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From the Editors

For sixty-two years now, The Historian has given NYU students a platform for publishing, promoting, and preserving the original research and historical writing of our fellow undergraduates. As students ourselves, we are honored to carry on this decades-long tradition of showcasing the exceptional scholarship of our classmates. As editors, we are proud of the rigorous process through which the eight articles contained within these pages were selected, edited, and prepared for publication.

Of course, this process, like all of university life, was complicated by the coronavirus pandemic. Yet thanks to the resilience of our contributors and staff editors, we were able to overcome the challenges of this moment and continue The Historian's proud tradition of celebrating undergraduate research.

This tradition would not be possible without the generous funding of NYU's Department of History and the continued support of its faculty. We are especially grateful to our advisor, Professor Rebecca Anne Goetz, and to the faculty members who encouraged and guided the research contained within this journal. We are also grateful to Jackie Menkel, the History Department's extremely capable undergraduate administrator, for always being a helpful resource and having answers to our many questions.

Most of all, we are grateful to the students who did the research, crafted the arguments, contributed their essays, and worked with our editors. Their articles, spanning three centuries and four continents, reflect both the strength and the diversity of undergraduate historical scholarship at NYU. They draw on a wide variety of primary sources and tell important stories set in places from New York to China, across the United States, South America, Asia and Africa.

Hayley Ackerman focused on the struggle for sovereignty by the Sawari people in Western Sahara. Ben Cooper wrote about racial ambiguity and imagined communities through cinema during New York's urban crisis in the 1970s and 1980s. Christina Schuler da Costa Ferro understood the leadership of Simon Bolivar in the Venezuelan Independence Movement through the concept of colonial rot. Phoebe Jones discussed how discrimination caused a failure in health care during the AIDS Crisis. Amanda McBain detailed the long history of environmental racism against indigenous populations across the U.S. Elizabeth Ruehl analyzed the relationship between Marxism, Confucianism and Islam in China, Korea, Yemen and Afghanistan. Ben Speigelman looked at the reaction of U.S. political figures to China's international presence under Mao. Alice Yu compared two distinct threads of anarchist thought in China during the 20th century.

The articles contained within this journal demonstrate history students and historians today are engaged in thoughtful and rigorous reflection of the past to inform our understanding of the present and transform the possibilities of the future. The Historian is proud to play a part, however small, in promoting this important work.

Thank you for reading,

Jill Valdes   Cole Stallone
Editor-in-Chief   Managing Editor

From the Faculty

Gentle Readers,

Welcome to the sixty-second edition of New York University's history undergraduate research journal, *The Historian*. Despite the restrictions and challenges of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Editor-in-Chief Jill Valdes and Managing Editor Cole Stallone have produced a fantastic issue covering topics as varied as the AIDS crisis and the Bolivarian Revolution. Each of the eight articles in this issue represent months of painstaking original research, long hours spent drafting and revising, and diligent editing by a dedicated and highly organized editorial team. It has been a delight to watch this volume emerge through the dedication and initiative of our undergraduates.

Happy reading,

Rebecca Anne Goetz

Associate Professor

The Sahrawi Case:
The Emergence of a Sovereign Struggle Through the Domination of the Nation-State

Hayley Ackerman

The struggle of the Sahrawi people of Western Sahara represents the last unresolved colonial conflict on the African continent. The reality of a people caught in seeming indefinite political stasis is a case best presented as both a consequence of the land and its people's historical construction and as a result of the contemporary post-colonial world. Precedents and actions from both periods weigh heavily on the territory's current indeterminate political status. As such, understanding the wider historical context helps in conceptualizing the varying weight of rivaling parties' claims. Currently, both the Kingdom of Morocco and the Popular Front For Liberation/Polisario Front have put forth contesting sovereign claims over the region of Western Sahara. Internationally, the United Nations defines the region as a 'non-decolonized area,' previously in the possession of Spain. Western Sahara belongs to the institution's list of Non-Self-Governing Territories and the UN has repeatedly affirmed the right of the Sahrawi people to self-determination. In the past-half-century, the conflict has found itself central on the world stage, embroiled in wider regional and international issues and co-opted by other powers/states. The sustained nature of the conflict and the introduction of an impasse brand of politics have transformed the region's resolution into an elusive ideal. This has in turn granted the conflict a degree of political agency, which allows outside actors to barter within the region and manipulate either (or both) sides without great anxiety of mass escalation or settlement.

Background on the Contemporary Reality

As a form of cultural identification, the term 'Sahrawi' has the intended definition of "indigenous to Western Sahara." However, the geographic limitation imposed here does not fit

the working reality of the territorial conflict, as those native to territories in Morocco and Mauritania identify as ethnically and nationally Sahrawi.[1] A more appropriate categorization of the Sahrawi people in the modern age is as a ethno-cultural subgroup of the *bedian*, or 'Moors,' who speak Hassaniya, a dialect of Arabic and claim membership to one of the traditional *qabael* (tribes/social groups) of the region.[2,3] As socio-cultural groups, the *qubael* are predominately comprised of non-Arab Muslim Africans, peoples indigenous to the Sahara who were products of early Berber migration and integration of the region in the first millennium BCE. While Bedouin Arabs, known as the Beni Hassan, do make up a portion of those who identify as Sahrawi, the implication that they represent the predominant ancestry of the region is inaccurate. Rather, the Sahrawi identity has been shaped by the overlapping effects of successive periods of conquest and is not attributable to a singular historical influence or wholly comparable to any other cultural group.

'Sahrawi' is the Arabic word for 'Sahara' and in its most rudimentary understanding means a person or thing "of the Sahara," the term did not take on the aforementioned ethnonationalist connotation until the 20th century. As a point of ethnic and national identification, the Sahrawi people embody "a unique and complex regional hybrid."[4] An identity that in a comparable manner to any other identity has been constructed and is in effect inseparable from a history of European colonialism.[5] This identity has in the past half century been grafted onto the Polisario Front, which after its founding in 1973, emerged as the representative body of the Sahrawi nation. Operating both as a rebel militant group and as a

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[1] Zunes, Stephen. "The Historical Formation of Western Saharan Nationalism." Western Sahara: War Nationalism and Conflict Resolution. Syracuse University Press. pp. 93.
[2] Hodges, Tony. "The Western Sahara File." *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Jan., 1984), pp. 74.
[3] Zunes, 93.
[4] Zunes, 95.
[5] See Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, for an analysis of the idea of constructed identity.

quasi-governmental force, the Polisario Front embodies at its core a nationalist movement with the primary goal of Sahrawi independence. The Polisario Front is internationally recognized by the UN as the legitimate representative of the Sahrawi people. Similarly, the institution's sovereignty has been legitimated in a formal capacity within the African continent after the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic's (SADR) acceptance into the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the predecessor to the African Union (AU), in 1984. While the admission of SADR caused Morocco to withdraw from the organization in protest, the country would rejoin the now-AU several decades later, becoming the institution's 55th member state in 2017. While Morocco's readmission means, at least on a conceptual level, that it and the SADR are member states of equal standing, Morocco has not relinquished its claims over the territory and arguably, has in the intervening decades worked to consolidate its economic presence in the sub-Saharan region.[6]

Despite international recognition of the Polisario Front's standing as a governing body — by the UN in 1979 and reaffirmed by the AU in 1984 — the Polisario Front acts as a government in exile that administers a 'state' which technically does not exist. Centered around headquarters in sovereign Algeria and claiming sovereignty over the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, a state without true international standing or even accepted borders, the Polisario Front is hard to view as a legitimate governing institution in equivalence with states. Yet at the same time, the Polisario Front serves as a body constituting the will of the Sahrawi people, acting in the favor of nationalist sentiment and operating under the Enlightenment rationality of the people as the base of a state's power. The current situation on the ground works to further destabilize the Polisario's claims of sovereignty, revealing that the movement controls a mere fraction of the region that

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[6] Hasnaoui, Yasmine. *Morocco and the African Union: A New Chapter for Western Sahara Resolution?* Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies, 2017, pp. 1-2.

constitutes Western Sahara, having been relegated to the interior quarter of the territory. The area under Polisario control is referred to as the Free Zone and is separated by a physical barrier from the Western majority of the territory that for decades has been administered by the Moroccan government as the state's Southern Provinces. Thus, the Polisario Front and moreover the future of Saharawi people and their claims of self-determination remain unactualized, as the territory of Western Sahara lingers in a bureaucratic grey zone of statehood, unable to access sovereignty in its full capacity.

The Nation-State as an Institution

Entangled claims of sovereignty over Western Sahara and the subsequent political stasis of the region represent the culmination of various strands of international intellectual anxiety about the future of the state as an institution and its capacity to withstand the changing geopolitical landscape of an ever-globalizing world. The wide-reaching consequences of the growing discourse of uncertainty are summarized by Peter Taylor when he writes "[a]t times it seems that everything the state does is under threat" and that "this widespread uncertainty… is certainly a new phenomenon in the modern world."[7] While current debates over the functionality of statehood undoubtedly respond in part to newly birthed challengers (for example: the modern international corporation), they belong to a tradition of discourse that has long questioned the role of state and its relation to non-state factors on the international stage. The state is commonly understood as a unit of spatial organization centered on a nationality and representing a fixture of the contemporary fragmentation of global political space. Such a definition exists in the international collective consciousness as rather static, having emerged from the entrenchment of the states-system in the post-WWII world order. Yet the definition of the state historically

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[7] Taylor, Peter. "The state as container: territoriality in the modern world-system." *Progress in Human Geography* 18,2 (1994) pp. 157.

speaking is fluid, evolving over both time and space and having experienced periods during which the institution and moreover, its validity and functionality have come into question.

Current literature in the field has evolved out of the questions of statehood, sovereignty and the relationship of rising non-state factors to international law, that emerged as topics of global concern during the interwar period of the 1920s and 1930s. The rise of such concerns to prominence in the discourse of the period was in Natasha Wheatley's words a consequence of the "sovereign casings crack[ing] open, the contents of the empires... spill[ing] over onto the international domain, and jurists as well as peacemakers [being] forced to reckon with the fallout."[8] Here Wheatley references the dissolution of several long-standing empires at the end of WWI, notably Ottoman, Habsburg, and Russian, as well as the larger reorganization of the European political stage. From this period of general disruption arose a veritable restructuring of global power dynamics, as the age of formal empire began to dissolve, enacting a process that would last through the end of WWII and from which a mounting number of non-state political factors were birthed. Included here are minorities, individuals, mandated populations, and insurgents, which emerged as new units of organization whose legal personality was unclear, as these groups were in part a parity of state, yet they existed outside of the conventional realm of international law. Consequently, these new subjects of international law "were fringe dwellers...straddling the line between legal visibility and invisibility, between international agency and its absence."[9] These new legal groupings represented the first cohort of state challengers in the modern era. As time progressed, the problems and challenges posed to the established order by their mere existence would only be exacerbated.

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[8] Wheatley, Natasha. "Spectral Legal Personality in Interwar International Law: On New Ways of Not Being a State." Law and History Review, vol. 35, no. 3, 2017, pp. 10.
[9] Wheatley, 04.

As challenges to the state proliferated in the post-WWII era, the emergence of non-state political factors was paralleled by the rise of anti-state philosophy, which opposed and criticized the existence of the state in the evolving modern era. Critiques of the state have taken on numerous forms, from fear over the state's functionality, to its consequences on the quality of human life, to a view of the institution as anachronistic in the face of accelerating globalization. As early as the 1950s, thinkers such as Hannah Arendt had already begun questioning the functionality of the state in the modern era. In her book *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt examined the mounting crises of stateless peoples and the paradoxical relationship between the states-system inability to account for and protect them and the state as the sole guarantor of "true freedom, true emancipation, and true popular sovereignty."[10] Conversely, general dissatisfaction with the modern era and rigidity of the state, rather than actual concern over its viability, can be understood as the context in which philosophy regarding alternative methods of social organization arose. One such movement in this direction was the emergence of a form of nostalgic reverence for the historic figure of the nomad in 1970s intellectual culture. The nomad who previously had been considered the inferior predecessor to the modern man of sedentary civilization, was recast as a "subversive contemporary" to "modern urbanity,"[11] idealized as an alternative to the perceived monotony and dividuation of the state. Other theorists argue that globalization will — or has already — render the state impractical, as increasing interconnectedness on a global scale problematizes the spatial limitations of statehood.[12]

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[10] Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New Ed. with Added Prefaces. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973, pp. 272.
[11] Schult, Anne. "Nomadic Practices and the Subversion of the Present." *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 2019, jhiblog.org/2019/03/06/time-travelers-part-ii-nomadic-practices-and-the-subversion-of-the-present/.
[12] Brenner, Neil. "Beyond State-Centrism? Space, Territoriality, and Geographical Scale in Globalization Studies." *Theory and Society*, vol. 28, no. 1, 1999, pp. 40.

Despite the growing debate over the state's validity and the imminent predictions of organizational breakdown predicated by certain intellectual's, the states-system has in the past half-century prevailed and become ubiquitous. The strengthening of the states-system in the US led post-war order can be understood in two regards: as a reaffirmation of the established order of the 19th century and earlier or as a consequence of rising territoriality as a premise of the nation-state. The former posits that despite the emergence of groups which seemed to rival the state's position following the conclusion of WWI, "the seemingly axiomatic idea that only states could be persons in international law,"[13] ultimately won out and other legal groups remained trapped in an international subjectivity of 'otherhood.' The second, more revealing option, is an understanding of the modern world as inherently territorially bounded and captured by a linking of the nation and state into a monopolizing coalition of sovereignty. Put another way, 'sovereign territory' and the 'national homeland' have been bonded to create the institution of the nation-state, which operates contemporarily as the ultimate holder of political sovereignty.[14]

The nature of the nation-state dichotomy intrinsically means that in order for a nation, defined here as an imagined cultural community, to exert its political will on the international stage (i.e. sovereignty) it must be a state. As Taylor posits, "[a]ll states, whatever their cultural make-up, are assumed to be nation-states,"[15] a presumption that as the Sahrawi conflict indicates is not always easily accepted by groups who understand themselves as constituting an independent nation, possessing a territorial homeland. In this manner, the Sahrawi case study can be interpreted as the consequence of the construction of only a partial nation-state, where one part of the relationship is fulfilled without the other. Understanding of both the Sahrawi as a

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[13] Wheatley, 08.
[14] Taylor, 151.
[15] Taylor, 156.

nation and of their relationship to the states-system in which they find themselves, requires broader historical contextualization. The region contemporarily referred to as Western Sahara, located on the northwestern coast of Africa, has a long history of conquest and colonization, having been under the control of various rivaling families, dynasties, states and empires since as early as the 10th century CE. Consequently, the contested claims of the region are not a phenomenon singularly located in the post-colonial era, despite the seeming uniqueness of the current protracted conflict in the region. The convoluted history of domination and occupation have undoubtedly contributed to the 'hybrid' identity of the Sahrawi and the layered aspects of Berber culture, Arab and Islamic influences, and the imported European ideals which constitute it.

Historical Construction of the Sahrawi Nation

The Arab conquest of Northern Africa began in the 8th century and under the banner of Islamic expansion peoples from the Arabian peninsula reached the Atlantic sometime within that century. The solidification of political Islam, however, was not an immediate result of the movements of Arabian peoples and the region of Western Sahara was not formally incorporated into the Islamic sphere until the 11th century.[16] After several centuries of slow diffusion, Islam reached the Sahara and the subsequent integration of the region brought with it fundamental changes to the social structure and perceived identities in the region. At the heart of the broad Arabization of the Maghreb[17] were two core features "the reconstruction of lineages and the

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[16] Zunes, 95.

[17] Maghreb is a term used to refer to the Northwestern region of the African continent, specifically the countries of Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Tunisia, and Morocco. In addition to the member states, included in the geographic region is Western Sahara and the Spanish controlled cities of Ceuta and Melilla. This region is considered to be the Western most part of the Arab world and is predominantly Muslim, though there are undoubtedly elements of traditional Berber culture as well as other ethno-cultural influences. The region is also referred to as 'the Arab Maghreb' and 'Barbary' - a term often used by Europeaas during the period of colonization.

ascendency of Arabic as the dominant regional language."[18] In the centuries following Arab

introduction into the Sahara, Sahrawi society was marked by an itinerant life of pastoral

nomadism and a culture of endemic violence between *qabaels*. The *qubael* were divided along

perceived lines of genealogy, with new social groups emerging under periods of domination by

varying Islamic dynasties. In effect, many of these social groups had manufactured their origins,

claiming connection to Arabia or even direct ancestry to the Prophet Muhammed himself as a

way to garner validity or a sense of cultural prestige. By the time European colonization began to

intensify in the region several social groups of varying influence had emerged as the

predominant *qabael* in the area that would become Spanish Sahara. These tribes, the largest of

which by territorial spread and population were the two Rgaybat confederations, constitute the

ancestry modern Sahrawi center their ethno-cultural identity around. Tribes of this nature acted a

new form of social organization, not just through their alleged connection to Arabia, but more

significantly they represented a shift from early models of "semi-matrilineal kinship

nomenclature to that of patrilineal eponyms."[19] The Arabization of contemporary Western

Sahara was an all-consuming endeavor, with the rise and fall of subsequent regional Islamic

empires undoubtedly shaping the region for centuries, until the concentrated interest of

Europeans, manifested as imperialism, became the region's dominant political force.

     Prior to the intensification of European presence in Western Sahara in the latter half of

the 19th century, no robust political connection between the region and its northern neighbor

Morocco had been able to withstand.[20] During the period of successive Islamic dynasties,

Western Sahara remained elusive, a region beyond the control of Moroccan sultans, largely due

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[18] Zunes, 96.
[19] Zunes, 96.
[20] Hodges, *File*, 78.

to the nomadic lifestyle of the region's inhabitants. Expansive desertscapes are a feature of

Western Sahara, a region that receives limited rainfall and wherein areas suitable for pastures are

minimal and dispersed. For centuries, the Sahrawi depended upon near constant movement for

survival, it was rare for an entire tribe to concentrate in one area simultaneously and permanent

establishments were simply not a reality of cultural life. Consequently, centralized governmental

control of the region by an outside power was volatile and "attempt[ing] to have administered or

taxed them [the Sahrawi], or to have halted their incessant inter-tribal raiding would have been

utterly utopian." [21] Particularly powerful rulers from both Morocco and Mauritania were able to

establish short periods of atypical control over Western Sahara from the 12th to the 19th-century.

Ahmed el-Mansour (1578-1603) and Moulay Ismail (1672-1727) are two such examples,

however, even in these instances control was constricted, concentrated only on a few key

holdings and rapidly deteriorating after the ruler's passing.[22] The historical disconnect between

the regions was acknowledged repeatedly by the Moroccan administration, with a 1767 Hispano-

Moroccan treaty stating that the Alwi sultan's control[23] did not extend to the Dra'a River, a

landmark now within the nation of Morocco. Reaffirming this stance, was sultan Hassan I's

assurance to the British that his sovereignty did not extend to Cape Juby, a small region that

straddles the modern border of Western Sahara and Morocco in 1875. Such sentiments were

largely parallel by the Sahrawi *qabaels* who sought to maintain a sense of autonomy and cultural

uniqueness, with "[t]he two largest confederations in the region, the two Rgaybat groups, always

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[21] Hodges, *File*, 79.
[22] Hodges, *File*, 78.
[23] The claims of Hassan I are relevant to the 21st century as the Alwi family remains the ruling dynasty of Morocco contemporarily. The Alaouite or Alawite dynasty first came to power in Morocco in 1631, when Sharif ibn Ali became Prince of Talfilat. The royal family was able to pacify and establish control over the majority of what constitutes the current state of Morocco in the successive generation, under the rule of Aulay al-Rashid son of Sharif ibn Ali. The royal family claims to be direct descendants of the prophet Muhammad and maintained their position as sultans under both the Spanish and French protectorates of Morocco, ruling through to the present.

reject[ing] the sultan's suzerainty."[24] Enduring connections between Western Sahara and Morocco prior to colonization were strictly cultural, based on a shared religious framework and a degree of shared ancestry. Important to note, is that even these cultural ties were tenuous, as they existed nearly exclusively in the Western imagination, in that the West viewed both peoples as 'other' or inferior or Muslim, etc. In actuality, the social and political structure of the two regions was dramatically different and the two peoples maintained their own cultural nuances, imagining themselves as distinct ethno-cultural groups, or in other words nations.

The Arabization of the Maghreb represents only a singular contributing factor to the hybrid character of the Sahrawi and inseparable from their modern ethno-nationalist identity is a history of European colonialism. Complete European domination over the region of Western Sahara was not instituted until the second wave of imperialism that characterized the period from the mid-19th century to the eve of WWI. Not to say that prior to the 19th century Europeans had not been present in the periphery life of the region's inhabitants, however, before the European 'Scramble for Africa,' Western Sahara was minimally attractive to outside prospectors. The first European contact with the Western Saharan coast came in the 15th century, as part of the Portuguese age of maritime discovery, which prompted the initial phase of European colonization. Portuguese exploration remained relegated to the coast, with only minimal excursions into the interior, often in the form of raids for slaves and/or gold.[25] European influence did not expand beyond these rather inconsequential trading ties for several centuries and after the decades immediately following initial contact, Portuguese and Spanish interest in Western Sahara faded. The decline of European interest can be attributed in part to the

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[24] Zuness, 99.
[25] Dodges, 79.

overshadowing of Western Sahara by other newly accessible regions with more economic dynamism, namely the Americas and the East Indies.

The construction of the Spanish Sahara in the 19th century was part of a larger process of world making undertaken by the great European powers and embodied a renewed interest in the region that would undoubtedly alter the Sahrawi identity moving forward. After the initial contact of European nations with the Western Saharan region in the 15th-century, Spain had managed to maintain several holdings in and around the northwestern African continent. The most significant being the cities of Ceuta and Melilla in northern Morocco and the Canary Islands, which sit opposite of the Western Saharan coast. These territories were maintained as footholds into various trading routes and remained of minimal additional importance to the Spanish government until the 1800s. The crown's renewed interest in the Sahara can be explained by a combination of domestic and international pressures, pushing for a new wave of imperialism. The first half of the 19th century bore witness to an era of world crises, known as the Age of Revolutions, the period shocked the globe and reshaped fundamental social systems. The formal empires of old were decimated and the imperial powers, other than Britain, emerged from the period at a loss, having witnessed successive revolutions throughout the Americas. Over the dramatic half century, Spain managed to lose the entirety of its colonial holdings in Latin America, a loss that "left a sense of wounded pride which some Spanish nationalists hoped to dispel by pursuing new imperial glories in Africa."[26] The renewed nationalist fervor for the glory of overseas expansion was not isolated to Spain, but represented a broader desire of European states. The major European empire builders turned to Africa not just to rectify wounded egos over their American losses, but as an effort to compete with the mounting

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[26] Hodges, 80.

economic presence of the United States. During the latter half of the 19th century, the term 'American Danger,' entered the vernacular of European statesmen and referred to the spectacular rise of the world's first postcolonial society. America's impressive growth in this period can be in part attributed to a new form of economic integration of a continent sized territory, that "redefin[ed] the relationships between national capitalism, state power and national territory."[27] In an effort to replicate this new model, European powers turned to Africa as their own possible 'Western frontier,' determined to capitalize on this new understanding of territoriality. As such, the European scramble for Africa can be understood partially as a manifestation of European anxiety over what some saw as an oncoming economic struggle, between the old European imperial states and the growing geopolitical power of the United States.

The intensification of Spanish influence over Western Sahara was not a coincidence, but a deliberate action that took into account the pressure of Spanish nationalists and a future which some saw marred with economic hardship. Understanding the driving forces behind second wave imperialism contextualizes Spanish action in Western Sahara and Madrid's insistence on maintaining control over the region for the century following the Age of Revolutions. In the mid-19th century, Madrid began seriously attempting to consolidate its power beyond its old colonial holdings. Spain's policies of expansion southward and into the interior of the continent began "when the Spanish government obtained Ifni….as a result of the 1860 Treaty of Peace and Amity with the Moroccan sultan."[28] During the Berlin Conference a decade and a half later, 1884-1845, the marginal coastal holdings of Spain such as Ifni, were recognized as enough of a sovereign claim, that the region was given to Spain as part of the European partition of the African

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[27] Beckert, Sven. "American Danger: United States Empire, Eurafrica, and the Territorialization of Industrial Capitalism, 1870–1950." *The American Historical Review*, vol. 122, no. 4, 2017, pp. 1139
[28] Zunes, 100.

continent. In December 1884 Madrid declared a 'protectorate' over what now constitutes the

territory of Western Sahara, as well as two adjacent protectorates farther north, referred to as

north and south Spanish Morocco. Definite borders in the northwestern region would not be

settled until several decades later in 1912, following four successive Franco-Spanish

conventions, which delineated the two nations respective territories and powers.[29,30] Madrid

maintained minimal direct control over their new colony, limiting their presence to only a few

coastal garrisons and administrating Western Sahara from their more robust colonial

infrastructure in Morocco. The interior of Western Sahara "became a sanctuary for nomad forces

resisting the French advance into the neighboring regions."[31] Over the course of three decades

(1904-34) raiding parties from the Spanish interior would attack the French, causing Spain,

under immense pressure from France, to finally occupy several strategic points in the interior.

For two more decades, the colony of Western Sahara would remain seemingly forgotten to

Madrid, as the Sahrawi people maintained their nomadic lifestyle with limited interference or

governance.

Not until the late-1950s would the Spanish attitude towards Western Sahara change, as

economic prospects awoke interest in Madrid, rapidly and fundamentally changing the Saharawi

way of life. The rich coastal fishing waters of Western Sahara had been exploited by the

Spaniards for nearly four-and-a-half centuries from their position in the Canary Islands. This

enterprise required minimal infrastructure in the region and had yielded little wealth for the

region's indigenous inhabitants. Not until the early 1960s would economic patterns begin to have

more profound impacts, as the region of Western Sahara was flagged for oil and mineral

[29] Zunes, 100.
[30] Hodges, *File,* 80.
[31] Hodges, *File*, 81.

extraction. Though no commercial oil exploitation occurred, oil companies descended on the region in the early 1960s after 43 onshore blocks, accounting for 37% of the territory's land-area, were awarded to 11 consortia groups. Western Sahara was only seriously considered for capital exploitation after the discoveries of iron ore and later phosphate rock deposits. In 1962, a systematic survey of the territory was conducted by the newly formed Spanish company *Empresa Nacional Minera del Sahara*, which revealed an estimated 10 billion tons of phosphate deposits. In 1969, Madrid founded a special company *Fosfatos de Bu-Craa* specializing in the exploitation of phosphate deposits in the Sahara and in 1972 exports from the region began.[32] After their initial survey Madrid began investing heavily in the region's phosphate extraction capabilities, connecting mines to ports and increasing production capacity to 2.6 million tons by 1972, a number that was only set to grow. Spanish Sahara was on track to being the world's second largest high-grade phosphate exporter, dwarfed only by Morocco.

Significant economic investment on the part of Madrid, only increased the states desire to not cede its territory in Western Sahara. Especially after Spain was forced to relinquish both northern Spanish Morocco and the Sahrawi populated Zona del Draa to the newly independent Rabat government, in 1956 and 1958 respectively.[33] Unlike the early fishing industries, mineral extraction required a buildup of the interior and rapid social change accompanied the economic changes brought by Spanish investment. Madrid began actively investing in the region's indigenous population, encouraging sedentarism and rapid urbanization, with an estimated 55% of the Sahrawi population residing in the region's three main cities by 1974. The modernization of Western Sahara disrupted the most fundamental elements of Sahrawi life and was ruthlessly administered by the established police state. The Sahrawi were encouraged to take up wage jobs,

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[32] Hodges, *File*, 83.
[33] Zunes, 101.

establish businesses and attend government schools, sacrificing their traditional nomadic lifestyle and the accompanying social structure. The ruling Spanish military officials stripped the traditional Sahrawi elders of sociopolitical standing, relegating them to a largely performative position as 'consultants' in a Spanish established *Djemaa*.[34]

The most significant colonial export was the introduction of colonial ethnography, which undoubtedly worked to shape the Sahrawi as a self-identifying group or nation. As a general principle, European imperial states viewed subjected populations as inferior and instituted their own social castes as a way of reorganizing colonial societies with varying goals. In accordance with the majority of the Maghreb, European ethnography in Western Sahara conformed to "the same basic oppositional model [of] Amazigh/Arab."[35] Understanding the implications of colonial castes, helps frame both the construction of the Sahrawi as a people/nation and highlights the power dynamics of the Sahrawi-Moroccan relationship. Throughout the 19th and 20th century, Spanish officials divided the existing Sahrawi tribes along the lines of the Arab Hassan, those descended from 11th-century arrivals from the Arab peninsula and Amazigh/Imazighen/Zawaya, the "true natives" or Berbers of the Sahara. Those now understood as Sahrawi, generally were categorized as Amazigh within the colonial infrastructure, while the ruling family of Morocco and those in the north were more often 'Arab.' Moreover, colonial ethnography applied a hierarchy within its castes, where "Zawaya were allegedly subordinate to the Hassan."[36] The implied power dynamics of colonial society consolidated the Sahrawi into a singular social caste and point of identification. This categorization is inseparable from the modern Sahrawi identity

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[34] Hodge, *File*, 82.
[35] Zunes, 94.
[36] Zunes, 94.

and in combination with Spanish rule of Western Sahara from their colonial offices in Morocco laid the basis for the relationship which modern Moroccan claims seek to reaffirm.

Spanish occupation of Western Sahara formally ended in 1975, though campaigns for independence had manifested themselves well before Madrid's formal ceding of the territory. During the decade leading up to the Spanish withdrawal, Madrid repeatedly attempted to circumvent growing pressure to decolonize, declaring Spanish Sahara a "province" rather than a protectorate or colony and affirming the right of the Sahrawi to self-determination — at least in theory. Amidst the growing anticolonial sentiment of the US led post-1945 order, the UN General Assembly passed its Resolution 2229, in 1966, stating the right of self-determination for the people of Western Sahara, a stance it would reaffirm in 1972 through its adoption of Resolution 2983.[37] Movements for liberation within Spanish Sahara remained fairly limited and ambiguous in their goals during the mid-20th century. There was a brief insurgency from 1957-58, catalyzed by Morocco regaining independence in 1956, during which Saharan participants launched periodic guerrilla campaigns against the French and Spanish colonial forces. A coalition of French and Spanish power decisively crushed the rebellion in Spanish Sahara in late-1957. This repression coupled with environmental pressures, primarily drought, caused a significant number of Sahrawi to flee as refugees and settle in southern Morocco. Despite the rebellion's minimal immediate effects, the period would be valorized by subsequent nationalist thinkers and act as a model for later movements. The first true nationalist Sahrawi uprising, referred to as the Intifadah al-Zamlah, occurred in 1970. Under the leadership of Mohammed Sidi Ibrahim Bassiri the movement launched a sizable demonstration in al-Zamlah Square in al-'Ayun, that was brutally suppressed by Spanish forces. The movement, known as *Harakat Tahrir*

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[37] Zunes, 102.

Saguia el-Hamra wa Oued ed-Dahab (Liberation Organization of Saguia el Hamra and Oued ed Dahab), effectively died with the capture — and believed murder — of Bassiri, still it acts a significant moment in the Sahrawi struggle for liberation.

Much of the initiative and organizing power behind anti-colonial movements came from Sahrawi's living abroad in Morocco and Mauritania, where there was more exposure to narratives of decolonization and the political left. It is within the Sahrawi diaspora that the Polisario Front was born in 1973, under the leadership of university student El-Ouali Mustapha Sayed. The movement stood as a "unique expression of the masses, opting for revolutionary violence and the armed struggle as the means by which the Sahrawi Arab African people can recover its total liberty and foil the maneuvers of Spanish colonialism."[38] In the early 1970s the movement began launching a series of military campaigns against Spanish forces in Western Sahara and engaging in both diplomatic and propaganda work. At the organization's second congress in 1974, the movement came out as strictly for full independence, negating former ambiguity and thoughts of Sahrawi integration under a unified Morocco. The Polisario Front transformed in the mid-70s "from a small vanguard group into a mass movement" in response to "vacillation of Spanish policy and the looming threat from Morocco."[39] A UN mission of inquiry to the territory in May 1975, highlighted the movements growing popular support, noting that "[a]t every place visited, the Mission was met by mass political demonstrations…[f]rom all these it became evident to the Mission that there was an overwhelming consensus among Saharans within the territory in favor of independence."[40] After the Polisario Front's display of strength to the UN Mission, the colonial government was forced to come to terms with the Polisario as a

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[38] Hodges, *File*, 85. Though this quote comes from the Polsario manifesto of May 10th, 1973.
[39] Hodges, *File*, 86.
[40] Report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Spanish Sahara, 1975, *op. Cit.*, pp 59.

reality. In the subsequent months Madrid began ceding several territories to the Polisario and growing good will between the two allowed for the colonial authorities and Polisario leadership to begin plans for "some Polisario leaders [to] move into al-'Ayun in preparation for the territory's independence."[41] Less than a month later Spain would do a complete reversal and seemingly abandon the Polisario, leaving its colony to Morocco and Mauritania.

Modern Conflict Begins: The Solidification of Contesting Sovereign Claims

The aspirations of the Polisario Front would not be realized with the end of Spanish occupation, as the Madrid Accords of November 14, 1975, announced both the formal withdrawal of Spain from the region and the joint Mauritanian/Moroccan annexation of Western Sahara. The Polisario — or any representative body of the Sahrawi for that matter — were not included in the discussion of the Accords and no mention of the Polisario or self-determination was included in them. Following the announcement of annexation, the majority of the Sahrawi people solidified their support of the Polisario Front, rallying behind them and advocating for the continued fight for independence. Thousands of men enrolled in the organization's guerrilla army and the Polisario soon went to war with both Morocco and Mauritania, rejecting any settlements that did not guarantee full territorial independence for the Sahrawi people. The Polisario Front formally declared the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic as a state-in-exile on February 27, 1976 and began acting as a true government both in the region and internationally.[42] Mauritania withdrew claims of sovereignty over any territory in Western Sahara in 1979, strained by the Polisario's guerrilla tactics. Conversely, Morocco was able to establish a *de facto* control over

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[41] Zunes, 105.
[42] Zoubir, Yahia H. "The United Nations Failure in Resolving the Western Sahara Conflict." *The Middle East Journal*. Autumn, 1995, Vol. 49, No. 4, pp 614-628.

the majority of Western Sahara that extends into the 21st-century and leads to the question of who is in control of Western Sahara.

Prior to analyzing the specific ramifications of annexation and actions taken by the Polisario Front and Morocco in the last half-century, it is necessary to examine the Moroccan platform on which it claims rightful sovereignty over Western Sahara. The Alaouite dynasty had for decades leading up to the Madrid Accords, expressed its belief that the territory of Western Sahara belonged to the 'greater or unified Morocco.' In a speech given in 1958 King Mohammed V of Morocco, pledged to "continue to do everything in our power to recover our Sahara and all that which, by historical evidence and by the will of its inhabitants, belongs as of right to our kingdom."[43] While the popularity of the Polisario in the following decades appears to refute the Alaouite claim of Sahrawi desire for reunification with Morocco, the historical portion of the Moroccan platform is not as easily understood. This side of Moroccan case is outlined in the 1974 Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), which at the UN General Assembly's behest was asked to rule on whether Spain had occupied Moroccan territory when it established its Spanish Saharan colony in 1885. The Hague ruled definitively in favor of Western Sahara's right to self-determination and detailed how under international law the former territory of Spanish Sahara belonged to the indigenous Saharawi people who were the only rightful bearers of sovereignty. In the court's opinion, the territory was not "no man's land" or the property of Morocco or Mauritania prior to European colonization, rather the court understood the land as "inhabited by people which, if nomadic, were socially and politically organized in tribes and under chiefs competent to represent them."[44] Morocco also claimed geographical continuity between the two regions and "immemorial possession" that began with the Islamic conquest of

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[43] Hodges, Tony. "The Origins of Saharawi Nationalism." *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 5, no. 1, 1983, pp. 38.
[44] Zunes, 106.

