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Creating Knowledge

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# Creating Knowledge

THE LAS JOURNAL OF UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP



CREATING KNOWLEDGE

The LAS Journal of Undergraduate Scholarship



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## FOREWORD

DEAR STUDENTS, COLLEAGUES, ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,

This may sound like an act of contrition, but it is not. When I meet administrators of other institutions of higher education, it is predictable that the first few minutes of interaction will be devoted to a vigorous display of institutional pride. In that context, my practice has been to let them deliver along traditional marketing lines including glossy brochures with abundant well-staged pictures of buildings, faculty, and diverse students. Once they are done, I kindly commend them and in return, I present to them our latest issue of *Creating Knowledge*. I know that their first reaction will be to tell me that they also publish the outstanding research work of their faculty, which I will acknowledge at the same time that I clarify that *Creating Knowledge*, is not the product of faculty research but student scholarship. They are clearly impressed, but will further point out that they also publish the work of their most talented graduate students, which I will again acknowledge and finally clarify that *Creating Knowledge* is a formal publication of “undergraduate scholarship”. Their surprise is priceless and triggers in me a sense of pride that I have truly come to enjoy very much. *Creating Knowledge* makes tangible our extraordinary commitment, not only to the dissemination of knowledge, but also its creation across all ranks in our academic community.

*Creating Knowledge: The LAS Journal of Undergraduate Scholarship*, was the product of a 2008 initiative aimed towards the goal of promoting research and creative endeavors among our undergraduate students. With this volume, we celebrate the 10th anniversary of this wonderful publication and the establishment of a rich culture of scholarship. In this issue, you will find a selection of 18 essays and 13 art works, representing advanced coursework produced in programs of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences during the 2016-2017 academic year. All the work hereby presented has been selected by department-based faculty committees as the best of the year’s student creative work and all have been revised for submission under the mentorship of faculty. Most of the work has already been the subject of recognition through department awards and supported by undergraduate research and creative grants. The first footnote to each essay provides information about the class in which it was written and the processes of selection and revision. This body of work celebrates the intellectual rigor, sophistication, and diversity for which our college is equitably recognized.

The evident academic rigor displayed by *Creating Knowledge* is largely dependent on the intellect and enthusiasm of our faculty and staff. I would like to express my profound gratitude to the more than 60 faculty who supported, reviewed, selected, and helped to edit this remarkable collection of student work. Thanks are also due to the three Department of Art, Media and Design faculty who served as jurors of the artwork and the three masters in writing and publication students who proofread the volume. In particular, I would like to thank Warren Schultz, Executive Associate Dean in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, who serves as editor of the volume, putting out the call for submissions, supporting the faculty work of reviewing, selecting, and editing the student essays, and coordinating the production of the print and digital editions.

I am sure that you will experience the same sense of pride in the work of our students that I feel. I encourage our students to see the work of their more advanced colleagues as a challenge soon to be transformed into the opportunity to build on the accomplishments of their predecessors. I hope that our alumni and friends of the college will take this opportunity to re-engage in the life of our college and renew their support of our students through the establishment of additional scholarships and the inclusion of our graduating students in their recruitment and hiring plans.

We are a group of life-long learners who find great joy in creating knowledge. It is my pleasure to invite you to enjoy this tenth issue of *Creating Knowledge: The LAS Journal of Undergraduate Scholarship*.

Sincerely,



GUILLERMO VÁSQUEZ DE VELASCO, PHD  
Dean



# UNPAID LABOR ACROSS TWO CULTURES

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## Introduction

The purpose of this research paper is to compare women's household labor in India and the United States. I investigate the history of unpaid labor, conditions in the home, and the role domestic servants play in both countries. My analysis is based on 11 interviews and 23 surveys with American women and 3 interviews with Indian women conducted by myself and my American, and Indian classmates.

This project was part of a Global Learning Exchange course I took in the winter 2017 quarter, which enabled me to speak directly with a student from Symbiosis International University in Pune, India. Throughout the quarter, I had multiple Skype conversations with that student, which gave me fundamental insight into Indian culture, specifically women's place in society. As evidenced by the collected data and despite any existing dissimilarities between the two societies, I argue that both American and Indian women partake in more unpaid work than men.

## Paid and Unpaid Domestic Labor

A rudimentary definition of a paid domestic worker is someone who engages in "work performed in or for a household" and "any persons engaged in domestic work within an employment relationship" ("Domestic Workers across the World", 2017: 13). Domestic workers can have various jobs such as "maids, cooks, waiters, valets, butlers, laundresses, gardeners, gatekeepers, stable-lads, chauffeurs, caretakers, governesses, babysitters, tutors, secretaries, etc." (International Labour Organization, 2017:

13). In the U.S., domestic servants became less popular after World War II (Cowan, 2008: 192).

In America today, it is not common to see domestic servants in lower- and middle-class homes. However, it is not unusual for families of different financial standing in India to have a domestic come once a day. Women's unpaid labor is the housework they do on a daily basis. It is not one single activity but a combination of cleaning, cooking, shopping, childcare, kin-work, emotional care-work, laundry and plenty of other tasks. Housework has the same features as paid jobs simply without a paycheck or other benefits such as sick days, vacation, or retirement plans. Women participating in unpaid labor are contributing "to our living standards and also to the development of human capabilities" ("Household Labor, Caring Labor", and Unpaid Labor, 2015: 33).

Although women doing unpaid housework do not have bosses, there are pressures on them to complete their job (Oakley, 2005: 64). Often times, women are not praised for their housework but are criticized if the work is not done. As such, their efforts typically go unnoticed. Yet their partners and children are said to "suffer" if the house is not cleaned and food is not prepared for them. A homemaker's working hours are often the longest in contemporary society; most women are putting in well over 40 hours of work per week. The women interviewed for this project ranged from doing 2-12 hours of housework per day, and most stated that their work was never entirely done.

## Methods

This research was Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved.<sup>1</sup> My classmates and I conducted 11 taped and transcribed interviews with women who had a combined income of at least \$40,000 per year and spoke English. We all used the same interview questions and added follow-up questions as we saw fit. I examined the interviews for key themes and shared experiences regarding housework. The intention of the interviews was to gain a deeper understanding of the gendered division of labor within the home as well as the tasks completed on a daily basis. The questions were open ended and regarded specific household tasks, childcare duties, and pertinent information about their lives. Interviewees in India were asked the same questions which allowed for a clear comparison between the two societies. The interviews with the Indian women were conducted with interviewees who were married and had children.

I also analyzed 23 surveys my classmates and I collected. Three of the women I personally surveyed—Maria, Emily, and Jackie (these are pseudonyms)—are Caucasian, married, and exceed the 40K salary criteria. Maria is married, has two children in college, and a dog to take care of. She has a full-time job as a high-ranking executive at an international corporation. Emily, also married, has a full-time job at a local school, which means she gets summers off and is always home at the same time as her child. Two of her kids are in college, and she has a son and a dog at home. Finally, Jackie is married and she is a stay-at-home mom. One of her children is in college, and she has a son and two dogs living at home with her. The surveys allowed for a direct comparison of these women's lives. Respondents recorded what activity they performed,

where it was performed, who it was done for, if they were multitasking while doing the activity, and finally if it was performed at home or not. Each woman filled out the survey over the course of 24 hours and wrote down the tasks they had completed every hour.

It was advantageous to send the surveys to women who I knew well because I could tell by examining the results if they were being honest or not. I have seen first-hand how hard all three women work inside and outside their homes, and I looked through their surveys to ensure they were accurately recording the substantial amount of work they do. Reading the surveys collected by my classmates, I could be unprejudiced about the women's answers while still gaining perspective on their lives.

Jackie, who stays at home and has one child at home, did far more work than the two women who worked full time. While all three women were undoubtedly doing the most work out of anyone in their households, Jackie was utterly overworked. The other two women would go to their paid jobs, come home, clean, and then relax. Jackie was always in her "office", and therefore it was tempting to constantly be doing work instead of sitting down and taking necessary breaks. The excessive amount of time spent doing housework has caused physical and emotional impairments for her. Because unpaid house labor is low in social status and not viewed as meaningful, women often start to view it that way. Almost all women in the surveys and the interviews downplayed the amount of work they do. This is because they assume, as does the rest of society, that cleaning, cooking, shopping, and child care has to be done by someone, typically a woman, and that these are not respected tasks.

## History of Women's Unpaid Household Labor in the United States and India

Women's unpaid labor in the United States has an extensive history that can be broken up into distinct eras: pre-industrialization, post-industrialization, post-war, and the most recent recession. Before industrialization was

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\* This paper was prepared for LSP 112 Focal Point Seminar: Women's Working Lives, taught in the winter quarter 2017 under the mentorship of Professor Nila Ginger Hofman. I want to express gratitude to Symbiosis International University in Pune, India and in particular to Manjulika Chellappan and Gayatri Nair.

1 IRB approval was granted for this project: NH092616ANT "Negotiating House Work: Middle Class Indian and American Women's Perspectives of Domestic Work."

arguably the height of equality for families inside of the home (Cowan, 2008). The bulk of paid work took place in or near the home, including farming. Women and men shared the burden of this labor. As a result of this time period, it is a “historical reality that women have always comprised a large segment of the agricultural labor force” (Dunaway, 2001: 3). If tasks were not completed, the family would be unable to make money and therefore would not survive. Incentive to stay alive made collaboration between partners indispensable. Tasks were organized hierarchically by age, with less of an emphasis on gender. Children took care of the responsibilities parents did not deem crucial to the family unit’s survival (Cowan, 2008: 26).

Industrialization brought about the notion of work outside the home. Men started going to work in factories and, for those who could afford to do so, they left their wives and children to manage the household. Women of color have always had to work both inside and outside the home because they did not have the same privileges as women who could afford to stay at home. They continued to do so during the industrialization period and beyond. As for financially secure, typically white women who stayed at home, an instantaneous shift occurred in their everyday jobs, which has continued to impact future generations. During this time, the separate spheres doctrine gained prevalence. Separate spheres is the ideological separation of men and women, allocating men to paid work and women to unpaid work. With these changes came general changes in normative gender ideologies. Women were, and continue to be, associated with the home, warmth, and morality. Men are associated with aggression and work (Cowan, 2008: 19).

The next major shift in housework came during 1920-40, a time of economic disparity and war. When men left for war in the 1940s, women had to take their place in the workforce. A new form of liberation occurred for these women, many of whom were working and running households successfully without their male partners for

the first time. Women of color had been working and raising children simultaneously for generations at this point. Once the men returned home, there was a battle for who would dominate the workforce again. Men pushed the working women back into the home and the suburbs.

However, many families in the post-war generation, in the latter part of the 1940s and 1950s, had to have two people working to support themselves financially. Although times were changing and more women were entering the workforce, their role inside the home remained the same. This is a perpetual struggle for women: while opportunities in paid labor increase, their responsibilities inside the home do not change. Despite the rapid advancements occurring for women in the second part of the twentieth century, periods of economic change tend to shake up the social status quo, which is why the recession in 2008 offered another shift in women’s unpaid labor. Similar to the post-war generation, more women had to enter the workforce in order to support their families. By this point, women also had the opportunity to receive a quality education, which contributed to the influx of women in the workforce. It was clear that while more women were taking on paid jobs, their unpaid labor in the home was not changing. The so-called “chore gap,” namely the contrast between the amount of housework done by women and men, is a solid indicator of gender equality in society (Sugden, 2014). Today, the chore gap in the United States shows that women spend about 248 minutes per day doing housework compared to men who do about 161 minutes (Sugden, 2014).

In India, the situation is unsurprisingly different from the United States. The caste system plays a central role in the divisions of labor in Indian society. Caste systems go beyond gender roles in that they help establish regulations such as who people marry, what types of work they do, and what education opportunities they will have (Dickey, 2000: 467). It is essential to note that caste and class systems have separate meanings. Class systems are socially mobile and can change throughout

one's lifetime unlike a caste system that is much more rigid. Change in caste can be obtained through marriage and procreation.

