*SID Lingua Inglese 1 2018-19 Collective essay writing: the case of Jamal Khashoggi*

Essay question: “Describe the background and events surrounding the disappearance of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, and assess the impact of this case on international relations”

Student paragraphs: 1st draft. REVISED BY COURSE INSTRUCTOR: GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY ISSUES ARE CLEANED UP AND SOME COMMENTS ARE MADE ALSO IN THE MARGIN ABOUT COHERENCE (AND ACCURACY OF CONTENT).

**1a.Jamal Khashoggi was a Saudi journalist** and a Washington Post columnist. He disappeared on 2 October while he was at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul to obtain a document certifying his divorce from his former wife. His current fiancée waited for him outside the building for several hours before warning the Turkish authorities about his disappearance. After that Turkish officials declared he had never left the consulate, as the security cameras videos showed. Khashoggi was a high-profile critic of the crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman; for this reason the journalist had recently moved to Virginia (US) as a form of protection. US Intelligence intercepts of Saudi officials have made clear that the Crown Prince was planning to lure Jamal back to Saudi Arabia. However, this plan was never successful and according to the latest news reports, he was brutally killed inside Saudi Consulate by a 15-member team which had arrived in Istanbul / flown in for the operation.

1b **Jamal Khashoggi was a Saudi Journalist,** born in 1958 in Medina, Saudi Arabia. He was also an editor in chief of the Al-Arab News Channel and editor for the Saudi Arabian newspaper Al-Watan, turning it into a platform for Saudi Arabian progressives. In 2017, he began to write for The Washington Post in the United States and his articles criticized the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its disputes against Qatar and Lebanon and the invasion of Yemen. Furthermore, he had been married and divorced three times. At the time he disappeared he had a Turkish fiancé who he was planning to marry, moving to Istanbul, the city that would host his new TV channel.

**2.Khashoggi lived in self-imposed exile in the USA.**Having spent several years of service at the court of Saudi royal family as an editor, he decided to flee his native country for a number of reasons. Before becoming a self-exile, Jamal Khashoggi had already lived in the US, to obtain his MBA at Indiana University. After his studies, Khashoggi started his career as journalist and became closer and closer to the royal family writing for the national newspaper. That made him aware of the tensions within the inner circle of the Saud family: he was described as someone who recognised the virtues of the regime but who could not remain silent before its injustices. After Khashoggi criticised President Trump in late 2016, the Saudi royal family banned him from public appearances and writing so he decided to move to the US for a temporary stay before definitively settling down in Turkey with his fiancée. The clash with the Wahhabid clergy orbiting around the royal family, due to his pro-Muslim Brotherhood leanings, is considered another key factor in his decision. Given that situation, the parallel with another important figure, the Turkish cleric Fethullah Gülen, also in exile in the US for similar, religious motives, is striking.

**3.On October 2nd, 2018, Jamal Khashoggi entered the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul**. and never came out of the building. Thus, the alarm was raised by his fiancée on the same day, four hours after he went in. As claimed by first reports, that was the second visit since September 28th, when he was told to come back to collect the marriage papers he needed. The details of what happened are yet to be officially determined, but the Turkish government did its best to provide any useful information to the press – such as CCTV footage and audio recordings – in order to determine the causes of Khashoggi’s death. (1) According to the most reliable hypothesis the Saudi journalist was tortured, murdered and dismembered in seven minutes by the Saudi forensics expert Salah Muhammad al-Tubaigy, one of the members of the so-called *Tiger Squad,* a well-known team of assassins formed more than a year ago by the Saudi Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman.