North Africa. Morocco produced a theoretical argument, wherein they posited that the Sahrawi people recognized the Moroccan sultan's "spiritual authority" as a descendent of the Prophet Muhammad and his position as commander of the faithful. Over the course of the court's proceedings the Moroccan delegation produced three main arguments, drawing on what they saw as historical, regional, international, or cultural evidence. At the end of its proceedings, the ICJ concluded that it was unable to discern "any legal tie of territorial sovereignty between Western Sahara and the Moroccan State."[45] Finding nothing to suggest that Resolution 1514 regarding the decolonization of Western Sahara and self-determination for the region's inhabitants, should be disrupted by perceived legal ties between the territory and Morocco.

While the Hague's opinion had limited impact on the Sahrawi reality, with the Madrid Accords announced the following year, the court's ruling does give validity to the Polisario Front's cause and detracts from current Moroccan campaigns. Contemporarily the two sides are at an impasse and for all intents and purposes minimal progress has been made in resolving the conflict in the past half-century. Formal aggression between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Polisario paused in 1990, as the UN sponsored a ceasefire between the two parties, dividing the territory into two respective zones of control and establishing the United Nations' Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara to handle the conflict's de-escalation. The commission's goal was to produce and publish a list of eligible Sahrawi voters and hold a referendum the following year, giving the Sahrawi people the choice between independence and integration with Morocco. The committee's plan was endorsed by the Security Council and "[a]corrding to the UN schedule, the fate of the Western Sahara would be decided by late January 1992."[46] Nearly three decades later, no such referendum has taken place, with continued delays and challenges on the

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45 Zunes, 109.
46 Zoubir, 617.

part of Morocco preventing decisive ruling. The largest impediment to the referendum, is difficulty in establishing and legitimizing an eligible Sahrawi voter pool, a problem which toys intimately with the relationship of nation and state. Specifically, how can a nation, a body that exists merely as an imagined cultural community and relies on what are subjective ties of historical and social experience be quantified. Put another way, how can a nation be folded into a state when a relationship between the two did not come to fruition naturally.

Impasse Politics as an Arbitration of War

Contemporarily it seems that the two sides of the Western Sahara conflict, the Polisario Front and Morocco, are at irreconcilable odds. In nearly five decades the situation has not progressed closer to a solution; in fact, it has devolved into a logistical failure on the part of the UN, an impediment to Maghreb and more broadly African unity and a crisis of stateless people with inherent humanitarian implications. Conceptualizing a complete cessation of hostilities between the two parties is difficult, as Morocco and the Polisario arguably exist in two distinctive frameworks of social organization. The Polisario Front is foremost an organization of and for the people, founded in the diaspora and standing for the shared ethno-cultural identity of the Sahrawi. The Polisario exist in a nationalist schema and historical analysis underlines the organization's difficulty in translating their representative capacity into action in the nation's favor. Conversely, the Alaouite dynasty of the Kingdom of Morocco represents an established state, validated in every international capacity and constituting a top-down administration of a defined territory. In the context of the conflict over Western Sahara, Morocco struggles to extend its sovereign statehood over a foreign nation, lacking the popular sovereignty of the people the country attempts to administer. Framing the conflict in this regard, with either side fulfilling one

half of the nation-state dichotomy, both substantiates the world-system posited by Taylor and brings to light the system's shortcomings.

The struggle over Western Sahara illustrates the inability of a nation (the Sahrawi) or a state (the Kingdom of Morocco) to unilaterally access and practically operate political sovereignty in a formal capacity. The situation also highlights the failure of international institutions in acting as presiding powers over the assignment and legitimation of sovereignty. The UN, AU, and ICJ have all ruled on the issue of sovereignty in Western Sahara and moreover, have all reached the same rudimentary conclusion of the Sahrawi as sovereign. Yet, without a presiding unified nation-state, the conflict remains unresolved, as in Taylor's system of world order the territoriality of the nation-state has monopolized the exercise of political sovereignty. In the post-1975 era, the actual conflict, which represents both sides of the nation-state dichotomy, has become the entrenched power in the region rather than either oppositional party. The conflict itself operates on the international stage and has more political agency than a resolution. Parties, both within and outside of the region, depend on the irresolvable nature of the situation, in order to leverage the ostensibly unattainable goal of resolution as a political tool. Examples of such manipulation are dispersed throughout the past half-century: with Algeria's unconditional support of the Polisario Front acting as a check on the nation's largest rival in the Maghreb, Morocco; the USSR and America's funding of the two sides operating as a minor proxy war; and most recently the Trump administration's leveraging of their support in order to force the Moroccan government to normalize relations with Israel. In all of these instances, the conflict acts and is treated as an independent entity to be bargained with and leveraged irrespective of the Polisario Front and Morocco. Perhaps more important is the fact that all of these situations are contingent on — or at least are benefited by — the conflicts perpetuation.

Political stasis affords the conflict over Western Sahara a degree of agency that neither the Polisario Front nor Morocco are independently allotted.

The Western Sahara case and more specifically the conflict's position as an actual political instrument, stands as paradoxical proof of Foucault's thesis from his 1975/76 lecture, *Society Must Be Defended*, that "politics is the continuation of war by other means." Here Foucault explains that in modern society, there exists a form of continuous warfare which rages "in all mechanisms of power." Foucault postulates that political power and war are not mutually exclusive institutions and war has an intrinsically political role as a "permanent social relationship" and mediator of relations and institutions of power.[47] Formal armed combat in the region of Western Sahara concluded approximately three decades ago, yet war still rages, with every political action seeking to mediate relations of varying scales. As the conflict over Western Sahara has in the past half-year been recentered on the international stage, with some predicting an imminent reignition of violence and a collapse of the current period of tenuous peace, the inherently war-like nature of impasse politics has become all the more glaring. The outgoing Trump administration's Israel-Morocco deal was cast as a deal in the name of peace, which sought to bring normalcy and stability to the region, however, it is largely agreed by political commentators that the action does anything but. Rather, "this supposed peace deal has ruptured decades of U.S. foreign policy in North Africa, and it sets the stage for more violent conflict, not less."[48] The Israel-Morocco deal forfeited the U.S.' largest bargaining chip in the region by confirming the country's allegiance, however, as long as conflict remains a reality, the US

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[47] Foucault, Michel. *"Society Must Be Defended": Lectures at the College De France, 1975-76*. Translated by David Macey, Picador, 2003, pp. 71/72.

[48] Roblin, Sébastien. "Trump Claims Israel-Morocco Deal Brings Peace, but in Reality It Could Spark War." *NBC News*, 22 Dec. 2020, www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/trump-claims-israel-morocco-deal-brings-peace-reality-it-could-ncna1252161.

remains able to leverage its support in order to pressure Morocco. Thus, the continuation of hostilities is arguably a beneficial reality for the United States. The Trump administrations' formal recognition of Moroccan sovereignty represents the most recent example of the short-sighted political leveraging of the Western Saharan conflict, which entails no practical end or impactful policy aimed towards resolution. The instrumentality awarded to the conflict in the absence of physical violence, as demonstrated by the U.S. brokered Israel-Morocco deal, perpetuates antagonistic relations between the Polisario Front and the Kingdom of Morocco. Thus maintaining the relations of war through the arbitration of politics.

The continued political stasis of Western Sahara can be attributed partly to the moderating power of war as a measure of control. A more profound revelation regarding the territory's protracted indeterminism involves the proof it provides of the nation-state's pervasiveness and domination in the modern era. Despite claims of an oncoming resurgence of violence, the Trump administration's deal does little to alter the structural reality of the conflict. It does nothing to change the legality of Moroccan sovereignty, which has been internationally denounced, and the Trump proposal has been wholly rejected by the Polisario and Algeria. Even if armed conflict were to resume in the region, there is no direct link between a resurgence of war and a total end to hostilities, it would work to merely exacerbate existing social and political dynamics. The core issue of a power vacuum caused by the lack of a viable governing institution (i.e. a nation-state) remains. As such, while theorists can predict the "future futility" of the nation-state as the prevailing organizational unit of political space, the conflict over Western Sahara ultimately demonstrates that, "dismissals of contemporary territoriality [are] premature."[49] Until a profound evolution in the organizational architecture of global political

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[49] Taylor, 161.

space occurs, defined by Clifford Geertz as "a shift away from looking at the state first and foremost as a leviathan machine….to looking at it against the background of the sort of society in which it is embedded,"[50] it is entirely possible that true resolution in Western Sahara will remain an unobtainable reality.

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[50] Geertz, Clifford. "What Is a State If It Is Not a Sovereign?" *Life among the Anthros and Other Essays*, edited by Fred Inglis, Princeton University Press, 2010. pp. 205.

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Hollywood to Latinos: Drop Dead

Ben Cooper[1]

Setting the Stage: Fear (of a Latino) City

In the 1970s, just a decade after the smash-hit musical *West Side Story* (1961) put Puerto

Rican characters in the Hollywood spotlight and dazzled moviegoers nationwide, New York

Latinos found themselves profoundly marginalized in the American cinema amidst an era of

historic instability — for themselves, for their city, and for filmmaking itself. By 1970, the city's

Latino population surpassed 1.2 million, almost double that of the previous decade, as the

immigration reforms of the Hart-Celler Act in tandem with regional instability in Latin America

(wrought in large part by political and economic interference by the United States) sent

thousands of migrants to New York.[2] In the five boroughs, people from Puerto Rico, the

Dominican Republic, Cuba, and, increasingly, other parts of Latin America, joined and expanded

existing working-class Latino enclaves like the South Bronx, Loisada, and Red Hook, creating

what Juan Flores calls the "diaspora city."[3] Few trials would strain this interwoven relationship

to the city more than those of the 1970s, the era of New York's disastrous fiscal crisis. As the

historian Kim Phillips-Fein has deftly recounted in *Fear City: New York's Fiscal Crisis and the*

Rise of Austerity Politics, in the midst of a steep economic decline wrought by white flight,

deindustrialization, and a retrenchment of federal aid — as well as New York State's strict tax

caps and the city's own budgetary chicanery — New York City was facing down a multibillion-

[2] Gabriel Haslip-Viera, "The Evolution of the Latina/o Community in New York City" in *Latinos in New York: Communities in Transition*, edited by Sherrie Baver, Angelo Falón, and Gabriel Haslip-Viera. 17-56. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2017, 33.
[3] Juan Flores, "Nueva York: Diaspora City" in *Latinos in New York: Communities in Transition*, edited by Sherrie Baver, Angelo Falón, and Gabriel Haslip-Viera. 439-449. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2017, 439.

dollar budget hole and the very real possibility of insolvency by the mid-70s. Infamously rebuffed by the Ford Administration, New York Mayor Abraham Beame was pressured by the financial community into assembling a pair of fiscal control boards that proposed cataclysmic budget cuts, layoffs, and reductions in city services. Only after the city accepted these once-unthinkable measures did the federal government extend loan guarantees and the financial industry once again begin purchasing the city's bonds.[4] The price for escaping the "valley of the shadow of default,"[5] then, was a cascading social crisis that deteriorated living conditions and engendered an image of New York as a crumbling, war-torn, "worst of all possible worlds."[6] Fundamentally, the choices made during the crisis cheapened the city's social contract with its citizens — in particular, Latino and Black New Yorkers whose neighborhoods and communal networks were the most crushed by the city's pivot to austerity.[7]

Into this maelstrom swaggered the motion picture industry. After the collapse of the old studio system and the restrictive Hays Production Code in the 1960s, independent mavericks from Dennis Hopper to Barbara Loden forged a revolutionary school of American filmmaking, dubbed the "New Hollywood" and defined by artistic freedom and narrative unconventionality.[8] No genre epitomized this breakaway movement more than the films shot on location in New York City. Taking advantage of the Mayor's Office of Motion Pictures and Television, established by Mayor John Lindsay in the late 1960s, New Hollywood filmmakers constructed a

[4] Kim Phillips-Fein, *Fear City: New York's Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of Austerity Politics* (New York, NY: Picador, 2017), 5.
[5] Phillips-Fein, *Fear City*.
[6] Llana Barber, *Latino City: Immigration and Urban Crisis in Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1945–2000* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 7.
[7] Phillips-Fein, *Fear City*.
[8] For a semi-comprehensive account of the New Hollywood era, skip the heavily criticized Peter Siskind book and find its synonymous companion documentary, *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls: How the Sex, Drugs and Rock 'N' Roll Generation Saved Hollywood*, director Kenneth Bowser (BBC Films, 2003), DVD.

new cinematic vision of the city that capitalized on its tarnished Crisis-era image.[9] Dispensing

with midcentury modernism and Old Hollywood backlots in favor of gritty, unvarnished

locations, the New York films of the late 60s, 70s, and early 80s seized on contemporary social

anxieties around street crime, poverty, and policing, producing a visceral lineup of critical and

commercial hits, among them *The French Connection* (1971), *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975), and

Taxi Driver (1976). Including similar projects from San Francisco to London, film scholar

Lawrence Webb has christened this genre the "Cinema of Urban Crisis," but we may call its

epitome, the New York films, simply the "New York Crisis" cycle.[10] Consistently, white male

anti-heroes dominated the genre (this was the age of "I'm walking here!," "You talkin' to me?,"

and "You feeling lucky, punk?"). While some Black independent filmmakers were able to create

a subversive and profitable niche with the "Blaxploitation" genre, in New Hollywood, portrayals

of urban Latino characters remained severely limited.[11]

As the historian Llana Barber has observed, while Latinos played a transformational role

in the historical drama of the era's multiple urban crises, they remain "woefully

underrepresented" in urban scholarship.[12] I contend the same obfuscation is true within

scholarship on Latino media representation, on the Urban Crisis cinema, and, importantly, within

the narratives of the Crisis films themselves. In the New York Crisis genre specifically, we find

Latinos on the margins of both the films' stories and the imagined community of the city they

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[9] While parts of *West Side Story* were strikingly shot on location in the neighborhood that would be torn down to construct Lincoln Center, these segments were still staged theatrically, mixed with actual set work, and such a strategy was fairly novel for the period, making the rugged realism of the Crisis films all the more radical.

[10] Lawrence Webb, *The Cinema of Urban Crisis: Seventies Film and the Reinvention of the City* (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Amsterdam University Press, 1992), 17.

[11] For a comprehensive look at the Blaxploitation cycle, see Novotny Lawrence's *Blaxploitation Films of the 1970s: Blackness and Genre* (Abingdon-on-Thames, England, UK: Routledge, 2007) and for a sharp analysis of the Black racial politics of the Crisis films, see Wesley Morris, "Shaft,' 'Dirty Harry' and the Rise of the Supercop," *New York Times*, Nov 5, 2020, https://nyti.ms/2TX4WIp.

[12] Barber, *Latino City*, 7.

present — glimpsed in small supporting roles like those of bodega owners and adult theater managers. Nevertheless, a thorough analysis of these limited portrayals can be hugely revealing as a reflection of how the city itself viewed (or chose not to view) its Latino residents amid the tumult of the crisis. Chiefly, the malleability of Latinos' racial status (both in New York and the United States) allowed New York Crisis filmmakers to racialize them with a wide degree of flexibility according to the narrative and ideological aims of their respective films. However, regardless of characters' racialization, films in the Crisis genre tended to imagistically dismantle Latino communities, depriving Latino New Yorkers of personal or collective mobility and disregarding struggles fundamental to their experiences navigating the heartbreak and fury of the Crisis era.

Part One: Racial Ambiguity

"You think I can't understand these people? Hey, the Irish are a lot like the Puerto Ricans. In fact, we are the Puerto Ricans, in England."

- Paul Newman, *Fort Apache, The Bronx* (1981)

In their conflicting and unsettled portrayals of Latino characters, the films of the Crisis cycle reflect a contemporaneous sense of ambiguity around Latinos' racial status in the United States. While a baseline understanding of Black New Yorkers' socio-racial position is clear throughout the genre — demonstrated in depictions both racist (*The French Connection* [1971]), anti-racist (*Across 110th Street* [1972]), or ambivalent (*Taxi Driver* [1976]) — Latino characters are understood more obscurely, appearing in smaller supporting roles, scarcely evoked in conversations among non-Latinos, and generally occupying a far less prominent space in the urban consciousness of the films than do African Americans or whites. Their marginalization, then, reflects what Latino media scholars Christopher González and Frederick Luis Aldama call

Latinos' "absent-presence and present-absence" in the American cinema, but it also implies a

certain apprehensiveness about wrestling with the racial identity of American Latinos writ large,

a debate which reached its zenith in the Crisis era.[13] In New York, Latinos navigated a binarized

American racial system that viewed them largely as people of color, in contrast to the complex

and gradational (though frequently hierarchical and white-centric) racial matrices of Latin

America.[14] In writing, activism, and conversation, they wrestled with the implications of this

schema: Was there a pan-Latino identity, as advocates of the Chicano Movement or, *el*

movimiento, argued? What was the position of people who considered themselves white, Black,

mixed, or indigenous in their home country or territory, but were not viewed the same way in the

United States?[15] In America, they found, Latinos were often paired, by policy and rhetoric, with

African Americans, subject to similar cycles of disinvestment and discrimination. On the other

hand, they were often ascribed what Llana Barber characterizes as a non-white, non-Black,

ambiguously "urban" ethnicity, particularly so for Latino immigrants and their descendants

during the Crisis period.[16]

In the New York Crisis cinema, that notion of pan-ethnicity is at once implicitly

supported and largely obfuscated. Apart from the occasional characterization of characters as

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[13] Christopher González and Frederick Luis Aldama, *Reel Latinxs: Representation in U.S. Film and TV* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2019), 57.

[14] Jorge Duany, "Reconstructing Racial Identity: Ethnicity, Color, and Class among Dominicans in the United States and Puerto Rico." *Latin American Perspectives* Vol. 25, no. 3 (May, 1998), 147-172.

[15] Jeffrey O.G. Ogbar, "Puerto Rico en mi corazón: The Young Lords, Black Power, and Puerto Rican Nationalism in the U.S., 1966-1972." *Centro Journal* 18, no. 01 (Fall 2006), 153-154.

[16] Barber, *Latino City*, 8. The complex nature of this debate was on full display in the awkward and trepidatious language of the era's Censuses: After adding and dropping the "Mexican" racial designation in 1930 and 1940, respectively, the U.S. Census Bureau made its first attempt at a more comprehensive Latino "origin or descent" question in 1970, asking Americans to self-identify as "Mexican; Puerto Rican; Cuban; Central or South American; Other Spanish." A decade later, the Census of 1980 saw a modification of these categories ("Mexican/Mexican-Am., Chicano; Puerto-Rican; Cuban; Other Spanish/Hispanic") as well as the first attempt at a pan-ethnic label ("Spanish/Hispanic origin or descent"). The term "Latino" itself would not appear until the 2000 Census. ("Measuring Race and Ethnicity Across the Decades: 1790–2010," United States Census Bureau, last revised September 4, 2015. https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/race/MREAD_1790_2010.html).

"Spanish," Latinos are rarely referenced on an explicitly pan-ethnic basis, while at the same time, few specific Latino ethnicities are ever identified or considered specifically, apart from, occasionally, Puerto Ricans. This duality resulted in a kind of racial flattening, collapsing the diaspora into a (poorly understood) collection of unnamed, ambiguously "Spanish" personae (the reality of Afro-Latino identity is scarcely considered). The Chicano film scholar Charles Ramírez Berg has argued that in Hollywood, dominant modes of Latino stereotyping remain largely consistent throughout the 20th century with only superficial adjustments, while certain films — those with more complex or contradictory portrayals — can be read as "conflicted" or "incoherent" texts.[17] I contend that the 1970s itself represented a "conflicted" decade, and the New York Crisis cycle within it a conflicted genre. Stranded between two dominant eras of Latino racialization — the dying Western and the emerging *narco* drama — the cinema of the 1970s constitutes an ambiguous, unsettled space for the depiction of Latino characters.

Some of the Crisis films, principally police thrillers, actively embrace derogatory tropes. *Fort Apache, The Bronx* (1981), for instance, features the actor Jaime Tirelli and playwright Miguel Piñero as a duo of lecherous Puerto Rican drug pushers who fatally overdose the love interest of the film's police officer protagonist (Paul Newman).[18] Similarly, in 1973's *Badge 373*, Robert Duvall plays an ex-officer working to take down a vast gun-smuggling conspiracy orchestrated by a gang of sinister Puerto Rican nationalists who have murdered his partner.[19] Berg has dubbed such characterizations "urban *bandidos*" after the "degenerate" greaser stereotype promulgated by Hollywood Westerns for much of the studio era.[20] As described by

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[17] Charles Ramírez Berg, *Latino Images in Film: Stereotypes, Subversion, and Resistance* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002), 66, 69.
[18] *Fort Apache, The Bronx,* directed by Daniel Petrie, (20th Century Fox, 1981), DVD.
[19] *Badge 373*, directed by Howard W. Koch, (Paramount Pictures, 1973), https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.10a9f785-db6e-2783-18ad-418845b5ac12?autoplay=1&ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb.
[20] Berg, *Latino Images*, 31.

González and Aldama, the classic *bandido* is constructed as the "fast-talking, crude…

slobberingly despicable villain," typically part of a gang, from whom innocent townspeople are

saved by the "mysterious badass" white cowboy figure.[21] Berg argues that the Latino gangsters

of subsequent urban crime films are constructed no differently, and indeed *Badge 373* and *Fort*

Apache, The Bronx conspicuously apply these Western tropes onto a cops-and-robbers paradigm.

Additionally, as González and Aldama explain, the casting of Latino actors in these roles, as

opposed to the Western's frequent use of white actors in brownface, served to legitimize the

equally derogatory nature of the portrayals.[22] This concept is particularly applicable to *Fort*

Apache, The Bronx, as Piñero was a widely respected poet and writer who himself had written

extensively about poverty, incarceration, and other challenges faced by the Nuyorican

community.[23] However, as damaging as these characterizations were, they remained infrequent

during the Crisis era, and the "urban *bandido*" trend would not truly gain currency until the

1980s with Drug War-era *narco* thrillers like *Scarface* (1983) and TV's *Miami Vice* (1984-1990),

which produced enduring stereotypes of criminality and excess.[24]

In a more subtly pernicious pattern of stereotyping, a number of films in the Crisis genre

deliberately mystify and obfuscate the Spanish language, implicitly "othering" or exoticizing

Latino characters. One such film is the blockbuster action caper *The Taking of Pelham One Two*

Three (1974), which tracks a hostage situation that plays out aboard an MTA railcar, as a group

of hijackers demand one million dollars from the city in exchange for the passengers' safety. One

of the passengers, a Latina woman played by the actress María Landa, speaks only in Spanish,

[21] González and Aldama, *Reel Latinxs*, 65.
[22] Ibid., 69.
[23] "Miguel Piñero," Poetry Foundation, accessed November 15 2020,
https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/miguel-pinero.
[24] Berg, *Latino Images*, 68.

and the majority of her lines are yelled in confusion as the situation becomes more severe

("¡¿Qué está pasando?!," "¡¿Por qué estos hombres están aquí?!," etc).[25] None of Landa's lines

are subtitled, erecting a conspicuous barrier between her character's diegesis and the audience's,

thus positioning her (warranted) dismay as part of the confusion or abstract "chaos" of the

hostage situation. Absent a translation, then, her concern becomes the film's cacophony. The

same strategy is deployed in "no wave" auteur Jim Jarmusch's debut feature, *Permanent

Vacation* (1980). The micro-budget film follows a young, white hipster's surreal odyssey around

the city as he drifts through blighted urban landscapes and encounters an eclectic series of

strangers. One of these figures, a young Latina woman strewn dramatically over the metal

staircase of an abandoned building, is played by the Mexican actress María Duval. Whereas in

Pelham, Landa's "foreign-ness" is used to subtly accentuate the havoc of the action, here

Duval's is actively foregrounded: She is disheveled, her makeup smeared, and she is crying and

singing to herself in (again) non-subtitled Spanish as Allie, the hipster, gawks at her in

bewilderment. When Duval notices him, she begins shouting nonsense ([In Spanish] "Go!... If

we keep talking, the King will hear you"), her voice eventually reaching a near-unintelligible

fever pitch until Allie leaves and she returns to her singing.[26]

This (non) use of Spanish by Crisis films evinces an implicit understanding of non-

English speaking Latinos as both foreign and problematic. In *Permanent Vacation*, Duval's

singing, the apparent content of her fantasies (a forbidden romance), the racial and gender

makeup of the characters (a white man and a Latina woman), as well as the set and blocking

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[25] *The Taking of Pelham One Two Three*, directed by Joseph Sargent, featuring María Landa (United Artists, 1974), https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.48b2b5f2-2e2a-cbec-9602-fba3aba612ef?autoplay=1&ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb.
[26] *Permanent Vacation,* directed by Jim Jarmusch, featuring María Duval (Cinesthesia, 1980), https://www.criterionchannel.com/permanent-vacation/videos/permanent-vacation.

directly recall *West Side Story*'s iconic balcony scene (Fig. 1-A). In this case, however, Duval's

dishevelment, "hysteria," and, crucially, the language barrier, serve to degrade, mystify, and

alienate her from both Allie and the audience. Whereas in *West Side Story*, Maria teaches Tony

to croon "*Te adoro*," positing language as a locus of communication and intimacy, in the Crisis

cycle it works as an expression of unknowability and the bizarre.[27] Additionally, the crediting

choices in both *Pelham* and *Permanent Vacation* convey a reductive racialization of both films'

linguistically "othered" Latinas. María Landa's character is christened "The Spanish Woman,"

while Duval's is dubbed "Latin Woman." No other credited characters in either film, be they

white or of color, are similarly categorized by race (i.e., "Man in Lobby," for a Black character

in *Permanent Vacation*).[28] A telling line from *Fort Apache, The Bronx* demonstrates how the

slippage between a subtle othering of spoken Spanish and the active denigration of non-English

speaking Latinos could be pushed even further: As one white officer gripes about his South

Bronx precinct, "You got the lowest income per capita, the highest rate of unemployment… [and

the] largest proportion of non-English speaking population in the city!"[29] As the characterization

makes clear, Crisis films were willing not only to confound Latinos' use of their shared language

but to position its ubiquity as a bonafide social problem as well.

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[27] *West Side Story*, directed by Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins, featuring Natalie Wood and Richard Beymer
(United Artists, 1961), Blu-Ray Disc.
[28] *Permanent Vacation. The Taking of Pelham One Two Three.*
[29] *Fort Apache, The Bronx.*

Fig. 1-A. From romance to bewilderment: Inverted balcony serenades in *West Side Story* (1961) vs *Permanent Vacation* (1980).

Many films in the genre sidestep such rigid stereotypes, embracing Latinos' racial ambiguity, often for specifically ideological purposes. In the vigilante thriller *Death Wish* (1974), a primal scream of race-baiting anti-urbanism, Charles Bronson stars (improbably) as a "bleeding heart liberal" who turns to murdering random criminals by night after his wife and daughter are attacked by a gang. As film scholar Nathan Holmes has detailed, while some of Bronson's victims in the film are identifiably Black, many are characterized, costumed, and raced far more ambiguously, a blurry mix of Blacks, Latinos, white hippies, drug addicts, and gay men (or, "fully integrated Equal Opportunity teams of muggers," as one critic for the African

American newspaper the *New Pittsburgh Courier* mockingly dubbed them).[30] This ragbag mélange enfolded Latinos into the Nixonian matrix of non-white and countercultural threat, while in the same stroke enlisting them in the film's apparent and cynical project of dismissing accusations of anti-Black racism (the film even features an extraneous, meta-referential party scene in which a white couple discusses the growing notoriety around Bronson's killings: "That guy's a racist," the man remarks. "He kills more Blacks than whites." "Oh, for Pete's sake, Gary!" the woman retorts. "More Blacks are muggers than whites! What do you want us to do, increase the proportion of white muggers so we'll have racial equality among muggers?")[31] By supplementing the number of Black victims with Latinos and other "non-normative" types, *Death Wish* sought to establish plausible deniability that it was ideologically anti-Black or had mobilized racist "law and order" fantasies of the era — an excuse, Holmes observes, that critics and audiences were more than willing to accept.[32]

Conversely, some films employ Latinos' racial ambiguity to present a classic "melting pot" vision of multicultural New York life. Walter Hill's phantasmagorical cult classic *The Warriors* (1979), adapted from Sol Yurick's novel as well as Xenophon's *Anabasis*, follows the eponymous youth gang as they are chased across the city over one night by hundreds of other competing factions after being falsely blamed for the assassination of charismatic gangland prophet Cyrus (Roger Hill, Fig. 1-B). While some of the film's fantastical gangs are racially homogenous, most, including the Warriors, are mixed. Throughout the film, Latino actors can be found in enemy groups (Wanda Velez among the cheekily siren-esque "Lizzies," Apache Ramos

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[30] Nathan Holmes, *Welcome to Fear City: Crime Film, Crisis, and the Urban Imagination* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2018), 163.
[31] *Death Wish*, directed by Michael Winner, featuring Charles Bronson, (Paramount Pictures, 1974), https://www.amazon.com/Death-Wish-Charles-Bronson/dp/B07NHY9YMM/ref=sr_1_2?dchild=1&keywords=death+wish+1974&qid=1606762490&sr=8-2.
[32] Holmes, *Welcome to Fear City*, 163.

in the comically defensive "Losers"), in the NYPD (future Oscar-winner Mercedes Ruehl as a

plainclothes officer who triumphantly turns the tables on a would-be rapist), and in the Warriors

themselves (Marcelino Sénchez as young Rembrandt, the group's conscience).[33] However, as in

Death Wish, none of these actors are explicitly ethnicized or otherwise made identifiable as

Latinos, an obscuration which similarly serves the film's ideological position on the city: *The*

Warriors, for its part, represents the most gang-sympathetic view of New York since *West Side*

Story, subjectively foregrounding the youth gangs and largely eliminating other areas of public

life around them. Rather than focusing on racial divisions, as in *West Side Story*'s Puerto Rican-

versus-Polish conflict, *The Warriors* opts for class commentary, observing notes of societal

hopelessness beneath the posturing veneer of its young leads — at one point stopping the film

cold for a poignant exchange of glances in which a group of white yuppies is floored by the sight

of the disheveled Warriors on the subway, dismantling a Crisis genre trope of framing transit

encounters as a potential class "equalizer."[34] Observing New York's stark racial divisions, then,

fell by the wayside amidst the film's pursuit of genre thrills and class commentary. Ambiguously

raced Latino characters, for better or worse, were brought along for the ride.[35]

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[33] In a 2012 interview, Ramos would reflect on the production's atmosphere of inclusivity and bonhomie, recalling director Walter Hill sharing a drink with him during auditions as well as embracing Ramos' improvisation of the memorable line, "We're gonna *rain* on you, Warriors!" (Apache Ramos, "Apache Ramos |Flashback Fever Radio| The Warriors Movie - Orphan #2," Flashback Fever Radio, October 9, 2012, video interview, 8:42 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2nbjXSg7HdY&ab_channel=FlashbackFeverRadio.)

[34] *The Warriors*, directed by Walter Hill, featuring Marcelino Sénchez, Mercedes Ruehl, et al. (Paramount Pictures, 1979), https://stream.nyu.edu/media/t/1_xz2wagpk/157165221.

[35] An informative 2014 documentary, *Rubble Kings*, tracks the real-life Bronx youth gangs from which Yurick and Hill took inspiration. (Daniel M. Gold, "Review: 'Rubble Kings' Recounts a Death That Led to a Gang Truce and Changed the Bronx," *New York Times,* June 18, 2015, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/19/movies/review-rubble-kings-recounts-a-death-that-led-to-a-gang-truce-and-changed-the-bronx.html.)

Fig. 1-B. Spot the Latino characters: *The Warriors* (1979) offers a melting-pot vision of gangland New York, class-conflicted but racially harmonious. Can you dig it?[36]

Other Crisis films employ the apparent utility of Latinos' racial amorphousness in a far more utilitarian manner, using Latino actors to either parallel or else literally represent people of other races. John Cassavetes' chase thriller *Gloria* (1980), for instance, stars Gena Rowlands as a white ex-mob wife who takes a six-year-old Puerto Rican boy (John Adames) under her wing after his parents are murdered by the mob. Certainly, Adames' Puerto Rican-ness serves the narrative in some ways, at times implicitly making him more vulnerable ("What are you gonna do, shoot a six year-old *Puerto Rican* kid on the street?," Rowlands at one point pleads with a mobster [emphasis added]), and at others working to heighten the "odd couple" nature of their pairing and the conflicts it engenders (in a pivotal fight, Adames reminds her, "You're not Spanish like me").[37] However as the *New Yorker* critic Richard Brody as well as the filmmakers

[36] *The Warriors*.
[37] *Gloria,* directed by John Cassavetes, featuring John Adames, (Columbia Pictures, 1980), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifn9gAPjLps&t=4980s&ab_channel=YouTubeMovies.

Josh and Benny Safdie have noted, Adames' character — brash, pugnacious, wounded — largely operates as a stand-in for Cassavetes himself (Fig. 1-C), joining a cinematic club occupied by white-ethnic actors in the director's previous films, from Peter Falk in *A Woman Under the Influence* (1974) to Ben Gazzara in *The Killing of a Chinese Bookie* (1976).[38] Adames' Puerto Rican-ness, then, works loosely as a white-adjacent ethnic signifier, ultimately subordinated to — rather than in service of — his oddball position as a tough-talking kid. Indeed, writing in the *Chicago Sun-Times*, Roger Ebert commented that Adames' race constituted merely a "twist" on the familiar story of a jaded criminal paired with a child character, rather than a substantive or meaningful addition to it.[39]

Furthering this notion of useful malleability, a number of Latino actors were tasked with playing an array of non-Latino characters in films throughout the genre. In *The Taking of Pelham One Two Three*, Puerto Rican actor Héctor Elizondo plays a bigoted, hot-headed Italian ex-mafioso; in the queer punk classic *Times Square* (1980), Puerto Rican-Spanish actress Trini Alvarado stars as a wide-eyed WASP teen who runs away from home to join the underground music scene; and the crime drama *Across 110th Street* (1972) features two prominent Latinos in non-Latino roles — Mexican-American Oscar-winner Anthony Quinn as a racist Italian-American police officer, and Puerto Rican-Trinidadian actor Antonio Fargas as a sex-addled, non-Hispanic Black gangster. The frequency of such cross-ethnic casting choices (at a moment wherein blackface and other forms of racial performance were in decline) spoke volumes to the real and perceived fungibility of Latinos' racial identity.

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[38] Richard Brody, "Gloria," *New Yorker*, accessed November 27, 2020, https://www.newyorker.com/goings-on-about-town/movies/billie. Josh and Benny Safdie, "Josh and Benny Safdie in Conversation," executive produced by Peter Becker, Criterion Channel, accessed November 27, 2020, video interview, 24:30. https://www.criterionchannel.com/josh-and-benny-safdie-s-adventures-in-moviegoing/season:1/videos/the-safdie-brothers-in-conversation.

[39] Roger Ebert, "Gloria," RogerEbert.com, January 7, 1998, https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/gloria-1998.