Similar to the U.S., Indian women's roles are characterized as caring for the home, nurturing, food preparation, serving, cleaning, kin-work (e.g. maintaining familial ties), laundry, and childcare. Modesty is a significant aspect of social life in the perception of Indian women, as they are not supposed to go outside of the home more than would be necessary (Dickey, 2000: 468). While that idea has been filtering out of Indian society, it can still be subtly seen today.

The distinction between living and working in the inside and outside spheres is of symbolic importance. The inside is associated with safety, purity, order, and women. On the other hand, the outside is seen as dangerous, contaminated, disordered, and masculine (Dickey, 2000: 470). Women are supposed to be protected from the outside world by their homes, which resembles women's association with the home in the U.S. These normative gender ideologies are highlighted by the fact that India has the largest chore gap of any country in the world (Sugden, 2014). Indian women spend an average of 351 minutes per day doing housework compared to men who do approximately 51 minutes. Other reasons for this massive gap include a drop in women's economic participation and educational opportunities (Sugden, 2014). Due to the chore gap, women are spending far less time in the workforce and increasingly more time in the home. Moreover, there has been a shift to machinery farming which has led to a reduction in available jobs (Sugden, 2014). Typical tasks done by Indian women in rural areas include making cow-dung patties, collecting firewood, sewing, tailoring, or collecting drinking water (Sugden, 2014).

### **Conditions Inside the Home**

A crucial question that exemplified conditions inside the

home was asking whether the interviewee felt empowered or oppressed by the housework she was doing. Barb shared the following:

That's a good question. I wouldn't describe it as empowered certainly. I mean I guess I like tidying, and I love the after affects. I love having a clean house, so that part feels good. But I guess I probably would be more on the oppressed end of the spectrum. Definitely not empowering.

Few women responded that they felt empowered by housework, but many of them shied away from using the term oppressed. Instead, they would answer with statements similar to Julia's: "It is a task that needs to be done, and if I don't do it, no one else will." The women interviewed in India answered the same questions and most of them answered along those lines as well. Lina explained that the work she is doing is just "a job that has to be done" and that as a woman it is something she must do. Another question that facilitated my understanding of how these women felt about housework was what tasks they did compared to the other members of their household. Barb described how the tasks were split up between her and her husband:

Dan does well pretty much everything outside of the house so yard, shovel, that kind of thing. Inside, he does a little bit of cleaning. He doesn't tidy everyday like I do. He doesn't do a very good job at it anyways, so he kind of gets out of it. But he will for sure every once and a while vacuum on his own or something like that.

If you look closely, you can see at the end of the quote she says "on his own." It seems as though she is implying that it is remarkable when her husband contributes to the housework on his own without being asked. However, she contributes to the household every day without being asked by anyone else. In another interview, Isabelle

continuously stated that her husband:

Can't do jackshit on his own... he needs someone to cook for him, do his laundry, and take care of the kids and all this like household stuff. But you know like that's not seen as a survival type thing cause like, it's just not deemed as worthy by society because it doesn't have any monetary value.

There were plenty of correlations as far as the tasks completed by American women compared to Indian women. Abala said that every day she gets the children ready for school, does laundry, runs her nanny service, takes care of her children when they come home, cleans the house, makes dinner, and then cleans the house again. Even though she reported feeling empowered by the work she does, it was fascinating to find that the only task her husband does is "drop kids for music class on Sunday, make smaller dishes like omelets, etc. if needed for dinner." Lina mentioned multiple times how her husband is in charge of making coffee. Although they have a domestic servant, she still does childcare, grocery shopping, and monitors the maid, which seems to be far more work than making coffee. Rajania reported spending 2-3 hours doing housework per day, which included "cooking, picking up kids, putting away laundry, loading the washing machine, cleaning the kitchen, and grocery shopping." When asked what her husband and children do as far as housework she stated that:

Our two daughters, who are in school, set the table, clear the table, and put their washed clothes away. My husband does a few of the above on weekends when he has more time.... My husband prepares coffee for us in the morning and occasional grocery shopping.

### **Roles of Domestic**

Out of the women interviewed in the U.S., Jackie was one of the few who had a domestic servant. Jackie is a stay-at-home mom, and her husband is the president of an international corporation. Her father was recently

diagnosed with terminal lung cancer, and she found herself with far less time to complete housework. She had the privilege and income to hire a weekly maid service, which relieved her from the double burden of care-work and her regular housework. Maria had a domestic servant come once a week while both of her children still lived at home. Her husband worked, and she was climbing the corporate ladder while raising two children. They could afford to hire a domestic servant and had the service come to clean every two weeks. In the interview process, the women who had domestic servants were asked if having this paid help was liberating for them. Kate answered this question by saying that "It is very liberating and it's worth the cost of having someone because I enjoy the time I am not cleaning." The relationship between the employer and employee tends to be one of mutual respect. Because of our country's roots in slavery, having a domestic has a stigma attached to it. Most people associate hiring a domestic servant with wealthy, white people living in the suburbs.

In India on the other hand, it is commonplace for financially secure families to have domestic servants on a daily basis. Having servants represents class achievement to others, which is imperative in a society based on a strict caste system and a burgeoning middle class (Dickey, 2000: 462). It is estimated that in 2004, there were 4.2 million domestic workers in India and that they were overwhelmingly women. The three most common tasks completed by domestics were cleaning, cooking, and gardening ("Domestic Workers across the World", 2017: 15). My correspondent in India interviewed multiple middle-upper class women regarding their housework. Out of the three women she interviewed, all of them had domestic help. Abala is married, runs a nanny service inside her home, and has two children. She has one maid who comes daily to clean the utensils and the house. When asked if having a domestic servant granted her any liberation, she responded:

Personally, I do perceive having a domestic worker as a liberation from routine drudgery kind of work needed to keep a house livable. Also, I am not a great fan of dusting and mopping so having a servant really helps.

Another woman interviewed in India was Lina, a married, stay-at-home mom. Her domestic servant comes daily to clean the house, do laundry, and clean the utensils. She grew up with domestics and was used to having someone in the household doing housework. Rajania also had a domestic servant who came daily. As a working mom, she did not have time to do basic household chores and therefore having a domestic liberated her from those duties. Despite the fact that all three women had domestic servants, two of them still said they were doing 2-5 hours of housework per day, which was more domestic labor than the men in their households. Although they all said domestic servants liberated them from routine daily household tasks, the interviews indicate Indian women still performed more household labor than their male partners. Even if their time was spent managing someone else performing the housework, that was still their time and effort that went into overseeing and directing the domestic.

Domestic servants provide an opportunity for Indian and American women to engage in paid labor outside the home, volunteer, or take care of older family members without the obligation of keeping the house together on their own. The transferal of labor from a middle-upper class woman to a lower class woman represents a crucial idea surrounding housework. Regardless of if the housework is being paid for or not, a woman should do it. Housework in India is seen as a task to be performed by individuals of a lower caste in the homes of upper caste families. In the U.S., for those who can afford domestics, it is typically a job taken by immigrants, people of color, or people with little education. Once again, reinforcing the perception that housework is not a worthy set of tasks to be completing.

## Discussion

When comparing the circumstances in India to the United States, there are differences and similarities. The primary difference was the significance of having domestic servants. It is recognizable that having domestics in either country alleviates the pressure of household tasks. However, in India it is easier to afford domestic servants and therefore more common that households have daily help. In the U.S., daily domestic help is only affordable for a small handful of wealthy families. Those families more often have part-time domestics, cleaners who come in every two or three weeks for 5-8 hours. The amount of work is unquestionably less for women who have domestic servants compared to women who do all of the work themselves every day.

A few key similarities include how people perceive women's role in unpaid labor and the fact that women do more unpaid work than their male counterparts. Interviews with women in both countries revealed that society viewed working women and stay-at-home moms similarly. For women who stay at home, Amy stated that "There are very, very elite, wealthy folks who expect women to be soccer moms and at home and things like that." Another woman, Jennifer, answered with "I don't think (society) gives homemakers the credit that's due to them." Along with the view that homemakers are privileged and underappreciated is the idea Julia shared which is that, "You're uneducated maybe. You're just looked down on...You always say 'well I'm just a homemaker', 'I just stayed home and took care of the kids.'" Women in both cultures of all castes experience societal pressures to adhere to certain gender roles and live up to impossible expectations. Taylor explained this as "a struggle. As women we are encouraged to be the best we can be and do everything while balancing work and family. That is not an easy thing to do." Women who work outside the homes are often accused of being inattentive mothers who cannot keep their home clean. Meanwhile, women who stay home are judged as being privileged or lazy.

The overriding similarity between unpaid labor in India and the United States is the fact that women do more work at home which is unpaid and under-appreciated. Women are carrying the burden of unpaid labor, childcare, kin work, and all other tasks that are perceived as a woman's duty. More importantly, this work is largely invisible to society because of the lack of monetary compensation. Women "contribute more labor power to household survival than males; but they receive an inequitable share of the total pool of resources." (Dunaway, 2001: 12). In the end, the emotional, mental, and physical effect of housework takes a toll on all women regardless of race, religion, class, caste, or culture. ■

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Jireh Drake | *The Watermelon Project* (Detail)



# PRIMITIVE MISUNDERSTANDINGS: CHANGES IN WESTERN METHODOLOGY AND PERCEPTION OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD

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## Introduction

Discovering the origin of language, or at least tracing back further to the roots of its ever-expanding tree, has been an academic pursuit throughout history. The approaches to studying language are tied to this pursuit, but rarely are these approaches examined. Discovering a way to examine language in an accurate and informative way is essential to the further study of languages. During the early modern period, the cross-cultural exchange of Western European and Chinese civilizations introduced both societies to a world—and a language—unlike their own. Jesuit scholars reported back to their homelands about China and its language, sparking interest and speculation. Initial perceptions of the language left many astonished and others convinced that Chinese was the “pure” language of Adam. As trade and communication continued, the way scholars approached the Chinese language shifted from collecting information to compiling it and then to constructing an understanding that fit within European concepts. In this essay I will argue that changes in the Western perception of Chinese language are largely centered around myths and misconceptions initially recorded in Jesuit accounts and that this near reversal of the perceived status of the Chinese language aligns with a shift in the manner in which academics established authority in their work.

Through a combination of the shifts similar to those expressed in David Porter’s *Writing China: Legitimacy and Representation*, and myths perpetuated by Jesuit accounts shown in both Bruce Rusk’s article *Old Scripts, New Actors* and John De Francis’s book *The Chinese Language: Fact and Fantasy*, I hope to demonstrate the importance of studying language through direct sources and the need to re-examine perceptions of past societies. I also hope to analyze the ways early misunderstandings and changing epistemological methods contributed to the early esteem and eventual dismissal of the Chinese language.