**4.The mystery surrounding his disappearance has provoked some strongly wondered responses in the international community.**Firstly, Samah Hadid, Middle East director of campaigns for Amnesty International, said that Saudi version of events cannot be trusted. The much-awaited USA response came from president Donald Trump, who recently declared that the Secretary of state Mike Pompeo had spoken with King Salman but was not totally clear about the matter. The reason for this caution that the USA and Saudi Arabia has a military spending agreement worth 110 billion dollars.  Trump also said that Saudi Arabia's explanation for how Khashoggi was killed was credible, adding what happened at the consulate is "unacceptable". French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said his country condemned the killing of Khashoggi and called for a thorough investigation into the incident. The German Chancellor Angela Merkel did not accept the Saudi explanation of this murder, adding that the "horrific events" surrounding the journalist's killing were a warning that democratic freedoms are under assault across the globe. This week, Saudi state media reported that King Salman had ordered the formation of a ministerial committee, headed by Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, to restructure the kingdom's intelligence services. Britain's Foreign Office said it was considering its "next steps" following Saudi Arabia's admission over Khashoggi's killing and reiterated that those responsible must be held to account.

**5a.The story soon became politicised**, as many countries have different connections with Jamal Khashoggi.  Beyond the fact, that he was known for his strong criticism against the Saudi government, the Turkish police denounced Saudi Arabia for the journalist’s disappearance, after finding evidence of his murder (2). Nevertheless, Saudi Arabi denied any involvement. The US played an important role in the matter, mainly because of the new alliance with Saudi Arabia (3): as a matter of fact, the Secretary of State Pompeo has been travelling to Riyadh and Ankara to mediate with Mohammed bin Salman and Erdogan. If Saudi Arabia should be found guilty, not only would this give birth to an international crisis, it would also shine a light on the reason why the Saudi journalist has been murdered, thus beckoning the question: is Khashoggi a martyr of free speech (4)?

**5b. The story soon became politicized**. The governments of Turkey and Saudi Arabia have turned the matter from a judicial investigation into a political issue. The Turkish government immediately pointed the finger at Saudi Arabia and this caused a commotion in the international political community, which sought clarity. Saudi Arabia  blamed rogue elements of the secret services, trying to keep the royal family out of the picture. Saudi Arabia has much interest in saving face because of the FII (Future Investment Initiative), while Turkey would like to see it fail. Trump took a more balanced position and tried to be diplomatic because his aim is to preserve USA economic interests.

**6.The treatment of Khashoggi has provoked a crisis in international relations.** Turkey and Saudi Arabia were supported by several other main countries, given that Saudi Arabia has had the US' support for over 40 years now (5): Trump has shown his support for the Saudi and refuses to take a stand until evidence proves him wrong. Meanwhile, Turkey, along with Russia, has been manipulating the situation in its own favour, wanting to prove Saudi Arabia's lack of diplomacy. Relations between the two leading countries (6) were already tense, but Khashoggi's death has compromised them definitely. The diplomatic world is about to be deeply changed, but it may also bring international relations back on an old path: the US and Russia are, once again, pitted one against the other but they're also not the main protagonists. Russia has admitted that, since no actual proof has been found, they can't cut all ties with Saudi Arabia; however, the murder of someone that has such ties with the US won't be underestimated.

**7aThe US and some other traditional western allies of Saudi Arabia have been embarrassed by the story.** US public opinion harshly condemns the facts and calls for to a break-off of the currently worsening relations with Saudi Arabia. By contrast, President Donald Trump stressed the importance of Saudi Arabia as a counterbalance to Iran and firmly opposed the call for sanctions against the country, because of the way it would affect the US economy.  Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that the country has already planned a $110 billion arms sale to the Saudi, whose cancellation would entail a significant financial loss. The UK, France and Germany say, “Nothing can justify this killing and we condemn it in the strongest possible terms”. Nonetheless, all three nations would rather await further explanation before making any judgement, even though they are all taking part in the growing boycott of the investment summit that will take place in Riyadh.

**7bThe US and some other traditional western allies of Saudi Arabia have been severely embarrassed by the story**. The European Union condemns the murder and calls for a thorough investigation into the accident, France in particular, and also Spain demanded transparent investigations to identify those responsible. Nobody believes Saudi Arabia’s version any longer, as they first said there was no evidence the murder happened in their embassy, but some days later admitted that the murder happened there. This lack of transparency increased the suspicions of European countries towards the Saudi attitude. Many western countries also called for an involvement of the United Nations, including Germany. In the United Kingdom, the Labour Party has called on the governing Conservative party to suspend arms sales to the kingdom. The only one who seems to trust the Saudi version is Donald Trump, the US president. He said Saudi Arabia’s explanation for how Khashoggi was killed was credible, even if the event is still unacceptable. Most significantly, he said he prefers sanctions against Riyadh that do not include cancelling the defence deals, which, together with the oil trade, are the closest bond between the countries. The USA and Saudi Arabia are long time allies.