Fig. 1-C. Ethnic signifier, auteur stand-in, or narrative "twist"? John Adames' (left) turn in John Cassavetes' (right) chase thriller *Gloria* (1980) epitomized the usefulness Crisis directors found in Latinos' racial malleability.[40]

In a select few instances, Crisis films and filmmakers actively undermine existing Latino stereotypes, creating complex and lived-in characters, though principally in subaltern or "underground" spaces. In contrast to the deluge of drug-pushing *bandido* depictions that the Crisis genre set in motion, Jerry Schatzberg's searing, time-capsule addiction drama *The Panic in Needle Park* (1971) takes a more detached approach to the racial politics of substance abuse. Penned by Joan Didion, the film tracks the tempestuous relationship between two addicts (Kitty Winn and a young Al Pacino) in the Upper West Side's then-notorious heroin scene at Sherman Square. Minimally present but crucial to the film's arc is the character of Marco (played by Raúl Juliá in his film debut), Winn's artist boyfriend whom she leaves for Pacino. While the film is deeply humanist and hardly didactic, Marco still bookends *Needle Park* as a moral bedrock,

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[40] "John Cassavetes and John Adames in Gloria," IMDB, accessed December 4, 2020, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0080798/mediaviewer/rm3118145792/.

helping Winn obtain an illicit abortion at the film's start and (unsuccessfully) offering her a path out of addiction at its end.[41] It's unclear whether Marco takes drugs himself, but he is neither an addict nor a part of the Needle Park scene. In fact, scruffy and paint-spattered, languid and introspective, Marco falls more in line with the white bohemian types sketched in films like *The Driller Killer* (1979) and *The Eyes of Laura Mars* (1977) while white actors like Winn, Pacino, and Kiel Martin are assigned the primary roles of addicts and thieves. Though far from a conscientious racial role-reversal akin to the "tables turned" justice of the Blaxploitation cycle, this positioning remains subversive. Notably, though, it appears in a subaltern space — the gradient between the underground art scene and the underground drug scene — which constitutes one of the few matrices in which such racial slippages and holistic portrayals could flourish in the Crisis films.

Perhaps the best example of this "alternative space" phenomenon can be found late in the Crisis cycle, when most major studios had moved on to more bourgeois modes of New York filmmaking while independent filmmakers were left to assess the socio-economic fallout of the Crisis years:[42] Bette Gordon's feminist neo-noir *Variety* (1983) — which tracks a white woman (Sandy McLeod) who, amid scant employment prospects, begins working at an adult movie theater — features two prominent Latino actors in supporting roles, both of whose characters are

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[41] *The Panic in Needle Park*, directed by Jerry Schatzberg, featuring Raúl Juliá, (20th Century Fox, 1971), DVD.
[42] To detail this trend: Throughout the 1970s, New Hollywood gradually developed a second, parallel genre of New York cinema, one that ran directly counter to the gritty image of the city presented by the Crisis films. As Lawrence Webb explains, a growing number of comedies and dramas began to depict the private lives of New York's white upper and upper-middle class, presenting an alternative, "rehabilitated" image of New York that worked hand in hand with advertising campaigns like "Big Apple" and "I ❤️ New York," rhetorically undergirding the city's gradual re-emergence from the fiscal crisis and facilitating its recontextualization as a center of global finance and tourism. This cinematic "gentrifi[cation]," as Webb calls it, culminated in the late 70s when upper-crust dramedies like *Kramer vs Kramer* (1979) and *Annie Hall* (1977) began to replace Crisis films as the dominant mode of New York representation. Latinos and other New Yorkers of color, then, were pushed from marginalization to near-invisibility. As Woody Allen boasts of himself in the opening passages of *Manhattan* (1979), "New York was his town, and it always would be." (Webb, *Cinema of Urban Crisis,* 105. *Manhattan,* directed by Woody Allen [United Artists, 1979], DVD.)

fully realized and actively subversive of contemporary types.[43] José, the theater's comedic

manager who flirts with McLeod, could easily have been constructed as lecherous, or in the mold

of the "male buffoon" type described by Charles Ramírez Berg.[44] However, as directed by

Gordon, written by Kathy Acker, and embodied by veteran character actor Luis Guzmán, José is

affable, low-key, and human — a sincerely funny character rather than a character to be made

fun of — and his quips with McLeod are played as mutualistic and respectful. Similarly, Norma

Rodriguez's turn as a stripper friend of McLeod's who relates her own experiences in New

York's sexual underground (Fig. 1-D), subverts the denigrated "harlot" type described by Berg

and seen throughout the Crisis cycle in films like *Badge 373*.[45] In *Variety*, Rodriguez provides a

nuanced and unsensational portrait of the city's sexual economy, both self-determinative ("I have

my own fan club") and commiserative ("They dismissed the charges… but that still doesn't

mean anything. Albany has them. If you want a good job, your prints are gonna come up"). As

with *Needle Park*, however, these depictions remain subaltern, indicating that, amid the tumult of

racial constructions found throughout the Crisis films, positive portrayals of explicitly Latino

characters in multiethnic spaces could be found — if only underground.

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[43] *Variety*, directed by Bette Gordon, featuring Luis Guzmán and Norma Rodriguez, (Variety Motion Pictures, 1983), https://www.criterionchannel.com/variety.
[44] Berg, *Latino Images*, 71.
[45] Ibid., 70.

Fig. 1-D. Norma Rodriguez (middle) and Sandy McLeod (left) on the set of *Variety* (1983).[46]

Part Two: The Imagined Community

"You know what they'll say? The *Times* will support you, the *News* will knock you, the *Post* will

take both sides at the same time, the rich'll support you, likewise the Blacks, and the Puerto

Ricans won't give a shit."

- Tony Roberts, *The Taking of Pelham One Two Three* (1974)

While the racialization of Latino characters remains highly unstable throughout the genre,

one construction is consistent: In the urban imaginary of the Crisis films, Latino communities are

cinematically dismantled, either through the dislocation of Latino characters, the diminishment

of communal structures both radical and capitalist, or the alienation of entire boroughs. These

(de)constructions consistently frame the position of New York Latinos as stagnant and

unchanging — a profoundly ahistorical project given the interconnectivity and tumultuousness

that characterized much of the New York Latino experience in the Crisis era. Primarily, many of

the Crisis films' Latino characters are individuals tied to fixed locations in single scenes,

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[46] "Variety (1984)," Bette Gordon Films, 2013, https://www.bettegordonfilms.org/variety.

decontextualized and stranded apart from communal structures, while the film's white

protagonists are afforded far greater mobility. In *Variety*, José is always found at the adult

theater, while McLeod's character comes and goes as she pleases, sometimes in the middle of

her shift;[47] in *Permanent Vacation*, María Duval is affixed to the abandoned building's stoop

while Allie is free to wander away;[48] in *The Panic in Needle Park*, Raúl Julía never leaves his

apartment;[49] in *Taxi Driver* (1976), the character of Melio (Victor Argo) appears in only one

scene, at the bodega he owns, while the film's protagonist (Robert DeNiro) comes and goes;[50]

and in *Badge* 373, the Puerto Rican prostitute played by Marina Durell is literally immobilized,

found half-unconscious in a hotel room by Robert Duvall, whose arrivals and departures dictate

the action of every scene.[51] This pattern is particularly striking given the Crisis genre's sheer

geographic scope: Under Mayor Lindsay, the Office of Motion Pictures and Television

substantially streamlined the permit application process for location shooting, allowing

productions to capture dozens of locations across the city in a single film. Many Crisis

filmmakers seized on this opportunity, sending their protagonists on multi-borough odysseys that

showcased a diverse array of New York environs and personalities — both *The Warriors* and

Badge 373 take their leads from the South Bronx to the tip of Coney Island, while Sidney

Lumet's *Serpico* (1973) uses no fewer than 105 discrete locations across four boroughs.[52]

Essentially, in the context of a revolutionary cinematic language that could take audiences

anywhere in the city, Latinos were still positioned as solitary and stationary, a veritable part of

the infrastructure.

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[47] *Variety*.
[48] *Permanent Vacation*.
[49] *The Panic in Needle Park*.
[50] *Taxi Driver*, directed by Martin Scorsese, featuring Victor Argo, (Columbia Pictures, 1976), https://www.netflix.com/watch/18907685?source=35.
[51] *Badge 373*.
[52] Webb, *Cinema of Urban Crisis*, 79.

By largely framing New York Latinos as a kind of urban fixture — stuck in place, free of personal antecedent or community ties — Crisis films engaged in a project of de-facto assimilation, in a sense alleviating commonly held prejudices of "foreignness" or being of the "Third World."[53] For a group that experienced intense discrimination on these grounds, this positioning as a part of the city's social fabric was no doubt valuable. By the same token, however, this pattern essentially stripped Latino New Yorkers of their personal and historical mobility. In reality, Latino New Yorkers were subject to, and agents of, some of the most profound changes of the Crisis era, bearing the brunt (along with Black communities) of the social fallout wrought by the city's pivot to austerity and fiscal "retrenchment," as well as passionately resisting such changes through activism and community organizing.[54] Moreover, as a relatively young immigrant population — absent the centuries-old roots of *tejanos* in the American Southwest, for example — many New York Latinos navigated the cascading challenges of immigration and acculturation, as well as intergenerational and interdiasporal debate around such issues.[55] The Crisis genre largely erases any sense of Latinos' identity as immigrants, and the lonely stasis embodied by the Latino characters obscures their personal and financial connections to their home countries, as well as their participation in family networks, schools, neighborhood clubs, churches, labor organizations, and other communal structures that served as lifelines for immigrants and their descendants[56] (in contrast to the abundant portrayals of white ethnic communities, i.e. Italian-Americans in *Mean Streets* [1973]).[57] Additionally, by

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[53] Barber, *Latino City*, 8.
[54] Phillips-Fein, *Fear City*.
[55] The Dominican community, for instance, saw heated debates throughout the 60s and 70s around whether the "modernizing" material and cultural influences of *Nueva York* were a boon or burden to the diaspora (Jesse Hofnung-Garskoff, *A Tale of Two Cities, Santo Domingo and New York After 1950* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010], 8).
[56] For a vivid account of the fight to save the bilingual Hostos Community College in the South Bronx, see the *Fear City* chapter "The College in the Tire Factory" (Phillips-Fein, *Fear City*, 241-255).
[57] *Mean Streets*, directed by Martin Scorsese (Warner Bros., 1973), DVD.

binding them so tightly to the city itself, the Crisis cycle conspicuously elided the large number

of frustrated Latinos who forswore New York for other parts of the U.S., or their home countries,

in response to soaring crime, bleak job prospects, vanishing public services, and other

demoralizing structural realities engendered by the fiscal crisis.[58]

Within the Crisis films, Latinos are also entrenched within one of the most racially

fraught discourses of the Crisis period (and beyond it): what newspapers called "crime in the

streets."[59] The 1950s and 60s saw a flurry of racialized popular discourse around street crime;

bestselling books and reports ruminated on "the Puerto Rican problem," as did Latino youth

gang films like *The Young Savages* (1961) and, to an extent, *West Side Story* (1961).[60] By the

Crisis period, as social conditions deteriorated and crime rates gradually rose, this fixation

became a cottage industry, with a racialized "mugging discourse" appearing everywhere from

heady *New Yorker* think pieces to a slew of sensational tabloid items and TV news reports, as

well as the infamous "Welcome to Fear City" pamphlets anonymously distributed by NYPD

officers to frighten tourists away from the city.[61] As Nathan Holmes notes, while New Yorkers

of color were often the most persistently victimized by such crimes, "white victimization tended

to be treated as newsworthy where [B]lack and Latino victimization did not."[62] Bronx-born

filmmaker and activist Vivian Vázquez Irizarry goes further, detailing how Latino communities

writ large were routinely blamed for the crime problems by which they were plagued and the

systemic realities from which those problems stemmed. "News reports didn't want to talk about

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[58] Barber, *Latino City*, 8.
[59] Holmes, *Welcome to Fear City*, 178.
[60] Elizabeth A. Wells, "Mambo! West Side Story and the Hispanic" in *West Side Story: Cultural Perspectives on an American Musical* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2010), unpaginated.
[61] Holmes, *Welcome to Fear City*, 163, 169.
[62] Ibid., 163.

redlining or policy," she recalled in 2019, "they just wanted to talk about us."[63] Embodied by films like *Death Wish*, the popular vigilante sub-genre emerged within the Crisis cycle to visceralize such sentiment.

Conversely, Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* (1976), perhaps the most critically lauded and culturally enduring of the Crisis films, positions Latino characters at the opposite end of the street crime discourse, as everyday vigilantes themselves. A profoundly ambivalent staging of the standard vigilante narrative, *Taxi Driver* tracks the slow-burn radicalization of Travis Bickle, the white, loner cab driver played by Robert DeNiro. While Bickle spends much of the film quietly seething about the city's Black-coded "scum," his embrace of actual racial violence is bolstered by the film's sole Latino character, Melio (Victor Argo), amid a pivotal robbery sequence. The setting is Melio's East Harlem bodega, which is quickly and explicitly ethnicized: As Bickle enters, Spanish-language radio plays and a large Goya Foods sign can be seen in the background. While he pokes around for snacks, we hear a nervous offscreen voice insist, "Okay, shut your fucking mouth, man, and give me the cash in the drawer." Bickle sneaks to the register as a dolly move reveals the perpetrator is a young Black man with a pistol. Quickly, Bickle appears from behind, pulls out his own gun, and shoots the man point-blank before he can turn around (Fig. 2-A). Melio, unfazed, asks, "You get him?" while Bickle, now nervous, stammers that he doesn't have a permit for his weapon and doesn't know what to do. Melio then proceeds to hurry Bickle out the door, confidently insisting, "I'll take care of it," before bashing the robber's limp and bloodied corpse with a crowbar, griping, "This is the fifth motherfucker this year" — the first and last we see of Melio, or any Latino character, in the film.[64]

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[63] *Decade of Fire,* directed by Vivian Vázquez Irizarry and Gretchen Hildebran, (Independent Lens, 2019), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZ322ymcJBI&ab_channel=YouTubeMovies.
[64] *Taxi Driver*.

Fig. 2-A. Anatomy of a murder: Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* (1976) typifies the complex racial geography of Latinos in the vigilante sub-genre by positioning Puerto Rican bodega proprietor Melio (Victor Argo) as a more experienced vigilante than the film's nominal vigilante protagonist, Travis Bickle (Robert DeNiro).

Melio's surprisingly sure-handed vigilantism of his own is noteworthy given the film's conspicuous racializing of his character. In demonstrating an experience and jadedness that upstages Bickle's nervous killing, Melio's actions posit a "community" vigilantism, personified by the Puerto Rican bodega proprietor, as more endemic to the city's geography of crime than the standard white-grievance, lone-wolf position of Bickle and his *Death Wish* ilk. In *Taxi Driver*'s racial crime space, Melio is the embattled trench warrior, while Bickle's grievances and killings quickly become deracialized following this scene, an implicit suggestion that such ground is better occupied by Latinos.[65] Arguably, this alternative construction (as opposed to the aforementioned Latino victim-blaming and pop-pathologization) both reflected and sensationalized a second, very real strain of the street crime discourse. Barely a year after the film's release, the city would erupt in a spasm of looting and petty crime amid the blackout of 1977, eliciting a rush of racist and anti-urban discourse on the ascendant conservative right,

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[65] Ibid.

while at the same time unleashing deep recriminations from many business owners of color, including Latinos, whose stores had been vandalized. One Harlem store owner indirectly echoed Bickle's language, scorning the vandals as "animals" and "the scum of the earth."[66] Whether the Crisis films saw Latinos as the criminals or the criminalized, they were consistently understood as static, unchanging fixtures of this dynamic.

At times, the Crisis films work not to passively erase Latino community structures but to actively delegitimize them. Multiple films in the cycle deride the thriving activist movements in which many Latino New Yorkers were involved — in particular, the militant Puerto Rican group known as the Young Lords. Founded in 1959 as a small-time Chicago youth gang, by the late 1960s the group had transformed into the Young Lords Party, a militant, activist organization with deep roots in New York City. Inspired by the Black Panthers and other such groups, the Lords embraced a broader understanding of Latino racial identity than that expressed by the hierarchies of either Puerto Rico or the United States, demystifying whiteness and advocating awareness of Puerto Ricans' Black and Taino heritage. While the Lords were sympathetic to the nationalist *independencia* movement (whose members had infamously shot five U.S. Representatives at the Capitol Building in 1954),[67] their campaign was primarily local: In Crisis-era New York, they agitated against police brutality, crumbling housing stock, and the city's painful cuts to education and health care, offering community services like free breakfasts and addiction treatment.[68]

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[66] Phillips-Fein, *Fear City*, 275.
[67] The Lords were less aligned with the bomb-throwing militants of the *Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional* (FALN). For more of the complexities herein, see Bryan Burrough, *Days of Rage: America's Radical Underground, the FBI, and the Forgotten Age of Revolutionary Violence* (London, UK: Penguin Books, 2016).
[68] Ogbar, "Puerto Rico en mi corazón," 154-7.

This activism would prove a recurring foil for certain "law and order"-minded films of

the Crisis period. Notably, rather than gin up fears about the Lords' radical politics, police

dramas like *Fort Apache, The Bronx* (1981) actively contrive to defang and undercut the group

by reframing its cinematic proxies as dupes, slackers, or criminals. In *Fort Apache*, a Young

Lords facsimile dubbed the "South Bronx People's Party" is rhetorically mocked by white

NYPD officers. "They're disco revolutionaries," one detective scoffs. "Know what I mean? They

preach armed revolt, but they spend most of their time balling white chicks from Scarsdale."

This jab is only the first of two, separate riffs on the Young Lords within the diegesis of the film:

In *Fort Apache*'s climax, the sinister *narcos* played by Miguel Piñero and Jaime Tirelli violently

take hostages at a Bronx hospital, a desperate and confusing bid to avoid facing charges as the

NYPD moves to arrest them.[69] To contemporary audiences, this sequence would doubtlessly

have evoked the 1970 takeover of the South Bronx's Lincoln Hospital staged by the Young

Lords to protest its deteriorating conditions and inferior care, what Lords member Gloria Cruz

described as a "butcher shop."[70] The daylong sit-in resulted in a major victory for health care in

the Bronx, prompting Mayor Lindsay to order the hospital demolished and rebuilt.[71] As re-staged

by *Fort Apache*, however, it becomes a frantic and ludicrous scheme, staged not by activists but

by doomed drug-pushers, reframing a coherent community response to the crisis as a kind of

anarchic tantrum, and a criminal one at that.[72]

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[69] *Fort Apache, The Bronx.*

[70] Alfonso A. Narvaez, "Young Lords Seize Lincoln Hospital Building," *New York Times,* July 15, 1970, https://nyti.ms/1GLenAM.

[71] Ogbar, "Puerto Rico en mi corazón," 157.

[72] Also of note is Fort Apache's offhanded denigration of queer Latino characters, and by extension queer Latino New Yorkers' contemporaneous activism. In an early, would-be comedic set piece meant to convey a sense of the Bronx's quotidian anarchy, Paul Newman and his rookie partner apprehend a character named "Carl" who is dramatically threatening to jump off a roof. It's unclear whether the character is meant to be a transgender woman or a gay man in drag, but regardless the scene is played for cheap laughs as a voguing, "hysterical" Carl is eventually apprehended and thrown in the back of a paddy wagon. Given the context of the period, in which queer Latina activists like Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR) co-founder Sylvia Rivera were being boxed out of the Gay Liberation movement in favor of a fast-solidifying strain of "respectability politics," this invocation of

Fig. 2-B. Fact and fiction: Latino activist movements are reframed as objects of mockery and sites of threat.
Above: The Young Lords March in Chicago.[73]
Below: Robert Duvall warily scopes out a Puerto Rican independence protest in *Badge 373*.[74]

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classic, Latino-specific queer stereotypes (i.e., particularly outlandish or pathetic) would have been particularly painful for queer audiences (For an accessible primer on these issues, see The Life and Death of Marsha P. Johnson, directed by David France [Netflix, 2017], https://www.netflix.com/watch/80189623?source=35). More, the "Carl" sequence cannot be read simply as an unfortunate vestige of a more homo/transphobic era: Just five years prior, Chris Sarandon earned an Academy Award for his portrayal of a white transgender woman in Dog Day Afternoon (1976), a breakaway queer film and one of the most critically and commercially successful of the New York Crisis cycle. For a detailed look at the queer Latino cinematic movement in New York around the time of Fort Apache's release, see Frances Negrón-Muntcmer, "Drama Queens: Latino Gay and Lesbian Independent Film/Video," in The Ethnic Eye: Latino Media Arts, edited by Ana M. López and Chon A. Noriega, 59-78. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

[73] Kerry Cardoza, "Once a Street Gang, Then a Political Collective, the Young Lords Celebrate 50 years with a Symposium at DePaul," *Chicago Reader*, September 21, 2018, https://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/young-lords-50th-anniversary-symposium-young-lords-depaul-university/Content?oid=58254685.
[74] *Badge 373*.

Another police thriller, *Badge 373* (1973), works to undercut Latino activism further still,

revealing an unexpected strain of panic around Latino economic fortune in the process. One of

the more brazenly anti-Latino films of the Crisis genre (the slur "spic" is used liberally, among

other provocations) is *Badge 373.* At its outset, the film appears to concern fired detective Robert

Duvall's off-the-books investigation of a militant, Young Lords-esque nationalist group

smuggling guns through New York Harbor to jumpstart a revolution in Puerto Rico (a

conspicuous conflation of the Lords with more accessibly controversial groups like the *Fuerzas*

Armadas de Liberación Nacional Puertorriqueña [FALN]). Certainly, some of *Fort Apache*'s

dismissiveness can be found here. At the group's headquarters, Duvall encounters a few Afroed

"toughs" smoking pot on the staircase, echoing *Fort Apache*'s contention that activists were

merely idle pleasure-seekers, and later in the film, Duvall warily scopes out a Puerto Rican

independence rally (Fig. 2-A), squinting skeptically as the group's leader rails against the U.S. in

an awkward regurgitation of militant rhetoric: "What has American imperialism done for our

island? What it has done is turn our island into a combination whorehouse, combination

gambling casino and dope drop. Naw. *Hell* naw!"[75]

More striking, however, is the revelation that the militant group, indeed the entire gun-

smuggling operation, is merely a front for "Sweet William" (Nuyorican character actor Henry

Darrow), the film's surprise antagonist, to enrich himself.[76] Explicitly invoking Pedro Albizu

Campos, the Harvard-educated *independencia* leader of the 1950s, Sweet William is a Bond

villain-esque mastermind, a self-made Puerto Rican capitalist who admits to manipulating the

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[75] Ibid.

[76] In Darrow's hands, the stereotypical Sweet William becomes a high-camp mustache-twirler for the ages. Such
elevation follows a cinematic legacy, outlined by Charles Ramírez Berg, of talented Latino actors reclaiming less-
than-flattering roles through the sheer quality of their performances, from Lupé Velez in *Wolf Song* (1929) to Rosie
Pérez in *White Men Can't Jump* (1992), (Berg, *Latino Images*, 87-108).

New York militants — he dismisses them as "zealots" — for his own financial gain, and it is he, not they, who draws Duvall's true ire. As Ebert noted in the *Sun-Times*, Duvall's character "doesn't care one way or the other about the revolution;"[77] he loses interest in the scheme as the film becomes transfixed by its own construction of the confident Latino industrialist as grotesque spectacle. In the film's climax, Sweet William is cornered by Duvall and the police atop the Brooklyn Bridge, roaring, "This is what matters, my slow-witted friend!" as he rains wads of cash over the railing. "It is the most marvelous of your American inventions!… *¡Qué viva dinero!*"[78] While Crisis-era New York saw no shortage of violent activity from the FALN and other radical underground groups, Campos' militancy preceded the film by some two decades and the contemporaneous environment of the 1970s saw Latinos, in New York and across the country, gaining ground in the professional realm, aided by upstart nonprofits like Aspira and the Hispanic Young Adult Association that worked to tackle extreme poverty and provide Latinos with community programs and jobs training.[79] Thus, by denigrating their street activism while scapegoating their emerging white-collar status, police dramas of the Crisis cycle worked to imagistically constrain Latinos at all strata of New York society.

Finally, beyond isolating Latino characters and diminishing specific groups, Crisis filmmakers' attention occasionally turned towards entire Latino communities, re-constructing real-life neighborhoods as similarly homogenous and stagnated — none more so than the South Bronx. Once an economically stable hub of diverse working-class life, beginning in the 1950s the Bronx was battered and eroded by cycles of deindustrialization, white flight, "urban renewal," and profound disinvestment. By the 1970s, the completion of Robert Moses' Cross-

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[77] Roger Ebert, "Badge 373," RogerEbert.com, July 26, 1973, https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/badge-373-1973.
[78] *Badge 373*.
[79] Luis Nuñez, "Reflections on Puerto Rican History: Aspira in the Sixties and the Coming of Age of the Stateside Puerto Rican Community." *Centro Journal* 21, no. 02 (2009), 33-47.

Bronx Expressway had riven the borough in two, while the infamous Bronx Fires — captured

vividly and unexpectedly by helicopter camera during the 1977 World Series — became, to

outsiders, an abstract symbol of the borough's decay.[80] In reality, the fires were a direct product

of the borough's increasing neglect by the city; electrical wiring was left uninspected, predatory

landlords who intentionally set "insurance fires" went uninvestigated, and the city made a habit

of closing dozens of fire stations, first amid the Lindsay administration's partnership with the

RAND Corporation and even more so as the city gutted services amid the fiscal crisis.[81] Such

negligence was hardly limited to fire safety. In 1976, the city's Housing and Development

Administrator, Roger Starr, advocated a policy of "planned shrinkage," a bureaucratic

euphemism for entirely eliminating all municipal services in certain areas of the city. While

planned shrinkage was never literally adopted (the chairman of the City Council's Black and

Puerto Rican Caucus wrote that it amounted to "genocide"), its specter lived on in the myriad

closures of hospitals, schools, child care centers, fire stations and other essential services —

tectonic moves that afflicted the South Bronx especially.[82] "We were cut to the bone," recalled

former FDNY Deputy Chief Vincent Dunn, "and we were cut deeper than the bone when the real

cuts came."[83]

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[80] The mythology surrounding this episode runs deep in American culture. Howard Cosell's purported reaction, "Ladies and gentleman, the Bronx is burning," which became the title of a 2005 book on the incident by Jonathan Mahler, is an urban legend. Cosell, while stunned by the sight of the fires, never actually said these words. (Joe Flood, "Why the Bronx Burned," *New York Post*, May 16, 2010, https://nypost.com/2010/05/16/why-the-bronx-burned/). The Bronx's plight also garnered significant national attention the year prior when then-candidate Jimmy Carter visited the borough pledging federal aid, a "big overpromise" per his Chief of Staff, Jack Watson, and one Carter failed to deliver as President, despite his extension of essential federal loan guarantees to the city in 1978 as well as signing the Community Reinvestment Act during his first year in office. (Jonathan Alter, *His Very Best: Jimmy Carter, A Life* [New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2020], 556-7). Ronald Reagan also toured the Bronx during his 1980 campaign against Carter, though principally to lecture Charlotte Street residents that there was no "government program" that could help them (*Decade of Fire*).
[81] *Decade of Fire,* directed by Vivian Vázquez Irizarry and Gretchen Hildebran, (Independent Lens, 2019), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZ322ymcJBI&ab_channel=YouTubeMovies.
[82] Phillips-Fein, *Fear City*, 207.
[83] *Decade of Fire*.

Echoing the city's posture, the South Bronx of the Crisis films becomes the go-to surrogate for the generically "blighted" Latino ghetto. In a Manhattan-centric genre, the borough is often rhetorically evoked to connote a degraded "alternative" city. In *Taxi Driver*, for instance, Travis Bickle's willingness to pick up fares in the Bronx becomes an object of morbid fascination among his fellow cabbies, though we never actually see the borough.[84] More punitively, in *Badge 373,* Marina Durell's prostitute character is referred to as "this bitch up in the Bronx" by one character, and in response, "[the] usual shithouse, a welfare case" by Robert Duvall, deploying potent stereotypical language amidst the nation's sharp turn against the Great Society in the 1970s (an abnegation hastened by the Crisis amid perceptions of New York's "wasteful" largesse).[85] Other films depict the borough explicitly: While *Gloria*'s cinematography showcases one of the genre's more rich and non-judgmental portraits of New York street life (embodying what David Dinkins would call the city's "gorgeous mosaic"),[86] the South Bronx ultimately becomes a colorful backdrop for Rowlands' mafioso shootouts, its residents watching passively from sidewalks and stoops.[87] Far more pejorative is *Fort Apache, The Bronx*, which suggests an unshakably corrupt borough plagued by an endless line of pimps, hookers, *narcos*, rioters, and all manner of personified malice — even Paul Newman's gentle Puerto Rican *amant* (Rachel Ticotin) is jarringly (and rather unconvincingly) revealed to be a heroin addict. Cynically epitomizing the depreciation of Latino communities by the city, *Fort Apache* actively engages in the media discourse which placed the blame for the Bronx's social ills squarely on its most vulnerable residents, even accusing them of attention-seeking: As Paul Newman explains to

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[84] *Taxi Driver*.

[85] *Badge 373*. For a deeply researched and riveting parable of racial confusion and America's popular rejection of the welfare state in the 1970s, see Josh Levin, *The Queen: The Life Behind a Forgotten American Myth*, (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 2019).

[86] David N. Dinkins with Peter Knobler, *A Mayor's Life: Governing New York's Gorgeous Mosaic* (New York, NY: PublicAffairs, 2013).

[87] *Gloria*.

a young rookie early in the film, "Fires, you see a lot of fires." Then, knowingly, "They look real good on the tube."[88]

Epilogue: Response and Resilience

As Lawrence Webb has considered, the precise meaning of the word "crisis" itself is something of a Rorschach test. The urban theorist Edward Soja understands the term to connote a profound shock to and "restructuring" of the social order, precisely what occurred in New York City during the pivotal years of the 1970s as the city restructured its debt, its assets, and indeed its fundamental civic identity to accommodate the demands of the financial sector and the federal government.[89] As Kim Phillips-Fein writes, "The fiscal crisis seemed to delegitimize an entire way of thinking about cities and what they might do for the people who live in them," fundamentally weakening the city's basic self-conception of its "democratic sensibilities, its working class ethos, and its common public life," particularly so for Black and Latino New Yorkers.[90] In their portrayal of Latino characters, the films of the New York Crisis acknowledge none of this turbulence. While the genre takes advantage of the real and perceived instability surrounding Latinos' racial status in the United States, creating a fascinating mosaic of contrasting and conflicted portrayals, it ultimately positions Latinos' role in the imagined community of the city as fundamentally stagnated, isolating characters and degrading communal structures. Effectively, New Hollywood reframed an existential shock to Latinos' role in the city as a kind of inevitable, unremarkable stasis.

To account for such ahistoricity, we must look beyond notions of Latino representation and its relative "quality" to questions of cinematic *responsiveness* — essentially, to what extent

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[88] *Fort Apache, The Bronx.*
[89] Webb, *Cinema of Urban Crisis*, 17.
[90] Phillips-Fein, *Fear City*, 5.

do films act as a barometer for contemporary cultural concerns, and if so, to whose concerns do they appear to be responsive? In 1961, *West Side Story* put New York Latino characters in its spotlight in large part because of popular concern around the plight of Puerto Ricans immigrants in the city, expressed in the widely read works of social reformers like Jane Jacobs (*The Death and Life of Great American Cities*)[91] and Elena Padhilla (*Up From Puerto Rico*) as well as by countless reactionaries who viewed Latinos' presence as "an ever-increasing threat to the safety of white Americans."[92] Paradoxically, by the time of New Hollywood — an era of filmmaking singularly unmoored from mega studios, test audiences, and international markets, and thus ripe for more vitally populist storytelling — such urgency had waned. While responsiveness to a general anxiety around New York's ongoing urban crisis was frenzied, producing a breakaway genre of searing classics with stories often ripped from the headlines, a similar sense of obligation to capture the fears, hopes, and lived realities of those most affected by the crisis — Latinos first and foremost — remained painfully lacking.

In New York, Latino audiences themselves were keenly aware of this fact and devised myriad responses of their own. In the South Bronx, Latino and Black coalitions organized against the dehumanizing portrait of their communities offered by *Fort Apache, The Bronx*, galvanizing a new wave of community activism within the borough;[93] inspired by the ascendant

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[91] In her seminal urbanist tract, Jacobs praised the Puerto Rican community as a fundamental part of the city's fabric, writing, "...immigrants—ours happen to be mostly Puerto Ricans… are going to make a fine middle class which the city cannot afford to lose." (Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York, NY: Random House 1961), 283.

[92] Wells, *West Side Story*, unpaginated.

[93] Throughout *Fort Apache*'s production and release, a growing chorus of voices denounced the film's content or called for boycotts, from an amalgamated local coalition self-styled
"The Committee Against Fort Apache," to New York reverends, U.S. Representatives, City Council-members, and eventually Mayor Ed Koch, who after a screening described the film as "racist" and, true to form, "not Kosher." (Selwyn Raab, "Film Image Provokes Outcry in South Bronx, *New York Times*, February 6, 1981, https://nyti.ms/29R5347). Irizarry directly ties this backlash to a new wave of South Bronx community organizing in the early 1980s, a movement that spurred the formation of new tenants' associations as well as dozens of cooperative construction groups like Banana Kelly, Nos Quedamos, and the Peoples Development Corporation (many of which are still in existence), which collectively refurbished significant amounts of housing stock, bringing

Chicano criticism and film movement, independent Latino filmmakers in the city turned to public television and documentaries, capturing pressing issues within their communities from domestic work (*What Would You Do with a Nickel* [1981]) to housing (*The Devil is a Condition* [1972])[94] to queer Latina identity (*Susana* [1980]);[95] and by the end of the decade, some filmmakers mounted the resources to respond to the provocations of the Crisis films on their own turf, feature-length narrative cinema. *El Super* (1979), a Crisis-style dramedy directed by Cuban exiles and brothers-in-law Leon Ichaso and Orlando Jiménez Real, uses the story of a Washington Heights superintendent (Raimundo Hidalgo-Gato) to ruminate on the frustrations and joys of immigration, assimilation, and family networks. Quietly subverting the Crisis films' obscuration of those realities, it emerged as a minor Cuban-American classic.[96] Such "*guerilla*" efforts would pay off in the following decade with a blossoming of critical and commercial hits like Luis Valdez's *La Bamba* (1987) and Gregory Nava's *El Norte* (1983), cementing Latino cinema as a legitimized cinematic force.[97] As a result of the Crisis era and its cinema, then, Latino audiences and creators alike began to articulate a new diasporic voice and aesthetic, one that Lillian Jiménez writes "legitimize[d]" the American Latino experience, and allowed Latino

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renewed (positive) attention to the area and culminating in a $4.4 billion-dollar investment in affordable housing by the city in 1985. (*Decade of Fire*).

[94] Lillian Jiménez, "Moving from the Margin to the Center: Puerto Rican Cinema in New York," in *The Ethnic Eye: Latino Media Arts*, edited by Ana M. López and Chon A. Noriega, 22-37. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996, 27-28, 34-36.

[95] Negrón-Muntcmer, "Drama Queens," 62.

[96] *El Super*, directed by Leon Ichaso and Orlando Jiménez Real, (Max Mambru Films, 1979), VHS scan. Ian Frazier, "El Super," *New Yorker*, December 14, 2009, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2009/12/21/el-super.

[97] Jiménez, "Margin to the Center," 27. As noted earlier, the post-1970s period has arguably witnessed an increase in actively pernicious Latino stereotyping, and as a group, Latinos continue to be one of the most dramatically underrepresented in Hollywood (see John Leguizamo, "From Music to Movies to TV, Latinos Are Widely Underrepresented — And I'm Done With It," *Hollywood Reporter*, August 28, 2017, https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/music-movies-tv-latinos-are-widely-underrepresented-im-done-guest-column-1033364). Nevertheless, Latino cinematic expression has been significantly legitimized since the Crisis, and a number of mainstream projects have reckoned directly with the Latino experience in New York, both Crisis-era and contemporary (e.g., *Paris is Burning* [1997], *I Like it Like That* [1997], *Before Night Falls* [2000], *Piñero* [2001], *The Get Down* [2016-17], *Pose* [2018-], and the upcoming *In the Heights* [2021]).

audiences themselves to "step outside of our condition and objectify our reality... to move from objects to subjects," reclaiming a sense of identity, however gradually, from a dominant mode of cinema that had consistently muddied it.[98]

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[98] Jiménez, "Margin to the Center," 27-28, 34-36.