Rusk uses several of the “myths” De Francis explains in his book to convey the primary ways the Chinese language was misunderstood by initial Jesuit scholars (Rusk 101). Of the six in De Francis’s book, the ideographic, universal, and monosyllabic myths can most directly be connected to information from Jesuit reports. The ideographic myth stems from the Chinese language using characters rather than an alphabet. The myth centers on the belief that the characters represent concepts without a corresponding phonetic system and, by necessity, there are as many symbols as there are concepts (De Francis 133). Rusk explains that the belief in this myth is the result of both Chinese and European academic interests in character etymology during the first Jesuit contacts with Chinese scholars. The second myth is that Chinese characters are universal. Rusk explains that the Jesuit accounts of this apparent universal quality of Chinese characters stems from Jesuit observations that Japanese and Korean scholars could read classical Chinese works (Rusk 100-102). This belief in the universality of Chinese characters

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reinforced the notion that Chinese characters were ideographic. Evidence of this connection to Jesuit reports is seen in Matteo Ricci's account, "They [the Japanese] can understand written Chinese because each individual character in Chinese writing represents an individual thing" (446). As Rusk and De Francis demonstrate, these two myths, discovered by Jesuits, interacted with and gave credibility to each other. The third of De Francis's myths with origins that can be traced back to Jesuit accounts is that the Chinese language is monosyllabic. This myth is manifested in observations of the Chinese writing system. Chinese characters are set apart an equal amount of space as words in alphabetic writing systems (De Francis 178-179). This, combined with the fact that what constitutes as a "syllable" in English and most other European languages cannot be applied directly to spoken Chinese in the same manner, explains why the Europeans perceived each character as being representative of a different word. Given the limited amount of time and the demand for information from Jesuits, these mistakes are not completely unreasonable. They are simply misunderstandings, formed and supported by the limited knowledge of first encounters and attempts to understand an entirely foreign writing system.

Now that the "myths" that began clouding European understanding of the Chinese language have been identified and explained, their contributions to the perceptions of Europeans at this time can be further examined. The Jesuit accounts of Martino Martini and other European scholars almost immediately focused their studies on written Chinese. The historical accounts of written Chinese and the records of its historical development were respected more than the spoken language because they could be traced back in time. Written Chinese, like knowledge from Romans, Greeks, and the Bible, had an authoritative backing, whereas spoken Chinese demonstrated no real consistency with an authoritative source. Regional dialects as well as class and educational dialects were seen as inconsistent and heard as indecipherable. This academic tendency to defer to

authoritative accounts is seen in both the way the Jesuits gathered information about the Chinese language and in the way it was used to establish credibility in academic writing at the time. John Webb's *An Historical Essay...* is an example of the intensity of admiration Europe had toward the Chinese written language. It also demonstrates how academic writers furthered arguments via authoritative knowledge from the Bible and official Jesuit reports.

### **Webb's *An Historical Essay* (1669)**

Webb's title invokes a sense of authority both by presenting his essay as "historical" and through his use of the word "primitive." The aim of Webb's treatise was to convince King Charles II and the public that the Chinese written language was identical to the Adamic language used until the Tower of Babel collapsed. While the modern meaning of "primitive" associates the word with ancient humans and crude stone tools, this more condescending connotation was not its original meaning. It was first used in the late 14th century with the definition of, "an ancestor or progenitor; a predecessor" in the 15th and 16th centuries (OED online). As early as 1779, the definition of "primitive" shifted toward being an adjective used to characterize something that belonged to a "preliterate society or culture" (OED online). Continued exploration of the changes in the early modern period shows parallels between this striking change in definition and Western perceptions. The change in the definition of this word by the end of the 18th century is perhaps the simplest way to depict the change in European perceptions of China and its language.

Rachel Ramsey argues in "China and the Ideal Order in John Webb's *An Historical Essay*" that Webb was able to gain authority and support for his "probability" largely because he presented it within the context of a revised history of the Old Testament. She writes, "The revised biblical narrative not only made Webb's encomium to that country more acceptable to a bible-reading public and a protestant king, but offered a politically-safe way for him to criticize the restored English monarchy" (Ramsey 484).

His introduction begins by beckoning for approval from a higher source: “Neither is it my purpose with others to insist on vulgar traditions of licentious etymologies of words; weak and frail foundations to support such weight, but fix my basis upon Sacred Truth and credible history” (Webb A2). His need to demonstrate before the essay begins that this information is coming from an accepted source of authority is evidence that authoritative epistemology was important.

The essay itself consists of a biblical narrative that suggests Noah and his family landed in India after the flood. Soon after, according to Webb, Noah and his family migrated into China. Later, a few of Noah’s sons emigrated west where they began constructing the Tower of Babel. China, however, avoided the curse and maintained use of the “primitive” system in writing which Webb argued was still in use. He even goes so far as to assert that the first emperor of China may have been Noah (Webb 60-61). Webb also cites numerous Jesuit reports on China to supplement the biblical history he outlines in his essay. Even when he does not directly cite a Jesuit scholarly source, Webb repeats the same misunderstandings seen in their original accounts, “they take the time to preserve their characters and the fact that people can read them in different dialects is proof of its purity of expression” (Webb 199). This harkens back to the “universality myth” coined by De Francis, showing these accounts misinformed Western Europeans in a way that supported previous suspicions. Webb’s attempt to incorporate these misconceptions into the accepted history of the Bible reinforced these reports, established credibility, and consequently cemented them as facts.

Webb’s essay shows that Europeans were looking for a way to fit the novelties of China into the framework of their current worldview. Their admiration of China’s civilization needed an authoritative backing to be comprehended in a serious, academic way. Scholars were using what (limited) information they had to place China within their conceptual understanding of the world. In

doing so, information that fit with their worldview was accepted without qualification or further analysis.

Now that we have examined both the initial reports of Jesuit scholars and a subsequent proposition that utilized their accounts, we will examine two works that were created out of the misinformation provided by Jesuits. Both Johannes Nieuhof’s *An Embassy from the East-India Company* and Jean-Baptiste Du Halde’s *A General History* make attempts to “package” full understandings of China and in so doing lean toward oversimplification.

### **Nieuhof’s *An Embassy for the East-India Company* (1673)**

Nieuhof’s *An Embassy for the East-India Company* was published in 1693, 30 years after Webb’s *An Historical Essay*. Rather than using the power of religious authority, Nieuhof’s book claims to be exhaustive in its knowledge about China. His section on the Chinese language is given just under 10 pages in his 431-page book, demonstrating already that even the extensive accounts of Jesuits could be necessarily summarized, condensed, and simplified. Descriptions of the Chinese language are caricatured and used to reach conclusions that further the misconceptions of the observations Jesuits made a century earlier. Here we see what was once misunderstanding being stated as fact and, consequently becoming the myths later debunked in De Francis’s book.

In attempts to fulfill the promises of its exhaustive title, the chapter, “Of the Characters, Language, Writing, and Literature of the Chinese: And in what manner the Learned in China arrive to the several degrees of Knowledge,” relies on the use of absolute words in attempts to completely categorize and “master” all the information received about China. For example, two of the myths discussed earlier are repeated, now as definitive facts rather than observations: “All the words without exception, are monosyllables...for each letter with them is a word,” (Nieuhof 149). What is shown here is that by the end of the 17th century studying Chinese language had turned away from gathering new,

more detailed information and moved toward categorizing and assigning a place to parts of the new world.

The general section about Chinese language in *An Embassy* begins by claiming, “There is no language which has so many double-meaning words as the Chinese, being only distinguished by some sound or expression in use amongst themselves” (Nieuhof 151). This excerpt illustrates several perceptions of China and the dismissive attitude Europeans held toward the spoken language. First, it asserts that aspects of Chinese language, and by extension its culture, are confusing because they exude uncertainty. Nieuhof’s account admits that these words *can* be distinguished by native speakers, but designates that the “how” is not entirely certain and implies exact understanding is sequestered to Chinese speakers by concluding that the differentiation is only, “in use amongst themselves” (Nieuhof 151). By stating that his knowledge is limited to the Chinese, Nieuhof ignores the possibility that a deeper understanding could be obtained by Europeans.

The final part of Nieuhof’s account of the Chinese language synthesizes the existing information with observations of the educated class of the Chinese. This begins with a transition from the perceived abstrusity of the spoken language to the clarity of the written language. Nieuhof writes, “[the Chinese] are necessitated to put their Minds in Writing else one cannot understand the other... though he speaks very clear and plain,” (152). This specific assertion discredits spoken Chinese as an effective form of communication in academia and demonstrates the beginnings of a shift in the perceptions of Chinese. Rather than the initial fascination and wonder attributed to China by Jesuit reports of novelties and riches, these statements hint that of the Chinese civilization is one run by illogic and prolonged uncertainties. It introduces the notion that the Chinese scholars, revered by Webb in his essay and admired by the Jesuits, are operating in an old system. In attempts to classify, explain, and understand the Chinese language, Nieuhof perpetuates the misunderstanding,

solidifies them as facts using absolute words, and adds to the confusion with a slew of conclusions about Chinese based entirely on misinformation.

### **Du Halde’s *The General History* (1736)**

Approximately 60 years later, Jean-Baptiste Du Halde released a compilation of information about China that differed slightly from Nieuhof’s in terms of content, but greatly in terms of methodology. Du Halde’s *The General History of China Containing a Geographical, Historical, Chronological, Political and Physical description of the Empire of China, Chinese, Tartary, Corea and Thibet. Including an Exact and Particular Account of their Customs, Manners, Ceremonies, Religion, Arts and Sciences*. is similar to Nieuhof in that it attempts to be a complete guide to a part of the world still far removed from Europeans. Despite the new information that was incorporated, previous information—misconceptions and all—still appeared almost completely unaltered.

Though much of the actual information is identical to Nieuhof’s account, the tone in Du Halde’s account is more scientific and, at times, more humble. For example, rather than simply stating no Chinese people can understand each other when speaking, Du Halde’s chapters dedicated to Chinese language cite the shortcomings of European study and practice rather than a fault inherent in Chinese language. Du Halde writes, “[Europeans do not] take the pains to at first pronounce the Chinese words with their accents and aspirations” (396). This description accounts for the same difficulty portrayed in Nieuhof’s account, but limits it to non-native speakers unable to pronounce the tonal qualities of the Chinese language without undermining the language’s integrity. Although this more fair attribution of the difficulties that arise in Chinese, Du Halde continues to repeat the idea that written Chinese is superior to the spoken dialects, comparing the universality of understanding in its characters to that of numbers and math (Du Halde 392). It appears

that the need for an authoritative support in establishing credibility in academic writing was not completely eradicated by the mid-18th century, but that the sources were increasingly less religious in origin.

Du Halde's use of "old" information about China can be seen as an attempt to gain credibility by demonstrating familiarity with existing scholarship, but it is not the only method used. Du Halde's attempt to create a complete explanation of the Chinese language and all of its attributes introduces comparison as a way of knowing. While this method of comparison does allow him to convey more information, his comparisons continue to use European conceptualizations of language that limit the possibility of understanding Chinese. One example that is almost laughable to scholars of the Chinese language today is his attempt to show different verb tenses of the Chinese language through a conjugation chart (Du Halde 409). This chart, along with others styled after other Romance language-learning models for adjectives and pronouns, is one way to see the continuation of a shift in sources of academic legitimacy. Using models that were once "universal" to the languages within a European worldview is a transition from those that use authoritative modes to organize empirical and observational information. His method of representing this information is indicative of the shifting epistemological methods and ways of establishing credibility during the 18th century.

### **Hager's *Explanation of the Elementary Characters* (1801)**

By the beginning of the 19th century, this change in perception of and the approach to studying and representing the Chinese language had solidified. The curiosity that once drove Jesuit study and speculations of the "true" language were gone. What was left behind—fundamental misunderstandings about the Chinese language and an attitude of dismissal and superiority—shifted the ways Western Europeans demonstrated their authority when writing about the topic. The first sentences of Hager's *Explanation of the Elementary Characters of*

*the Chinese* claim, "Scarcely in any age have the written characters of ancient times or distant countries been so much objects of curiosity as in the present" (Hager i). This statement can easily be disproven by mere existence of Webb's book and the plethora of other texts. While it could easily be written off as hyperbole, asking "why?" raises several possible answers. The simplest is that Hager felt the need to demonstrate his topic was of interest and use because it was not already perceived that way. Lack of interest is only one of the Western European perceptions of the Chinese language that can be pulled from this quote. Hager also groups the Chinese characters and "hieroglyphics" into a category of language from "ancient times" and "distant countries." The vocabulary he uses to categorize Chinese language is indicative of how it was perceived. While the documents from the start of the 17th century show a perception of China as a modern, almost "ideal" model of a nation, Hager's first few sentences indicate that China is forever removed from modernity.