**7c The US and some other traditional western allies of Saudi Arabia have been severely embarrassed by the story**. Donald Trump, the president of the United States, defended the Saudi regime from the beginning, declaring himself sure about the innocence of the Saudi government; those declarations have already been contradicted by the Saudi consulate itself. France, another strong ally, has strongly condemned the murder, but has taken no action, like many other European countries (8). The UK, for example, condemned the event too, but at the same time declared it will not take any action against the Saudi government. It is not willing to face the economic consequences, like many other states.

**8.It remains to be seen how this incident will be resolved.** What happened on the 2nd October 2018 in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul is a dramatic diplomatic case which risks undermining the situation in an already troubled zone: the Middle East. In this region, recent events have seriously and rapidly changed the geopolitical strategies of international and local powers. A direct American intervention cannot be excluded, due to its significant military presence and its considerable import and export interests that could be affected by the issue. Even if all the major exponents of the international community have worked to prevent an escalation, a solution seems elusive. In order to avoid a Middle East crisis, it is necessary to find a compromise between Turkey and Saudi Arabia, but the situation is still confused and unstable (9). In fact, while a Turkish official, speaking anonymously and without providing evidence, has said Khashoggi was murdered inside the consulate, the Saudi government continue to vehemently deny this theory, casting shadows about what happened, marginalising the idea of an agreement between the parts. Despite the Saudi attempt to cover up the truth, the international community will have to encourage an economic and political agreement between Turkey and Saudi Arabia in order to preserve the current status quo in this unsteady area. In conclusion, this is the only way to preserve this area from future instability.

Comments:

1 This makes it sound as if Turkey was being socially useful and helpful. Is this true? It’s being said in the Western media that Turkey has manipulated the release of information to the media, piece by piece, for its own strategic advantage over Saudi Arabia

2. The politicisation has less to do with Khashoggi himself I think than with the use that is being made of the story by Turkey, to advance its own interests, and the way it is being managed by other countries, like the USA and Britain, to protect theirs (this point can be further developed in 6. below).

3. What is the logical link between the two parts of this sentence? The meaning is unclear.

4. The alliance is not new, it has lasted for decades. Besides, this paragraph is less about the mediatory role the US has played in the crisis than about how the US has managed the crisis with a view to preserving its own interest in maintaining the alliance.

5. How are the discovery of Saudi guilt and the implications for free speech, ‘political’ matters?

6. What is the logical meaning here? In what sense have Turkey and Saudi Arabia had the support of many countries, and why is this predicated on the fact (“given that”) that the US and Saudi have been allies for decades? This needs to be explained.

7. Reference: which countries are we talking about, here?

8. France, the UK and Germany issued a strong, joint statement of condemnation

9. Why is a compromise necessary? Does the incident involve only Turkey and Saudi Arabia?

Argumentative prose: Malthus

# From the Rev. Thomas Malthus’s (1766-1834) First Essay on Population, 1798

# Comprehension: Is the summary an accurate account of the full text, below?

# Summary

#  Rev. Malthus makes two postulates: necessity of food for the existence of man, and of passion between the sexes. These two laws of nature will never cease to be. According to Mr Godwin, passion between the sexes may in time extinguish itself, but Malthus sees no alterations in the number of exceptions to his second thesis. Hence he concludes that the power of humankind to reproduce is greater than the power of earth to support it.

#  Nature’s laws of balance and necessity keep in check the amount of population and its growth accordingly with the power of earth to produce food. Mankind, due to its organic nature, is unable to escape from these laws. Consequently, it is impossible for mankind to reach perfection, because there is, and may never be a solution to the pressure of nature’s laws, and no answer to the limited productivity of the earth.