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Redefining Caring vs Curing Amid Division: The United States AIDS Crisis

Phoebe Jones

In the case of AIDS, and in epidemics of all kinds, prejudice played a strong role in determining health outcomes. Centuries of racial, class, and gender hierarchies come into play every day during clinical practice, in medical emergencies, in the management of epidemics and pandemics. The rise of AIDS in the US coincided with the War on Drugs, which has since been identified as the contemporary iteration of Black oppression,[1] and was a major social determinant for how Black people were seen and treated within the medical establishment. The War on Drugs stereotyped Black Americans as being diseased, dirty, drug-infested, and criminal, creating new archetypes while building on top of other racial tropes of the past. Gay people, Black and otherwise, had long faced social blame and scrutiny, which during the same period allowed for the homophobic accusation that AIDS was a form of "punishment" for gay men. AIDS, originally known as GRID (Gay-Related Immune Deficiency Disorder) placed the illness specifically in the gay community, allowing for legislators to remain passive and fail the communities affected by the AIDS crisis as they were not a part of the larger, socially acceptable "general public." By analyzing the immense political, social, and medical failures of the Reagan administration, we can more effectively combat racial discrimination in the medical field as various infectious diseases expand and contract. In order to adequately care for AIDS victims, celebrities, doctors and communities had to prioritize *caring* over the fear of failure, of the inability to *cure*, during a time of vast social and moral division.

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[1] Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2012).

These marginalized communities were left to suffer in silence while Larry Speakes, Reagan's press secretary, laughed and mocked the victims of the "Gay Plague," saying he did not know anything about AIDS when asked if the White House saw it as a "great joke."[2] Rather than discuss methods of intervention and care for those who became sick with AIDS, the conversation was geared towards protecting the "American public" from "Americans with AIDS" and away from helping those who were already sick.[3] One well respected public health official who spoke about AIDS at this time, Harvey V. Fineberg, Dean of the Harvard School of Public Health, stated publicly that "Bisexual men and prostitutes who are drug addicts are spreading the virus to the general population."[4] He spoke of the categories and identities above separate from the concept of the "general public." Though this is a purportedly serious statement from an expert in public health, there was still no indication as to why gay or bisexual men, Black Americans, sex workers, and intravenous drug users were not considered part of the "American public." The concept of "the Gay Plague" was that AIDS came as a punishment for illicit or indecent behavior, piling blame on top of the shame already cast so freely upon these communities. Officials spoke of "protecting the American people," in other words, those the government felt were socially necessary to save.

In 1984, Speakes responded to a question of what Reagan was doing about the AIDS crisis with the statement "I haven't heard him express concern," and later stated that he hadn't even asked the President about it when at that point in 1984, over 4,000 people had died.[5] Reagan abstained from speaking on AIDS publicly until 1985, after upwards of 16,458

[2] Richard Lawson, "The Reagan Administration's Unearthed Response to the AIDS Crisis is Chilling," *Vanity Fair,* December 1, 2015, https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2015/11/reagan-administration-response-to-aids-crisis.
[3] Walt Odets, "*Out of the Shadows: Reimagining Gay Men's Lives*" (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2019), 66-68.
[4] Ibid*., 67.
[5] Ibid.

Americans had already been infected.[6] This shift in opinion was not necessarily attributed to the number of cases rising, but rather the kinds of cases that were on the rise in the public eye. The case of Ryan White—a 13-year-old boy from Indiana who contracted AIDS after receiving a blood transfusion for his hemophilia—was easier for Reagan to discuss publicly, as he was an "'innocent' aids victim, unlike the gay men Reagan did not like to mention."[7] White, an otherwise "normal," white, straight teenager from America's heartland, made the fight against AIDS a distinct threat for the so-called "general public" whom Speakes had told not to worry. White became one of the first publicized *victims* of AIDS, receiving a distinctly different media treatment than intravenous drug users, Black people, and Gay communities. Even though he received pity from President Reagan and was held above those "Other" communities, he was still ostracized by some in the public since "people said that he had to be gay, that he had to have done something bad or wrong, or he wouldn't have had it."[8]

Today, in part as a result of this history, we recognize that there cannot be a proper public health campaign without factual, unbiased reporting and good news circulation, and that public health outcomes are greatly affected by the spread of misinformation.[9] Swinging wildly between an image of purity and an image of uncleanliness, the US government allowed the idea of AIDS a "Gay Plague" to proliferate, implying that AIDS could not spread to heterosexual people. Stigmatizing and ignoring diseases prevents public health precautions from being adopted or

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[6] Boyce Rensberger, "AIDS Cases in 1985 Exceed the Total of All Previous Years." (*Washington Post*, 17 Jan. 1986. https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1986/01/17/aids-cases-in-1985-exceed-total-of-all-previous-years/38c933d7-260c-414b-80f7-0dd282415cc6/.

[7] Michael Specter, "Hillary Clinton, Nancy Reagan, and AIDS." *The New Yorker*, https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/hillary-clinton-nancy-reagan-and-aids.

[8] "Who Was Ryan White?" *HIV/AIDS Bureau*, 9 Aug. 2016, https://hab.hrsa.gov/about-ryan-white-hivaids-program/who-was-ryan-white.

[9] This paper was written and edited during the COVID-19 pandemic, a time in which this theme is particularly salient. See, for example, J. Jaiswal et al. "Disinformation, Misinformation and Inequality-Driven Mistrust in the Time of COVID-19: Lessons Unlearned from AIDS Denialism." *AIDS and Behavior* volume 24, issue 10 (2020): 2776-2780.

taking effect, putting more people at risk. If the suffering of minority groups is not publicized, then it is not considered publicly to be a "real threat." Those who did not look like Ryan White were not exalted to his level of innocence. Rather, the silence surrounding their suffering only reconfirmed discrimination against Black and gay communities. This is not to discredit nor ignore the hardships and distinct pain that White and his family went through, but to show how AIDS is perceived in relation to different communities based on their social acceptability, demonstrating the power of mass media coverage. Even after Ryan White's story contextualized the fact that AIDS was in fact a national health crisis, "popular consciousness still [sought] to see AIDS as confined to the 'unclean' and 'deviant' prostitutes, the promiscuous, and partners of the outcast original risk groups."[10] The resurgence of the concept of "heterosexual AIDS," the AIDS that existed within the United States meant new programs rolling out, more rigorous testing, campaigns for the eroticism of condoms and safe sex, and ads stating how now the "general public" was officially at risk equal to those who were not counted as the general public. Though it was crucial to acknowledge how every person in America was at risk, the notion of risk being equal was far from the truth.

There existed a battle for balance in ostracized communities between representation within the AIDS crisis and targeted discrimination. Those who were known to be at increased risk were still at increased risk, yet public programming targeted the White cis-gendered straight people who were presumed to be at equal risk, or whose risk was seen as more important, thereby "obscur[ing] the true contours of the disease with devastating consequences for communities disproportionately affected."[11] Overrepresentation implied villainization, but

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[10] Introduction, "*Radical America*," Vol. 20, No. 6, Oct. 1987, 3,
https://libcom.org/files/Rad%20America%20V20%20I6.pdf
[11] Ibid.

without any representation at all, silence still equaled death for those most Otherized. Because of the systemic discrimination that existed prior to the AIDS crisis, the Black and Gay communities, as well as I.V. drug users were now feared for their presumed HIV-contagiousness; AIDS was a consequence of their actions, something presumably deserved. They did not seem to be victims, so in turn, they became the villains, unclean and deviant.

Historian of science Evelynn Hammonds points to the construction of the racial concept of "colorblindness" during the AIDS crisis.[12] In terms of race, neither mainstream media nor popular Black media wanted to truly dissect the issue of AIDS prevalence within the Black community. By remaining silent or chillingly distant in its approach to AIDS in the Black community, "white media fail to challenge the age-old American myth of blacks as carriers of disease."[13] Black media creators feared that by humanizing Black people with AIDS, they risked "blacks being associated with two kinds of deviance: sexually transmitted disease and homosexuality."[14]

To Hammonds' points, within the latter half of the 1980s through the mid-1990s, Black Americans experienced a "double pandemic," in which they suffered from the effects of white supremacy and anti-Blackness as well as HIV/AIDS itself. Black communities were trapped in the complexity of needing to be seen and assessed to properly treat AIDS, but simultaneously not being willing to expose oneself to racial violence. To be gay on top of being Black was—and is—to be uniquely endangered. Therefore many members of the Black community chose to isolate themselves from the gay community, falling into the trap of hypermasculinity to counteract the perception of being gay. These taboo topics of homophobia, manhood, and

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[12] Evelynn Hammonds, "Race, Sex, and AIDS: The Construction of 'Other.'" *Radical America*, vol. 20, no. 6, Oct. 1987, 29. https://libcom.org/files/Rad%20America%20V20%20I6.pdf
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.

machismo were, ironically, put into the spotlight themselves. Arthur Ashe, a famous tennis player, spoke in his personal memoir about the struggles of perception and how he saw and felt firsthand the stress that was to potentially be perceived as gay. From his uncle questioning him in private about him being gay to being asked in front of worldwide audiences, Ashe began to understand the stress and persecution that came with being marked as potentially gay.[15] Ashe realized that his late friend Max Robinson's plea to be remembered as a promiscuous "lady-killer" came from the sheer anxiety of this perception, writing in his memoir that "to worry, at the moment of one's death, whether or not one is perceived by other people as gay or straight is a cruel burden to bear at a time of ultimate stress. And yet it definitely seems to matter to the world if one is gay or straight."[16] Upon reflecting upon his past and learning after his diagnosis he was able to recognize the use of "stereotypical masculinity" as a tool for being outwardly misogynistic and homophobic as gayness was tied to femininity.[17] Though too late to call out the homophobia he witnessed in the past, he used his understanding of his peers' presentation to understand that masculinity is used as a tool to portray homophobia, even though masculinity itself does not equate to heterosexuality.

Another sports superstar, Magic Johnson, contracted HIV and shared his vastly different approach to thinking about the disease. Rather than speaking about its importance and prevalence in different communities, Magic Johnson instead chose to speak about the number of women he slept with, citing his carelessness and libido as the cause of his HIV-positive status. He echoed fellow basketball icon Wilt Chamberlain, who, around the same time, famously claimed he had slept with twenty thousand women. Johnson's use of the objectification of women as a response

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[15] Arthur Ashe and Arnold Rampersad. *Days of Grace: A Memoir.*
Heinemann, 1993. 225-226 https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.32106010091509&view=1up&seq=9
[16] Ashe, "Days of Grace", 227
[17] Ibid., 228

to his diagnosis disturbed Ashe, who saw it as pure deflection and defensiveness.[18] Ashe scolds both Chamberlain and Johnson, saying "African-Americans have spent decades denying that we are sexual primitives by nature, as racists have argued since the days of slavery. Then two college-trained black men of international fame and immense personal wealth do their best to reinforce the stereotype."[19] Rather than embracing the image of being disease-ridden or gay, one of the forms of deviance Evelynn Hammonds discussed, they frame their pride on another racial stereotype, but one that has roots in hypermasculinity rather than effeminacy or illness. She recounts that Black people were stereotyped as being "more loose and flagrant in their sexual behavior — behavior they could not control" and that Black people became the subjects that deserve to be infected by and die from diseases since they lacked the "control" that White people had.[20] Hammonds and Ashe in their own ways problematize the image of Black promiscuity, and while neither of them seeks to shame sexual activity, they offer the importance of reflecting on how one's actions could be directly harmful to other communities or to other members of one's own community.

Care, Not Cure

Medical communities were uncertain as to what the best course of action was in fighting AIDS. Without a standardized plan in place, doctors went about treating a variety of different patients in a variety of different ways. One doctor stated that he didn't "get into this to take care of shooters," citing that he was happy to take care of gay men instead but that he didn't "like drug users."[21] When medical professionals feel comfortable cherry-picking who they do and do

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[18] Ibid., 238
[19] Ashe, "Days of Grace", 238
[20] Hammonds, "Race, Sex, and AIDS," 31
[21] Ronald Bayer and Gerald M. Oppenheimer, *AIDS Doctors: Voices from the Epidemic*, Oxford University Press, 2000, 61.

not want to care for, the functioning of the system itself is called into question. With some

doctors vowing to give the best care they could, others deliberately not diagnosing their patients,

and yet others doctors telling patients to "go home and wait to die," the phrase "do no harm"

itself became subject to varied interpretation.[22] With no standardized treatment methods, doctors

took it upon themselves to decide how patients would find out about their status and live out the

rest of their days. William Owen, a doctor who chose to delay telling patients about their

diagnosis, said he felt doing no harm looked like "not worrying people about what later turned

out to be HIV disease" because at that time "there was really nothing they could do" to prevent

their death.[23]

Donald Kotler challenged this concept, saying that "curing was only part of doctoring."[24]

Many doctors, William Owen included, were acquiescing to the fact that there was no way for

them to "undo" the diagnosis or take all the pain away. Disgusted by their resignation, Kotler

wrote, "that was the sickening excuse of many people who didn't want to deal with patients with

AIDS. If I cannot cure, why should I bother?"[25] Kotler calls upon his fellow doctors to focus on

patients' comfort by reducing pain and physically being present with them.

On a larger scale than individual doctors, institutions had different policies regarding

AIDS patients, in many cases hinging on publicity, an important factor for a private hospital.

New York University Medical Center, for example, one of the leading institutions treating AIDS,

opted for putting AIDS patients in individual isolation rooms, starkly reducing the capacity of

AIDS patients NYU would be able to take in.[26] Patients for other diseases and ailments began to

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[22] Ibid., 68-73
[23] Bayer and Oppenheimer, *AIDS Doctors*, 68
[24] Ibid., 70
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid., 96

seek out other hospitals in fear as a result of NYU's Medical Center being labeled as an "AIDS hospital," a problem faced by Lenox Hill Hospital as well.[27] In a mid-1980s letter he penned to the president of Lenox Hill, Dr. Peter Seiztman asked and answered his own questions about the hospital and its issues:

> Smaller cities with fewer patients have opened AIDS units both inpatient and outpatient... Why hasn't Lenox Hill? Answer: Lenox Hill does not want to become known as an AIDS Hospital. AIDS patients are gay men and not worthy of the care that would be extended if the AIDS epidemic affected primarily homosexuals. Question: Why are AIDS patients isolated contrary to all medical evidence of transmissibility? Answer: Lenox Hill prefers to acquiesce to the public's irrational fears rather than help to lead the way in quelling them through education and example.[28]

Fear remained one of the most divisive factors in the entirety of the AIDS crisis. People feared their untimely deaths, they feared being alone and being misrepresented, but rather than seeking to come together as a country to counteract the epidemic, this fear created a topic for debate, and a private conflict for hospitals around how to proceed when public confidence was dwindling. As Seiztman stated, many hospitals, including New York University and Lenox Hill chose to side more with the fears of the public as they tried to stay afloat. In order to adequately care for patients on a widespread level, hospital systems had to make the same commitment that individual doctors had made, that they "had to confront their fears in an institutional climate that often mirrored the fear and hostility characterizing so much of the social response to AIDS."[29] The four walls of a hospital, for both doctors and patients alike, was a microcosm of the outside world, where hatred and disgust were long-established.

It was this primitive fear and dislike that continued to ravage AIDS programs in hospitals. Hospitals refused to become adequately situated for the amount of AIDS patients that

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[27] Ibid.
[28] Bayer and Oppenheimer, *AIDS Doctors*, 96-97
[29] Ibid., 94

needed care. Doctors still protested treating patients, as their "homophobia was so intense that it overrode all sense of professional responsibility." Some doctors cited their religion and their distaste for getting in the way of "the wrath of God coming down on these people."[30] One doctor, a leading AIDS nutritionist at the time, said to Dr. Kotler that their patients were not worth expensive palliative resources, since "they're going to die" and "it's too expensive."[31]

The separation between the healthy and the sick existed both on a macrosocial level and on the level of medical practice. Despite all evidence showing that airborne infection is impossible with HIV, patients were physically isolated and treated as untouchable. Human touch is one of the first senses we gain when we are born. It is the most calming occurrence when we cannot speak or do not have the words. To lose access to human touch, on top of all the other effects of HIV/AIDS, was devastating for patients. Some doctors feared touching fellow doctors who worked with AIDS patients. Carol Brosgart, the head of the AIDS program at the Bay-area Alta Bates hospital stated that colleagues refused to shake her hand, saying "it was incredibly distasteful to be treated as if you were a leper just because you cared for people others saw as lepers."[32] With touch and closeness being fixated upon during the AIDS crisis, a gesture as simple as a handshake took on a whole new meaning.

This fear existed in gay doctors as well, some of whom saw their patients as a reflection of what the doctor himself could become as well as a reflection of what his community was enduring. Physician Jerry Cade believed that he was safe from AIDS in 1983 since his high risk of contraction period was a brief period of sexual openness in 1981. As many physicians came to realize, the incubation period was much longer than the 2-year span as previously thought. When

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[30] Bayer and Oppenheimer, *AIDS Doctors*, 104
[31] Ibid., 105
[32] Ibid., 100

Jerry Cade went in to be tested in 1987, his suspicions were confirmed: he too became an AIDS patient, and reflected the illness seen in his patients.[33] Instead of being a doctor cautiously distant from patients, Cade himself became a sick patient, isolated by the medical establishment.

John Mazzullo, a physician based in Boston, stated that he hugged his patients "contrary to the traditional clinical distance taught to him" since he felt that simply "handing them kleenex" is not care enough for the patients and "not the right thing to do."[34] Being able to empathize more with his patients allowed him to recognize the importance of touch. Most patients, he wrote, "never get touched except by someone sticking them or poking them" so he hugs them to "balance it out."[35] Neill Schram, another openly gay physician who was based out of Los Angeles made it his mission to humanize patients through hugging as well since "so many of them won't be touched by anybody" and what they wanted "most of all was a physician who treated them in spite of their HIV infection."[36] Touch and closeness for them became a symbol and standard of care.

This newfound standard of care was felt across the county. Cliff Morrison, a doctor at San Francisco General Hospital, opened Ward 5B to focus on outpatient services such as "emergency housing, long-term housing, hospice care, and support care."[37] His goal was to transform the care model for AIDS patients to prioritize treating patients with care and compassion. He acknowledges that this priority was

> probably the single most visible change that happened--and I think it's a direct result of this epidemic--is that health care providers show an emotional side of themselves that

[33] Bayer and Oppenheimer, *AIDS Doctors*, 81
[34] Ibid., 72
[35] Ibid., 72-73
[36] Ibid., 73
[37] "The AIDS Epidemic in San Francisco: The Medical Response, 1981-1984, Vol. I."
https://oac.cdlib.org/view?docId=kt2m3n98v1&query=&brand=oac4, 177

they never did before. We touch each other, and we touch our patients, and we touch our patients' families, and we hug people. Something we never did before.[38]

This type of care wasn't about either curing or abandoning patients as incurable. Rather, it was meant to revolutionize and improve upon how doctors care for their patients, HIV+ and otherwise. The challenge, as Morrison's colleague Gayling Gee put it: "How do you truly give nonjudgmental excellent care?"[39] In many ways, the answer lies in their legacy, which has altered how doctors across the United States prioritize caring along with curing. Of the success of this movement in medical ethics, Morrison said he is "proud that we took AIDS out of the shadows and made it human," because operating in fear meant neglecting those that needed this care most.[40]

As Morrison said, the humanization of touching AIDS patients moved the epidemic out of the shadows, largely within the four walls of hospitals. Yet the compassion from a few famous celebrities brought it into the (very) public light. One of the most famous photos of the AIDS crisis is that of Princess Diana shaking hands with a man with AIDS without gloves in 1987, challenging the notion that AIDS could be spread through touch.

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[38] Ibid., 206

[39] Ibid., 70

[40] "'They Needed to Feel Loved': How One Nurse Revolutionized Patient Care During the AIDS Crisis," June 7, 2019. https://www.jnj.com/personal-stories/ward-5b-how-one-nurse-revolutionized-patient-care-during-the-aids-crisis.

She stated publicly after the event that "HIV does not make people dangerous to know, so you can shake their hands and give them a hug. Heaven knows they need it."[42] Princess Diana, known for being consistently groundbreaking as a public figure, was praised and revered because of her observed boldness with the disease as a princess, while others called her careless. Regardless, many cite her as being one of the first public figures photographed in close contact with people with AIDS.

Few photos of AIDS patients were as powerful as the photos taken of David Kirby and his family at the hour of his death, which came to be known as the photos that changed the face of AIDS. The photo deviated from the status quo regarding AIDS at the time, showing Kirby welcomed home and closely surrounded by family at his death per his dying wish.[43] The image

[41] ANWAR HUSSEIN/GETTY IMAGES "Diana Shakes Hands with an AIDS Patient at Middlesex Hospital's AIDS Ward", on April 9, 1987. from Chloe Foussianes, "Princess Diana Advocates for AIDS Patients"
[42] Chloe Foussianes, "Princess Diana Advocates for AIDS Patients—Much to the Queen's Dismay—in a Clip from CNN's 'The Windsors.'" *Town & Country*, 5 Sept. 2020, https://www.townandcountrymag.com/society/tradition/a33917175/princess-diana-aids-the-windsors-cnn-exclusive-video/.
[43] Ben Cosgrove, "World AIDS Day: The Photo That Changed the Face of HIV/AIDS." *LIFE*, 25

of Kirby being embraced by his father was shocking to those who had only seen AIDS patients photographed alone and from afar. For some Roman Catholics, the image became controversial in that it "mocked classical imagery of Mary cradling Christ after his crucifixion."[44] The photo, used as a provocative advertisement for Benetton, forced many to *see* the Kirby family, to confront their humanity instead of continuing to remain (purposefully) uncomfortable and ignorant about AIDS. Though successful in spreading awareness about the heavy losses of AIDS, the usage of Kirby's photo was not without controversy.

The Terrence Higgins Trust, a well-renowned AIDS charity in England, wanted the ad banned, as they felt the ad was "offensive and unethical" as Benetton profited off of Kirby's suffering.[46] Kay Kirby herself stated that she "never had any reservations about allowing Benetton to use Therese's photograph" since she saw Benetton's ad as an opportunity to show "the truth about AIDS."[47]

Nov. 2014, https://www.life.com/history/behind-the-picture-the-photo-that-changed-the-face-of-aids/

[44] Ibid.
[45] Therese Frare, David Kirby on His Deathbed, Ohio 1990
[46] Ibid.
[47] Cosgrove, "World AIDS Day"

After David Kirby's death, his parents Bill and Kay Kirby continued to care for Peta, David's previous caretaker who had also become infected with HIV. Kay Kirby stated "I made up my mind when David was dying and Peta was helping to care for him, that when Peta's time came and we all knew it would come that we would care for him. There was never any question. We were going to take care of Peta. That was that."[48] Kay, herself, noticed the distance and coldness AIDS patients were treated with as the nurse who came to hand out menus "refused to let David hold one [for fear of infection]. She would read out the meals to him from the doorway."[49]

Once again, despite all medical evidence showing that AIDS was not contagious through regular touch, fear and innate disgust with AIDS patients kept many doctors and nurses from being close with patients, both physically and socially. Upon reflection, Kay Kirby decided that "we would help other people with AIDS avoid all that, and we tried to make sure that Peta never went through it."[50] By sharing how committed they were to both their son and his caretaker, The Kirby's became a model for compassion and love in the time of AIDS rather than retreating in fear.

These public stories created more room for acknowledging the humanity that existed in AIDS patients worldwide. One of the fondest relationships that emerged prior to the fame of David Kirby's photo, was between Ryan White and Elton John. Upon learning about Ryan White's story and finding out that he wanted to meet Elton John, John made sure he got in touch with White and his mother by bringing them to a gig he had and to Disneyworld afterward

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[48] Cosgrove, "World AIDS Day"
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.

because he "really adored them."[51] John stated that Ryan White became a source of inspiration

for him since he was an example of "real courage in the face of something truly appalling."[52]

John remained a constant presence in Ryan White's life, and remained at his side, helping

Ryan's mother Jeanne and sister Andrea with Ryan's care, starting in the early spring of 1990

until his death on April 8th, 1990.[53] This sobering moment for Elton John reflected the change in

the way of thought many people were having at the time of Ryan White's death. Ronald Reagan,

being one of these people, had a newfound dedication to funding research and writing policy

regarding AIDS. Reagan who, as stated earlier, was not keen on speaking about AIDS, wrote a

letter to Ryan White upon his passing, stating "Ryan, my dear young friend, we will see you

again."[54] The recognition and memorialization of Ryan White's death continued on in

presidencies following Reagan, including the presidency of George H.W. Bush, who signed the

Ryan White Care Act into law. Voices and famous faces from the epidemic helped humanize and

contextualize the impact that AIDS had on many people. Relationships like Ryan White's and

Elton John's as well as the prominence of David Kirby's photo brought AIDS out of the shadows

and into the light where the public was forced to face AIDS' touch.

Humanizing AIDS was a crucial step to normalizing patients and relaxing irrational fears

in order to replace them with attentive care and understanding. Dr. Linda Laubenstein focused on

compassion within competent care from the very beginning of the epidemic. She stated in the

first AIDS conference at New York University in 1983 that she knew "One patient was an

interesting event...two was an epidemic."[55] Laubenstein herself was familiar with the grips of

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[51] Elton John, *Me*, Henry Holt and Company, 2019, 207
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., 217
[54] Specter, "Hillary Clinton"
[55] Robin Marantz Henig, "AIDS A NEW DISEASE'S DEADLY ODYSSEY (Published 1983)."
The New York Times, 6 Feb. 1983. *NYTimes.com*, www.nytimes.com/1983/02/06/magazine/aids-a-new-disease-s-deadly-odyssey.html.

disease as she underwent multiple surgeries before the age of five due to her battle with polio

that left her paraplegic. The lasting effects of polio led her to oftentimes be "sicker than her

patients" though "she didn't let it stop her," as one of her colleagues recounts.[56] Among the first

wave of doctors recognizing that this was an epidemic on the rise, Laubenstein herself had "seen

62 patients with AIDS" which added up to be "a fourth of the national total recorded at the

time," going above and beyond be seeing patients "in the emergency room in the middle of the

night and even made house calls, using her motorized wheelchair and public buses."[57] As much

as she saw it to be her duty to take care of patients, she saw the necessity of keeping as many

AIDS victims employed as "work was vital to emotional and physical health as well as for

financial support," particularly in a population that was targeted and fired based on their health

status.[58] As a result, she and a colleague founded Multitasking in 1989, a nonprofit organization

employing people with AIDS to do office services. [59] Laubenstein sought to fight for the person

with the AIDS diagnosis, not just against the disease itself.

This bravery is not to be misconstrued with fearlessness. Fear during an epidemic is to be

expected, but for many of the strongest actors in the epidemic, such as Dr. Laubenstein, the fear

drove them to strive for excellence and honoring the lives being lost. On a larger scale, Bellevue

Hospital, a teaching affiliate of New York University's Medical School, became widely known

for its high population of AIDS patients. Jeanne Kalinoski, who was a nurse and an AIDS

clinical instructor stated that "touching is basic to hospital care, it can't be avoided," So their goal

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[56] Bruce Lambert, "Linda Laubenstein, 45, Physician And Leader in Detection of AIDS (Published 1992)." *The New York Times*, 17 Aug. 1992. *NYTimes.com*, https://www.nytimes.com/1992/08/17/nyregion/linda-laubenstein-45-physician-and-leader-in-detection-of-aids.html.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.

became the proper education of hospital workers. [60] In the face of fear, Bellevue prioritized the education of their hospital workers, placing the hospital at the cutting edge of AIDS treatment. In 1985, the *New York Times* reported that of the "15,403 cases of AIDS...reported nationally since the disorder was first identified in 1981, almost a third of them" were treated at Bellevue.[61]

That's not to say that the crisis at Bellevue was handled easily or flawlessly. At this time in 1985 cases were growing exponentially and projected to double in the year to come. Additionally, Bellevue was spending $900 a day on care for patients when the hospital only received $460 a day for each patient from New York City.[62] Dr. Saul Farber, the dean of NYU's medical school rejected and mocked calls to action against AIDS, saying to one Dr. Friedman-Kien, "Thank you for this very nice lecture...but why does NYU have to be the Titanic?"[63] He, too, held the fear previously discussed of becoming an "AIDS hospital," which could weaken Bellevue's public perception in a time where they were already losing money to the high costs of AIDS care.

Frankly, sometimes treatment did just go wrong. Between Dr. Friedman-Kien and Dr. Laubenstein, there were stark differences in how they believed they should treat AIDS patients. In an effort to keep patients alive, Dr. Jerome Groopman believed that "an aggressive approach to an aggressive disease was needed" as he had witnessed promising results in patients with a different disease.[64] Though commendable in their dedication to fighting AIDS, using methods to treat cancer for AIDS lent itself to "results that were often disastrous."[65] Dr. Laubenstein herself

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[60] Ronald Sullivan, "AIDS: BELLEVUE TRIES TO COPE WITH DISEASE IT CANNOT CURE (Published 1985)." *The New York Times*, 23 Dec. 1985. *NYTimes.com*, https://www.nytimes.com/1985/12/23/us/aids-bellevue-tries-to-cope-with-disease-it-cannot-cure.html.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Bayer and Oppenheimer, *AIDS Doctors*, 96
[64] Bayer and Oppenheimer, *AIDS Doctors*, 121
[65] Ibid., 120

thought it was necessary to try all aggressive methods possible in order to treat AIDS. She prescribed cancer drugs to one of her early AIDS patients and thought he initially responded to the cancer treatment, but "18 months later he was dead, his body covered with 75 lesions."[66] Her intervention did not work.

Though he admired Dr. Laubenstein greatly, Dr. Friedman-Kien remembers how he and she disagreed over oftentimes prescribing chemotherapy, which according to Freidman-Kien resulted in her "bump[ing] off more people than lived."[67] Though she was dedicated to saving those suffering greatly from AIDS, her method of intervention did more harm than good in the early days. It was not easy being one of the first responders to AIDS and seemingly coming up short in the ability to treat it. Freidman-Kien noted how Laubenstein would work 18-hour days and even still her methodology wouldn't work at best and kill patients faster at worst. [68] Freidman-Kien and Laubenstein clashed in their methods of treatment simply because there was no one right way to go about treating AIDS in 1981. As a result, Friedman-Kien was always medically engaged by the suggestions and eagerness his patients came in with. He stated that he enjoyed taking care of patients who "participate, who aren't just boilerplates who sit back waiting for me to give them what I want, but who say 'what about this? What about that?'"[69] Though harsh in some regards, Friedman-Kien felt that working with patients helped to ease stress and work towards learning more about AIDS. Some patients had underground ways of getting the newest AIDS treatment drug to Dr. Friedman-Kien so that he could test it. Friedman-Kien acknowledges this in saying that he too would "grope for straws" and "look for the same

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[66] Lambert, "Laubenstein"
[67] Bayer and Oppenheimer, *AIDS Doctors*, 121
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., 159

thing" if he had AIDS. Through these types of interactions it contextualizes the fact that in addition to being a doctor in different ways, there was no one way to be a patient either.

Though they keep a professional face when speaking to patients, the consistent loss causes a different kind of grief for medical professionals. Freidman-Kien himself stated that though his patients see a "very clinical" side of him, his "inner feelings are quite different" and he is "very much affected" by the death of his patients.[70] Another doctor, Leonard Calabrese, stated that after the deaths of his patients in Cleveland he felt grief that's "so black you think it's never going away." So he, too, kept his distance from his patients and made an extra effort to "not become overly involved." Their deaths cause a feeling of incompletion, that the doctors themselves must have failed, but not for lack of trying.

In the face of horrific numbers, Bellevue continued on to operate in knowledge rather than fear as well as compassion rather than belittlement. Learning to operate in the face of death became essential because of how doctors would "be torn apart" without learning to distance themselves from it.[71] Dr. Sagemam, another prominent AIDS doctor at Bellevue, recognized that "in some ways, the hospital had gone through the same psychological stages dying people experience—from the initial reaction of anger and fear, through denial and then to acceptance."[72] This acceptance was crucial in order to focus on the type of care that patients asked for instead of insisting on doing treatments they did not want. Patients themselves were forced to reckon with their impending deaths at the time of their diagnosis. There was no reason to treat an aggressive disease with an aggressive treatment if it wasn't working. The somber calmness in dual acceptance then allowed for doctors to push towards "forgo[ing] aggressive life-saving

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[70] Ibid., 189
[71] Sullivan, "AIDS: Bellevue"
[72] Ibid.

technology and painfully invasive treatments in favor of a little human compassion" and to grant

patients a "death with dignity."[73]

Bellevue, through education and strong leadership, reminded the doctors to focus on the

needs of the patients rather than allowing their fear to generate an environment of self-

preservation. The goal of medicine is not always to cure, but rather to aid in patients' decline and

focus on making sure that their inevitable death was one with dignity. Dr. Gerald Friedland, a

former resident at Bellevue Hospital, felt that "as long as we keep talking about cure, we'll

always feel like failures."[74]

Concluding Thoughts

Divisiveness is to be expected in the case of an epidemic. When nothing is certain in the

area surrounding disease, marginalized populations become fair game for political and medical

scapegoating. Populations such as Blacks and gays were fighting the alarmingly high levels of

AIDS in addition to the struggle to exist in a society that already antagonized them. From the

beginning of the epidemic, AIDS came as an excuse for some to be racist, homophobic, and

classist to those most affected by the disease. To others, AIDS was something best ignored until

it was forced in their faces, such as via the ad of David Kirby that Benetton ran.

Even within individual communities that were disproportionately affected by AIDS,

some members wanted to ignore the prevalence and gravity of the epidemic. As discussed by

Hammonds, the Black community felt ashamed of AIDS' associations with homosexuality and

uncleanliness. As Ashe and Hammonds explore, the attitudes of Black celebrities and Black

media dictate how the community and the outer would view AIDS at large. This purposeful

ignorance in not speaking to the dangers of AIDS was an attempt at separating Blackness from

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[73] Sullivan, "AIDS: Bellevue"
[74] Bayer and Oppenheimer, *AIDS Doctors*, 71

disease, yet in turn, allowed a narrative to bloom out of pre-existing racial stereotypes. Without proper media coverage in the Black community, the perception of Blacks as poor and diseased people to be avoided remained.[75] The Black experience in the medical sphere has long been one filled with mistrust and pain. Without the public attention necessary to call the government to action, the cyclical nature of inadequate care and worse health outcomes continued on. In this way, colorblindness works to no one's benefit. It is because of this that it becomes even more crucial to recognize that "the power to define disease and normality makes AIDS a political issue."[76] It was not strictly a matter of disease, but also a matter of perceptions of race, class, and sexuality.

After reading primary accounts, it is hard to neglect the fact that patients of different identities were treated differently. Reagan's response to Ryan White's illness differed greatly from the non-response given to the thousands of other AIDS patients who died before White. Those patients just so happened to be gay, Black, or intravenous drug users. Because of their identity, there was a certain level of guilt attached to minority patients that weren't as severely attached to patients like Ryan White. Because of the nature of the disease, some reactionary assumptions were made and used to harm White, yet his image as a hemophiliac and innocent White teen made his face and case more acceptable and therefore easier to talk about publicly.