Hager uses comparison here as a method of explaining China, much like Du Halde does; however, Hager only makes comparisons between Chinese and languages of the past. There are several pages devoted to the similarities Hager sees between the Chinese and the Roman way of representing numbers. He specifically cites the Chinese characters for numbers 1-3 and 10 (一 二 三, 十) and the Roman numerals for the same figures, (I II III, X). (Hager xii-xiii). While a similarity can be seen, it appears quite obvious that the characters used are straight lines that correlate with the numerical value they represent. Using comparison as a means of demonstrating academic legitimacy continued into the 19th century; however, the changed perception of the Chinese language meant that it could no longer be compared to the "modern" European languages.

Though Hager's title page would seem to suggest that the contents of his book focus on the correct writing of Chinese characters, their meaning, and use, the introduction is longer than the actual "dictionary." The

comparisons to Roman and Egyptian writing and culture discussed earlier are just a few tangents to Hager's history of Chinese writing. He cites the use of trigrams as the first writing system and the replacement for a system of knotted chords (Hager vi-viii). While the use of knotted chords has been recorded in both Chinese and European histories of China, Hager uses these facts to make connections that are far-fetched. He relates the chords to astrology, the ancient money used in China, and the abacus. Based on this relationship, he indicates that the use of the abacus in Rome is proof that the civilizations had extensive communication (Hager ix-xi). His speculations about the history of Chinese become even more suspicious when one looks at sources he uses to support his argument. For example, Hager uses sources from Japan, not China, almost as much as writings from Western European scholars (Hager xvii). The spotty and selective nature of Hager's sources shows that academic writing during this time established its legitimacy by presenting an exhaustive account of a specific topic rather than a focus on a singular aspect of a subject.

Even without Hager's selective choice of material, this new desire to describe entire systems can be seen clearly in the agency Hager takes in representing the Chinese language. Though several faults in his theory have been pointed out, Hager nonetheless displays a confidence in asserting his accounts as "fact," indicating a European attitude of mastery over China. One of the ways he takes control over the portrayal of Chinese is the peculiar way in which he writes the Chinese characters and pronunciation guides. The English text in the book is written in the typical way for European languages—horizontally, from left to right. The Chinese characters are written horizontally as well, despite the fact that he (correctly) describes Chinese writing at the time as vertical (Hager l). This choice makes sense considering the problems that writing in both vertical and horizontal type presented, but what does not make sense is the way Hager *does* write Chinese characters within his text. While he writes them in a European way in their horizontal orientation, he employs

the Chinese manner of writing from right to left. More confusing still is that the pronunciation guides, which use an English alphabet and marks indicating tones, are in the European left to right order. This means that his audience, people who likely had limited knowledge of the Chinese language, would have to be able to read and know the pronunciation of the characters to understand that the order of Hager's pronunciations do not correspond with the order of the Chinese characters. If conveying accurate information was a concern to Hager at all, the pronunciation guides would have been explained in full and made clear to his readers. Even more condemning is that fact that Hager acknowledges he has not written the characters vertically to avoid "throwing our pages into confusion" (Hager lvii). He only briefly alludes to the fact that he has chosen to write the characters "like Arabic or Hebrew," and makes no explicit explanation of the way the pronunciation guides are written. Furthermore, this barely sufficient two sentence explanation of his representation of Chinese characters does not even appear until page 57 of the introduction, despite the fact that it is used liberally throughout his introduction. Small details like these indicate that Hager's focus was not on actually representing what he observed in the Chinese language, but rather what he wanted to represent.

What is problematic about Hager's account is that, like Du Halde, comparisons were made, or arguably forced, under European conceptualization of language. Using comparison as a means of conveying knowledge, while rooted more in specific and empirical information than the authoritative models seen at the beginning of the early modern period, is not a sufficient manner of studying of a language from a non-native perspective. As a contrast, a translation of *The Sacred Edict* by Reverend William Milne, continued interaction with original sources by analyzing a final primary source, rather than paraphrased repetition of second-hand information. It will be shown as a way to prevent the solidification of perceptions rooted in misunderstandings.

### **Milne's Translation of *The Sacred Edict* (1817)**

Reverend William Milne was a missionary in China during the late 18th century. The introduction to his translation gives not only the contemporary context of the text the reader is about to experience, but also a historical context in China (Milne vii-xv, translator's preface). Rather than thrusting the reader into contact with a completely different language and culture, the way Hager does with his "dictionary," Milne makes sure his readers understand the reasons why the text he translated exists in this culture before they encounter it. He also makes fairly progressive comments given his own historical context and occupation:

"Of the sentiments diffused through this book, reader will no doubt form different opinions and draw different inferences... *the partially informed Christian* will probably regret that such things should be made known in Europe But he should remember, that the gospel was not intended to annihilate the good principles which are found in existing Pagan nations, but to give them their full energy of the mind" (Milne xi, translator's preface).

His statements here advise his reader to rid themselves of bias and urges them to re-evaluate their own beliefs.

It bears mentioning that Milne translated not only the original 16 maxims and the expansions on them made by the Emperor Yongzheng, the son of KangXi, but also the paraphrased versions created by the officials. These paraphrased versions were made to relay the moral code of the original text to the subjects that were uneducated, thus they relied heavily on colloquial phrases and idioms. Milne even went to the lengths of translating the introduction of the Chinese official that wrote the paraphrased version (Milne xix-xxvi). Given the accuracy of his translations, it seems reasonable to say that Milne's knowledge of the Chinese language required him to abandon the misconceptions of previous scholarship. In addition to having accurate translations, Milne includes footnotes that further explain the meaning of Chinese

expressions his English-reading audience might struggle with. For example on page 220, Milne uses three footnotes within four sentences of translation one of which being an explanation of the idiom, "they are not to act as mere wine and flesh friends," as "a certain description of persons to be met with in this world, who are good friends with you at the bottle, and when there is a full table to invite them to" (Milne 220). Like his introduction, the footnotes are almost completely free of qualitative comments and aim to convey information that would not otherwise readily come to Western Europeans encountering a language and culture so different from their own.

The biggest difference between Hager and Milne is not the accuracy of their information—though it is a close call—but rather the way they try to absorb China and its language into their own worlds. Hager, looking for understanding, decides to create one that fits within European concepts whereas Milne, also looking for the same understanding, decides to expand European concepts by introducing Chinese ones into the knowledge of Europe. Both are responses to the continuing struggle of fitting the Chinese language into a framework Europeans could accurately comprehend. Milne also avoids repeating the myths mentioned at the beginning of the essay. Again, it may be impossible to prove a direct link between these two occurrences as this research is not exhaustive, but the correlation nonetheless suggests a compelling idea: expanding concepts via contact with direct sources and experience prevents misunderstanding.

### **Conclusion**

Though change in Western perceptions of the Chinese language nearly reversed within a 300 year time span, the impact of these perceptions persisted beyond the early modern period. The consequences of these views manifest in the Orientalist views of China in the 19th century and beyond. In order to prevent the perpetuation of misinformation and move past problematic perceptions of language, not only do we need to change the way we study language, but also the way we study the way language was

studied. This meta-analysis requires the reexamination of “facts” and perceptions, direct interaction with primary source material, and an inclusive expansion of conceptual understandings of language. ■

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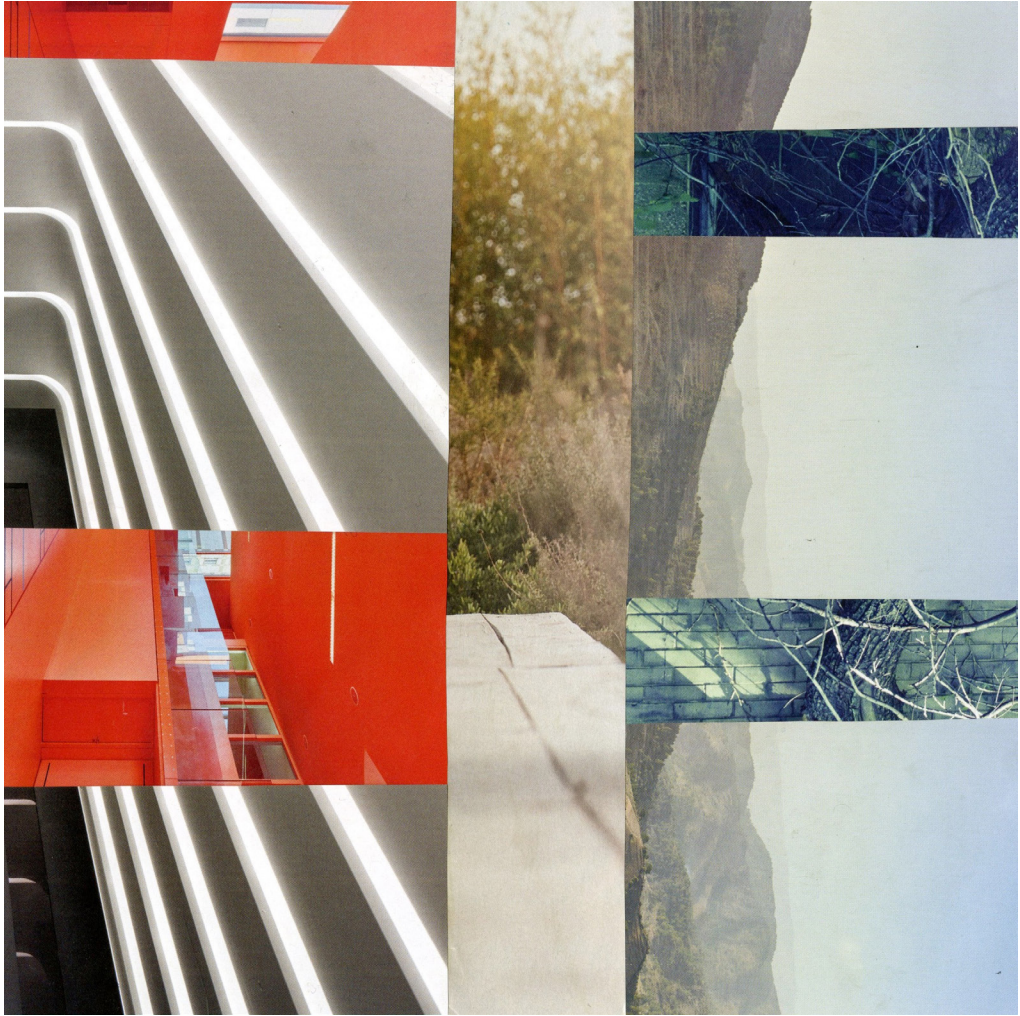
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2 Used for its translation of Martino Martini’s *Bellum tartaricum*, which is contained within this compilation.





Moya Fagan | *We Know What's Inside*



Isi Ennis | *Dripping*

# WOMEN CAN PAINT: THE FEMINIST POTENTIAL OF POSTIMPRESSIONISM IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *TO THE LIGHTHOUSE*

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It was in that moment's flight between the picture and her canvas that the demons set on her who often brought her to the verge of tears and made this passage from conception to work as dreadful as any down a dark passage for a child. Such she often felt herself—struggling against terrific odds to maintain her courage; to say: "But this is what I see; this is what I see," and so to clasp some miserable remnant of her vision to her breast, which a thousand forces did their best to pluck from her.

—Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*

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The enduring literary legacy of British modernist writer Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) is one of radical innovation and defiance of convention. Unencumbered by the limits of genre, Woolf's diverse body of work includes experimental novels, short stories, essays, reviews, and biographies published during her lifetime, as well as autobiographical reflections within her diaries, letters, and journals published posthumously. At the time of her writing in the early twentieth century, Woolf was one of a growing number of avant-garde writers and artists who rejected traditional forms in response to what critic Pericles Lewis calls a "crisis of representation" (1). For these artists, conventional modes of expression were no longer sufficient to represent the rapidly changing reality of the modern world. Woolf comments on this representational crisis in her 1919 essay "Modern Fiction":

At this moment the form of fiction most in vogue more often misses than secures the thing we seek. Whether we call it life or spirit, truth or reality, the essential thing, has moved off, or on, and refuses to be contained any longer in such ill-fitting vestments as we provide. Nevertheless, we go on perseveringly, conscientiously, constructing our two and thirty chapters after a design

which more and more ceases to resemble the vision in our minds. So much of the enormous labour of proving the solidity, the likeness to life, of the story is not merely labour thrown away but labour misplaced to the extent of obscuring and blotting out the light of the conception.<sup>1</sup> (CR 149)

Woolf and her contemporaries sought new, more immediate methods of capturing that "essential" truth. In order to authentically reproduce human perception in her fiction, Woolf casts off the "ill-fitting vestments" of plot and exposition, choosing instead to explore the interiority of her characters and to stretch time into elongated moments layered with memories of the past. This stream-of-consciousness technique frees Woolf to focus on the "light of the conception"—the impression of reality upon the mind—and allows her to illuminate the complex nature

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<sup>1</sup> Published in Woolf's *The Common Reader* (1925); cited throughout as CR.

of consciousness. Her formal experimentation and the resulting depth of authenticity she achieves is just one of Woolf's extraordinary contributions to modern literature.

In addition to her status as an innovator of form, Woolf is also considered by many critics to be a foremother of feminist criticism. Her 1929 book-length essay, *A Room of One's Own*, is narrated by a fictionalized female writer—a stand-in for Woolf and her female contemporaries. She analyzes the virtual absence of any “good” or authentic literature written by women within the canon and rejects the patriarchal notion that women lack the capacity for intellectual or creative endeavors, concluding instead that women have simply been denied access to the material conditions necessary for fostering creativity. Namely, an artist needs private space for uninterrupted work and enough financial freedom to reduce external demands. In Woolf's words, “five hundred a year stands for the power to contemplate...a lock on the door means the power to think for oneself” (*AROO* 110). Historically, most women, including Woolf, were considered to be intellectually inferior and were not permitted to attend university; rather, they were expected to remain in the domestic sphere without questioning their inequality. In light of these limiting social norms, pursuing the life of an artist as Woolf did can be seen as a feminist act in itself.

In her 1927 novel *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf combines her modernist and feminist sensibilities to examine the complex effects of gender roles upon the lives and minds of her characters. Woolf's third-person omniscient narration moves fluidly between the inner lives of the Ramsays,<sup>2</sup> their eight children, and their extended guests, all of whom are visiting the Ramsays' summer house in the Hebrides. The novel is divided into three sections. The first, entitled “The Window,” introduces Mr. Ramsay, a professor with a fragile ego; his chauvinistic

student Charles Tansley; William Bankes, a widower with traditional values; Mrs. Ramsay, the Victorian matron and hostess; and Lily Briscoe, a young artist with no interest in marriage and a passion for abstract painting. In the second section called “Time Passes,” Woolf compresses ten years into a short, impersonal interlude. The tragic fate of several characters is imparted briefly: Mrs. Ramsay and two of her children have died, and World War I has ensued. The final section occurs ten years later, when many of the characters have returned to the summer house, and they must grapple with the loss of Mrs. Ramsay. The novel ends with Lily finally completing the canvas that she had been struggling to finish throughout the novel.

Woolf's feminism is inextricably linked to her modernism within the character of Lily Briscoe. Lily's struggle to complete her painting simultaneously represents the modern woman's pursuit of an unconventional lifestyle despite external pressures to become a wife, mother, and caretaker, as well as the struggle to discover techniques not already steeped in the morals and standards dictated by the patriarchy. Lily's distinctly postimpressionist methods suggest that Woolf saw the potential for the removed, impersonal approaches to art within postimpressionism to help women artists remove themselves from the influence of oppressive patriarchal conventions. Just two years after writing *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf would go on to declare this independence as a necessary condition for women artists in *A Room of One's Own*. Thus, I argue that Woolf presents certain aspects of postimpressionist theory in *To the Lighthouse* as potential gateways through which the female artist can rise above any exterior influences that would be, as Woolf puts it, “tugging at her imagination and deflecting it from its path” (*AROO* 76). In the moments when Lily successfully transcends these influences, she gains a pure perception of reality. In Woolf's words, only at this moment of transcendence can artists like Lily access the vision “that Nature, in her most irrational mood, has traced in invisible ink upon the walls of the mind” (*AROO* 75). In the following, I examine the ways in which Woolf, through Lily, engages with postimpressionist values in

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2 Woolf's diary reveals that Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay were loosely based on her own parents and that the novel represents a sort of “elegy” to lay to rest these figures who had continued to exert their power over her even after death (*Diary*).

order to explore their potential to reveal and overcome systems of oppression facing female artists of the modern era. More specifically, I draw from the postimpressionist theories developed by Woolf's friend and fellow intellectual Roger Fry in his 1920 collection of essays, *Vision and Design*—a work which likely introduced Woolf to the postimpressionist movement.

Lily's rejection of photographic mimesis in favor of abstract forms allows her to represent her subjects (in this case, young James Ramsay and his mother, Mrs. Ramsay) in a way that expresses her affection for them without also idolizing traditional images of motherhood. In Fry's words, the modern artist is "free to choose any degree of representational accuracy which suits the expression of his feeling. [No] single fact, or set of facts, about nature can be held to be obligatory for artistic form" (195). Lily seems to be seeking an accurate way to express her intimate feelings (particularly for Mrs. Ramsay) after finding herself unable to voice them within the limits of social expectations. Standing outside by her easel, she turns her gaze upon the others around her and muses:

Looking along the level of Mr. Bankes's glance at [Mrs. Ramsay], she thought that no woman could ever worship another woman in the way he worshipped; they could only seek shelter under the shade which Mr. Bankes extended over them both. Looking along his beam she added to it her different ray, thinking that [Mrs. Ramsay] was unquestionably the loveliest of people. (TL 48)

Woolf presents women's relationships with other women as hidden in the shadow of male-female relationships. Overt displays of intimacy between women are not allowed; they may only admire each other as fellow objects of the male gaze. Lily wishes repeatedly that she could speak her mind to Mrs. Ramsay but struggles to find the language to do so: "What could one say to [Mrs. Ramsay]? 'I'm in love with you?' No, that was not true. 'I'm in love with this all,' waving her hand at the hedge, at the house,

at the children. It was absurd, it was impossible" (TL 19). Instead, Lily chooses to pay "tribute" (her word) to her subjects by virtue of the "relations of masses,<sup>3</sup> of lights and shadows" (TL 53). Thus, she can manipulate the boundaries of social expectations (associated with light and shadow in Lily's mind) in order to capture her vision.

Lily's use of abstract forms is immediately questioned by the well-meaning William Bankes, who, despite his affinity for Lily, cannot seem to escape his limited view of art within the system of patriarchal values to which he has become accustomed. Woolf positions Bankes as part of the Victorian generation by presenting him from Lily's perspective as "old enough to be her father...a widower, smelling of soap, very scrupulous and clean" (TL 18). The word "father" is suggestive of Bankes' symbolic function as a traditionally-minded patriarch, and thus his scrupulous, "judicious way" of viewing Lily's work represents the established practice of equating an artist's skill to his or her ability to recreate a photographic likeness. Lily recounts Bankes' confusion:

What did she wish to indicate by the triangular shape, 'just there'? he asked. It was Mrs. Ramsay reading to James, she said. She knew his objection—that no one could tell it for a human shape. But she had made no attempt at likeness, she said. For what reason had she introduced them then? he asked. Why indeed?—except that if there, in that corner, it was bright, here, in this, she felt the need of darkness. (TL 52)

Bankes assumes that the shapes in Lily's painting correspond directly to material objects, rather than recognizing Lily's aim to present a unified vision of emotional truth. His response to Lily's work is comparable to the English public's reaction to the first exhibition of postimpressionist art, curated by Fry in 1910. Featured artists included Van Gogh, Gauguin, Picasso, Cézanne, and others (Reed 49). Fry writes,

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3 In *Vision and Design*, Fry names mass as one of the "chief aspect[s] of order in a work of art" (20-21).

When the first Post-Impressionist Exhibition was held ... two years ago the English public became for the first time fully aware of the existence of a new movement in art, a movement which was the more disconcerting in that it was no mere variation upon accepted themes but implied a reconsideration of the very purpose and aim as well as the methods ... of art. It was not surprising, therefore, that a public which had come to admire above everything in a picture the skill with which the artist produced illusion should have resented an art in which such skill was completely subordinated to the direct expression of feeling. (237)

Like Bankes, the public had no context within which to judge abstract impressionist art. Many early viewers found the exhibition to be crude and tasteless. Woolf and Fry, though, were able to appreciate these innovative works for what they are: striking representations of perception permeated by emotion and spirit—brilliant visions of the essential fabric underlying experience.

In the novel, Woolf takes the implications of the public's reaction one step further than Fry, using Bankes's failed attempt to grasp postimpressionist concepts to bring his male-centric bias to light. For example, Bankes seems scandalized by Lily's abstract treatment of her subject; he thinks aloud with Lily, "Mother and child then—objects of universal veneration, and in this case the mother was famous for her beauty—might be reduced to, he pondered, a purple shadow without irreverence" (*TL* 52). There is an obvious conflation of values in his mind, making the success of a work contingent upon its adherence to gender roles. Bankes makes two critically biased assumptions here: 1) that motherhood and conventional beauty are universally desirable qualities intrinsic to womanhood, and 2) that photographic realism—a mode which usually reinforces established gender roles since it relies on established images—is the ultimate form of reverence. Lily's postimpressionist sensibilities, however, allow her to proceed knowing that "the picture was not of them...Or, not in his sense. There were other senses too in which one

might reverence them. By a shadow here and a light there, for instance" (*TL* 52). In Lily's mind, her painting would scarcely be a tribute if it took the form of a mirror-image; what she sees is overlaid with "the residue of her thirty-three years, the deposit of each day's living mixed with something more secret than she had ever spoken or shown in the course of all those days" (*TL* 52). Painting this way allows her to represent her subjective thoughts, ideas, and experiences as a woman—a perspective for which, in Lily's world, no other suitable language yet exists.

Continuing with the examination of patriarchal bias through Bankes's interaction with Lily, Woolf exposes specific elements of male bias through his perspective. By having him admit that "all his prejudices [are] on the other side" of the art world (as opposed to Lily's modern side), the reader is directed to view his opinions as just that: fundamentally prejudiced. With this in mind, Bankes's description of a painting in his collection is easily read for indications of bias; he tells Lily, "The largest picture in his drawing-room, which painters had praised, and valued at a higher price than he had given for it, was of the cherry trees in blossom on the banks of the Kennet. He had spent his honeymoon on the banks of the Kennet, he said. Lily must come and see that picture, he said" (*TL* 53). Immediately, Bankes places value on the painting's size, which is to suggest that an artist of larger stature (likely a man) has greater artistic potential. Its size also implies that its value is determined by the artist's ability to afford to work in a large space and to buy the quantity of materials necessary for a large piece. These are the exact material conditions (i.e. private space and substantial income) that Woolf deems necessary for creative success in *A Room of One's Own*. Furthermore, Bankes associates the painting with his honeymoon, which emphasizes that marital bliss is one of his most cherished values. This detail, combined with Bankes's status as a single widower and Mrs. Ramsay's conviction that "William and Lily should marry," recreates the expectation of a developing romance and eventual marriage between the two characters within the mind of the reader. Lily's views on marriage, however, are quite

opposed to tradition. In her thoughts, Lily reveals that she sees marriage as an impingement upon her independence: “For at any rate, she need not marry, thank Heaven: she need not undergo that degradation. She was saved from that dilution” (TL 102). For Lily, conventional marriage would mean the imminent sacrifice of her individuality; giving herself up to the role of wife would deprive her of the freedom and extended solitude she needs to achieve her artistic vision.