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| **Reference: what do the words in the right column refer to, in the text?**  |
|  (A) I think I may fairly make two postulates: first, that food is necessary to the existence of man; secondly, that the passion between the sexes is necessary, and will remain nearly in its present state. These two laws ever since we have had any knowledge of mankind, appear to have been fixed laws of our nature; and, as we have not **hitherto** seen any alteration in **them**, we have no right to conclude that **they** will ever cease to be what they now are, without an immediate act of power in that Being **who** first arranged the system of the universe; and for the advantage of his creatures, still executes, according to fixed laws, all its various operations.  | Them = *fixed laws*They = Who =  |
|  |  |
|  (B) I do not know that any writer has supposed that on this earth man will ultimately be able to live without food. But Mr. Godwin has conjectured that the passion between the sexes may in time be extinguished. As, however, he calls this part of **his** work, a deviation into the land of conjecture, I will not dwell longer upon **it** at present, than to say, that the best arguments for the perfectibility of man, are drawn from a contemplation of the great progress that **he** has already made from the savage state, and the difficulty of saying where **he** is to stop. But towards the extinction of the passion between the sexes, no progress whatever has **hitherto** been made. **It** appears to exist in as much force at present as **it** did two thousand, or four thousand years ago. There are individual exceptions now as there always have been. But, as these exceptions do not appear to increase in number, **it** would surely be a very unphilosophical mode of arguing, to infer merely from the existence of an exception, that the exception would, in time, become the rule, and the rule the exception. Assuming then, my postulate as granted, I say, that the power of population is indefinitely greater than the power in the earth to produce subsistence for man.  | **His** **It** **He** **He** **It** **It****It**  |
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|  (C) Population, when unchecked, increases in a geometrical ratio. Subsistence increases only in an arithmetical ratio. A slight acquaintance with numbers will show the immensity of the first power in comparison of the second.  |  |
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|  (D) By that law of our nature **which** makes food necessary to the life of man, the effects of these too unequal powers must be kept equal. This implies a strong and constantly operating check on population from the difficulty of subsistence. This difficulty must fall somewhere; and must necessarily be severely felt by a large portion of mankind.  | **Which**  |
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|  (E) Through the animal and vegetable kingdoms, nature has scattered the seeds of life abroad with the most profuse and liberal hand. **She** has been comparatively sparing in the room, and the nourishment necessary to rear **them**. The germs of existence contained in this spot of earth, with amplefood, and ample room to expand in, would fill millions of worlds in the course of a few thousand years. Necessity, that imperious, all pervading law of nature, restrains **them** within the prescribed bounds. The race of plants, and the race of animals shrink under this great restrictive law. And the race of man cannot, by any efforts of reason, escape from **it**. Among plants and animals **its** effects are waste of seed, sickness, and premature death. Among mankind, misery and vice. The former, misery, is an absolutely necessary consequence of **it**. Vice is a highly probable consequence, and we therefore see **it** abundantly prevail; but **it** ought not, perhaps, to be called an absolutely necessary consequence. The ordeal of virtue is to resist all temptation to evil.  | **She****Them****Them****It** **Its** **It** **It** **it** |
|  |  |
|  (F) This natural inequality of the two powers of population, and of production in the earth, and that great law of our nature which must constantly keep their effects equal, form the great difficulty that to me appears insurmountable in the way to the perfectibility of society. All other arguments are of slight and subordinate consideration in comparison of **this**. I see no way by which man can escape from the weight of this law **which** pervades all animated nature. No fancied equality, no agrarian regulations in their utmost extent, could remove the pressure of **it** even for a single century. And **it** appears, therefore, to be decisive against the possible existence of a society, all the members of **which**, should live in ease, happiness, and comparative leisure; and feel no anxiety about providing the means of subsistence for **themselves** and **their** families.  | **This****Which****It** **It** **Which****Themselves****their** |
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|  (G) Consequently, if the premises are just, the argument is conclusive against the perfectibility of the mass of mankind. |  |