The story of AIDS was never as simple as an unknown illness. It expanded into all crevices of the American landscape. Community and family members close to those with AIDS found new ways of taking steps to raise awareness of the severity of AIDS. One person was an AIDS victim himself, William Syder, who received tainted blood from an open-heart surgery

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[75] Hammonds, "Race, Sex, and AIDS," 29
[76] Ibid.

sued the American Association of Blood Banks won $405,000 in a settlement.[77] Though Dr.

Joseph Bove, chairman of the association's Committee of Transfusions, claims that the

association "simply [does] not have the financial resources to respond to these kinds of

judgments." Months before Snyder's transmission, Dr. Donald Francis, the director of the AIDS

task force at the CDC in 1983, "urged the association to adopt a three-part screening system to

eliminate high-risk donors."[78] Though there was "ample evidence" that AIDS was transmitted

through blood, Bove remained "unconvinced that AIDS was transmitted through blood."[79] Blood

Banks across America were sued for large figures as a result of Bove's and others' medical

negligence.[80] There was no screening put in place, therefore their method of preventing

transmission was banning all gay men from donating blood. Instead of addressing the problem at

the beginning, the system was forced to resort to discrimination. Subsequently, programs such as

the San Diego Blood Sisters were created out of a need for blood for victims of AIDS. The

Blood Sisters were dozens of lesbians who gathered to donate blood to AIDS patients after the

ban on gay men donating was imposed.[81] Even though they were not perceived publicly as being

AIDS carriers, there was an attempt to bar lesbians from donating blood in 1985 as "the public

could not distinguish between what was a high-risk group and what was not."[82] Sentiments

around the association between gay men and AIDS spread into other groups in the LGBTQ

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[77] Robert Hanley, "Blood Bank Is Held Liable in AIDS Case (Published 1996)." *The New York Times*, 5 June 1996. *NYTimes.com*, https://www.nytimes.com/1996/06/05/nyregion/blood-bank-is-held-liable-in-aids-case.html.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Beth Hutchison,"Lesbian Blood Drives as Community-Building Activism in the 1980s." *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, vol. 19, no. 1, Jan. 2015, pp. 119. *Taylor and Francis+NEJM*, doi:10.1080/10894160.2015.968079.
[82] AP. "Fear of AIDS Cancels Blood Drive on Coast (Published 1985)." *The New York Times*, 11 Jan. 1985. *NYTimes.com*, https://www.nytimes.com/1985/01/11/us/fear-of-aids-cancels-blood-drive-on-coast.html.

community. Fear allowed for the continuation of discrimination into groups that were known to not be "at risk."

Among methods of avoidance and division, frustration and the feeling of failure became commonplace. For the first decade of the crisis, the diagnosis was a death sentence for all people with AIDS. There was no prevention. Doctors felt hopeless because of their inability to cure AIDS and stop patient deaths. Out of this frustration, however, came a newfound expansion of care. Care, as it were, meant diagnosing and treating and subsequently discharging cured patients from the hospital, but with AIDS this was no longer a course of action that could be taken. Within a crisis such as AIDS, it is important to recognize that the strongest uniting factor is people's humanity, the ability to see one another as people in need of help rather than seeing what "plagues" them instead. Doctors focused on treating the whole person by being close to them, giving them hugs, and giving them as much autonomy as they could in the process. As Dr. Gerald Friedland stated, focusing on curing patients rather than being with them in their final moments would always result in doctors feeling like failures.[83] Humanizing patients meant feeling the real emotional impacts of the epidemic. Doctors, in particular gay ones who saw what AIDS was doing to their community, felt unimaginable grief at the loss of their patients. But with the strength of compassion within care, patients became more than a task, they became people. Curing, as Dr. Donald Kotler said, was "only part of doctoring."[84] Becoming close with patients was crucial in forming both a national and international understanding of both AIDS and the people AIDS affected. Doctors who truly kept their promise to do no harm set an example of how to treat patients and give them the "death with dignity" they deserved. And though NYU

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[83] Bayer and Oppenheimer, *AIDS Doctors*, 71
[84] Ibid., 70

and Bellevue may have looked like the Titanic, it was through their compassion and care that they broke the divide and truly embraced the pioneer status they claimed to have.

AIDS Today

Because of the mutation rate of the virus, to this day there is still no cure. Medicine has been developed especially to treat and prevent AIDS such as PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis), so that the risk is lower and the diagnosis itself is no longer a death sentence. To this day gay men are not allowed to donate blood. Those with access to PrEP have a significantly decreased risk of contracting AIDS and those with access to AIDS medications are able to live normal lives. However, an estimated nineteen percent of people with AIDS are unaware of their diagnosis because of the inaccessibility of HIV testing.[85] Additionally, thirty-three percent of people with AIDS globally are unable to access antiretroviral therapy (ART).[86] Though HIV.gov cites the accessibility to testing and ART as crucial to stopping the spread of AIDS, these numbers are still detrimentally high, especially for an epidemic that has been around for decades.[87]

The fight to stop the spread of AIDS, though stronger, is still not over. Because of this, it is pivotal to look at the compassion of the key actors of the epidemic, doctors such as Freidman-Kien and Laubenstein, activists such as Hammonds and Ashe, and celebrities such as Princess Diana and Elton John, and remember the aspiration of excellent care for the patient. The compassion and humanity exercised in the AIDS epidemic serves as a reminder to prioritize care for all people, especially in the face of potent moral and social division. So long as we value caring over curing, we need not worry about failure.

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[85] HIV.gov. "Global HIV/AIDS Overview." *HIV.Gov*, 25 Nov. 2020, https://www.hiv.gov/federal-response/pepfar-global-aids/global-hiv-aids-overview.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid.

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The Environmental Degradation of a People:
How American Settler-Colonialism Perpetuated a System of Environmental Racism Against Native Americans

Amanda McBain

Introduction

For many Native American groups, their relationship to the environment is central to not only their religions and cultures but also their survival. The environments of Native Americans serve as sources of history, spiritual connections, sustenance, and appreciably more, and each aspect is imperative to their ability to thrive as a population. However, environmental racism has posed a severe threat to that relationship since the United States first established itself as a settler-colonial state on Natives' land many years ago. From its founding, the United States government weaponized the environments of Native Americans in order to fortify its status as a settler-colonial state and institute a government system that primarily served the interests of wealthy white men. These acts of environmental racism committed by the United States have proven detrimental to Native life. However, the U.S. government has since continued to carry out and sanction acts of environmental racism gratuitously despite the government's more expansive electorate. Through its establishment of environmental laws and institutions, the U.S. government has crafted an intricate system of environmental racism that it has upheld for decades.

Nevertheless, since the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 60s, the environmental justice movement has taken shape as an influential force against environmental racism. Various forms of protests have guided the environmental justice movement, primarily demonstrations and sit-ins, but recently environmental justice seekers have begun to more actively employ the legal tools of the United States government to confront environmental racism. U.S. laws, such as the

Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970, are purported as pathways for the environmental justice movement to challenge environmental racism legally. The U.S. government portrays these acts as intending to eliminate bias and environmental harm in government actions, but through their implementation, they have created little significant change regarding environmental racism, specifically against Native Americans. Instead, the results of legal challenges to environmental racism are often partial towards the government and corporations. Through an exploration of the U.S. laws, policies, and institutions that sanction environmental racism, and the environmental justice movement's challenges to such racism, it is clear that by establishing a legal system and institutions that historically have worked to benefit a settler-colonial agenda, the United States government has perpetuated a deleterious system of environmental racism against Native Americans.

Defining Environmental Racism and Environmental Justice

In order to understand how the United States government has utilized its legal system and institutions to weaponize the environment against Native Americans and how they are challenging such racism, we must first define environmental racism and environmental justice.

Environmental Racism

Environmental racism is a concept of racism that grew out of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s. The term highlights the racial discrimination that exists in how environmental policies are created, implemented, and enforced, and the detrimental impact such actions can have on minorities. Civil rights leader Dr. Benjamin Chavis coined the term "environmental racism," stating:

> Environmental racism is racial discrimination in environmental policy-making
> and enforcement of regulations and laws, the deliberate targeting of communities
> of color for toxic waste facilities, the official sanctioning of the presence of life-

threatening poisons and pollutants in communities of color, and the history of excluding people of color from leadership of the environmental movement.[1]

It is important to note that environmental racism applies to all minority communities in the United States, as evident in this statement. However, this article focuses specifically on environmental racism practiced against Native Americans and, concomitantly, explores environmental racism's historical role in the early settler-colonial era and how it has persisted since.

Dr. Chavis divides environmental racism into four components, with the first being "racial discrimination in environmental policy-making and enforcement of regulations and laws."[2] Chavis argued that when exercising environmental racism, the U.S. government designed policies to exclude minorities from environmental protections and make it feasible for harmful environmental actions to be committed against minority communities. Further, when environmental law and regulations incorporate minority communities under their protection, enforcement is often lax, and there is little oversight into how the policies are exercised. The second component is described as "the deliberate targeting of communities of color for toxic waste facilities," in which minority communities are disproportionately designated as waste sites. This is due to the disregard for minority life and a biased expectation from the government of dormancy in response to such environmental actions.[3] Communities in close proximity to these sites often face serious health risks, as evident in the health issues currently impacting the Ramapough Lenape Nation of Ringwood, New Jersey.[4] The third component is "the official sanctioning of the presence of life-threatening poisons and pollutants in communities of color."[5]

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[1] Benjamin Chavis, Preface to *Unequal Protection: Environmental Justice and Communities of Color*, ed. Robert D. Bullard (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1994), xi-xii.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] *Mann v. Ford*. Directed by Maro Chermayeff and Micah Fink, Show of Force, 2010.
[5] Ibid.

Here, it is further highlighted that those practicing environmental racism are aware of the

significant threat it poses to the health of minorities and that the government's institutions and

the legal system purposefully allows it to take place. Finally, the fourth component is "the

history of excluding people of color from leadership of the environmental movement," which

acknowledges that the voices of minorities have long been ignored and excluded from a

movement of which fights against a system of environmental harm that disproportionately affects

them.[6]

Environmental Justice

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), a federal agency created to

monitor and enact actions related to the protection of the environment, defines

environmental justice as follows:

> Environmental justice (EJ) is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all
> people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the
> development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws,
> regulations and policies.[7]

The EPA further defines "fair treatment" as meaning "…no group of people should bear a

disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from

industrial, governmental and commercial operations or policies."[8] For their definition of

"meaningful involvement," the EPA states:

> Meaningful involvement means: people have an opportunity to participate in
> decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health; the
> public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision;
> community concerns will be considered in the decision-making process; and
> decision makers will seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially
> affected.[9]

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[6] Ibid.

[7] EPA, "Environmental Justice," https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/learn-about-environmental-justice.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

With these definitions, the EPA expresses its intent to eliminate social bias in how environmental laws are crafted and subsequently enforced. They aim to appear to be more considerate of the concerns of those directly impacted by government actions that affect the environment. Through language such as "fair treatment," the EPA attempts to address the issue of environmental racism without directly declaring the problem as environmental racism.[10] The EPA's failure to acknowledge environmental racism in part represents why the problem has lasted for so long and why it is difficult to challenge it. The EPA's message of environmental justice is also seen as an attempt to co-opt a movement that seeks to challenge the acts of environmental racism fostered under their agency. In other words, by presenting themselves as allies in the fight for environmental justice, the EPA attempts to remove themselves as active participants in the perpetration of environmental racism and targets in the battle against environmental racism.

While these are the definitions of the EPA and, although of a different intent, one can apply the same goals of "fair treatment" and "meaningful involvement" to the current movement among Native Americans to end environmental racism and bring about environmental justice.[11] Native Americans aim to bring attention to racial bias in environmental policy-making and enforcement in hopes of putting an end to disproportionate environmental violations against their communities and environmental violations overall. According to Karen Jarratt-Snider, "For Native Americans and Indigenous Peoples there are three unique factors of EJ: tribal sovereignty, connections to traditional homelands (including culturally significant—or sacred—

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[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.

sites), and the continuing effects of colonization."[12] The U.S. government views federally

recognized tribal nations as having a government-to-government relationship with the U.S.

federal government, thus placing on them the environmental protection responsibilities of U.S.

federal agencies.[13] Further, the physical environments of Native Americans carry a nutritional,

cultural, and spiritual depth for Natives that traces back many centuries prior to the arrival of

European colonialism. These traditional relationships Natives have cultivated with the

environment have made them significantly dependent on it, making their fight for environmental

justice unique. However, central to environmental racism against Native Americans is

colonization, which shifted the authentic way of living for Native Americans and established an

extended system of burdensome and harmful living. These three factors guide the environmental

justice movement for Native Americans but also make challenging environmental racism

difficult.

U.S. Sanctioned Practices of Environmental Racism

The U.S. government has unjustly subjected Native American communities to various

forms of environmental racism, including toxic waste dumping and weapons testing. According

to Daniel Brook, "Because of the severe poverty and extraordinary vulnerability of Native

American tribes, their lands have been targeted by the U.S. government and the large

corporations as permanent areas for much of the poisonous industrial by-products of the

dominant society."[14] Since first settling on Native territory, the U.S. government has exercised

environmental racism against Natives because relative to the industrial wealth and power of the

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[12] Karen Jarratt-Snider, "Environmental Injustice, Land, and American Indian Religious Freedom" in *Indigenous Environmental Justice*, ed. Karen Jarratt-Snider and Marianne O. Nielsen (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2020), 41.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Daniel Brook, "Environmental Genocide: Native Americans and Toxic Waste," *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 57, no. 1 (1998): 106.

U.S. government, Natives were perceived as "less-than." The U.S. government has "deliberate[ly] target[ed]" Native Americans with environmental racism because they view Native communities as easy targets for environmental harm and have used such harm to achieve a larger agenda including to exercise control over Native Americans and their land.[15]

Settler-Colonialism

Settler-colonialism is a form of colonialism in which the settlers aim to replace the existing population by way of harmful practices, including assimilation and murder, in order to establish a society that places the settlers at the center and as the dominating force. Patrick Wolfe summarizes settler-colonialism as "an inclusive, land-centred project that coordinates a comprehensive range of agencies, from the metropolitan centre to the frontier encampment, with a view to eliminating Indigenous societies."[16] In the context of the United States, early colonizers sought to eliminate or displace Native Americans to gain their land, on which they would eventually establish a system of government that they would utilize to diminish the Native population further.

Early Settler-Colonial Practices of Environmental Racism

The U.S. government established a long history of environmental racism during the 1800s through laws such as the Indian Removal Act of 1830 and the Dawes Severalty Act of 1887. These early laws relocated Native Americans to less productive lands, while the U.S. government enjoyed the benefits of fruitful lands.[17] The acts passed through the U.S. legislative

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[15] Benjamin Chavis, Preface to *Unequal Protection: Environmental Justice and Communities of Color*, ed. Robert D. Bullard (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1994), xi-xii.

[16] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," Journal of Genocide Research 8, no. 4 (2006): 393.

[17] Ibid, 400.

system sanctioned acts of environmental racism against Native Americans, and in most cases, the enforcement of the acts strayed from the original intent of the legislation.

Indian Removal Act of 1830

In 1830, the U.S. government exercised by law one of the earliest forms of environmental racism against Native Americans through the Indian Removal Act. The act passed under President Andrew Jackson authorized an "exchange" of land between willing Native Americans from the five southeastern tribes (the Chickasaw, Choctaw, Seminole, Cherokee, and Creek) and the U.S. government.[18] The legislation stated that willing southeastern Native American tribes would be relocated to the west of the Mississippi River, and the U.S. government, in "exchange," would receive their lands. Those willing would also receive payments for any "improvement" they had made to their lands.[19] However, the legislation's enforcement was not in keeping with the words guaranteed in the legislation itself. Under President Jackson, many Natives were violently and forcibly removed from their lands and moved into "Indian territory," thus violating treaties that guaranteed the southeastern Native tribes their right to their lands.[20]

Many suffered from starvation during the "relocation" process due to their loss of game and produce. Such consequences demonstrated that removing Natives from their homes severely disrupted their ability to survive.[21] The lands to which the southeastern Native Americans were relocated were also not as productive as the lands they left behind in the east. According to Jarratt-Snider, "These actions disrupted traditional food systems; instead the government

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[18] Jason Edward Black, *American Indians and the Rhetoric of Removal and Allotment* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2015), 60.

[19] Alfred A. Cave, *Abuse of Power: Andrew Jackson and the Indian Removal Act of 1830* (Milton Park, UK: Taylor & Francis, Ltd., 2003), 1343-1344.

[20] History, "Trail of Tears," (November 09, 2009). https://www.history.com/topics/native-american-history/trail-of-tears.

[21] Alfred A. Cave, *Abuse of Power: Andrew Jackson and the Indian Removal Act of 1830* (Milton Park, UK: Taylor & Francis, Ltd., 2003), 1345.

supplied Indians with rations early on, now known as 'commodity foods,' which do not provide the nutritional value of traditional food systems, and can in turn lead to health issues among Native Americans."[22] These early actions by the U.S. government significantly damaged the traditional relationship the southeastern tribes had established with their environment as a source of sustenance. The relocated Natives, in turn, had to change their way of living and deal with the detrimental effects of a broken relationship with their rightful lands.

With the Indian Removal Act of 1830, the U.S. government established an early system of environmental racism against Native Americans in order to achieve its settler-colonial agenda. The U.S. government weaponized the environment against Natives by relocating the southeastern Native population from their lands that produced game and crops for their sustenance to lands that failed to do so. The U.S. hoped to usurp the roles of Natives on their rightful lands and reaffirm a government system that primarily served the interest of white U.S. settlers. The U.S. government saw it necessary that they replace and assimilate the Native population in order to establish and, subsequently, maintain their desired system of government.

The U.S. Military

The U.S. military is an institution that has been a dominant force in practicing environmental racism against Native Americans. According to Winona LaDuke and Sean Cruz, "The U.S. military is the largest polluter in the world."[23] Through harmful actions, such as weapons testing, the U.S. military has primarily exposed Native Americans and their environments to various toxins, leaving many Natives and animals dead or sick with diseases.

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[22] Karen Jarratt-Snider, "Environmental Injustice, Land, and American Indian Religious Freedom" in *Indigenous Environmental Justice*, ed. Karen Jarratt-Snider and Marianne O. Nielsen (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2020), 42.
[23] Winona LaDuke and Sean Cruz, *The Militarization of Indian Country* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2013), 69.

The U.S. military has expropriated the lands of Natives "in the name of national security" in numerous instances.[24] Nevada and Alaska are the top two states with the most extensive federal landholdings of 84.5 percent and 69.1 percent, respectively.[25] These two states have relatively large Native populations, and because they have such vast federal landholdings, the Native populations in these states are often subject to substantial environmental harms exercised by the military. As Bruce E. Johansen explains, "The U.S. military during World War II made a policy of dumping its most hazardous wastes on or near Indian reservations on the assumption that the land was far from population centers and otherwise relatively worthless."[26] The U.S. military's harmful view of Native Americans as of little value or non-existent has guided their environmental actions. This, in turn, caused many Native communities to disproportionately suffer the detrimental effects of environmental harm.

The nuclear weapons testing that took place within the Western Shoshone Territory of Nevada between 1951 and 1992 serves as an example of the harms of environmental racism. This weapons testing exercised by the U.S. military exposed about 160 million people to radiation, left many with cancer, and contaminated the game supply. However, those most impacted by the testing were the Natives of the Western Shoshone Territory because they were closest to the site. As a result of the weapons testing, many Natives were killed, and their food supply was damaged.[27] U.S. military actions deteriorated Natives' sources of economic wealth and food and, paradoxically, took many lives in the name of national security.

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[24] Ibid., 79-80.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Bruce E. Johansen, *Environmental Racism in the United States and Canada: Seeking Justice and Sustainability* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2020), 7.
[27] Winona LaDuke and Sean Cruz, *The Militarization of Indian Country* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2013), 91-93.

In many similar instances, the U.S. military presented itself as an active perpetrator of environmental racism. As an institution, it also expanded its act of environmental racism internationally for the proclaimed reason for national security. However, as evident in the harm done to Native American communities by way of deadly acts such as weapons testing, the military has not been unbiased in deciding who is harmed in their imprudent attempts to protect the nation.

Superfund Sites

Native American communities are disproportionately targeted as sites for dumping waste, toxins, and pollutants.[28] Throughout history, U.S. laws and institutions, such as The General Mining Law of 1872, have enabled corporations, as well as the government itself, to unjustly contaminate the lands of Natives with toxic waste. Passed under President Ulysses S. Grant, the General Mining Law of 1872 authorized the acquisition of economic mineral claims on federal public lands and is still utilized today. These economic minerals include gold, silver, and uranium, and due to this law, the mining of these minerals is allowed and has left damaging effects on Native communities.[29] The Bunker Hill Mining and Metallurgical Complex, whose mining activities contaminated over 150 miles of river, lake, and tributary with toxins and left many Native children with high levels of lead in their bloodstream, demonstrates the dangerous impacts of toxic waste. Without the General Mining Law of 1872 and laws alike, it likely would have been much more difficult for Natives to fall victim to the damaging effects of mining, but

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[28] Bruce E. Johansen, *Environmental Racism in the United States and Canada: Seeking Justice and Sustainability* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2020), 7.

[29] Linda M. Robyn, "Environmental Injustices and State-Corporate Crime on Navajo and Hopi Lands" in *Indigenous Environmental Justice*, ed. Karen Jarratt-Snider and Marianne O. Nielsen (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2020), 78-79.

laws such as these sanction harmful activities without considering their impact on those living on the environment.

As with many other wastes and contamination sites, the contaminated site of the Bunker Hill Mining and Metallurgical Complex was deemed a superfund site by the EPA.[30] According to Linda Robyn, "Superfunds are lands in the United States that have been contaminated with toxic waste and are slated for cleanup because they pose a threat to humans, animals, and the environment." These sites were established under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 and are part of the EPA's alleged effort to recognize and correct environmental violations.[31] However, as of June 2014, 25 percent of the active superfund sites are in Indian Country, referring to Native tribal and ancestral lands, while as of 2010, the U.S. Native population was only 1.7 percent.[32, 33] The incongruity present in the data indicates that the EPA has been ineffective in its legal duty to correct environmental harms and that there is significant racism against Native Americans in the allocation and correction of those environmental harms. The EPA expresses its intent to correct environmental harms but does not act on behalf of Native communities, thus declaring that their health and safety do not matter. Therefore, the EPA's declared intent to establish "fair treatment" and "meaningful involvement" is disingenuous and highly performative, in that these acts and institutions are created only with the intent to placate the environmental racism movement and not substantially reform environmental racism.[34]

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[30] Linda M. Robyn, "Environmental Racism: Contaminated Water in Indigenous and Minority Communities" in *Indigenous Environmental Justice*, ed. Karen Jarratt-Snider and Marianne O. Nielsen (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2020), 94.
[31] Ibid., 93.
[32] Ibid.
[33] National Congress of American Indians, "Indian Country Demographics," (2020). https://www.ncai.org/about-tribes/demographics.
[34] EPA, "Environmental Justice," https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/learn-about-environmental-justice.

Impact of Environmental Racism on Native American Communities

The impact of environmental racism comes with significant cultural loss and health risks for a lot of Native Americans due to their established dependence on the environment for their sustenance and cultural practices. Many Native American religions have established sacred sites that serve as conduits for religious belief and exercise. However, due to environmental harm, the religious practices of some Native Americans have been severely disrupted. This is evident in *Lyng v. Northwest Indian Cemetery Protective Association* (1988), in which the Northwest Indian Cemetery Protective Association, on behalf of the Yurok, Karok, and Tolowa tribes, challenged the U.S. Forest Service's attempt to build a logging road in the Chimney Rock area. The Chimney Rock area serves as a sacred site for the Native tribes, and the implementation of the logging road would likely damage the site and the tribes' ability to practice their religions. Ultimately, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the government, for the Court did not view the government's actions as directly forcing Natives to be in violation of their religions.[35] Such a ruling would perpetuate an overall disregard for the religious and cultural practices of Native Americans, thus promoting government acts of environmental racism.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "American Indian and Alaska Native…death rates for both men and women combined were nearly 50 percent greater than rates among non-Hispanic whites during 1999-2009."[36] Native Americans are clearly dying at a much higher rate. While it is difficult to establish causality between environmental racism and Native deaths due to other contributing social factors, the evidence

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[35] Karen Jarratt-Snider, "Environmental Injustice, Land, and American Indian Religious Freedom" in *Indigenous Environmental Justice*, ed. Karen Jarratt-Snider and Marianne O. Nielsen (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2020), 45-46.

[36] CDC, "American Indian and Alaska Native death rates nearly 50 percent greater than those of non-Hispanic whites," (April 22, 2014). https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2014/p0422-natamerican-deathrate.

presented above demonstrates a disproportionate and harmful targeting of Native Americans by the U.S. government. These demonstrated abuses under the U.S. government, in turn, warrants the claim that such death disparity is in part likely due to the environmental racism continuously practiced against Native communities. Further, when it comes to resolving environmental harms, there is greater disregard towards communities of color. It takes 20 percent longer for minority communities to be recognized as clean-up sites compared to white communities.[37] Native Americans and the protection of their environment are substantially disregarded by the U.S. government, for the U.S. government itself, through its laws and institutions, has been the perpetrator in the environmental harm against Natives.

Challenges to Environmental Racism

However, Native American communities actively seek environmental justice and challenge environmental racism. Through "sophisticated forms of political protest, coalition-building, and international networking with environmental and human rights organizations . . . [Native Americans] have demonstrated that…ecologically-destructive megaprojects can be slowed down, modified, and even stopped," states Al Gedicks.[38] Various forms of protests can lead to a substantial change in the fight against environmental racism, but Native Americans have recently begun to incorporate civil rights laws and environmental protection laws in their fight against environmental racism. While these legal tools ostensibly provide Native Americans with the opportunity to challenge environmental racism legally, the United States government

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[37] Luke Cole and Sheila Foster, "Environmental Racism: Beyond the Distributive Paradigm" in *From the Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2001), 55, cited in Gary Egger, *The Empire Writes Back: Environmental Racism & Indigenous Projects* (Mankato, MN: Minnesota State University, 2013), 12.

[38] Al Gedicks, *The New Resource Wars: Native and Environmental Struggles Against Multinational Corporations* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1993), 14-15, quoted in Linda M. Robyn, "Environmental Racism: Contaminated Water in Indigenous and Minority Communities" in *Indigenous Environmental Justice*, ed. Karen Jarratt-Snider and Marianne O. Nielsen (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2020), 109.

remains a perpetrator of environmental racism. Therefore, these tools often serve to be solely

performative and, in turn, work against reforming environmental racism.

National Environmental Policy Act

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was passed in 1970 with the intent of

ensuring that prior to government actions and projects, the government determines the

environmental impact of such actions and projects. In describing NEPA, the EPA states:

> The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was one of the first laws ever
> written that establishes the broad national framework for protecting our environment.
> NEPA's basic policy is to assure that all branches of government give proper
> consideration to the environment prior to undertaking any major federal action that
> significantly affects the environment. NEPA requirements are invoked when airports,
> buildings, military complexes, highways, parkland purchases, and other federal
> activities are proposed. Environmental Assessments (EAs) and Environmental Impact
> Statements (EISs), which are assessments of the likelihood of impacts from
> alternative courses of action, are required from all Federal agencies and are the most
> visible NEPA requirements.[39]

While the Act does not explicitly address environmental racism, the passage of NEPA

signaled the United States government's shifting attitude towards environmental

protection. On the surface, this Act provides Natives the unique opportunity to challenge

government-sanctioned actions on the basis of their environmental impact. However,

according to Michael Fisher, "Because NEPA's requirements are solely procedural,

however, victorious plaintiffs can win only an order directing the defendant to repeat the

decision-making process correctly before taking action."[40] Based on the United States'

history with environmental protection, it is likely that the action will still occur, but at

most, at the consequence of the action being delayed due to the legal challenge. The

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[39] EPA, "Summary of the National Environmental Policy Act," https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-national-environmental-policy-act.

[40] Michael Fisher, *Environmental Racism Claims Brought Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act* (Portland, OR: Lewis & Clark Law School, 1995), 308.

Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's many unsuccessful attempts to challenge the Dakota Access

Pipeline under NEPA demonstrate the established inefficiency of NEPA, for oil has

flowed through the pipeline since 2017. Although, as of 2020, an environmental review

has been ordered to review the pipeline's development without a halt in its functioning.[41]

The government's failure under NEPA to acknowledge the harmful effects

environmental actions have on Native Americans represents the larger settler-colonialism

system that the U.S. government has cultivated through environmental racism since

settling on Native territory. The government's institutions continue to sanction and

exercise environmental racism, the same of which was used to establish a settler-colonial

agenda many years ago. From then, by way of harmful environmental acts, the U.S.

government fostered an ideology that Native communities were less than and ingrained

that ideology in the institutions and laws that are now presented as meant to protect

Natives from environmental racism.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

To directly address the racism present in environmental policy-making and enforcement,

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 purportedly provides the opportunity for people of color

to challenge the EPA. The law arose out of the Civil Rights movement in response to racial

segregation and discrimination. However, its usage has grown to incorporate environmental

racism into its regulation, although with little effective change. Title VI states, "No person in the

United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from

participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or

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[41] James MacPherson, "Court reverses order to shut down Dakota Access pipeline," *The Washington Post*, August 5, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/court-reverses-order-to-shut-down-dakota-access-pipeline/2020/08/05/5243bec2-d761-11ea-a788-2ce86ce81129_story.

activity receiving Federal financial assistance."[42] As it is applied to environmental racism, federally funded environmental agencies are supposed to be responsible for enforcing environmental policy and must ensure that how those policies are enforced does not allow for racial discrimination in the allocation of pollution. If there is evidence of racial bias within these environmental agencies, it is grounds for a complaint under Title VI. However, as with NEPA, U.S. institutions often fail to make effective use of this law in favor of Native Americans, prompting the view that this Act was established solely to pacify the movement against environmental racism and provides little opportunity for reform.

Californians For Renewable Energy et al. v. United States Environmental Protection Agency et al. (2018)

The EPA issued a 1998 ruling on a complaint against a Michigan environmental agency that permitted the Select Steel Company to establish a steel recycling "mini-mill" in a predominantly Black community despite justified concerns of air pollution. The EPA ruled in favor of the environmental agency and Select Steel, stating "[I]f there is no adverse effect from the permitted activity, there can be no finding of a discriminatory effect which would violate Title VI and EPA's implementing regulations," and thus set the tone for future challenges under Title VI.[43] While Title VI provides the opportunity for minority groups to file complaints against environmental agencies, the EPA either rejects or dismisses over 95 percent of the complaints.[44] This further indicates that the tools presented as solutions to environmental racism are meant only to appear as effective measures and not meant to substantially reform.

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[42] Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

[43] United States Environmental Protection Agency quoted in Julia B. Latham Worsham, "Disparate Impact Lawsuits Under Title VI, Section 602: Can a Legal Tool Build Environmental Justice," *Boston College Environmental Affairs Law Review* 27, no. 4 (January 1, 2000): 660.

[44] J. Mijin Cha, "Private: The EPA Fails to Address Environmental Racism," *American Constitution Society*, February 12, 2016, https://www.acslaw.org/expertforum/the-epa-fails-to-address-environmental-racism/.

However, recently in Californians For *Renewable Energy et al. v. United States Environmental Protection Agency et al.* (2018), the Court ruled in favor of environmental justice groups seeking accountability from the EPA. Californians For Renewable Energy et al. argued that the EPA had ignored the civil rights complaints of community-based groups in California, Michigan, Texas, Alabama, and New Mexico filed between the years 1992 and 2003. EPA laws require that civil rights complaints are investigated within 180 days, but the subject complaints were not addressed until the suit was filed in 2015.[45] The Court's ruling indicates that, while the EPA continues to perpetuate a system of environmental racism, there is a small effort within other government institutions to hold them accountable and bring an end to environmental racism. However, as mentioned above, overall, Title VI makes little impact, and this small victory does not demonstrate effectiveness on the part of the U.S. government. Instead, it demonstrates the growing efforts of racial minority groups to challenge environmental racism.

Wayne Mann et al. v. Ford Motor Company et al. (2008)

The case of *Wayne Mann et al. v. Ford Motor Company et al.* serves as another example of U.S. institutions' failure to address environmental racism. From 1967 to 1971, the Ford Motor Company plant in Ringwood, New Jersey, dumped toxic waste and "plaint sludge" in the Ringwood mountain area, contaminating the land and water source.[46, 47] This Ringwood community is home to members of the Ramapough Lenape Nation, and the actions of the Ford Motor Company left many dead or with diseases such as cancer and diabetes. "It was no less than a hate crime," describes Wayne Mann, and in response to that crime, the Ramapough Lenape Nation of Ringwood filed a civil suit against the Ford Motor Company. The

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[45] EARTHJUSTICE, "Court Declares that EPA Failed To Protect Civil Rights," (March 30, 2018). https://earthjustice.org/news/press/2018/court-declares-that-epa-failed-to-protect-civil-rights.
[46] *Mann v. Ford*. Directed by Maro Chermayeff and Micah Fink, Show of Force, 2010.
[47] HBO, "Mann v. Ford," https://www.hbo.com/documentaries/mann-v-ford/mann-v-ford.

Ramapoughs ended up settling with the Ford Motor Company at a lower-than-expected settlement rate due to the 2008 financial crisis.[48] Due to the EPA's disregard for Native life, the Ringwood waste site has been removed and reinstated to the superfund list twice and still awaits clean-up.[49]

The Ford Motor Company and the EPA demonstrated through their interactions with the Ramapough Lenape Nation that the health and safety of the Ramapoughs do not matter. The U.S. government presents the EPA as an institution that intends to protect against environmental harms and the biases that may exist in doing so. However, through its ineffectiveness and inaction, the EPA does not prove to be an unbiased and active protector against environmental racism. Instead, in their intentional disregard for Native life, the EPA acts as a perpetrator of environmental racism.

Conclusion

Environmental racism has inflicted harm against the Native American community for many centuries, and the United States government utilizes its legal systems and institutions to sustain that harm. Settler-colonialism has directly established a system of environmental racism against Native Americans that remains present today. The laws and institutions of the early settler-colonial era that inflicted environmental harm against Native Americans have evolved to perpetuate a pattern of environmental racism in the institutions and laws that serve to guide the U.S. Although the U.S. laws and institutions that govern us have expanded to become more representative of America's population, they remain entrenched with the historically based ideology that environmental racism against Native Americans is warranted to achieve a settler-

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[48] *Mann v. Ford*. Directed by Maro Chermayeff and Micah Fink, Show of Force, 2010.
[49] Kaelyn Forde, "Ford pays for Ramapough tribe medicine garden on former toxic site," *Al Jazeera America*, June 16, 2014, http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/6/16/ ramapough-ford-toxic.

colonial agenda. While the acts of environmental racism today do not directly resemble the acts of the early settler-colonial era, they contribute to the same settler-colonial agenda.

There is no substantial or effective defense for Native Americans against environmental racism through the utilization of U.S. laws and institutions, even among those ostensibly intended by the government as opportunities for environmental justice. It is evident that the government tools created in response to the environmental racism movement are intended only to placate and co-opt challenges to government fostered environmental racism. In reality, they offer few opportunities for effective change. Thus, it is clear that the ideology behind the early settler-colonial era tactics of environmental racism has transcended its era to be perpetuated among the laws and institutions that govern Native Americans today.