Perhaps the most productive postimpressionist concept for Woolf is the moment within the creative process that Fry describes as “cutting off the practical responses to sensations of ordinary life, thereby setting free a pure and as it were disembodied functioning of the spirit” (242). In other words, the artist must separate his/herself from external forces in order to free the senses to perceive visions of unadulterated reality. Woolf demonstrates the potential for this process to free the female artist’s mind by detailing Lily’s process as she prepares to paint: “She took up once more her old painting position with the dim eyes and the absent-minded manner, subduing all her impressions as a woman to something much more general; becoming once more under the power of that vision which she had seen clearly once and must now grope for among the hedges and houses and mothers and children—her picture” (TL 53). At this moment, Lily transcends gender altogether, disempowering any oppressive force that relies on gender roles. Her vision is hidden among established labels like “mothers” and “children,” so she must cast off such labels in order to see her picture clearly. Woolf often returns to this notion of a “more general” androgyny as necessary for unbiased creation. For example, Woolf writes in *A Room of One’s Own*, “it is fatal for anyone who writes to think of their sex. It is fatal to be a man or woman pure and simple; one must be woman-manly or man-womanly...The whole of the mind must lie wide open if we are to get the sense that the writer is communicating his experience with perfect fullness” (AROO 108). Indeed, Lily must not think of her gender if she is to overcome the potentially

fatal refrain of Mr. Ramsay’s student, Charles Tansley: “Women can’t paint, women can’t write” (TL 86).

Both Mr. Ramsay and Tansley reflect Woolf’s disdain for the patriarchal nature of academia—a sentiment she expresses in a similar passage from *A Room of One’s Own* in which the narrator describes the experience of reading the work of a female writer and recognizes her attempt to reach that removed, transcendent state “as if one had gone to the top of the world and seen it laid out, very majestically, beneath” (97). As she reads, she envisions various obstacles facing the author: “I saw...the bishops and the deans, the doctors and the professors, the patriarchs and the pedagogues all at her shouting warning and advice. You can’t do this and you shan’t do that! Fellows and scholars only allowed on the grass! Ladies not admitted without a letter of introduction!” (97). The same feelings of intellectual superiority are espoused by Mr. Ramsay and Tansley in *To the Lighthouse*. For example, when Mrs. Ramsay contradicts Mr. Ramsay’s assertion that bad weather will keep them from sailing to the lighthouse, he thinks, “the folly of women’s minds enraged him” (TL 31). In a clever move by Woolf, it is Mr. Ramsay who looks foolish when he assumes he can accurately predict something as changeable as the weather. He repeats demeaning generalizations like these throughout the novel as if any undermining of his authority is proof that all women are irrational. Similarly, Tansley spouts generalizations such as, “Women made civilization impossible with all their ‘charm,’ all their silliness” (TL 85). His original sneering phrase—*women can’t write, women can’t paint*—echoes in Lily’s mind at six different points in the novel, often distracting her as she is trying to form an aesthetic plan for her piece. It becomes crucial, then, for Lily to adopt postimpressionist techniques in order to subdue “all her impressions as a woman” so that this phrase no longer has any power over her.

Before completing her painting, Lily must also silence the traditional matriarchal voice of Mrs. Ramsay that insists, “an unmarried woman has missed the best of life” (TL

49). This task poses a unique challenge for Lily given her deep admiration and affection for Mrs. Ramsay—feelings which stand in stark contrast to Lily’s outright contempt for marriage. Through Lily’s inner conflict, Woolf explores the complex relationship between an older generation of women (mother figures) entrenched in tradition and their younger counterparts (daughter figures) who look to them to be taught, but who also find conventional wisdom to be too restrictive. On the one hand, Lily adores Mrs. Ramsay and wishes for a communion with her in which unity and intimacy can be reached. For example, one evening, as she lovingly presses herself against Mrs. Ramsay’s knees, Lily’s mind wanders:

[Lily] imagined how in the chambers of the mind and the heart of the woman who was, physically, touching her, were stood, like the treasures in the tombs of kings, tablets bearing sacred inscriptions, which, if one could spell them out, would teach one everything, but they would never be offered openly, never made public. What art was there, known to love or cunning, by which one pressed through into those secret chambers? What device for becoming, like waters poured into one jar, inextricably the same, one with the object one adored? Could the body achieve, or the mind, subtly mingling in the intricate passages of the brain? or the heart? Could loving, as people called it, make her and Mrs. Ramsay one? for it was not knowledge but unity she desired nothing that could be written in any language known to men, but intimacy itself, which is knowledge. (TL 51)

Lily yearns to speak openly among women and learn from women; she wishes to foster an intimate relationship with Mrs. Ramsay that surpasses boundaries to such an extent that the two of them can become one through their love. But, on the other hand, Lily recognizes that this type of relationship cannot be achieved when their only means of communicating were created by “men,” passed down by “kings.” Furthermore, Lily struggles to resist Mrs. Ramsay’s commanding matriarchal authority, needing to

gather “desperate courage” in order to “[urge] her own exemption from the universal law; plead for it; she liked to be alone; she liked to be herself” (TL 50). She feels governed by the “universal law” that is the expectation of marriage—an institution so engrained within tradition that it has become a general rule rather than a choice.

While Lily recognizes that marriage would rob her of individuality and solitude, she is nevertheless distracted from her pursuits by the pressure to adhere to the overwhelmingly accepted image of subservient wife and mother. Woolf describes a version of this wife/mother figure—the Victorian “Angel in the House”—as a distraction to her own writing in her essay “Professions for Women.” Struggling to write, Woolf discovers that she “should need do battle with a certain phantom”:

And the phantom was a woman, and when I came to know her better I called her after the heroine of a famous poem, The Angel in the House. It was she who used to come between me and my paper when I was writing reviews. It was she who bothered me and wasted my time and so tormented me that at last I killed her. You who come of a younger and happier generation may not have heard of her—you may not know what I mean by the Angel in the House. I will describe her as shortly as I can. She was intensely sympathetic. She was immensely charming. She was utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult arts of family life. She sacrificed herself daily. (*Collected Essays* 285)

Again, there is a sense that, for women, marriage is accompanied by a loss of autonomy and a loss of self. Like Woolf needed to kill the Angel, Lily is only able to complete her painting after Mrs. Ramsay has passed away. When Lily resumes painting for the last time, she finds herself thinking, “Mrs. Ramsay had faded and gone...We can override her wishes, improve away her limited, old-fashioned ideas. She recedes further and further from us. Mockingly she seemed to see her there at the end of the



corridor of years saying, of all incongruous things, 'Marry, marry!' And one would have to say to her, It has all gone against your wishes" (TL 174-5). Here, Lily is finally able to confront Mrs. Ramsay's insistence upon marriage. In laying these figures to rest, Woolf ushers Lily and herself into an era free of Victorian constraints.

Still, while this is an important step in Lily's process, she remains distracted from finishing her painting until this confrontation with the ghost of Mrs. Ramsay leads her to a particular epiphany. While thinking of Mrs. Ramsay, Lily is struck by a memory in which the mere presence of the matriarch facilitates a pleasant interaction on the beach between herself and the previously intolerable Charles Tansley. She thinks,

[Mrs. Ramsay] sitting there writing under the rock resolved everything into simplicity; made these angers, irritations fall off like old rags; she brought together this and that and then this, and so made out of that miserable silliness and spite something—this scene on the beach for example, this moment of friendship and liking—which survived, after all these years complete ... almost like a work of art. (TL 160)

This bringing together of seemingly unrelated elements and "making of the moment something permanent," as Lily puts it, strikes her as parallel to her project of capturing the essence of Mrs. Ramsay as only she can see her; by bringing together abstract forms to create her unique vision of Mrs. Ramsay, Lily is effectively combining herself with her subject, crystalizing them into one object: her painting. Lily realizes, "this was the nature of a revelation. In the midst of chaos there was shape; this eternal passing and flowing was struck into stability. Life stands still here, Mrs. Ramsay said. 'Mrs. Ramsay! Mrs. Ramsay!' she repeated. She owed it all to her" (TL 161). In the end, Lily does satisfy her desire to learn from Mrs. Ramsay, and she is able to do so without becoming a wife and mother as Mrs. Ramsay had insisted of her.

The novel concludes with the final stroke of Lily's paintbrush; thus, both Woolf and Lily complete their creative endeavors at the same moment. With a flash of clarity, Lily finally finishes her ten-year process: "With a sudden intensity, as if she saw it clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the center. It was done" (TL 209). With this central divide, Lily's picture ends up having the same three-part structure as the novel; the line in the center is equivalent to the short middle section ("Time Passes"), surrounded by two longer sections of the book, like the sections of the canvas on either side of Lily's line. This final gesture is an obvious homage to Fry and his theory of postimpressionism as a mode of achieving purity of vision in *Vision and Design*; Fry's "An Essay in Aesthetics" reads,

One chief aspect of order in a work of art is unity; unity of some kind is necessary for our restful contemplation of the work of art as a whole, since if it lacks unity we cannot contemplate it in its entirety, but we shall pass outside it to other things necessary to complete this unity. In a picture this unity is due to a balancing of the attractions to the eye about the central line of the picture. The result of this balance of attractions is that the eye rests willingly within the bounds of the picture. (20-21)

Thus, Lily with her balanced painting and Woolf with her balanced novel have succeeded in containing their matriarchal figures within the bounds of their work. Their unconventional methods have allowed them to capture these figures as they saw them—to pay tribute to them without also becoming them. In the last line of the novel, Lily finally puts down her brush: "It was done; it was finished. Yes, she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, I have had my vision" (TL 209).

Lily's use of postimpressionist methods is directly related to her ability to overcome the "thousand forces" that threaten to deter her from achieving her vision. The impersonal, non-mimetic techniques of postimpressionism—analogueous to Woolf's modern literary

techniques—provided modern artists with new ways to examine and transcend gender roles. Put simply, Lily’s success (and, by extension, Woolf’s success) in achieving her artistic vision proves the feminist potential of postimpressionism. In the years following the publication of *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf’s emergent feminism began to take shape. Though there were few female artists who enjoyed the same level of success as their male counterparts at the time, Woolf nevertheless maintained defiant confidence and optimism regarding women’s capacity for creative success if given equal resources: “give her a room of her own and five hundred a year, let her speak her mind and she will write a better book one of these days. She will be a poet...in another hundred years’ time” (AROO 98). ■

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# SYMBOLIC ACCRETION AND THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF BUDAPEST'S MEMENTO PARK

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**ABSTRACT** This essay examines the cultural landscape of Memento (or Statue) Park (Szoborpark) which is located on the outskirts of Budapest, Hungary. Established in 1993, Memento Park is an open air museum to which 42 Communist-era statues that once were found throughout Budapest have been relocated. Using geographical theories of cultural landscapes and symbolic accretion, I argue that Memento Park is a liminal space, which creates a cultural landscape that sits between two distinct positions neither condoning nor condemning Communism. The placement of Communist-era statues together in Memento Park, with little explanation or historical narrative, leaves the observer to interpret their past and future meanings.

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## I. Hungary, 1989

1989 was a turning point for Central and Eastern Europe as Communist regimes fell and countries transitioned into post-communist life. The collapse of Communism looked different in every country: while countries like Romania ended Communism through violent revolution, Hungary's Communist Party disbanded gradually (Light 2000). In Hungary, during the fall of 1989, the Communist Party lost power, Soviet troops withdrew, and political parties formed for the country's first democratic election to be held in March 1990. Thus ended 40 years of Communist Party's rule in Hungary, which had begun in 1949 after the Soviets removed the Nazi collaborationist Arrow Cross Party at the end of World War II.

