. (2014, Feb. 17) US scolds Russia as it weighs options

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