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Compatible Comrades?:
Marxism, Confucianism, Islam and the Interaction of Non-Western Value Systems

Elizabeth Ruehl

Since Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels released the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848, communism has been the adversary to capitalism, purporting to create an economically equal society in which the working class is no longer exploited. While Marxism was ideologically oriented around achieving economic equality, it likewise promoted the idea that religion was a bourgeois capitalist tool to keep the majority of the population under control; as Marx stated, "Religion … is the opium of the people."[1] As Marxism moved from a theoretical movement into a lived ideology, its anti-religious agenda was imposed onto nations with pre-existing dominant religious and philosophical ideologies. While the most powerful Marxist-Leninist state, the USSR, was decidedly Christian before the communist take-over, Marxism-Leninism has also taken hold of states in which non-Western value systems, such as Islam and Confucianism, were the predominant ideologies.

This essay will compare the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), two notable Confucian independent Marxist communist governments, to the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) and Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, two Islamic independent Marxist communist governments. This comparison will highlight the effect that the states' traditional ideologies have had on the success of the communist regimes. It will illustrate the argument that, in the case of communist regimes encountering Confucianism, it appears that Confucianism proved more easily compatible with

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[1] Karl Marx, "Introduction," in *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right,* proofed and corrected by Andy Blunden, February 2005, corrected by Matthew Carmody in 2009 (1844), https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1843/critique-hpr/intro.htm.

their actions even after other communist regimes denounced Confucian traditions and values. Comparatively, for communist regimes instituted in Islamic areas, the regimes first dismissed Islam and then attempted to construct a more palatable, state-sanctioned Islam which garnered no real support and further isolated religious citizens. Consequently, Confucian values were demonstrably more compatible with Marxist-Leninist communism and led to more successful communist governments than Islamic Marxist communist states.

Marxism, which as mentioned previously was created as an adversary to capitalism, began as an ideology founded on fundamentally Western values. Writing in the midst of the Industrial Revolution, when the rapid industrialization sweeping across Europe was sending a formerly rural population into sprawling cities to work in factories under incredibly poor working conditions, Marx crafted his *Communist Manifesto,* contending that the history of mankind was fundamentally dictated by class struggle. Marx asserted that the zenith of human history would be reached after capitalism advanced/deteriorated to the point that the proletariat (the working class) could rise up against and overthrow the bourgeoisie (upper class society), with the end result being a socialist utopia in which everyone would receive economic equality. While Marx died before seeing this vision realized, in the 1917 October Revolution, Vladimir Lenin, who promoted the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism, overthrew Russia's provisional government, beginning the road to the birth of the first fully realized communist state, the USSR. Marxism-Leninism, as opposed to Marxism, advocated for the possibility of the attainment of a socialist utopia without first advancing through the final stages of capitalist development through the use of a vanguard party. This made it possible for countries such as Russia, which was comparatively behind the rest of Europe developmentally, to become a communist society with aspirations of realizing the socialist utopian goal. Following the Soviet Union's rise to power

following the Russian Civil War, communism became a prevalent force within the world. Over the course of the twentieth century, communism expanded beyond its Western origins into a global phenomenon while retaining its original anti-capitalist, anti-religious, and anti-imperialist agenda. It was in this expansion that Marxist-Leninism encountered both Confucianism and Islam.

While Marxism is a relatively new phenomenon, Confucianism is an over 2,000-year-old tradition predominantly based in East Asia. Confucianism has developed over time, experiencing fluctuating degrees of prominence in East Asian society, yet "by the end of the nineteenth century... Confucian values and practices informed the daily lives of people in China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam, and whole systems of government were justified with reference to Confucian ideals."[2] It was into this culture of Confucian values that the two communist regimes of China and North Korea entered in 1921 and 1948, respectively. As Daniel A. Bell and Hahm Chaibong note, at their inceptions "The communists did their best to extirpate every root and branch of Confucianism that they regarded as a feudal and reactionary world view hindering progress. Indeed, for the vast majority of East Asians, modernity had come to mean overcoming Confucianism."[3] But, before discussing how these two communist regimes tackled overcoming these established Confucian teachings to further the aims of their regime, it is important to provide a brief outline of what some of these fundamental Confucian teachings were.

There are two central Confucian tenets that are particularly relevant to its relation to communism. These are the prioritization of hierarchies dictated by the five cardinal relationships and the universality of the concept of the world under heaven. These five cardinal relationships

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[2] Daniel A. Bell and Hahm Chaibong, "Introduction: The Contemporary Relevance of Confucianism," in *Confucianism for the Modern World,* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003)*,* 1.
[3] Ibid, 2.

were the relationship between the ruler and his subject, a father and his son, a man and his wife, an older brother and a younger brother, and between friends — out of these five relationships, only the one between friends was non-hierarchical. The concept behind these relationships is the idea of *ren,* which as Chan writes is "the highest most perfect virtue... *Ren* is primarily expressed through human relationships… *Ren* manifested in the parent-child relationship is filial piety (xiao), and in the sibling relationship, brotherhood (ti)."[4] Consequently, an understanding of societal hierarchy was ingrained into Confucians from the time of their birth as these relationships were seen to dictate how one acted in almost every aspect of their lives. Furthermore, as Chan notes, they sustained societal order as "the familial virtues are not only the root of *ren* but also the basis of a stable social and political order. It is rare for a person who has the virtues of filial piety (xiao) and brotherhood (ti) to have the inclination to be rebellious against his or her superiors."[5] The concept of the world under heaven is in a sense an extrapolation of this view of familial relations, as in Confucianism the family and the subsequent relationships are viewed as highly elasticized and expansive, which means that "theoretically the family can be extended to cover the whole world (tian xia)."[6] This notion of tian xia is the concept of the world under heaven, which as Chan writes is "The highest political order for the Chinese… which has no territorial limit; and it provides the broadest site one could imagine for the practice of *ren* and the actualization of one's self."[7] Confucianism's hierarchical structure and overarching concept of a higher political order that ought to govern the whole world helped to facilitate its compatibility with PRC and the DPRK.

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[4] Joseph Chan, "Confucianism and Human Rights," in *Religion and Human Rights,* eds. J. Witte and M. C. Green (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) 64.
[5] Chan, "Confucianism and Human Rights," 64.
[6] Ibid, 64.
[7] Chan, "Confucianism and Human Rights," 66.

While the Chinese Communist Party was conceived in 1921, it was not until 1949,

following the end of both World War II and the Chinese Civil War, that the People's Republic of

China officially rose to power under the control of Mao Zedong. Subsequently, Mao moved to

rapidly industrialize the nation, seeing industrialization as the ticket to modernity and socialist

utopia. In 1949, Mao first instituted land reforms, removing power from feudal landlords while

allowing farmers to keep control of their own lands and the profits reaped from farming them,

resulting in an increased standard of living for those in the countryside.[8] This shift was

substantiated both by Communist ideology in the sense of removing the power of the feudal

lords and by Confucian ideals as "the regime turned to Confucius, symbol of the authority of the

family, to legitimize this effort because the Party's plan for economic decentralization was based

on the family unit as the pivot of agricultural production."[9] In spite of the regime's otherwise

negative view of the tradition, the CCP clearly used Confucian ideals to further their goals. In

this instance, the marriage of communism and Confucianism produced positive results and a

decrease in economic inequality. However, with Mao's initiation of the Great Leap Forward, a

program between 1958 and 1960 in which the population was reorganized into large communes

in which "agricultural and political decisions were decentralized, and ideological purity rather

than expertise was emphasized,"[10] this marriage of ideals produced devastating results. As Mao's

regime denounced the value of the intellectuals and refused to listen to the advice provided by

economists, The Great Leap Forward's devastating failure resulted in 20 to 30 million deaths. In

this case "never was the Confucian legacy of asceticism more serviceable in sustaining loyalty to

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[8] Satya J. Gabriel, "The Structure of a Post-Revolutionary Economic Transformation: The Chinese Economy from the 1949 Revolution to the Great Leap Forward," *Mount Holyoke College Department of Economics, Essay Number 3*, (September 1998), https://www.mtholyoke.edu/courses/sgabriel/economics/china-essays/3.html.
[9] Tong Zhang and Barry Schwartz, "Confucius and the Cultural Revolution: A Study in Collective Memory," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 11, no. 2 (1997, www.jstor.org/stable/20019932, 194.
[10] The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, "The Great Leap Forward," *Encyclopedia Britannica,* https://www.britannica.com/event/Great-Leap-Forward.

a regime than during this period of indescribable suffering."[11] In essence, the CCP's

manipulation of the values espoused by the Confucian tradition proved to facilitate both

developing economic equality and widespread systemic societal devastation.

Following the catastrophe of the Great Leap Forward and in an endeavor to regain

control, Mao instituted his infamous Cultural Revolution in 1966, which lasted until his death in

1976. Over the course of the Cultural Revolution, Mao and his radicalized Red Guards killed 1.5

million, imprisoned others en masse, and terrorized the population through a relentless campaign

against what were described as the "four olds" and any capitalist remnants in the state.[12] These

"four olds" were old ideas, old customs, old culture, and old habits, and targeting them for

eradication meant that Mao wanted to stamp out Confucianism.[13] This anti-Confucian sentiment

was further emphasized through Mao's Anti-Confucian Campaign of 1973 to 1974 in which "the

central themes of the campaign were centralization, institutionalization, ideological unity, and an

emphasis on economic production, themes that had been compromised by the volcanic events of

the Cultural Revolution."[14] While framed in an anti-Confucian light, these themes were the same

ones that had been seen previously — it was not that Confucianism itself was the problem, the

regime was simply looking for a scapegoat to align itself against.

In the PRC under Mao, then, communism and Confucianism were not actually

misaligned in spite of the regime's decrial of the tradition. Rather, the PRC used Confucian

values when they were useful and vehemently rejected them when they were not.[15] With regard

to how this relationship functioned, as Sung Bin Ko articulates:

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[11] Zhang and Schwartz, "Confucius and the Cultural Revolution: A Study in Collective Memory," 194.

[12] "Cultural Revolution," *History.com,* Last updated April 3, 2020, https://www.history.com/topics/china/cultural -revolution.

[13] A. James Gregor and Maria Hsia Chang, "Anti-Confucianism: Mao's Last Campaign," *Asian Survey* 19, no. 11 (1979), Accessed May 7, 2020, doi:10.2307/2643955, 1075.

[14] Gregor and Chang, "Anti-Confucianism: Mao's Last Campaign," 1075.

[15] Zhang and Schwartz, "Confucius and the Cultural Revolution: A Study in Collective Memory," 197.

Richard Solomon identified two tangible aspects. First, 'the social and political orientation of the Chinese strongly reflected the values of the Confucian tradition.' Second… that Mao's political leadership contained a complex reaction against many traditional values even as 'it drew upon those behavioral patterns and emotional concerns which he deemed essential in gaining popular support.[16]

As to the relationship between Marxist-Leninist ideology and the Confucian tradition, both systems prioritized systems of hierarchy and operated with the idea that they were aiming towards a universal goal for human society.[17] In this sense, just as Chan denotes how the "the Chinese notion of 'the world under Heaven' (tian xia) represents the ultimate stage of the development of political order, whereas states are seen as an incomplete realization of the Chinese ideal,"[18] Marxism-Leninism likewise was predicated upon the ideal of achieving the end goal of a utopia in which all of the world could share. With regard to how this seemingly conflicting way of assessing the relationship between these two systems as Mao teetered back and forth, "This dilemma was resolved by 'critical inheritance' — a form of collective memory that has no close Western counterpart… Critical inheritance upholds traditional authority because it sustains the dignity of the past while recognizing the need of successive generations to re-evaluate it."[19] In essence, Mao and the CCP were able to use Confucian values and alternate between their use and their rejection in whichever way it suited the regime — Confucianism itself provided no real opposition to communism. Rather, it acted to facilitate its machinations.

Turning from the PRC to the DPRK, it is important to note that while China was the original home of Confucianism, the tradition took root all over East Asia. Since the time of the Choson Dynasty, for example, Neo-Confucianism had been the predominant tradition in Korea. When the area was divided into North and South Korea by the USSR and the United States in

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[16] Sung Bin Ko, "Confucian Leninist State: the People's Republic of China," *Asian Perspective* 23, no. 2 (1999), www.jstor.org/stable/42704214, 233.
[17] Ibid, 232.
[18] Chan, "Confucianism and Human Rights," 66.
[19] Zhang and Schwartz, "Confucius and the Cultural Revolution: A Study in Collective Memory," 194.

1948, it was into this Neo-Confucian environment that the communist Kim Il Sung entered when

he took control of North Korea. Following the end of the Korean War in 1953, Kim instituted

the nationalist policy of Juche as the official ideology of the DPRK.[20] As Alzo David-West

notes, "historian Bruce Cumings, for instance, uses the phrases 'Neo Confucianism in a

communist bottle" and "Chu Hsi in a Mao jacket'"[21] to describe Juche. Juche itself can be

understood to mean "self-reliance," "sovereign autonomy," or "self-determination;" Kim Il Sung

states that in English it translates to "subjectivity."[22] Conceptually, Juche philosophy originates

from aspects of Marxist-Leninist thought; however, instead of dictating that class struggle is the

defining factor in history as Marxism does, Juche asserts that "people's sovereignty is seen as

being of greater significance."[23] Eun Hee Shin describes that "the core idea of Juche is based on

a 'human-centered view on the world.'"[24] In this human-centered view, people are seen as

having two selves — an individual and a social self, with the ultimate value being placed on the

social aspect. As Hee Shin writes, according to the Juche ideology "the social group represented

by the working masses will live forever together with the party, the leader (suryŏng), and the

history of the fatherland and the people. A human being is thus neither a purely spiritual being

nor a simple biological being: he or she is a social being who lives and acts in social

relationships.[25] The emphasis of social relationships within Juche is decidedly similar to that of

Confucianism, which as noted previously, promotes the idea of *ren* through the five cardinal

relationships. Furthermore, just as the Confucian conception of the ruler and subject relationship

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[20] "North Korea," *History.com*, August 21st, 2018, https://www.history.com/topics/korea/north-korea-history.
[21] Alzo David-West, "Between Confucianism and Marxism-Leninism: Juche and the Case of Chŏng Tasan," *Korean Studies* 35 (2011) Accessed May 7, 2020, www.jstor.org/stable/23719456, 94.
[22] Eun Hee Shin, "The Sociopolitical Organism: The Religious Dimensions of Juche Philosophy," in *Religions of Korea in Practice*, ed. Buswell Robert E. (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007), Accessed May 7, 2020. doi:10.2307/j.ctv346r61.42, 517.
[23] Shin, "The Sociopolitical Organism: The Religious Dimensions of Juche Philosophy," 517.
[24] Shin, "The Sociopolitical Organism: The Religious Dimensions of Juche Philosophy," 518.
[25] Shin, "The Sociopolitical Organism: The Religious Dimensions of Juche Philosophy," 520.

bears with it the necessity of the benevolence of the ruler and the idea of the ruler acting in the

best interest of those of the ruled, Juche likewise prioritizes a benevolent ruler. As Hee Shin

writes, in the Juche ideology "the leader is not merely a specific person or figure but a virtuous

and benevolent entity who functions like the 'nerve center' or 'top brain' of the nation. The

leader's existence is meaningless, if he or she does not serve the people."[26] Consequently, the

Juche philosophy aligns with dominant Confucian ideals while standing as its own North Korean

nationalist and Marxist-Leninist derivative.

Juche shared many common traits with the Confucian tradition, and just as was the case

with the PRC, Confucianism was used or rejected by the regime more out of tactical political

considerations rather than actual denial of the values it espoused. According to Jin Woong Kang,

"communist Korea embraced some Confucian traditions as ideological tools while it attacked

traditional Confucian institutions as 'feudal' obstacles to communist modernization."[27] This

trend of traditional Confucianism representing a barrier to modernization was similarly seen in

the PRC in Mao's Great Leap Forward. In the case of Korea, it was the feudal Confucian

landlords which the DPRK removed as a means for their progression towards a more communist

economy. [28] Moving forward after removing the feudal Confucian structure, the DPRK instated

the values espoused by the Juche philosophy instead, with the idea of the socialist society as a

large family itself.[29] Yet society was not so quick to adapt to the cultural shift, and so "separating

socialist values and practices from feudal ones was problematic for the regime. Some Confucian

traditions, evaluated as feudal, persisted in the new socialist system. In this situation, the socialist

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[26] Shin, "The Sociopolitical Organism: The Religious Dimensions of Juche Philosophy," 522.
[27] Jin Woong Kang, "Political Uses of Confucianism in North Korea," *The Journal of Korean Studies* 16, no. 1 (2011) Accessed May 6, 2020, www.jstor.org/stable/41490270, 68.
[28] Kang, "Political Uses of Confucianism in North Korea," 68.
[29] Kang, "Political Uses of Confucianism in North Korea," 69.

regime at times prohibited some feudal traditions while it accepted others, and it began to absorb

traditional Confucian values into socialist morals from the late 1950s on."[30] Ultimately, both in

the form of Juche ideology's use of Confucian ideas in tandem with Marxist-Leninist concepts,

and with regard to an actual relative tolerance of some traditional Confucian values, the DPRK

found a way to incorporate the Confucian tradition into its society in a manner that proved

beneficial to the regime and did not necessitate an entire removal of the tradition.

In the case of Confucianism's interactions with communism, as viewed through the cases

of both the People's Republic of China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, these

regimes found ways to both entirely dismiss and simultaneously use Confucianism

interchangeably as it suited their needs. In the Chinese case, the Confucian hierarchical structure

and concept of the world under heaven proved compatible with Marxism-Leninism, while in the

North Korean case the Juche ideology provided a mechanism for fusing Marxist-Leninist ideals

with Confucianism into a wholly unique Korean ideology. In a sense, Confucianism was able to

be manipulated in such a way because of its lack of conceiving a radically fundamentalist

movement — in fact, "one of the most remarkable aspects of Confucianism's encounter with

modernity is that unlike in the case of Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, there has never been an

organized Confucian resistance to modernization. Confucianism seems to be one 'religion'

where one would be hard put to find any 'fundamentalist' adherents at all."[31] This lack of

fundamentalist adherents was the exact opposite of the result of the merging of Islam and

communism, as can be seen in the cases of the People's Democratic Republic of South Yemen

and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. In these instances, fundamentalist Islamic groups

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[30] Kang, "Political Uses of Confucianism in North Korea," 69.
[31] Bell and Chaibong, "Introduction: The Contemporary Relevance of Confucianism," 2.

developed in response to the communist regimes and ultimately contributed to these regimes' failures.

Like Confucianism, Islam is a very old religion with much too complex a history for it to be easily reduced to a simple definition. However, as the tenets of Islam pertain to the scope of this paper's argument, a defining aspect to highlight is the role of the duty of commanding right and forbidding wrong in Islamic society and the state's relation to that duty. With regard to the Islamic concept of commanding right and forbidding wrong there are a number of areas debated, including what exactly constitutes "right" or "wrong" and to whom the duty extends. In spite of these controversies it is generally understood that what is good or bad is to a certain extent laid out in the teachings of the Qur'an and the Hadith and the duty is a collective one to be partaken as a community. Furthermore, more modern thinkers have taken to emphasizing this communal aspect of the duty in contrast to a smaller, more individual responsibility.

In the case of predominant Sunni beliefs, Michael Cook reflects on Sayyid Qutb's beliefs regarding a Jahili society, which is defined as any society which is not governed by Sharia law.[32] Cook writes that "A Muslim society is indeed one that enables a Muslim to devote himself to forbidding wrong, without his attempts being reduced to pointless gestures or made impossible altogether as in the case in the Jahili societies that exist today."[33] Consequently, any communist regime would be defined as a Jahili society and would subsequently hinder a Muslim's ability to perform the duty. Furthermore, Cook articulates how a number of thinkers have extended the duty to a larger context, emphasizing the role of God as the figure who would advocate such a shift, writing how God is conceived as being concerned with how "our agenda is the total reform

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[32] "Sayyid Qutb," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, https://www.iep.utm.edu/qutb/.
[33] Michael Cook, "Beyond Classical Islam," in *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islam,* (New York: Cambridge University press, 2000), 528.

of society — moral, credal, economic, and social — through the preparation and organisation of the means appropriate for the realisation of right in its broadest sense... "[34]

A key takeaway here is the explicit role of God in the structure of society at large, underscoring how the divine is seen as a necessary factor in how society is reformed. This role of the divine stands as the complete opposite of the societal structure of atheism communism, which vehemently denies the existence of God. From this understanding of the framework of the Islamic approach, it is easier to see how in practice, as Chantal Lobato states, "The relationship between communism and Islam has never been an easy one."[35] Just as communism spread to previously Confucian lands, communism likewise came to the Islamic world; however, comparatively, Islam proved a more resistant ideology to communism than Confucianism did. As Laura Feliu and Izquierdo Brichs detail, "In the Arab world and Middle East, this [communist] influence arrived more slowly than in Europe, and it clashed with other strong ideologies that viewed communism as a threat or as the competition, primarily nationalism and political Islam."[36] This clash, and the arguably unsuccessful attempts that the communist regimes made to temper it, can be seen in the cases of both the failed states of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, which lasted from 1967 to 1990, and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, which lasted from 1978 to 1992.

The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen was established at the end of 1967 with the National Liberation Front (NLF) taking control of the territory as a result of Britain's withdrawal Apart from Aden, the territory was vastly under-developed and predominantly a non-

[34] Cook, "Beyond Classical Islam," 554.
[35] Chantal Lobato, "Kabul 1978 — 1988: Communists and Islam," *Religion in Communist Lands* 16, no.4, (1988) DOI: 10.1080/09637498808431391, 345.
[36] Laura Feliu, Ferran Izquierdo-Brichs and Francesc Serra, "Communist Parties in the Middle East and North Africa: An Overview," in *Communist Parties in the Middle East and North Africa* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 1. DOI: 10.4324/9780367134464-1.

homogeneous tribal society. With regard to the role of Islam in Yemeni society, Islam had been

both a central part of societal and individual identity since the seventh century AD. [37]

Consequently, the NLF faced a number of challenges in reforming the society to meet its basic

principles, which were later laid out during the Fifth Congress in 1972 and which endeavored to

economically advance, collectivize, and remove previous vestiges of Arab nationalism from the

political organization.[38] These basic principles included "the adoption of scientific socialism

(which has in practice meant a sort of eclectic Marxism), and the struggle against imperialism,

Zionism and reaction (Article 1). Articles 2 to 4 respectively entrenched three important

organizational principles within the party: democratic centralism, collective leadership, and the

purge ('purging counter-revolutionary and decadent forces being essential for the organization to

continue and to develop')."[39] Furthermore, while these principles marked the beginning of the

desired so-called "scientific socialist" revolution, it was not until 1978 that the NLF was finally

officially replaced by the vanguard party — the Yemeni Socialist Party.[40] It was within this

context that the state altered its approach to Islam, which had been initiated as a violent attack

against the religion.

It seemed that since the start of the NLF's rule, the party had been struggling to tackle the

question of the Islamic nature of their population. As a communist regime interpreting atheist

Marxist ideals, accordingly "one of the most difficult dilemmas facing the regime in trying to

implement its plans has been how to deal with Islam. The first few years after independence in

1967 were marked by a violent campaign by the National Liberation Front (NLF) against the

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[37] Norman Cigar, "Islam and the State in South Yemen: The Uneasy Coexistence," *Middle Eastern Studies* 26, no. 2 (1990), Accessed May 8, 2020, www.jstor.org/stable/4283364, 190.
[38] Ismael and Ismael, *The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen: Politics, Economics, and Society, 36.*
[39] Ismael and Ismael, *The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen: Politics, Economics, and Society, 36.*
[40] Ismael and Ismael, *The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen: Politics, Economics, and Society, 38.*

country's religious establishment."[41] As Norman Cigar describes, this violent campaign "was apparently most virulent in the Hadramawt… where clerics and others with ascriptive religious status were intimately bound with the existing social, political, and economic hierarchy. There — and probably elsewhere to a lesser extent—NLF-inspired intifada-s ('uprisings') resulted in the public humiliation, torture, and killing of numerous clerics." [42] Unsurprisingly, the violent campaign provoked substantial backlash, promoting a necessary change in tactics for the regime.[43]

In this alteration of approach and attempt to regain control of the situation, the PDRY used a number of different methods to curry favor with the Islamic community. The first of these was "to deflect accusations of being anti-Islamic by using religious symbols to its own advantage."[44] The second was through the application of "liberation theory," which essentially promoted the construction of a state-sanctioned form of Islam that adhered to their communist beliefs. This new official state-approved Islam existed at odds with the popular Islam by professing a reinterpretation of the religion. In essence, through this liberation theory,

> the regime seeks to convince the population that, basically, there is no contradiction between Socialism and Islam, provided the latter is 'interpreted properly'. Islam is seen exclusively as a socio-economic phenomenon concerned only with this world, while its complementary spiritual side is ignored, or at best left for affairs of the next world.[45]

Accordingly, the gap between official Islam as dictated by the state and popular Islam became viewed in an economic light — that is to say, the division between these two versions of Islam purportedly ran along socio-economic class lines. This interpretation meant that devotees of popular Islam were framed as pro-imperialist and exploitative for self-serving reasons whereas

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[41] Cigar, "Islam and the State in South Yemen: The Uneasy Coexistence," 185.
[42] Cigar, "Islam and the State in South Yemen: The Uneasy Coexistence," 185.
[43] Ismael and Ismael, *The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen: Politics, Economics, and Society, 36.*
[44] Cigar, "Islam and the State in South Yemen: The Uneasy Coexistence," 186.
[45] Cigar, "Islam and the State in South Yemen: The Uneasy Coexistence," 187.

"for the poor, Islam is a critique of injustice, exploitation, and hoarding of wealth, while it favors social justice and prosper."[46] In spite of the PDRY's construction of an official form of Islam, the general trend of the PDRY's approach to Islam was still one of mitigation and reduction of the impact of the religion's power and role within society.

The actual success of the PDRY's efforts to reduce the Islamism prevalent within the state proved marginal; since the implementation of the new form of official state-approved Islam, the fundamentalist revivalist Islamic movement only gained more traction. And "in ideological terms, this strand of religion articulates a complete alternative system to Marxism-Leninism. As such, it can legitimate or even stimulate opposition by individuals and groups to social, economic, or cultural policies that the regime wants to implement."[47] In spite of the PDRY's efforts to undermine Islam through both the creation of its official Islam and by de-emphasizing the importance of the religion in Yemeni culture, a fundamentalist revivalist Islam which is both ideologically incompatible with Marxism-Leninism and politically powerful, has been increasing in popularity. Conclusively, in the case of the PDRY, Islam and communism proved incompatible as Islam produced a destabilizing effect rather than a beneficial one to the regime.

Similar to the PDRY, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan likewise began with a stricter approach to Islam. This strictness alienated Muslims and instigated the rise of a fundamentalist movement before the regime switched to a less hardline approach that did little to mitigate the disconnect between the regime and popular Islam. Conceived in 1978, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan came to rule over a territory rife with ethnic, cultural and religious differences. Yet, in spite of the differences, "when the country has been under external threat it is undoubtedly Islam that has served as a shared reference point for all Afghans seeking

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[46] Cigar, "Islam and the State in South Yemen: The Uneasy Coexistence," 187.
[47] Cigar, "Islam and the State in South Yemen: The Uneasy Coexistence," 191.

to expel the enemy, whether the infidel in question be British or Soviet."[48] It was not until two years later that the Soviets arrived in the area, yet even prior to their influence, the acts of the DRA and the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) had already instigated resentment and the beginnings of a fundamentalist Islamic push-back. These developments can first be noted in the late 1960s.[49] Moreover, once the PDPA assumed power the regime didn't entirely renounce Islam; instead it instituted a number of reforms of Islam to make the religion, in the words of President Nur Mohammed Tarak, more "progressive, modern and pure."[50] However, the PDPA's efforts to reform Islam only proved antagonistic towards the Islamic population as, instead of engendering support, they pushed away conservatives and peasants, a fact which was only exacerbated by the violent acts of the party militants.[51] With regard to actual actions, while professing to support Islam, albeit in a reformed manner, the PDPA removed the Islamic green from the flag and ordered a number of purges of religious leaders. In 1979, a purge against religious leaders ensued. In the aftermath "an emigre claimed that thousands of clerics had been arrested since the previous April."[52] These policies — the imposition of a reformed Islam and a systematic purge of the traditional Islam — make it clear that the regime was not so much interested in preserving Islam as a religion, but rather as an attempt to "encourage a conservative Islam which will not threaten government legitimacy and which will not actively oppose the secularisation of Afghan society."[53] Unfortunately for the communist regime, however, the success of its approach towards Islam proved no more successful with the Soviet occupation than prior to it.

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[48] John Anderson, "Islam and the Afghan Regime," *Religion in Communist Lands* 14, no. 2, (1986), DOI: 10.1080/09637498608431251,174.
[49] Anderson, "Islam and the Afghan Regime," 174.
[50] Anderson, "Islam and the Afghan Regime," 174.
[51] Anderson, "Islam and the Afghan Regime," 175.
[52] Anderson, "Islam and the Afghan Regime," 175.
[53] Lobato, "Kabul 1978 — 1988: Communists and Islam," 350.

Following 1980 when the Soviets intervened in Afghanistan, in spite of the Soviets'

promotion of a more subversive and less blatantly antagonistic approach to Islam in the area, the

relationship between Islam and the state only deteriorated with the evolution of an even stronger

fundamentalist Islamic presence.[54] As Chantal Lobato writes of the regime's approach, "All

efforts of the Kabul regime to bring peace to the country have ended in failure, even though it

has resorted increasingly to religious rhetoric."[55] While Lobato was writing in 1988 prior to the

DRA's ultimate failure, he foresaw the inevitable problems that came from the regime's

approach to Islam.

> Faced with an Islam which takes the place of political ideology in the resistance, the
> ritualistic and conservative religion put forward by Kabul can receive only limited
> support amongst the population. This type of conservative Islam is an artificial
> construction which has little chance of surviving the political upheaval likely to follow
> the Soviet withdrawal.[56]

Ultimately, therefore, because the ideals of traditional Islam were contradictory to those of the

communist regime, the communist regime in Afghanistan attempted to construct a state-

sanctioned version which only further alienated the Muslim population, its efforts proving

unsuccessful in tackling the problem that Islam posed to its rule.

Much of the history of the second half of the twentieth century is the history of the

success or failure of communist experiments in various non-Western societies. The study of the

compatibility of Marxism with non-Western value systems is therefore a matter of great

historical as well as philosophical significance. As demonstrated through the cases of the

People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the People's

Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, Confucianism has

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[54] Christina Dameyer, "In Afghanistan, Soviets find replacing Islam with communism isn't easy," *The Christian Science Monitor*, August 6, 1985, https://www.csmonitor.com/1985/0806/olam.html.
[55] Lobato, " Kabul 1978 — 1988: Communists and Islam," 351.
[56] Lobato, " Kabul 1978 — 1988: Communists and Islam," 351.

historically been a more compatible tradition with Marxism-Leninism than Islam has. While Marxism-Leninism is essentially an ideology centered around the promotion of economic equality and the empowerment of the worker, economic equality actually seems to be almost irrelevant when it comes to Marxism-Leninism's compatibility with Confucianism and Islam; instead, the compatibility or lack thereof arises as a result of how Marxism-Leninism accords with the other values of these non-Western traditions. In the case of Confucianism, both the hierarchical structure inherent within the tradition and the concept of the world under heaven prove consistent with communist ideology; likewise, the DPRK's Juche philosophy cohesively merged Confucianism and Marxism-Leninism into a palatable mix. Conversely, in the case of Islam, the concept of the duty of commanding right and forbidding wrong is one which has increasingly become understood in a communal context in tandem with the idea of God presiding over Islamic society — God, a figure absent in the Confucian tradition, is antagonistic to communist's secular goal for society. As a result of this antagonism, the communist state's reaction in both the PDRY and the DRA to construct a state sanctioned official form of Islam devoid of the beliefs less favorable to communism, served only to further alienate their Islamic populace and push Muslims towards Islamic fundamentalism in response. Ultimately, understanding the compatibility and incompatibility of the ideologies of Confucianism and Islam in respect to communism are relevant because of the widespread effect of these three ideologies and the global pain that communism has inflicted in the name of constructing utopian societies.

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The Colonial Rot of Bolívar's Venezuelan Independence Movement

Christina Schuler da Costa Ferro

Introduction

The rot remains with us, the men are gone.[1]

Ann Stoler's thesis *Imperial Debris: On Ruins & Ruination* interrogates the ways colonialism remains, even after independence is won, through structures and logics she names "debris." Drawing inspiration from poet Derek Walcot, she writes: "Proceed with caution, stay alert, for the 'rot remains' long after murderous men….have perished, rapacious planters have turned to ash, colonial officials have returned 'home,' and anxious white settlers have relinquished hold on what was never theirs— and are gone."[2] In her argument, Stoler "tack[s] the uneven temporal sedimentations" in which processes of colonialism and imperialism leave their mark.[3] Following this argument, it would seem that those states that emerged from the first Age of Revolution (1774 to 1849) in Latin America failed in various aspects. The colonial debris was too saturated for these societies to fully experience the ideals of freedom or liberty that were not present in older structural hierarchies.

Stoler's description of colonial debris refers to structural remnants of an old world in a "new, free" world, potentially indicating an interrogation into Venezuela's first republic and "new" society. But I propose that the collection of the debris into the new world, in the case of Venezuela, relied on its existence in the moment of colonialism and "freedom": the independence movement itself. I therefore choose to examine the revolution in the proceeding pages, arguing it was not a total departure from colonialism, but rather a reproduction of its

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[1] Derek Walcot, "Ruins of a Great House," *Collected Poems, 1948-1984, (*January, 1987), 20.

[2] Ann Laura Stoler, *Imperial Debris: On Ruins and Ruination (*Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 2.

[3] Ibid.

logic, specifically in the case of racial ideology.

I begin then with the revolution's leadership: Simon Bolívar. Bolívar's guidance during the Venezuelan War of Independence (1810–1823) is often revered as being the pinnacle of bold and fearless revolutionary work, and he is therefore credited with the liberation of the present-day countries of Colombia, Panama, Ecuador, and Venezuela (then forming Gran Colombia) from Spanish colonialism. An undeniable beacon of hope for democratic progressives during the First Age of Revolution, this liberation movement is known for thrusting off the chains of colonialism, slavery, and feudal hierarchies, and, in their place, making a turn toward freedom, liberty, and equality. And yet, the recent proclamation of a second Era of Revolutions,[4] such as Venezuela's own Bolivarian Revolution in 1998, would suggest that the constitutions, decrees, and state institutions created in the early nineteenth century were not enough to stand the test of time and guarantee the aforementioned rights after all. Perhaps, as Stoler suggests, the lingering of colonial "rot" prevented them from realizing their true emancipatory potential.

I contend that in the case of Venezuela, the role of race was an early weakness and exhibition of this colonial rot within Bolívar's leadership. A prime example of this is the execution of Bolívar's Black general Manuel Piar. In the following pages, I argue that the debris of colonialism lingering in the independence movement was Bolívar's reproduction of colonial racial thinking, evidenced not just in his execution of Piar, but also in the way he spoke of this decision. While historians like Aline Helg and Sibylle Fischer have produced thoughtful secondary sources on the topic of Bolívar's fear of a race war and the execution of his generals, neither have considered *both* statements he wrote about Piar's execution as the focus of their work, nor do they consider them alongside Bolivar's conception of emancipation. My paper is

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[4] Sinclair Thompson suggests this second Age lasting from the early to the late twentieth century, on his class syllabus for "Workshop: Popular Politics and Revolution in Latin American and the Caribbean History."

distinct from their literature as it attempts to make a case that these documents were not only an indication of subtle racist attitudes or anxieties, but that their consequence was the reproduction of colonial racial ideologies and hierarchy.

By subordinating Black leadership in his movement, Bolívar essentially replicated the color class hierarchy of Spanish colonialism. Through his subsequent reluctance to speak about race in a statement following the execution, he failed to adequately address lingering issues of racial inequality and pushed Venezuelan politics into a state of willfully blind racelessness. Ultimately, Bolívar's intense anxiety over a race war is what prevented a true *social* revolution from taking place with regard to racial hierarchies, despite his political promises of equality, liberty, and independence.