As democracy came to Hungary in the early 1990s, the new government initiated a cultural shift. A prominent part of this shift was dealing with the physical remnants of the Communist regime: statues, memorials, and monuments. In the capital city of Budapest, there were around 1,000 art pieces of this style dedicated to Communist leaders, ideals, and important events. Similar pieces were found throughout Hungary in cities like Pécs, Szeged, and Veszprém. Opinions were split regarding these monuments: officials wanted signs of the old regime to be removed but did not want to destroy the statues outright. Decisions on removal were given to local governments rather than the national state, which resulted in many statues being removed from the public landscape and put into local museums or storage until a final determination was made (Foote *et al.*, 2000).

In Budapest, many statues praising Communist leaders or ideology underwent alteration or complete removal. In 1991, the Budapest General Assembly Districts decided to establish an open-air museum to house Communist-era statues. The chosen pieces were moved to Memento Park,

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also known as the Statue Park (*Szoborpark*), in the city's 22<sup>nd</sup> district, about six miles southwest of the center of Budapest. This museum opened to the public in 1993 and currently holds 42 statues and monuments.

The design and location of Memento Park is deliberate, signaling the separation of present day Budapest from Communist Hungary. While the park is located in the capital, travel from the city centre via public transportation takes at minimum thirty minutes. Foote *et al.* note “the distance was necessary and intentional, for it separated statues physically and symbolically from their original sites and political meanings” (2000: 308). The architect desired for the pieces to function purely as statues rather than political motivators, an intention that was exemplified by the relocation.

## II. History of Communism in Budapest and Memento Park

Political turnover dominates Hungary's history. The 1920 Trianon Treaty at the end of World War I divided the Hapsburg Austro-Hungarian Empire and established the borders of modern Hungary. A conservative government subsequently ruled the newly independent Hungary from 1920 until it was replaced by the Nazi-allied Arrow Cross Party from 1944-1945. Following WWII, the Hungarian Communist Party would hold power for the next forty years. With these transitions of power, physical statues and memorials of each government were removed, destroyed, or altered to fit the reigning party's ideology. After ousting the Arrow Cross government in a largely destroyed Budapest, Communist officials were able to change the array of monuments as they saw fit, desiring to remove all mention of Nazism or remaining memorials to the Hapsburg monarchy. This was largely done through the destruction of any pieces promoting these regimes and the construction of pro-Communist statues (Foote, *et al.*, 2000). To reinforce their regime, the Communist party took these measures to rewrite Budapest's cultural landscape.

One of these rewritten monuments is The Liberation Memorial situated on Gellért Hill on the Buda side of Danube River. Once the center of the Hapsburg Monarchy, the post-war communist government erected a monument celebrating the liberation of Hungarians by the Soviet army. Liberty, embodied by a female figure with her arms raised, overlooks the city of Budapest and the nearby Parliament Building. On a lower pedestal two Soviet guards were added, symbolically protecting Liberty from harm. At the base of the statue is the inscription “The past gives power to the future”. The memorial, raised above the city, can be seen throughout central Budapest and became a key icon of the city's landscape. Following the fall of Communism, the two Soviet soldiers were relocated to Memento Park (one of which is featured on the park's marketing material) and the inscription was also changed (**Figure 1**). Today, the memorial reads “In the memory of all those who lost their lives for the independence, freedom, and happiness of Hungary” (Palonen 2008).

FIGURE 1



FIGURE 2



A key moment during the rule of Communism in Hungary, now featured prominently in the city and in Memento Park, was the 1956 Revolution. On October 23, 1956, a popular uprising by Hungarian citizens broke out against the government in Budapest. The destruction included the toppling of an eight-foot tall statue of Joseph Stalin, leaving only his shoes standing. The protest lasted three weeks until the intervention of the Soviet military restored Communist Party rule. Until 1989, the Hungarian government praised those who fought for the Communist Party, condemning the revolutionary leaders and protestors (Palonen 2008). Since the fall of Communism, however, statues and memorials to the revolution can be found throughout Budapest. One notable memorial can be found outside the Budapest Parliament Building, where the bravery of both protestors and political leaders, such as Imre Nagy (Figure 2), is praised (Foote, *et al.* 2000).

As the cultural landscape of Hungary changed in the aftermath of Communism, creating Memento Park appeased the democratic government's desire to remove these statues from public view without destroying them. Their role in Hungarian history was not dismissed, but this intentional distance allowed them to be easily forgotten. The task to design Memento Park was designated to architect Ákos Eleőd. Desiring to keep the park neutral, removing the political origins of the statues and intending them to function purely as statues, Eleőd wrote that the park is "not about Communism, but about the fall of Communism!"

FIGURE 3



FIGURE 4



Memento Park is separated into two areas: "Witness Square," dedicated to the 1956 Revolution, and "A Sentence about Tyranny," where Communist era statues and memorials were relocated from different areas of the country (Memento Park 2016a). The park's design serves as a physical representation of Communist Hungary. Upon entering Memento Park, visitors pass statues of Vladimir Lenin and Karl Marx placed within redbrick walls (Figure 3). Once inside, the main path follows a figure-eight-shaped route where each circle contains a selection of statues to view before returning to the center trail. The park's statues line its periphery, ranging in size and material, and they are arranged in three sections based on the statue's subject—general Soviet leaders, Hungarian Communist leaders including Bela Kun (Figure 4), and the working class (James 1999). In the center of the park is a Soviet Star formed by a bed of flowers. A brick wall frames the farthest end of the park, so visitors must circle around to exit the museum. Duncan Light refers to this

as “representing the ‘dead end’ which state socialism represented in Hungary” (2000: 168). Across the street from the Statue Park is “Witness Square,” dedicated to the 1956 Uprising. Here an open square leads to large pedestal holding a set of boots, referencing the boots of Stalin that remained after civilians toppled his statue during the protest (Figure 5). The square also features a small museum, which shares some information on Communism in Hungary and screens a documentary on the life of a Communist agent (Memento Park 2016a).

The remnants of Communism are present throughout Hungary, particularly through physical reminders like the statues relocated to Memento Park and the altered memorials of Budapest. While Memento Park meant to create a “symbolic distance” (Foote, *et al.* 2000: 320) between the past regime and the new, democratic government, bringing these pieces to a singular location reinforces that place as cultural and politically significant. Memento Park reconsiders the gathering of politically charged pieces whose meaning can be explored through the concept of symbolic accretion.

### III. Literature Review: Cultural Landscapes of Commemoration and the Concept of Symbolic Accretion

Cultural geographers have explored the relationship between popular memory, place, and commemoration to argue that monuments contribute to cultural landscapes that are political, present a preferred meaning of history, and a partial understanding of a city or nation. For example, Derek Alderman (2000; Alderman and Dwyer, 2004; Dwyer and Alderman, 2008), examines the political contestations over the location of civil rights memorials in the American South; Hague and Sebesta (2011) look at a Confederate memorial seemingly in the ‘wrong’ place, namely in Blaine, WA, on the border with Canada; and, Post (2009) seeks to understand the complex memorial landscape surrounding John Brown in Kansas. Internationally, similar work has been done by Karen Till (1999) around monuments and memorials in Berlin and

FIGURE 5



Hamzah Muzaini (2014) in Malaysia. In his 1997 book *Shadowed Ground: America’s Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy*, Kenneth Foote develops the concept of “symbolic accretion” to explore how sites are memorialized and, as they attract more monuments, are reinforced as meaningful places. Foote (1997: 232) describes this process of “symbolic accretion” at the San Jacinto battleground in Texas. In 1936-39 a monument was built to commemorate this 1836 battle during the Texas Revolution, and in 1948 the U.S. Navy’s battleship *Texas* was docked nearby after serving in both World Wars. The San Jacinto site subsequently gained more memorials, including ones commemorating Prisoners of War and Missing in Action soldiers in Vietnam. Though the San Jacinto site itself does not hold a historical connection to Vietnam, the addition of these memorials reinforces the importance of the battleground as a site of symbolic commemoration.

Building on Foote (1997), Owen Dwyer (2004) discusses the creation of collective memory and argues that memorial design is essential to shaping what is and is not remembered, and the way memorials enhance or dismiss parts of history enables memorials to challenge or even change meanings of the past. This is an important and highly disputed aspect of commemorating political eras such as Communism. Describing symbolic accretion as the “appending of commemorative elements on to already

existing memorials,” Dwyer (2004: 420) divides Foote’s (1997) concept into two different categories: “antithetical accretion” and “allied accretion.” These categories draw on a memorial’s ability to contribute to a larger message, either reinforcing the original’s intent or bringing in a new way of considering the piece. Adding a monument that reiterates its original message, “enhancing and confirming the dominant discourses with a memorial,” is allied accretion (Dwyer, 2004: 421) and is common in many memorial sites. Muzaini (2014) for example, describes the British Cenotaph in Ipoh, Malaysia. Erected by the British colonial state in memory of 91 local residents of Ipoh who died during World Wars I and II, following Malaysian independence in 1957 the original plaque with the names of the dead was removed in the 1960s and placed into storage. In a 2008 rededication ceremony for the Cenotaph, the original plaque was restored along with a second plaque that extended the memorial to remember Malaysians who died during important local events. These additions have made the monument more relevant to the current Malaysian population yet allow the Cenotaph to serve its original purpose.

When an addition runs counter to the memorial’s original intent, Dwyer (2004: 421) classifies these as “antithetical accretion” that presents a “counter-narrative.” These additions to the memorial give new information, promoting a different understanding of that location or event that the initial monument did not provide. This type of “antithetical accretion” is increasingly common in the American South around places associated with the practices of slavery. One such site is the Lexington Courthouse Square in Kentucky, which was a common place for selling, trading, and whipping slaves during the mid-1800s. As Schein (2009) explains, this part of the square’s history was not formally remembered until 2003 when a plaque was added to the Square describing and commemorating Lexington’s large slave population, the practice of slavery, and how these practices culminated in Courthouse Square. This addition not only presents a more accurate history of Lexington but also prevents

this information from being erased from the memorial landscape.

Dwyer’s (2004) subcategories of symbolic accretion function in different ways: one reinforces while the other contests. They show the power of statues and memorials on the cultural landscape and the use of collective memory of an event. In Budapest, the statues which are now located in Memento Park were initially created to invoke national pride in the ruling Communist regime. The individuals remembered were to be powerful, idealized leaders, evident in both the composition and aesthetic of the statues (Burk 2006). Though architect Ákos Eleőd desired to erase these intentions, his attempt to remain neutral in commemoration does not allow the park to serve as clearly “allied” or “antithetical” accretion. Instead, Eleőd’s practice of “symbolic accretion” (Foote 1997) produces the park as a meaningful place with an ambiguous message.

#### **IV. Symbolic Accretion and the Power of Statues**

Memento Park was created to answer the question of what to do with statues reminiscent of and admiring the Communist regime. By removing these statues from their original locations, their meanings change. Putting these once prominent monuments into a museum on the edge of the city places Communism firmly into the past, distancing this part of Hungarian history from modern day Budapest. Were these statues to remain on public property in the city center, today’s Hungarian government could be read as giving Communism “an implicit seal of approval” (Hague and Sebesta 2011: 296). By stripping these pieces of their original context, argues Light (2000: 168-9), Memento Park serves to preserve the monuments antithetical to a now democratic Hungary and show that Communism has been defeated. Yet, the layout of the park and the composition of the statues do not explicitly clarify how the Hungarian government feels about its Communist past and the issues surrounding this memory.