Context via a Summary of Helg's Argument

While the execution of a Black general alone bears no clear connection to matters of racial anxiety, Aline Helg's discussion on Bolívar's 1815 letter indicates that he was, in fact, intensely aware of a potential race war and feared it. In these letters addressed to the British residents living in Jamaica, where Bolívar was seeking refuge at the time, Bolívar attempted to gain British support for his revolutionary cause. Helg writes, "in them, Bolívar reassured his readers by predicting a peaceful future for Spanish America, despite its racial makeup. To that effect, he used Haiti as a counterexample to posit that no revolution along the lines of Saint Domingue could happen in continental Spanish America."[5] It is entirely possible that Bolívar was cunningly appealing to his audience's white and western sensibilities; however, the acknowledgement of this fear demonstrates he was at least aware of the threat that racial tensions posed. Most interestingly, Helg points out, Bolívar "restricted his mentions" of

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[5] Aline Helg, "Simón Bolívar's Republic: a bulwark against the "Tyranny" of the Majority," *Revista de Sociologia e Política*, (vol. 20, no. 42, 2012).

"Afro-descended peoples" to "freedmen and slaves, passing over in silence their vast majority: the freeborn blacks, mulatos, and zambos."[6] Perhaps his neglect here was a purposeful omission: in trying to convince the British that a race war was impossible, he could not mention those who posed a true threat to his cause, men like Piar who were born free and desired some racial equality greater than mere emancipation.

A Discussion on Haiti via Fischer

Having previously referenced Haiti as a counterexample to his own movement, it seems pertinent to examine exactly what great fear this former French colony represented to Bolívar. Haiti's rebellion cast off colonialism through a war waged on the basis of race: it symbolized a revolutionary future without white leaders or actors. Despite having a seemingly good relationship with Haitian leaders,[7] the country's narrative still ominously loomed over him. At the time of Bolívar's refuge, Haiti itself was divided between the south, which supported Alexandre Pétion, and the north, which supported Henri Christophe. The tension was defined by the arrival of three French agents to Haiti who were meant to "'negotiate' a return of the wayward colony to French tutelage."[8] Henri Christophe, suspicious of these men, subsequently accused Pétion of failing to guarantee liberty for Haitians and suggested that he intended on bringing slavery back to the country.[9] The conflict effectively opened up an intellectual conversation that tied racial hierarchies to colonialization and slavery, and "Pétion… .[appeared to his rivals as the] coopted and corrupted minion of the colonial regime who hoped to purchase 'whiteness' through cooperation with the devious French."[10]

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[6] Ibid.
[7] Bolívar took refuge in Haiti in 1815 and 1816
[8] Sybille Fischer, "Specters of The Republic: the Case of Manuel Piar" *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies,* (vol 27, no. 3, 2018).
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.

Because Bolívar stayed in Haiti while these tensions were reaching their height, he was exposed to the ways "that race could function as a political category; that it was legitimate to speak as a subject of color; that white supremacy was so entrenched in Western culture that only a radical departure from received paradigms could establish a realm of 'liberty and independence."[11] He witnessed the divisive nature of racial politics for Pétion, who himself was Black. If even he was subject to criticisms through a mere proximity to whiteness and colonial empires, surely Bolívar faced the same, or worse, critiques. It is with this global backdrop that Bolívar came to understand his tensions with Black general Piar as threatening and indicative of a coming race-based rebellion. His intense anxiety over his own whiteness and status as a member of the colonial elite caused him to view calls for racial equality beyond emancipation not as critiques to incorporate into his agenda, but rather as a means of his undoing.

Manuel Piar, His Execution & the Role of Emancipation

Manuel Piar was one of the highest-ranking officers in Bolívar's army who served starting in 1810 and is mostly notably known for leading the defeat of Spanish loyalist forces in Guyana. As a leader, his commitment to the cause was first undermined by General Pablo Morillo, who noted Piar's close relationship with Alexandre Pétion, president of Haiti. Because Haiti symbolized the worrisome potential of a white massacre, Morillo's suggestion that Piar and Pétion were working together capitalized on Bolívar's probable fear of a racially motivated counterrevolution. More than this, the accusation came off of the tail end of a deep conflict between Piar and Bolívar, during which Piar resisted Bolívar's military strategy.[12] This resulted in Piar's resignation and subsequent exile.[13] Later, Fischer writes, "Bolívar received a letter from

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[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.

a pardo officer by the name of Juan Francisco Sánchez, who accused Piar of planning an insurrection of the people of colour with the goal of killing all white criollos" : Bolívar's biggest fear.[14]

I have yet to find sources to help me answer whether there is any truth to these accusations. But Bolívar does point to these allegations in his statements about Piar's execution, albeit in sometimes subtle language. In a manifesto issued on August 5, 1817, Bolívar addresses the crimes Piar committed against the revolutionary movement. Though Fischer does consider this text in her work, she leaves out the subsequent Proclamation given in September and does not provide an as in-depth examination of the text itself alongside Bolívar's previous emancipation proclamation.

In his initial Manifesto to the people of Venezuela , Bolívar states "this man so favored by fortune has attempted to submerge you in the horrible deep of anarchy! Yes, Venezuelans, General Piar has formed a destructive spell to threaten the system of equality, liberty, and independence."[15] Here, Bolívar points to Piar's "fortunate" upbringing, casting him as a selfish, ungrateful traitor to the republic, who despite rising to elite status within the army, still desired more. Making his favored upbringing clear, Bolívar attempts to sever his ties with the poor slaves who might have found him more relatable: his wealth and status make him unable to be an organic leader of the people. This is done ironically and in spite of the fact that Bolívar, too, was a member of the colonial elite. Moreover, Bolívar continuously addresses his audience not as men, but rather as "Venezuelans," reminding them that it is their citizenship and patronage to their country that unites them, not their racial identity.

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Simón Bolívar, trans. Christina Schuler, "Manifiesto a los pueblos de Venezuela," (1817), 1.

Worried that slaves and other free Black men would hear of Piar's alleged plan and feel more allied with his cause, Bolívar discredits Piar himself to detract from his racial agenda. Bolívar skillfully turns the conversation toward Piar's past, telling his audience that Piar was born "of a mother who is...not Venezuelan, and of a father who is from the Canary Islands," suggesting he comes from partial colonial blood on his father's side.[16] He goes on to describe that "General Piar denied from his first years" his mother's heritage, "for the only reason of not being that respectable light color that he had inherited from his father."[17] Here Bolívar's mention of race is included only to portray Piar as a self-hating Black man who resented his mother for her color. Again, this is included to covertly indicate that any fraternity fellow Black men might feel with Piar would be a false association, as he does not wish to be Black, and instead longs to be white. "General Piar does not want the strength of a color that he hates," he continues, therefore his race war is a ploy: a trick played on the Black population to wield their military strength toward anarchy and away from their own freedom.[18] This delicate wordsmanship does, in effect, paint Piar as the Pétion of Venezuela. Although Bolívar is a white elite himself, it is Piar who is a traitor to his own race and longs for an association to power and whiteness, a crime far worse than actual parentage.

In the following six pages of his manifesto, Bolívar claims Piar to be a power-hungry and ambitious man, never satisfied with his own position and constantly defying the commands of his chiefs. He details the fall of Cumaná, which was under Piar's charge and attributes the death of his soldiers to their "having obeyed Piar who forced them to lock themselves in that defenseless city."[19] Bolívar even writes, "Unhappy victims there buried, say who put you under

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[16] Ibid., 2.
[17] Ibid., 2.
[18] Ibid., 7.
[19] Ibid., 3.

the knife of Boves."[20]Suggesting that Piar bears more responsibility than the Spanish enemy for these deaths, Bolívar's Manifesto reads as a vicious attack on Piar's character, past, competency, and conviction to Venezuelan independence. He portrays Piar's mission not as Black equality, but rather the destruction and death of Venezuelans, even saying "with his foolish and abominable conspiracy, he has only created the guise of a war of brothers, which will cruelly murder and slaughter innocent children, weak women, and the elderly for the inevitability of being born white."[21] Through his rhetoric, Bolívar renders Piar unfit to be a trustworthy brother, not to 21 mention leader, to his fellow Black soldiers and white citizens while also making him responsible for conspiring in a race-based counterrevolution.

This conspiracy is not a matter of racial gain or equality to Bolívar, and rather spells the end of Venezuelan freedom. "What does the General intend in favor of colored men," Bolívar asks his audience[22] "Equality," he continues, "No: they have it and enjoy it greatly. . . The general himself is irrevocable proof of this equality."[23] "Equality," he continues, "No: they have it and enjoy it greatly. . . The 22 general himself is irrevocable proof of this equality." Bolívar suggests that true equality has already been realized through the revolution, ultimately resting this claim on the idea that his abolition of slavery was freedom's equivalent. Without considering white generational wealth, remaining social biases, and reparations, Bolívar fails to consider the ways in which racism and inequality could still exist in a slave-free nation. In his subsequent statement, issued in October of 1817, he writes, "Haven't our weapons broken the chains of the slaves? Has the odious difference of classes and colors not been abolished forever? . . .What then, did General Piar want for you? Are you not equal, free, independent, happy, and

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[20] Ibid., 3.
[21] Ibid., 8.
[22] Ibid., 7.
[23] Ibid., 7.

honored?"[24] Arguing that the reality of freedom has already been granted, Bolívar suggests that Piar's plan was never for the benefit of Black men writ large, but rather a device for his own personal gain and greed. Making Piar into the enemy of his own race, Bolívar attempts to stifle talks of a race war and demonstrate himself as the hero of the slaves and freed Black men: their true best interest was with Bolívar.

In his final words, Bolívar reassures his audience of his best intentions compared to the nefarious ones of Piar: "the government, which is your father, only stays awake for your welfare. Your chief, who is your companion in arms, and that always. . . has participated in your dangers and misery, as well as your triumphs, trusts in you. Trust then in him. Be assured that he loves you more than if he were your father or your son."[25] Despite being a former elite, Bolívar makes 25 himself a man of the people, explaining that he has experienced the same miseries and threats as his soldiers. His care for his men make him Venezuela's valiant leader, and his decision to murder Piar is not a cruel act of racial oppression, not a defusing of the revolutionary flame on matters of racial equality, it is a necessary kindeness done to protect the Venezuelan public from more war, death, and anarchy.

However, the Decree for the Emancipation of Slaves given in 1816 suggests he was not the savior he claimed to be.[26] Article three includes a caveat to Black freedom: "The new citizen who refuses to bear arms in fulfillment of the sacred duty to defend his freedom shall be subject to servitude, not only for himself but also for his children under the age of fourteen, his wife, and his aged parents."[27] Not only does Bolívar imagine racial equality only in terms of abolition, but 27 he also makes this abolition contingent upon military service in the name of his independence

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[24] *Pasatiempo*, (26 Jan. 1853), 3.
[25] Ibid.
[26] This declaration was made as a concession to Pétion in exchange for support and material aid
[27] Simón Bolívar, *The Bolívarian Revolution*, 66.

movement. Slaves must earn their freedom, using the racist logic of the old world that implies

they are not born with it. This clause does not represent true freedom, as he often says it does in

his Manifesto and proclamation, but rather a servitude to a different master and cause. Bolívar

discredits the possibility that Black Venezuelans might be able to imagine freedom on their own

terms, and posits his revolution as the only path away from colonialism.

Conclusion

Though he mentions race in his first Manifesto on Piar, he never gives credit to what an

actual Black insurrectionist movement would mean or stand for (perhaps equality beyond

contingent freedom?) and instead only is able to discredit the alleged leader himself. In his

second proclamation, the topic of race explicitly vanishes, as Bolívar feared that even the

mention of racial tension stood to threaten the delicate fraternity of his cause. And his skepticism

over factions wasn't without reason. In fact, he executed another Black general, Jose Padilla, for

igniting a Black-led military mutiny against him in 1828. While it could be true that limiting the

potential of factions led to the success of his campaign, Bolívar's investment in a raceless

ideology reproduced colonial practices of racial domination. He had a profound commitment to

ignoring matters of race beyond the abolition of slavery, ultimately halting conversations about

social equality, land, and financial repatriation. This, Stoler would argue, is the evidence of

colonial debris and rot that took hold of Bolívar's sensibilities.

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All the World's a Stage:
Kissinger and Fulbright Interpret the Power of Mao's "Performance"

Ben Spiegelman

In his 2011 work *On China*, former United States Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who governed United States foreign policy during the Nixon and Ford administrations and is known for his role in the establishment of diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, posited his thoughts on Mao Zedong and his idea of a global revolution:

> Mao was too much of a realist, however, to pursue world revolution as a practical goal. As a result, the tangible impact of China on world revolution was largely ideological and consisted of intelligence support for local Communist parties....Whether as a reflection of realism or philosophical motivation, revolutionary ideology was a means to transform the world by performance rather than war, much as the traditional emperors had perceived their role[1].

This interpretation of global revolution as predominantly ideological in nature is in stark contrast to how the "threat" of China was perceived by government institutions of the United States during the Cold War; many believed China to be actively at work within nations around the world and directly fomenting Communist revolt and insurrection. Kissinger's view on this matter was, however, shared by the former United States Senator J. William Fulbright, who expressed similar sentiments to Kissinger in his 1966 book *The Arrogance of Power,* though his analysis of China did differ somewhat from Kissinger's in some respects and, crucially, lacked the advantage of being able to view this period from a historical perspective rather than a contemporary one. Henry Kissinger and J. William Fulbright both viewed China as a predominantly ideological force in the world during the Mao era as opposed to a military one, departing from the conventional views held by the 1960s national security establishment of the United States.

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[1] Henry Kissinger, *On China*, (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2012), 104-106.

Mao Zedong was the leader and one of the founders of the Chinese Communist Party. In the wake of World War II, the opposing factions of the Communist Party and the Nationalists, led by Chiang Kai-shek both vied for power, resulting in civil war. After four years of conflict, Mao and the Communists ousted the Nationalists from the mainland, officially establishing the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949.[2]

Throughout *On China*, in which he examined the history of China and reflected on both United States and Chinese foreign policy during the Cold War era, Henry Kissinger made frequent comparisons between Mao and leadership figures throughout Chinese history, laying the groundwork for his assertion that Mao's perception of himself mirrored that of the emperors. He began his assessment of Mao with a brief overview of the typical dynastic cycle of China, in which the ruling dynasty would lose the Mandate of Heaven because of their failing leadership to then be supplanted by a new claimant after a period of upheaval, noting that despite all of the disruption, the basic tenets of society, such as the Confucian bureaucracy, had always remained largely intact[3]. He goes on to declare Mao to be at the head of a "new dynasty that, in 1949, poured out of the countryside to take over the cities."[4] Already, Kissinger was attempting to connect Mao to the legacy of Imperial China, positioning him in the historical narrative as a new kind of emperor.

He goes on to discuss Mao's admiration of the Emperor Qin Shihuang, who ended the Warring States Period and unified China in 221 BCE, observing Mao's remarks that governance of China required "a combination of Marx's methods and Qin Shihuang's."[5] Once again, Kissinger was establishing Mao as something akin to an emperor, this time noting Qin

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[2] Ibid, 89.
[3] Ibid, 91.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid, 92.

Shihuang's own disruption and destruction of traditional Chinese culture as being of interest, and perhaps even inspirational, to Mao in his combating of Chinese tradition as a means of transforming the country. When describing Mao's "war on China's traditional art, culture, and modes of thought,"[6] Kissinger noted that, despite his public anti-tradition, anti-Confucian stances, Mao was still very much a student of the Chinese classics himself, asserting that Mao's strategy was ultimately based around the Confucian concept of Great Harmony and that he sometimes recreated his own version of the classic mandarin bureaucracy.[7] This seeming contradiction can also be seen as evidence of Mao attempting to "transform the world by performance,"[8] even within China itself. Publicly, Mao disavowed Confucianism and all other aspects of traditional Chinese culture,[9] wanting to break from the past. Privately, however, he harnessed these ideas and concepts to his own end.[10] Thus, he was altering the ideals and cultural landscape of broader China through his words and "performance" of anti-Confucianism, while the objective reality of Chinese leadership and governance at least partially influenced by traditional thought and Confucian beliefs remained the same.

Kissinger later acknowledged that, though Mao was able to pursue some version of his "continuous revolution" within China due to his increasingly absolute power, China's leaders were realistic enough to realize that they "lacked the means to challenge the prevailing international order except by ideological means."[11] With this statement, Kissinger established Mao, as well as other contemporary Chinese leaders, as a realist who understood the "continuous revolution," at least abroad, to be one of ideology as opposed to literal, physical revolution. He

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[6] Ibid, 94.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid, 105.
[9] Ibid, 94.
[10] Ibid, 95.
[11] Ibid, 99.

goes on to note that "in the realm of foreign policy, [Mao] was substantially more circumspect."[12] Here Kissinger acknowledged "Mao the realist," who was capable of separating his espoused desire for a global revolution from the realities that dictate the ultimate impracticality of said desire.

Perhaps most crucial to Kissinger's portrayal of Mao as changing the world through performance instead of war was his analysis of the People's Republic of China's "attitude of aloofness"[13] adopted towards the Western powers. Kissinger asserted that, in the wake of the establishment of the People's Republic of China, Mao and Zhou Enlai took the public position of avoiding contact with the West and prioritizing revolution in the developing world before establishing any new relations with the Western powers.[14] In Kissinger's view, the most important part of this indifference, particularly towards the United States and the Soviet Union, was the "calculated indifference to their military capabilities."[15] According to Kissinger, Mao adopted a public aloofness towards the nuclear capabilities of both great superpowers, even claiming to be willing to incur hundreds of millions of casualties for the purpose of Communist victory.[16] This is perhaps the clearest demonstration of Kissinger's conclusions on Mao. China at that point in time lacked the military capabilities to directly contend with either the United States or the Soviet Union. However, through the performance of nuclear indifference, China gained international credibility and influence that, at the time, far outstripped its objective capabilities. Furthermore, from Kissinger's perspective, this lack of concern towards the nuclear powers, as well as the general avoidance of and aloofness towards the West as a whole, was portrayed by

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[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid, 100.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid, 101.
[16] Ibid.

the Chinese as being done in the interest of global revolution and overall Communist victory.[17]

The outsized psychological and ideological influence granted to China by this performance, coupled with these remarks about global revolution, bolstered the ideological power of that sentiment, transforming the reality of the world through that ideology as opposed to through warfare or more direct actions.

Kissinger then cited Lin Biao's 1965 pamphlet, *Long Live the Victory of the People's War*, as evidence of the global revolution's ideological bent, asserting that, though the pamphlet was read by the Lyndon Johnson administration as a sign of China's direct hand in Communist insurrection around the world, it was actually "a statement of the limits of Chinese military support,"[18] noting Lin's claims that revolution should be carried out predominantly by a given country's own people. To Kissinger, a statement such as this was proof of Mao and China provoking change through performance as opposed to through actual direct military involvement and aid. Kissinger concluded his analysis of Mao by noting that China managed to act as a "geopolitical 'free agent' of the Cold War,"[19] having shifted its relationships with both the United States and the Soviet Union over time, commanding great influence despite its comparative weakness, and still managing to end up in an advantageous position following the end of the Cold War. Once again, Kissinger re-asserted his position with this analysis: to him, China's influence was able to far outclass its actual military strength due to a kind of performance based on ideology.

The anti-war Democratic Senator J. William Fulbright, former chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee from 1959 to 1974 and then-political opponent of Kissinger, took a

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[17] Ibid, 100.
[18] Ibid, 105.
[19] Ibid, 111.

similar stance in his analysis of China and the Chinese Revolution in his 1966 work *The Arrogance of Power*. Taking after an earlier speech of the same name, *The Arrogance of Power* contained Senator Fulbright's criticisms of United States foreign policy during the late 1960s. In particular, he condemned the war in Vietnam and examined the central reasons for entering into said war, particularly those relating to China. Fulbright began his analysis by noting that anything the West thought, said, and did in relation to Vietnam and the then-ongoing war in Vietnam was tinged with the idea of China as North Vietnam's facilitator and master and that China was often seen as the United States' true threat and enemy in Southeast Asia despite the "separate and indigenous"[20]nature of the Vietnam Revolution. Already, Fulbright was establishing China's considerable ideological influence within Asia and the world as a whole and, in particular, how said ideological influence was perceived within the United States and the West. He goes on to claim that the Chinese Revolution was, at least in part, "the rebellion of a proud and ancient civilization against foreign powers"[21] and that China's experiences with the Western colonial powers ultimately were what ultimately gave rise to the revolutionary impulse within the country.

Fulbright then examined China's pre-revolutionary history, citing the Opium War and subsequent Treaty of Nanking as the turning points which "exposed China's vulnerability and opened the way to extensive exploitation by foreign powers,"[22] going on to observe the numerous unequal treaties that were later forced upon China by such powers as France, Russia, Germany, and Japan and the effective semi-colonial status experienced by China that followed[23]. In Fulbright's view, it was these indignities suffered by China, as well as the miseries suffered by

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[20] J. William Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power*, Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2018, 139.
[21] Ibid, 144.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid, 144-146.

the Chinese under European influence and rule,[24] that would come to give rise to the eventual Chinese Revolution.

Fulbright later examined the adoption of Marxism within China. He specifically noted that Marxism was "the Western political doctrine … which the West itself had rejected"[25] and that this was a considerable factor in its acceptance among those in the countryside. He further asserted that the Chinese Communists were also able to claim a genuine Chinese nationalism in addition to Marxism, effectively "[making] Marxist ideas Chinese."[26] He later stated that this "Chinese Marxism" was simultaneously enacting two different revolutions with respect to the country of China: first "a domestic revolution which [was] almost totally reconstructing Chinese life and society"[27] and one directed towards the foreign world involving China reclaiming a version of its prior status in the world. In Fulbright's view, China desired to return to the kind of aloofness it traditionally held towards the outside world and instead turn its focus entirely towards domestic affairs, such as the advancement of industry and Chinese society as a whole.

Fulbright next assessed China's foreign policy. He too examined Lin Biao's proclamations in *Long Live the Victory of the People's War*, specifically addressing the claims that Asia, Latin America, and Africa will eventually overcome the rest of the world in the same manner that the Chinese Communists claimed victory in China.[28] He interpreted this as more talk than anything, noting that many experts believed that Lin was promoting indigenous revolution more than he was saying that China would directly facilitate such revolutions around the world.[29] Thus, for Fulbright, there was a gap between what America interpreted China as saying and

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[24] Ibid, 147-148.
[25] Ibid, 149.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid, 150.
[28] Ibid, 151.
[29] Ibid.

doing and what China actually intended to do. He attributed this to the "ideological prism through which America [looked] at the world,"[30] causing considerable issues with communication and understanding between the two powers.

He ended his assessments of China and the Chinese Revolution by pondering whether or not this gap in understanding was at all bridgeable and whether or not American hostility was "[perpetuating] the extremist phase of the Chinese Revolution."[31] He expressed a desire to establish more friendly relations with China and posited that the United States should be more willing to treat China with respect, believing that America, as the stronger nation, "[had] an obligation of magnanimity"[32] towards the developing and growing China, especially after the century of struggle experienced by China against the West. In Fulbright's eyes, "understanding and generosity" were not only the key to bettering tensions with China, but also bettering the entire situation in Asia.

Fulbright's analysis and understanding of China shared much with Kissinger's. At their core, both assessments viewed the Chinese Revolution as domestically being largely about the complete transformation of the traditional society, which had grown complacent and fragile, into something newer and more vigorous than before. Similarly, both also tied the Revolution to prior Chinese history, with Kissinger connecting it to the traditional cycle of rising and falling dynasties[33] and Fulbright drawing on the century from the Opium War on to explain the origins of the revolutionary impulse.[34]

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[30] Ibid, 152.
[31] Ibid, 155.
[32] Ibid, 156.
[33] Kissinger, *On China*, 91.
[34] Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power*, 144.

Perhaps the most critical alignment of these two views is in regards to what Kissinger might refer to as China's "performance." Both cited Lin Biao's 1965 *Long Live the Victory of the People's War* as evidence of both China's lack of direct military involvement and support with Communist revolutions in other countries and the largely ideological nature of China's influence. Fulbright noted that, despite the aggression and seeming threats present in Lin's language, "China [had] tolerated a high degree of independence on the part of her neighbors,"[35], noting that China did not typically have any of its troops in other countries and that, contrary to views of China as a sort of master, countries such as North Vietnam, North Korea, and Burma had all operated "substantially in command of [their] own affairs."[36] Kissinger's views on Lin Biao are similar, with him also believing that the Lin doctrine was more about providing an ideological framework for indigenous revolution as opposed to directly causing it.[37]

Both men thus disagreed with the conventional wisdom of the 1960s American national security world, which painted China as having had an "aggressive posture towards the outside world."[38] There was a perception in Washington that developed during the Kennedy administration in which the Soviet Union was seen as having developed a more sophisticated and developed view of the world while China essentially took the Soviet Union's place in the eyes of the Americans as the more "violent, hostile, unreasoning— and, concomitantly, more revolutionary"[39] power between the two. It was Washington's view, at this point, that the Chinese sought to dominate all of Southeast Asia and that the Soviets were as displeased as the Americans were in regards to that supposed goal. To the national security apparatus at this time,

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[35] Ibid, 151.
[36] Ibid, 152.
[37] Kissinger, *On China,* 105.
[38] James Peck, *Washington's China: The National Security World, the Cold War, and the Origins of Globalism*, (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006), 201.
[39] Ibid, 205.

China seemed to pose an imminent military threat throughout Asia. This concern seemed to be proven correct in 1965 with Lin Biao's aggressive proclamations about the eventual defeat of the developed world.[40]

To Kissinger, this was a significant factor in the ultimate decision of the Johnson administration to send troops into Vietnam. In his view, President Johnson and his advisors saw Lin's *Long Live the Victory of the People's War* as "a blueprint for—and probably outright participation in—Communist subversion all around the world and especially in Indochina,"[41] and not as a statement on the limits of direct Chinese aid to revolution like how Kissinger himself read it. Senator Fulbright's views on Lin's statements, as previously stated, aligned with those of Kissinger. In addition to this, he also pointed to another significant factor which he believed to be one of the major roots of the 1960s national security apparatus' view of China as a force bent on conquest and domination: ideology.

Fulbright asserted that the primary cause of the "discrepancy between myth and reality"[42] between how Washington perceived China and the truth of how China actually acted was the previously mentioned "ideological prism"[43] that America viewed the world through. According to Fulbright, the Americans deemed China to be aggressive and threatening based solely on the words they said and assumptions about their intentions, with their actual actions having been often completely overshadowed. In his view, "China [was] not judged to be aggressive because of her actions; she [was] *presumed* to be aggressive because she [was] communist."[44]He further suggested that a key component of this seeming inability or unwillingness on the part of both the

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[40] Kissinger, *On China*, 104.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power*, 152.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.

Americans and the Chinese to see each other as they actually are stemmed from a basic lack of understanding between the peoples of the two nations, with him considering the United States to have been "the most unrevolutionary country in the world, and China the most revolutionary."[45] In Senator Fulbright's assessment, only through gaining an increased and better overall understanding of China and the Chinese Revolution and its origins could this gulf between fact and fiction have been bridged.

While these analyses did align on this significant point, they also differed in some crucial ways. As previously mentioned, Kissinger stated that Mao's leadership was based on a combination of Emperor Qin Shihuang's philosophies and Marxism.[46] Fulbright, on the other hand, stated that the Chinese Communists were governed by an iteration of Marxism which they had made into a Chinese idea[47]. While both were arguing that Chinese leadership was influenced by some combination of Chinese ideals and Marxism, their conceptions of this were somewhat different. Kissinger directly tied Mao's ideals to Qin Shihuang and China's imperial past, positioning the comparatively non-Chinese philosophy of Marxism as a compliment to these both distinctly Chinese and distinctly traditional beliefs. On the other hand, Fulbright's interpretation made no mention of any influence from the legacy of Qin Shihuang or any other emperor. Instead, he positioned Marxism in China as having been entirely subsumed by Chinese nationalism, effectively transforming it into a Chinese idea and removing any conception of "foreignness" or "Westernness" it may once have held.

Fulbright and Kissinger also differed in their historical approaches to the origins of the Chinese Revolution. Both Kissinger and Fulbright made reference to China's history in their

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[45] Ibid, 153.
[46] Kissinger, *On China*, 92.
[47] Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power*, 149.

approach to understanding revolutionary China and its leaders. However, the way they went about using said history is considerably different. Kissinger saw the Chinese Revolution as a part of what was in his view the endless rising and falling of different ruling dynasties throughout Chinese history. To him, the Revolution was the result of this cyclical tumult, and Mao, though he did not use the title, was just the latest emperor to claim the Mandate of Heaven and establish a new kind of dynasty. As previously stated, his view of Mao-as-Emperor extended to how he perceived Mao's alteration of the world by performance, comparing it to "how the emperors had perceived their role."[48] Similarly, he placed considerable weight on what he perceived to be the influences of the Chinese classics and traditional Confucian government on Mao's general strategy and methods of governance. He saw the Mao period as merely another part of the grand arc of Chinese history, fitting it into what he believed to be the natural ebbs and flows of dynasties and leaders across the ages in China. Fulbright, in contrast, did not position the Chinese Revolution within the context of the dynastic cycle and the Mandate of Heaven at all, nor did he proclaim Mao as any kind of emperor, or even mention the emperors in any substantial way. Instead, he pointed to the so-called "century of humiliation," in which China was subjected to numerous unequal treaties and demands by the major Western powers, as an impetus for the rise of revolutionary sentiment and the later ascension of the Chinese Communists to prominence and eventually rule. In Fulbright's evaluation, the role of the West's degradation of China far exceeded that of the traditional waxing and waning of dynasties when it came to the Chinese Revolution. He also made no mention whatsoever of the Chinese classics as a part of Mao's leadership, nor did he declare the Chinese Communist government to be a new version of the traditional Confucian bureaucracy. Ultimately, Fulbright's analysis utilized only

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[48] Kissinger, *On China*, 106.

pre-revolutionary China's more modern history in its appraisal of the rise of Mao and his era of leadership.

Fulbright, unlike Kissinger, continuously stressed that, in his view, China remained "in its period of extremism"[49] in the wake of the Revolution. In his eyes, China was still suffused with a post-Revolution fervor with which it believed it could truly change and remake the world. He goes on to explain that he believed American hostility to be at least in part responsible for the perpetuation and even the strengthening of this extremist phase[50]. Kissinger, in his approach, made no such mention of China remaining in any kind of extremist state. He addressed the grand proclamations and claims of the Mao era but did not declare it to be a product of extremism; he instead pointed to ideology, tradition, and Chinese nationalism[51]. Unlike Fulbright, however, Kissinger had the benefit of considerable hindsight in his assessment; *On China*'s 2011 publication put it well after the Mao period, not to mention the Cold War as a whole, while analysis present within the 1966 *The Arrogance of Power* was limited by the then-contemporary nature of much of its subject matter.

Though their analyses had some considerable differences, both former United States Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and former chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee J. William Fulbright viewed Mao's global revolution to be one of ideology and not direct military action, departing from the views of the national security apparatus of the time. Both of these men, whether at the time or with the benefit of decades of hindsight, viewed Mao and the Chinese Communists' grand declarations on eventual global Communist victory to be just that: declarations. They recognized both Mao's "performance" and the power and

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[49] Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power,* 140.
[50] Ibid, 155.
[51] Kissinger, *On China*, 107.

international influence of that performance, which greatly exceeded that of Mao-era China's actual military capabilities. Both also recognized the consequences of the broader misunderstanding of said performance: heightened hostility and the United States engaging in war in Vietnam. One cannot help but wonder how the historical landscape may have been altered had this been the prevailing line of thought within Washington during the Cold War; perhaps some modicum of understanding may have been able to be reached with China much earlier on.

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Radical Transitions to Modernity:
The Emergence of Anarchism and the Reconstruction
of Nationhood in China before the 1911 Revolution

Alice Yu

Introduction: The World That Needed Remaking

Understanding, interpreting, and dealing with anarchism can be a conceptually ambitious task. Critics often equated anarchism with annihilation, chaos, and destruction, overlooking diverse theories and practices of anarchism in actuality. As an ideology, anarchism encapsulates a varied range of interpretations and possibilities; therefore, any attempt to create a singular, definitive understanding of anarchism would be self-defeating. Under different historical and cultural circumstances, the coinage of anarchism could easily become a misnomer, prone to oversimplification and misinterpretation.

While some academics have traced anarchist thinking as early as the teachings of Lao-tzu, a fourth-century BC Chinese Daoist philosopher,[1] the conceptualization of anarchism emerged in the nineteenth century. European anarchist activists and philosophers actively adopted the anarchist label and inspired an intellectual movement that spread to China at the beginning of the twentieth century. My focus will be on the twentieth-century Chinese anarchist movement preceding the 1911 Revolution, a revolution that subverted the Qing dynasty and terminated two thousand years of imperial dynastic rule. This movement drew from ancient philosophical traditions of Lao-tzu and the late-nineteenth-century European philosophies of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Mikhail Bakunin, and Peter Kropotkin. By focusing on the conceptualization and adoption of the anarchist movement from the end of the Boxer Rebellion

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[1] Randall Amster and et al., "Introduction," in *Contemporary Anarchist Studies: An Introductory Anthology of Anarchy in the Academy*, ed. Randall Amster and et al., (London: Routledge, 2009), 2.

leading up to the 1911 Revolution, this study attempts to deal with a time when anarchist

thinking and activists were situated in the center of revolutionary discourse. Rather than

assuming that nationalism and anarchism were mutually exclusive by fundamental ideological

principles, in what ways were anarchist ideologies compatible with the emergence of nationalism

leading up to the 1911 Revolution? I argue that late-Qing China's historical context in the early

twentieth century produced an intellectual culture that gave rise to both Chinese nationalist

sentiment and anarchist ideologies, and the conflict, evolution, and synthesis of the two

contributed to an evolving radical revolutionary thought in its nascent stages. In an effort to

answer this question, I will examine the dynamics between two anarchist movements, the Tokyo

and Paris group, focusing on how Chinese nationals were drawn to anarchism with its

universalist aspects, despite schisms in ideology, goals, and principles.[2]

In terms of sources, two works in particular, Robert Scalapino and George T. Yu's *The

Chinese Anarchist Movement* and Arif Dirlik's *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, were

indispensable in forming my investigation of anarchism in China. Scalapino and Yu's work

offered a solid overview of the historical context surrounding the rise of Chinese anarchism. In

contrast, Dirlik's work provided me with an ideological framework to analyze anarchism both as

a philosophy and a movement. To dive into what inspired the rise of anarchism in the first place,

I perused Rebecca E. Karl's *China's Revolution in the Modern World: A Brief Interpretive

History*. Karl's comprehensive and nuanced overview of the 1911 Revolution shaped my

understanding of the factors contributing to the 1911 Revolution and how this context shaped

anarchist and nationalist goals.

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[2] Arif Dirlik, "Anarchism in Early Twentieth Century China: A Contemporary Perspective," *Journal of Modern Chinese History* 6, no. 2 (2012): 131–46.

Primary source materials written by Chinese anarchists were challenging to access. To address this problem, I extracted quotations from other academic works. Instead of applying their views of the text, I attempted to translate, situate, and clarify the meanings behind the text to my own interpretation of anarchism and the anarchists under discussion. To understand the Tokyo Group's anarchism championed by Liu Shipei, I researched traditional Daoist and Buddhist ideas to complement my reading of his theories. To understand the Paris Group's anarchism, I relied on Peter H. Marshall's *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism* to discern the ways in which Paris anarchists adopted and adapted the ideas of Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin, and Élisée Reclus to China's local situation. In incorporating quotations and references, I retained the use of traditional Chinese characters to be consistent with the original, with the exception of footnotes where sources were titled with simplified Chinese characters.[3]

Overall, developing this paper was an incredibly rewarding process. Readers will hopefully be enlightened by the variety of thought embedded in anarchist thinking, the possible alternatives to what the present world anarchism offered, and the reconsideration of the structures that they might blindly accept and take for granted, in a new and critical light. The study of anarchism in a Chinese context is particularly edifying as it reveals how philosophies and political ideologies could be interpreted, wielded, and conceptualized in a globalized context, transcending linguistic, cultural, and national barriers.

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[3] The simplification of Chinese characters was also a product of China's modernization efforts, when reformists saw traditional values, emblemed by traditional characters, as obstacles. Even though discussions on character simplification first appeared as early as 1909, widespread use came after 1956, when the People's Republic of China sanctioned its first official character simplifications. For more on the reformation of calligraphy as part of China's modernization process, see Yuehping Yen, *Calligraphy and Power in Contemporary Chinese Society*, (London: Routledge, 2004).

Emergence of Revolutionary Culture and its Historical Context

Examining the historical context that gave rise to a radical intellectual culture helps provide an answer to how the 1911 Revolution was rooted in a "global temporal and spatial simultaneity" according to Rebecca Karl. She argues that the 1911 Revolution saw the "definitive redefinition" of the Chinese concept of "revolution," from "'severing' (*ge*/革) the (dynastic) 'mandate' (*ming*/命) for the purpose of bestowing that mandate on a new dynasty" to 'revolution' (*geming*/革命) for the advancement "toward a modern global version connoting the fundamental transformation of political (if not also social) power from one form of polity to another." I agree with Karl that this transformation also laid a fundamental expansion of what constituted the realm of the political to the broader society beyond insulated royal courts. The abolition of the civil service exam in 1905 propelled this expansion, terminating the ties between classical education and appointment to dynastic bureaucratic offices.[4] Translations from thinkers abroad flourished, ranging from philosophy to scientific theory, which introduced concepts such as anarchism and utopianism. The influx of foreign publications gave rise to new professional opportunities and rejuvenated ideological and cultural discourse. With the linkage between knowledge and dynastic rule officially defunct, reimagining China's political identity in the twentieth century was no longer limited to classical Confucian intellectual traditions.[5] Underpinned by Confucian socio-ideological theories, increased political discussion and

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[4] The civil service exam was an examination process used to select bureaucrats based on Confucian classics. The exams traced its roots from the Sui dynasty (581-618 BCE) and served as an instrument for scholars to achieve social mobility in imperial China.

[5] Rebecca E. Karl, *China's Revolutions in the Modern World: A Brief Interpretive History* (London: Verso, 2020), 34.

engagement intertwined with global philosophies of society, economics, and politics which opened up new possibilities and facilitated the collapse of a dynastic socio-political framework.[6]

This intellectual rupture followed the erosion of China's sovereignty during the late Qing period. By the late nineteenth century, the Qing regime festered in domestic weaknesses as ethnic tensions mounted. Seated on the throne were the Manchus, an ethnic minority from Manchuria who overthrew the Han-ruled Ming Dynasty. Motivated by increasing anti-imperial and anti-colonial beliefs, Chinese nationalists accused the Manchu rule of debilitating Han culture and reducing China's position as a world power to an underdeveloped, poverty-stricken nation. Zou Rong, a scholar-turned-revolutionary, called on his comrades to "[s]weep away millennia of despotism in all its forms, throw off millennia of slavishness, annihilate the five million and more of the furry and horned Manchu race, cleanse ourselves of 260 years of harsh and unremitting pain."[7] Espousing "anti-Qing-ism" (*paimanzhuyi*/排滿主義), revolutionaries like Zou Rong construed the nature of the revolution as one of the Han against the Qing. Peter Zarrow, a scholar who examined anti-Manchuism as a form of historical trauma, argues that the the concept of "ancestral nation" (*zuguo*/祖國) and Han people's self-identification in racial-ethnic terms contributed to the formation of Chinese nationalism.[8] Narratives of the "death of the nation" (*wangguo*/亡國) under the Manchus reflected "a loss of the self as a source of legitimacy" as revolutionaries mourn the fall of the perfect China.[9]

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[6] Ibid. 29.

[7] Jung Tsou, *The Revolutionary Army: A Chinese Nationalist Tract of 1903* (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 1968), 58.

[8] Peter Zarrow, "Historical Trauma: Anti-Manchuism and Memories of Atrocity in Late Qing China," *History and Memory* 16, no. 2 (2004): 72-73.

[9] Zarrow, "Historical Trauma: Anti-Manchuism and Memories of Atrocity in Late Qing China," 73.

To the late-Qing radicals, the rejection of the destructive, numerically inferior "barbarian" Manchus symbolized a rejection of China's conquered past.[10] Japanese and Euro-American imperial intrusion only exacerbated domestic turmoil.[11] China signed a series of agreements known as "Unequal Treaties" (*bupingdeng tiaoyue*/不平等條約) following Chinese military defeat against countries such as Japan, Britain, France, Russia, and Italy. These negotiations forced China to pay war reparations, open ports for commercial usage, cede or lease territory, and grant extraterritorial privileges and sovereignty to foreign citizens.[12] Most notable was China's defeat against Japan in the Sino-Japanese War from 1894–1895, when Japan forced China to cede Taiwan and pay reparations. This defeat was especially humiliating, as China traditionally considered Japan to be lesser both historically and culturally.

Increased Western imperial presence similarly contributed to heightened anti-imperialist and anti-colonial tensions. A manifestation of Japanese and Euro-American imperial intrusion was the establishment of concessions. Concessions were "de jure and de facto special physical spaces, but arguably also emotional spaces, due to the enjoyment of special rights. The juridical power of the nation of origin was extended to its citizens living abroad, who enjoyed the principle of extraterritoriality and were exempted from Chinese laws."[13] Figure 1.1 depicts a map printed in 1912 of Tianjin, a city in northern China. Eight countries in total occupied concessions in Tianjin alone, including (in order of establishment from earliest to latest): Britain, Austro-Hungary, France, Japan, Germany, Italy, Belgian, and Russia. The growing economic dominance

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[10] Andrew Phillips, "Contesting the Confucian Peace: Civilization, Barbarism and International Hierarchy in East Asia," *European Journal of International Relations* 24, no. 4 (2018): 742.

[11] Karl, *China's Revolutions in the Modern World,* 30.

[12] Taylor Fravel, "Regime Insecurity and International Cooperation: Explaining China's Compromises in Territorial Disputes," *International Security* 30, no. 2 (2005): 47.

[13] Maurizio Marinelli, "The Italian production of space in Tianjin: Heterotopia and emotional capital," in *Foreigners and Foreign Institutions in Republican China,* ed. Anne-Marie Brady and Douglas Brown (London: Routledge, 2012), 33.

of foreign institutions brought discontent among merchant and commercial elites, as the expropriation of ports resulting from concessions rendered competition against internationalized markets impossible. Therefore, in the face of Japan's meteoric rise as a modern industrial nation-state, the invasion of sovereignty by Euro-American nations, and mounting internal pressures, the decline of their country's international position and the realities of modernity confronted Chinese nationals, further inciting calls for social reform in a complacent bureaucracy, albeit futile.
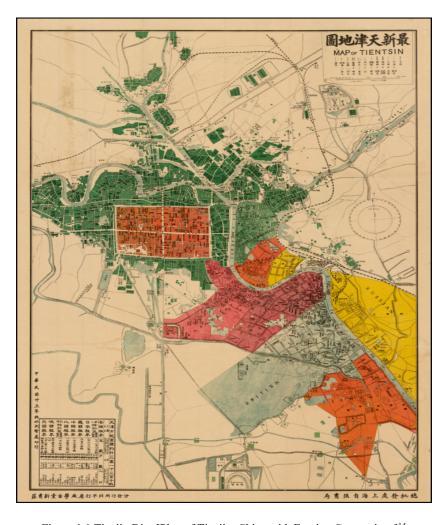

Figure 1.1 Tianjin Ditu [Plan of Tianjin, China with Foreign Concessions][14]

[14] Tianjin di tu / Map of Tientsin [Plan of Tianjin, China with Foreign Concessions], 1912, The Barry Lawrence Ruderman Map Collection, La Jolla, CA, cartographic image, 1936, 27.5 x 19.5 in Stanford University Libraries, https://purl.stanford.edu/vt775gn2391.

The Tokyo Group: Anarchism in "National Essence"

Anarchism gained traction in China after the failed Boxer Rebellion, when cohorts of students, sent by central and provincial governments to study abroad, introduced anarchism to China. Under a decree issued in 1905 titled "An Imperial Edict Sending Zai Ze and Others Eastwards and Westward on a Mission to Study Foreign Politics," the Manchu government first sent Chinese ministers and scholars to "study all forms of politics in the hope of selecting the good ones to follow" as part of an effort to initiate reformation.[15] Another source by Edwin Dingle, an English journalist who resided in then Hankow, China (now Wuhan) during the 1911 Revolution, contended that the Manchu government, hoping to organize and control a modern army, sent Chinese students abroad to be trained as military commanders. Revolutionaries then infiltrated such student groups, converting some students into revolutionaries to take positions in the army upon their return.[16]

By 1906, at least 10,000 students studied abroad in Japan. Among all Japanese cities, Tokyo was particularly popular for its geographic proximity, affordable cost, and cultural affinity. Most importantly, Tokyo symbolized the fusion between tradition and modernity, a synthesis that many Chinese students found meaningful. Among these students were Liu Shipei, his wife He Zhen, and Zhang Ji, three figures central to the Chinese anarchist movement in what became known as the Tokyo Group.[17] In incorporating traditional Chinese thinking with anarchist philosophies, the Tokyo Group, represented chiefly by Liu, reflected an urge to universalize and recontextualize China's evolving role in the world.

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[15] Cheng Jie, "Why Late Qing Constitutional Reform Failed: An Examination from the Comparative Institutional Perspective," *Tsinghua China Law Review* 10, no. 1 (2017): 112.

[16] Edwin J. Dingle, *China's Revolution, 1911-1912: A Historical and Political Record of the Civil War* (New York: McBride, Nast & Co., 1912), 15-16.

[17] Robert A. Scalapino and George T. Yu, *The Chinese Anarchist Movement* (Berkeley: University of California, 1961), 5.

Liu's attempts to situate ancient Chinese philosophies within imported modern Western theories illustrated the intellectual struggle of early twentieth-century China to institute, transform, and subvert traditional ideologies in a global context. Joachim Kurtz, a scholar on late-imperial Chinese philosophy, describes Liu as a "precocious offspring of a distinguished scholarly lineage…best known for his chameleonlike political radicalism that led him from a vicious breed of anti-Manchu nationalism, via a romanticized anarchism with feminist inclinations."[18] Liu first arrived in Japan with his wife in 1907. He took a radical, nationalist anti-Manchu stance, changed his name to Guanghan (光漢/restore the Han) and began publishing an anarchist journal, *Tianyibao* (*Journal of Natural Justice*/天義報), influenced by Japanese radicals such as Kōtoku Shūsui (幸得 秋水).

In his famous 1901 book *Nijū seiki no kaibutsu tekokushugi* (*Imperialism: Monster of the Twentieth Century*/二十世紀の怪物 帝国主義), Kōtoku argued that "Japan's mission was to be a model and guide for China, preserve its territorial integrity, and act as a mediator between China and Western powers."[19] Originally a socialist thinker, Kōtoku became enamored with anarchism and direct action following his five-month imprisonment in 1905 for publishing the socialist journal *Heimin Shinbun* (*Common People's Newspaper*/平民新聞), during which he studied Kropotkin's works.[20] Kōtoku's understanding of anarchism solidified after his imprisonment, when he traveled to San Francisco and corresponded with Kropotkin on

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[18] Joachim Kurtz, "Disciplining the National Essence: Liu Shipei and the Reinvention of Ancient China's Intellectual History," *Science and Technology in Modern China, 1880s-1940s*, ed. Jing Tsu and Benjamin A. Elman (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 69.

[19] Tatiana Linkhoeva, *Revolution Goes East: Imperial Japan and Soviet Communism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2020), 22.

[20] John Crump, *Hatta Shūzō and Pure Anarchism in Interwar Japan* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 21-22.

translating his works into Japanese.[21] Upon Kōtoku's return to Japan in 1906, Japanese political thinker Kita Ikki (北 一輝) befriended Zhang and introduced Zhang to Kōtoku, after which Zhang and Liu began participating in Kōtoku's *Shakaishugi Kōshūkai* (Socialist Lecture Group/ 社會主義講習會). In June 1907, Zhang and Liu founded their own *Shehui zhuyi jiangxi hui* (Society for the Study of Socialism/社會主義講習會) in Tokyo to promote and discuss Chinese anarchist ideologies.[22] Due to his classical education background, Liu grounded his anarchist ideals in indigenous sources such as Daoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. In his first speech to *Shehui zhuyi jiangxi hui*, Liu argued that China, with its non-interventionist political regime and unique historical situation, should pioneer the global transformation of anarchism:

> For thousands of years, Confucianism and Daoism underpinned Chinese political foundation. Both schools emphasized principles of non-interference (*fangren*/放 任); therefore, China's political foundations rest in non-interference (*fangren*/放 任) and in indifference (*buzhuganshe*/不主干涉). In practice, the existence of a regime in China is merely titular in nature, and is no different from anarchism… Anarchism is a mere utopian fantasy in Euro-American countries, but China has practiced anarchy for thousands of years… Therefore, it ought to be the easiest for China, of all the nations in the world, to achieve anarchism.[23]

Moreover, the Tokyo Group championed an anarchist vision that preserved agrarian labor and equality, devoid of the intrusions of capitalism, urbanism, and industrial machinery. Revering Tolstoy's anti-capitalist, anti-urban egalitarian ideals, Liu and He asserted that

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[21] For more on Kōtoku Shūsui's ideological development during his time in the United States, see John Crump, "Kōtoku Shūsui and the American Connection" in *The Origins of Socialist Thought in Japan* (London: Croom Helm, 1983), 182-211.

[22] Robert T. Tierney, *Monster of the Twentieth Century: Kōtoku Shūsui and Japan's First Anti-Imperialist Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), 118-119.

[23] Liu Shipei 劉師培, "Shehui zhuyi jiangxihui diyici kaihui jishi" 社會主義講習會第一次開會記事 [Notes on the First Meeting of the Society for the Study of Socialism], *Tianyibao,* no.6 (August 8, 1907). Quoted in He Ruojun, "Lun Liushipei zhengzhi sixiang de yanbian"论刘师培政治思想的演变 [On the evolution of Liushipei's political thought], *Huananshidaxuebao* 2 (1983): 68.

"Europe, America and Japan have only pseudo civilizations." Historian Charlotte Furth observed that *Tianyi* even published Leo Tolstoy's "Letter to the Chinese," in which Tolstoy praised native Chinese intellectual traditions as "the freest society in the world" and "warned against the oppressive consequences of constitutional government industrialism, and military power."[24] Liu's thinking echoed the organizational theories from Confucian classic 周禮 (*zhouli/Rites of Zhou*), pre-imperial agriculturalist communalism, and Tolstoy's egalitarianism. Farmer-scholars would live in a state of "non-interference" (*fangren*/放任), and "none shall be dependent upon another nor be the servant of another." Achieving this vision, Liu argued, required the "Equalization of human powers" (*renlei junli shuo*/人类均力说), where "the man is the worker,

the farmer, and the scholar, each possessing equal rights and duties…sharing with the rest of mankind all bitterness and happiness."[25] Liu extended the same logic to gender equality, possibly inspired by the feminist literature of his wife, He. Only when "men do not rely on their women by family politics and women do not look up to their men by food and clothing" could society achieve equality between men and women.[26] In summary, as Peter Zarrow aptly observed, Liu's society would "lack distinction between capitalists and workers as well as rulers and commoners," while "[promising] a sufficiency of goods as well as the abolition of all forms of oppression."[27]

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[24] Charlotte Furth, "Intellectual Change: From the Reform Movement to the May Fourth Movement, 1895–1920" in *The Cambridge History of China*, ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 382.

[25] Liu Shipei 劉師培, "Ren lei junli shuo" 人類均力說 [On the equalization of human powers], *Tianyibao,* no.3 (July 10, 1907), quoted in Furth, "Intellectual Change," 382.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Peter Zarrow, "Anti-Despotism and "Rights Talk": The Intellectual Origins of Modern Human Rights Thinking in the Late Qing,"*Modern China* 34, no. 2 (2008): 190.

Essential to Liu's anarchism was a search for the "national essence." In justifying and

localizing anarchist thinking, Liu sought to preserve the "national essence" (*guocui*/國粹) and

identify the "Chinese origins of Western knowledge" (*xixuezhongyuanshuo*/西學中源說).[28]

Dissecting the concept of rights in Liu's works, Stephen C. Angle focuses on the 1903 *Zhongguo*

minyue jingyi (中國民約精義), also known as *Essentials of the Chinese Social Contract.*[29] To

relate traditional Chinese concepts with European political doctrines, Liu incorporated Chinese

adaptations of a Japanese translation of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Social Contract* with quotations

from classical Chinese literary canons.[30] To Liu, the social contract between the ruler and the

ruled was present in Chinese political thought since 易经 (*yijing*/*Book of Changes*), an ancient

Daoist divination text traced to the late ninth century BC.[31] These attempts illuminated Liu's

approach to anarchism: to penetrate "deeply into present and past (*bo tong jin gu*/博通今古),

[understand] all the different currents [of traditional thought] and their sources (*dong liu suo*

yuan/洞流所源), and [thereby] illuminating their substance and translating it into action (*ming ti*

da yong/明體達用)."[32]

Liu's commitment to traditionalism and cultural conservatism reflected, in the words of

Arif Dirlik, "subversive implications in its reconstruction of the past." In deconstructing and

recontextualizing past legacies, Liu's reinterpretation of China's past, drawing on literary and

philosophical thoughts from ancient China and the European Renaissance, called for a

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[28] Kurtz, "Disciplining the National Essence," 68.
[29] Stephen C. Angle, "Did Someone Say 'Rights'? Liu Shipei's Concept of *Quanli,*" *Philosophy East and West* 48, no. 4 (1998): 625.
[30] Kurtz, "Disciplining the National Essence," 70.
[31] Jens Hürter, "The Fountainhead of All Learned Tradition: Liu Shipei's Treatise on the Official Scribe and Its Significance for Chinese Culture," *Oriens Extremus* 44 (2003): 44.
[32] Ibid, 47.

reinstitution of ancient values.[33] His anarchism was an amalgamation in nature, combining

nationalism and anti-statism, China and states outside of China, as well as perceived libertarian

traditions and modern anarchistic thinking. Beyond undermining the Manchu regime, Liu

questioned the very foundation of China's political hierarchy, the existence of political authority,

and even the lack thereof. Though Liu appreciated certain Euro-American values, as a nativist,

he was fundamentally suspicious of their imperial, capitalist influences. This is where the Tokyo

and Paris group differed.

Paris Group: Anarchism as a Science

The Paris Group's European origins predisposed radical beginnings. Chinese officials

identified France in particular to be a place wrought with "subversive radicalism and political

instability," and students who aspired to study in France in the early 1900s "[risked] exposure to

'dangerous extremism.'"[34] Some students, including one named Chu Ho-chung who was sent to

Germany, wrote that "local authorities in the Wuhan area sent student 'activists' abroad to get rid

of them, with the more radical being dispatched to Europe and the less radical to Japan."[35]

Contrary to other study abroad students who sought technical and military training, more

students travelled to Paris to pursue law, economics, and political science, creating a fecund

ground for the birth of Chinese student social radicalism in the early twentieth century.

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[33] Arif Dirlik, "Anarchism in Early Twentieth Century China: A Contemporary Perspective," *Journal of Modern Chinese History* 6, no. 2 (December 2012): 138.

[34] Li Shizeng 李石曾, "Zhongfa Jiaoyu Wenti" 中法教育問題 [The Question of Sino-French Education], *Zhongfa daxue banyuekan* 中法大學半月刊 (Bulletin Bimensuel de l'Université Franco-Chinoise) no. 1: 5-6, quoted in Paul J. Bailey, "Cultural Connections in a New Global Space: Li Shizeng and the Chinese Francophile Project in the Earlier Twentieth Century," in *Print, Profit, and Perception: Ideas, Information and Knowledge in Chinese Societies, 1895-1949,* ed. Pei-yin Lin and Weipin Tsai (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 20.

[35] Chu Ho-chung, "The Record of the European T'ung Meng Hui," in Lo Chia-lun, (ed.), *Ke-ming wenhsien* [Documents of the Revolution], vol. 2 (Taipei: Chung yang wen wu kung ying she, 1953), 251–270, quoted in Scalapino and Yu, *The Chinese Anarchist Movement*, 5.

Leading the Paris Group was Li Shizeng, Zhang Jingjiang, and Wu Zhihui, along with Cai Yuanpei, by 1924 as the "Four Elders" of the Nationalist Party (*guomingdang yuanlao*/國民黨元老). Li's family held high political positions, Zhang came from a wealthy salt and silk merchant family, and Wu grew up in a scholarly family in Jiangsu.[36] While studying in Paris in 1906, the Paris anarchists formed a cultural publishing house known as the New World Society (*xinshijie she*/新世界社) and established the anarchist journal *The New Century (Xinshiji*/新世) a year later in June 1907. The Paris anarchists drew heavily upon Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin, and Elisée Reclus. Li eventually became acquainted with Paul Reclus, the nephew of Élisée.[37]

The Paris Group's contrarian attitudes toward tradition stood in stark contrast with the Tokyo Group; the Paris anarchists fervently opposed any association with native intellectual traditions, such as that of Lao-tzu and Confucius. Li took Lao-tzu's "inaction" (*wuwei*/無為) as an escapist philosophy, dangerous for its potential to undermine revolutionary action. To Li, "[a]narchism advocates radical activism. It is the diametrical opposition of quietist nonaction," and "…naturally what [Lao-tzu and other ancients] had to say is not fully relevant to events that are occurring several thousand years later."[38] Echoing Li's sentiment, Chu Minyi asserted that "the Chinese seem to be the greatest lovers of things ancient, so much that their minds had been wholly bound by traditional customs and thus they have been enslaved by the ancients." Chu's criticism also illuminated the intellectual chasm between the Tokyo and Paris Groups, taking on Liu's theories as "a tendency to treat all Western things as things which China has long

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[36] Laurence Chang, *The Zhangs from Nanxun: A One Hundred and Fifty Year Chronicle of a Chinese Family* (Palo Alto: CF Press, 2010), 160.

[37] For more on classical anarchist thinking, see Peter H. Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism* (Oakland: PM Press, 2010).

[38] Zhen (pseudonym for Li Shizeng), "Da Chee shi" [Response to Mr. Chee], 2, quoted in John A. Rapp, *Daoism and Anarchism: Critiques of State Autonomy in Ancient and Modern China* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 108-109.

experienced or possessed... [But] there are countless things which even modern man cannot foresee. Thus how much can one expect of the ancients?"[39] In advancing anarchist thinking, the Paris Group questioned the weakening cultural, ethnic, and historical legacies that constituted China's political foundations in face of modernity and new global realities.

Instead of tracing back to intellectual traditions, the Paris Group championed science. Science was truth, and the only means to thwart burdensome tradition in favor of progress and modernization. To achieve progress, the Paris anarchists sought to promote the intellectual development of the masses through scientific education. Unlike classical education, scientific learning was a discipline independent of national and cultural influences, and hence universalist in nature. One would achieve true morality, Li argued, not by "particular" (*si*/私) learning of un-scientific moralities, but through "universal" (*gong*/公) learning including natural sciences, sociology, and anthropology.[40] A biologist himself, Li resonated with the experiences of his predecessors, including Kropotkin who was a zoologist and Reclus who was a geographer.[41] Scalapino and Yu argued that the Paris Group saw science as a universal and rational way to explain both nature and man; furthermore, applying science to politics is to seek a "universal scientific theory of man in society."[42] Science, especially the ideas of Charles Darwin, guided Paris intellectuals to analyze the fundamental values underlying the role of the individual in society and socio-political revolutions. Under this evolutionary mold, the Paris anarchists portrayed anarchism not as a distant fantasy, but a necessary stage of human evolution. Science

[39] Zhu Minyi 诸民谊, "Looking at the Past," *Xinshiji*, no. 24 (November 30, 1907): 2, quoted in Scalapino and Yu, *The Chinese Anarchist Movement,* 10.

[40] Zhen, "Tanxue," *Xinshiji*, no.7: 2, quoted in Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 111.

[41] John Clark and Camille Martin, *Anarchy, Geography, Modernity: Selected Writings of Elisée Reclus* (Oakland: PM Press, 2013), 13.

[42] Scalapino and Yu, *The Chinese Anarchist Movement,* 8.

not only served a utilitarian function to modernize and uplift a backwards society through technological developments, but it also acted as a tool to universalize and legitimize the anarchist cause — revolution.

Advancing the anarchism cause, moreover, required intellectual development of the individual. Challenging Social Darwinian assumptions, anarchist appeal, argued James Pusey, was rooted less in "survival of the fittest" and more in Kropotkin's theories of "mutual aid," along with ideas from Reclus and Bakunin.[43] Fundamentally anarcho-communist, *Xinshiji*'s philosophy opposed religion, tradition, family, government, militarism, and nationalism. In terms of lifestyle, the anarchists also prohibited smoking, drinking, gambling, and visiting prostitutes as part of a strict moral code. On the other hand, they advocated for science, freedom, humanism, communism, revolution, and universalism. Only after the destruction of institutional restrictions could human freedom truly flourish.

Therefore, while the Tokyo group called for a return to China's ancient agrarian traditions, what the Paris anarchists advocated for was a social revolution — a redefinition of the individual's relationship to society and community, without the corrupting influences of institutional powers. To Wu, advocates of political revolutions failed to account for social and economic inequalities and only "sought the happiness and welfare of one country or some of the people, not the happiness and welfare of the masses of the world."[44] Political revolutions merely substituted new inequalities with old ones, replacing the "evils of political despotism" with "the poison of economic monopoly."[45] Like Kropotkin, they defined anarchism as "no authority,"

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[43] James Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 370-433, referenced in Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 114.

[44] Wu Zhihui 吳稚暉, "Jiu shehui zhuyi yizheng gemingzhi yilun" [Clarifying the meaning of revolution through socialism], (Paris: Xin shiji congshu, 1906), 2-4, quoted in Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 88.

[45] Min, "Shenlun minzu minquan shehui" [Discussion of national and democratic society], *Xinshiji*, no. 6 (July 27, 1907): 4, quoted in Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 91.

resisting all state power and governments as the corruptor of freedom and equality. "Proper society" in the eyes of the Paris anarchists "is that which permits free exchange between and among individuals, mutual aid, the common happiness and enjoyment of all, and the freedom from force by the control of the few."[46] Embedded in this view is a fundamental rejection of division, so the concept of nationalism lay diametrically opposed to it. How then, did the Paris anarchists interact with the Tokyo Group, and how did Chinese anarchists contribute to a nationalist revolution?

Anarchism and Nationalism: Convergence in the Time of Turmoil

Despite ideological differences, both the Paris and Tokyo anarchist groups made marked contributions to the revolutionary discourse leading up to the 1911 Revolution, as the two groups supplied the necessary discourse to sustain and inspire revolution as means of instituting change. The Tokyo Group used anarchist tactics and theories to promote the "national essence" of the Han Chinese identity, while the Paris Group advocated for the universal eradication of all preexisting structures, using the logic of anarchism to relinquish the very thing Tokyo anarchists sought to preserve.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Liu wanted to redefine and reassert China's cultural heritage to achieve strength as a collective, defined by ethnicity. Liu saw anarchism as a vehicle to rid of structures that undermined what he believed threatened and corrupted the Han identity. Imperial rule over two millennia and foreign influences inhibited local autonomy and intellectual flourishing symbolical of the Zhou Dynasty which led to commercialization, despotism, moral degeneration, and most devastatingly, the demolition of the agrarian life at the expense of urbanization. Abolishing the government, therefore, was not the end goal; it

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[46] "Answers to a letter by Li Shizeng," *Xinshiji*, no. 8 (August 10, 1907): 2-3, quoted in Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible*, 520.

symbolized an essential step in his quest to return to his agrarian utopian vision of a Zhou Dynasty well-field system.

Hostile to the developments of the present reality, Liu turned to the past to contemplate future implications. His nostalgia and commitment to conservatism was a reactionary response to a shifting, modernizing world that challenged his view of China's place in the world with uncertain, and for many uncomfortable, realities. Liu's view presupposed the expulsion of all foreigners and foreign influence — any cultures deviant from the Han tradition, not just limited to Western powers and Manchu rulers. Historian Julia Schneider summarizes Liu's stance on foreigners as follows:

> The second introductory part of the *Zhongguo minzu zhi*, the "Great aims of this book," gives a further idea of Liu's intentions: "The idea of this work is taking the Han [Chinese] ethnicity as master and the other ethnicities as tenants." Liu emphasized a dichotomy between the Chinese self, or the "inside" (*nei*/內), defined as the "masters" or "subjects" (*zhu*/主), and the "barbarian" others, the "outside" (*wai*/外), defined as the "tenants" or "objects" (*ke*/客).[47]

Excluding "barbarians" from Chinese historiography was morally justifiable as he believed non-Han Chinese to be morally inferior beings who "polluted" the Chinese, and that China needed purification.[48] Liu's rhetoric of "purification" and "evolution of human society" reeked of Social Darwinist language, presupposing ethnic divisions and conflict. To Liu, nature perpetuated such differences:

> 至於謀一群之幸福，則群力之擴張益廣，不得不有害於他群。
> The search for one group's happiness [affects] the search for another group's happiness, thus the enlargement of one group's power [cannot] but harm other groups. This is the reason why wars between ethnicities [arise].[49]

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[47] Julia C. Schneider, *Nation and Ethnicity: Chinese Discourses on History, Historiography, and Nationalism (1900s–1920s)* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 223.
[48] Ibid, 226.
[49] Liu Shipei, "Xu," 1997 [1905], quoted in ibid, 232.

In the face of a modernizing world, it was paramount for Liu to preserve one thing: the

cultural heritage of his people, even if it meant self-imposed isolation. This reaction stood in

stark contrast to the Paris Group, as Liu likely saw his Parisian counterparts as traitors to their

national heritage who blindly worshipped Western thinkers as pioneers of modern political

thought, even though their Chinese predecessors had already touched upon elements of these

vogue theories. Therefore, Liu's reinterpretation of familiar texts demonstrated his desire to

restore past intellectual traditions and resituate them in the present context. Liu's intellectual

legacy was imperative in demonstrating that even teachings from the past, though rooted in

archaic structures, still possess the potential to stimulate new conversations through radical

reconstructions of the past.

The Paris Group, on the other hand, used anarchism as a way to criticize and interrogate

not only the foundations of socio-political institutions, but also the very existence of division.

Unlike Liu who actively excluded and ignored the role of foreigners in his attempts to re-

historicize the past, the Paris anarchists embraced universalism. Such a proactive response

strongly contrasted Liu's passivity, as the Paris anarchists accepted China as part of a larger

global context, rather than a world in itself. Basing anarchist theories off of scientific principles

underscored the universality and attainability of the anarchist vision, despite differing local

circumstances. This principle legitimized the potential for mankind to unite under the same

principles of social organization and political ideologies just like science, offering new

possibilities for the reassessment of China's global situation.

Therefore, for the Paris Group, achieving complete human liberation required the

complete destruction of preexisting institutional restraints and authority structures, including

nationalism. Unlike Liu, who considered evolution as a predestined process to purge the Chinese

population of "barbarous outsiders," the Paris anarchists believed that evolution from barbarian to mankind meant eliminating all external coercion and internal weaknesses. In escaping the shackles of institutional oppression, anarchism would help all populations — regardless of culture, nationality, and language — achieve true happiness and freedom. Due to its universalist elements, anarchism acted as a carrier for seemingly utopian ideals and possibilities alternative to the present. This aspect of anarchism allowed for complexity and flexibility in strategy and purpose, despite divisions in locality, culture, and ideology.

Conclusion: Anarchism as a World of Seemingly Impossible Possibilities

Paul G. Clifford argues that anarchism by definition could not be adapted to the needs of nation building as attempted by Chinese anarchists; therefore, realistic implementation of anarchist ideologies would be doomed for distortion, "proving the theoretical weakness of anarchism."[50] I find his view overly pessimistic, for he overlooked the infinite potential inherent in anarchism to inspire new possibilities. The universalist dimension of anarchism, moreover, made compatibility with nationalism possible. The very existence of a despotic Manchu imperial rule necessitated a revolution for the anarchists and nationalists, despite varying conceptions of the meaning and consequences of revolution. In supporting a common revolutionary cause, the EY aspirations of Tokyo and Paris anarchists intertwined with that of the nationalists: the Tokyo and Paris groups sought the abolition of government itself, while nationalists sought the abolition of the government ruled by the Manchus. Therefore, the advancement of anarchist goals could, at times, act in conjunction with nationalists. Appealing to nationalist ideals, Liu was able to further the anarchist cause by linking past intellectual legacies with modern anarchist principles. The nationalists, in turn, adopted anarchist strategies to realize collective development and freedom

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[50] Paul G. Clifford, "The Intellectual Development of Wu Zhihui: A Reflection of Society and Politics in Late Qing and Republican China," PhD diss., (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1978).

from imperial rule. Consequently, there was a diversity and complexity of thinking among

Chinese anarchists. Dirlik observes that,

> Conservatives who defended social and political order against the threat of revolution were also able to find in anarchism ideals on which to focus their yearning for a good society… The most radical current in Chinese socialist thought until the early twenties, anarchism was to end up in the service of Guomindang reaction in the late twenties… Nevertheless, anarchist ideology, in its peculiar formulation of questions of interest and conflict in society, lent itself to counterrevolution almost as easily as to revolution.[51]

Not all those who discovered an affinity with anarchist thinking, therefore, possessed a

coherent ideology. What anarchism offered was an abundance of possibilities to redefine one's

relationship to the state, to their locality, and to the rest of the world. As an alternative to the

present, anarchism brought faith to revolution and most importantly, faith in the masses' ability

to enact change. When confronted with the realities of a new world, people's roles in society,

defined by their relationship to state power, demanded reconstitution. The question was no

longer limited to what new government should be in place — it became whether or not the

government should *be,* at all. This change provoked the nationalist and ethnic identification

inherent in subjects, making way for the interrogation of institutional structures, reinvention of

discourse, and increased receptivity to new political and social possibilities, resulting in the rise

of anarchism. The distrust in politics in early twentieth century China gave rise to intellectual

and political turmoil that required ideological vehicles — such as anarchism — to exert their

assimilative power, therefore allowing for the coexistence of competing philosophies.

Ultimately, both nationalism and anarchism encapsulated a desire to preserve and make

sense of one's social identity and humanity amidst a tide of confusion and uncertainty. The

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[51] Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 84.

questions proposed by anarchists and nationalists alike were fundamentally existential, and the answers were intrinsically humanistic. Examining the rise of anarchism in the lead up to the 1911 Revolution illuminate the ways in which an individual may reconstruct his selfhood when all the assumptive pillars are threatened or violently removed. How should one redefine their relationship with society? Leading up to the 1911 Revolution, Chinese anarchists refuted the validity behind widely accepted social and political structures. This spirit of defiance challenged hegemony, assailed conformist zeitgeist, and inspired thought beyond the restraints established by dominant discourse. This anarchistic intellectual tradition of pondering allowed for the propagation of not only anarchism, but also aspirations for a better future.

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