Constructing commemorative environments presents a particular challenge to the architect, especially when working with politically charged statues. In this case, Ákos Eleőd had the power to mold public opinion and influence public memory of these pieces. In his desire to stay neutral, however, no clear narrative was created for Memento Park and visitors must determine their own meaning of the statues. Because of this, Memento Park represents neither “allied” nor “antithetical” accretion, neither clearly promoting, nor clearly discrediting, Hungarian Communism.

This lack of narrative is largely due to the limited information provided about the park’s monuments, with the plaques accompanying the statues providing only the title, the material, and the year of creation. Most importantly, the history of each monument is missing: no information is presented about the subject’s influence or importance under Communism, nor is the original location given. Therefore, visitors themselves must interpret the statues and create their own understandings of their meaning. This relies on visitors having previous knowledge about Hungarian Communism, its influential figures, and important events associated with the time period. If visitors are unfamiliar with these aspects, the statue is not likely to make an impact unless the figure itself is particularly striking or unique.

By removing historical information, Memento Park not only neutralizes these pieces, but also downplays the harms of Communism on Hungarian citizens during its 40 year rule. These monuments were originally created to honor the leaders of Communism and acknowledge those individuals’ accomplishments for the ruling party. What is not captured are the damaging acts by these individuals, silencing those they oppressed and people who suffered under their command. By not providing this information for park visitors, these parts of Hungarian history remain unseen and unarticulated. The statues continue a cycle of systematic forgetting, particularly for tourists, who make up the majority of the park’s visitors (Burk 2006).

Though Ákos Eleőd desired for the pieces to be viewed objectively, monuments created for political reasons can never be fully separated from their original intent. In its current form, it is impossible for Eleőd, “to avoid creating an anti-propaganda park from these propagandist statues” (Light 2000: 167). Memento Park, Light (2000: 167) continues, “represents a serious attempt to present and interpret Hungary’s recent past, describing itself as an open-air museum: Western commentators have inevitably labeled it a theme park.” This “theme park” element can be attributed to two aspects: first, the size of the statues. Many of the statues are close-to-life scale of their subjects. Others, however, tower high above visitors and monuments span several feet. The Republic of Councils Monument (**Figure 6**) is one of the largest statues in the park and is prominent in marketing materials. This piece features a soldier running and waving a Communist flag, as to signal the viewer to take up arms for the Communist cause. Its size not only makes it intimidating to stand beside but also makes it difficult to observe. Open space around the monument allows viewers to circle it to gain a better look, but one must step back several feet to see the full figure. The height of statues like the Republic of Councils Monument are further accentuated by to the park’s design: all of the statues stand on the periphery of the park, surrounding visitors on almost all sides and

**FIGURE 6**





accentuating the empty interior. This, along with the lack of noise in the park, creates an ominous atmosphere, silencing visitors and exemplifying the powerful presence these statues had in their original locations.

The second element that promotes this theme park element is the encouraged physical interaction between visitors and the statues, which discredits the seriousness around the statues and about the time period. Visitors are not only encouraged to get close to the pieces, but they are allowed to climb onto, around, and through them. The park advertises these photo opportunities for visitors, with unique experiences such as standing on Stalin's pedestal to "feel what it was like to be a communist party leader" (Memento Park 2016b). The featured photos on the park's website show people next to the statues mimicking their poses. One of the most common of such images is the Martyrs Monument (**Figure 7**). Little information is available about this piece, but it is clear the monument's subject is in physical pain. By promoting this type of interaction with the statue, the original, political message of this piece and the story of its subject are silenced. This has a way of rewriting the piece's narrative, exemplifying the complex role monuments play in omitting parts of the past (Dwyer 2004: 423).

By excluding all biographical information about the statues, no constructive information is added to the narrative of Hungary under Communism. This can even promote unwanted attitudes towards this era. When visitors must interpret a statue's meaning, the piece's original meaning is not erased: rather, the visitor creates its meaning. This will vary based on the person's knowledge of Hungarian history. For example, the park's Liberation Monument (**Figure 8**) shows a Hungarian worker breaking through a wall of oppression. He, and all of Hungary, is now free thanks to Communism. With this title, an ambiguous wall of oppression, and no available context, the monument can be understood in very different ways. It could be seen as the creators intended, a Hungarian breaking free with the aid of Communism.

The worker, however, could be seen as breaking free from the oppression of Communism—a meaning that would fit with the park's greater message. By not providing context, meaning is left up to the audience.

The alternative meanings of a piece can be understood as the monument's social meaning, which exist outside the narrative promoted by the state. Since many social memories about Communist Hungary, such as the stories of certain Hungarian cities and individuals, are not manifested in monument form, the figures chosen for remembrance by the state present a certain narrative about that time period (Burk 2006). Outside of this is the public memory, brought into the park by individuals who have a variety of formal and regional interpretations of the park's statuary. These social narratives are not fixed, but rather change based on the individuals' understanding of the past. The establishment of a fixed place for remembering Communism such as Memento Park attempts to control the public's dialogue and understanding of the past and counteract this social meaning (Till 1999: 254-5). The desired message in Memento Park, however, is not fully constructed, which allows for social meaning to manifest and contradict a message of seriousness surrounding the park.

Without a solid narrative, Memento Park is what Hague (1996: 133) identifies as a "liminal space," a place in a transitional stage between two distinct positions, namely between acclaiming and condemning Communism, between allied and antithetical accretion. While its distance from central Budapest places Communism firmly on the periphery and into the past, the message regarding this past changes depending on the viewer and their understanding of Hungarian Communism. The park can be seen as homage to Communist Hungary, praising and nostalgic for its time of power, or as the resting grounds for the statues that once populated Budapest, separating the city from its painful past. The statues, left alone without additional context, neither celebrate nor condemn the Communist regime. The park's narrative of symbolic

FIGURE 7



FIGURE 8



accretion is neither clearly “antithetical” nor “allied.” By leaving out descriptive details and history in an attempt to be neutral, a political narrative is still presented, but its message is determined by the viewer rather than the park’s designers.

## V. Conclusion

After the fall of Communism in 1989, the new democratic government of Hungary worked to distance itself from this 40 year oppressive regime. The cultural landscape of Budapest and much of Hungary underwent a symbolic shift, where statues were altered, relocated, and completely removed to signal political change. This led to the creation of Memento Park in the southern 22<sup>nd</sup> district of Budapest, where these rejected historical icons were to be housed on the edge of the city. The relocation of these statues from the center of Budapest to an open-air museum on its outskirts allows the city to disassociate itself from this part of its history.

The park desires to present a neutral attitude toward these pieces, not to glorify them but see them as purely statues. It attempts to do this by eliminating key biographical information, such as the subjects of the statues, their original locations, and the background or influence of the figure(s) represented. This composition creates a mixed message regarding Communist Hungary, making Memento Park a liminal space, neither condemning nor celebrating the Communist era. The park sits between two distinct understandings of Communism, tipping one way or the other depending on the viewer. Therefore, while the collection of statues informs visitors that the Memento Park is a meaningful place, the symbolic accretion of the collection is neither antithetical nor allied. This lack of narrative suggests that Memento Park leaves the understanding of Hungarian Communism up to the viewer.

If Memento Park hopes to become a place of clear antithetical accretion, condemning the Communist regime and discrediting the legacy of these figures, additional biographical information must be added to the statues in Memento Park. This information should recognize and identify the harms of the Communist regime as well as the controversial history of the figures represented there. Doing this would not only make the park’s intention clear, namely “that the park isn’t about Communism but the fall of it” (Memento Park 2016a), but would also assist visitors as they attempt to understand Hungary’s Communist past. Creating this narrative would constructively add to the collective memory of Communist Hungary, presenting the statues in a way that thoughtfully and critically considers their history. This park shows that the narratives presented by monuments do not occur on their own: decisions are made regarding what and what not to include in memorial landscapes. Commemoration cannot remain neutral. ■

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# DIE NERVÖSEN KÖRPER VON KAFKA UND ALLEN

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**ABSTRACT** This paper discusses the nervousness and anxiety of Franz Kafka and Woody Allen via analyses/ close readings of Allen's film *Shadows and Fog* (1991) and several of Kafka's texts. Allen and Kafka both manifest their nervousness in representations of the body, portraying it as diminutive, meek, and in Kafka's case, sickly. This may be, as the paper argues, an internalization of their anxiety vis-à-vis their Jewish identity.

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Das Leben Franz Kafkas war schwierig und seine Beziehung zu seinem Körper und Judentum war genauso kompliziert. Die Kämpfe von Kafka über sich und seine Beziehungen erscheinen in seinen Diskussionen über seine jüdische Identität sehr häufig. Wie es oft gesagt wird, war Kafka ambivalent seinem Judentum gegenüber, wie Judith Butler in "Who Owns Kafka?", einem Aufsatz für *London Review of Books*, schrieb.<sup>1</sup> Vielleicht war Kafka ambivalent, aber viel von seiner Arbeit über seinen Körper und seine Religion reflektiert einen internalisierten Kampf mit seiner Identität. Diese Angst, die Kafka über seine jüdische Identität fühlte, wurde in seinem Körper verinnerlicht und in seinem Werk ausgedrückt. Dies ist auch klar in den Werken von Woody Allen, insbesondere in seinem Film „Shadows and Fog“ (1991). Allen, wie Kafka, verinnerlichte seine Angst und nutzte seinen Körper, um diese Angst auszudrücken. Kafka und Allen fühlen sich beide nervös in ihren Körpern, was als Ausdruck ihrer Angst vor dem Judentum verstanden werden kann.

Kafka kämpfte häufig mit seiner jüdischen Identität, etwas, was klar in seinen Werken wie „Die Sorge des Hausvaters“ (1920) zu finden ist. Dieser Text mag kurz sein, aber ein zentraler Konflikt Kafkas ist trotzdem leicht erkennbar in der Geschichte. Arnold J. Band, ein Akademiker, der sich auf jüdische Literatur konzentriert, schrieb, dass Kafkas Werk frei von Verweisungen auf das Judentum sei. Aber „Die Sorge des Hausvaters sagt anders. Der überzeugendere Teil von Bands These ist sein Argument, dass Kafkas Schriften “clearly a sustained process of repression” sind.<sup>2</sup> Der Text “Die Sorge des Hausvaters” zeigt, daß die Unterdrückung der Metapher vom Judentum wenig aber klar ist. Die Zentralfigur dieses Textes ist ein unvorstellbarer Gegenstand namens Odradek. Kafka schrieb, “das Ganze erscheint zwar sinnlos, aber in seiner Art abgeschlossen.”<sup>3</sup> Zwei Elemente dieses seltsamen Gegenstandes sind wichtig. Erstens, das Objekt (Odradek) besteht aus einem Stern. Zweitens, es kommt und geht ständig; es bleibt nur selten still. Es ist möglich, dass Kafka den Stern irrelevant fand, aber es ist wahrscheinlicher der Fall, dass Kafka dieses Symbol wichtig für die Geschichte und sein Leben im Bezug auf

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1 Judith Butler, “Who Owns Kafka?”, *London Review of Books* 33, no. 5 (2011):3-8. Accessed online on January 10, 2017. <https://www.lrb.co.uk/v33/n05/judith-butler/who-owns-kafka>.

2 Band, Arnold J. “Kafka: The Margins of Assimilation.” *Modern Judaism* 8 no. 2 (1988): 139-155. Accessed 017. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1396381>

3 Franz Kafka, “Die Sorge des Hausvaters.” (1920). Provided by Anna Souchuk.

sein Judentum fand. Auch kommt und geht Odradek ständig, was Kafkas Darstellung des jüdischen Volkes wohl reflektieren mag. Die Geschichte des Judentums ist die Geschichte eines wandernden, heimatlosen Volkes. Das ist wichtig, weil die andere Hauptfigur – der Hausvater – sich vor Odradek fürchtet, weil er Odradek nicht versteht. Der Hausvater kann Odradek sehen, und er erkennt, dass Odradek nicht nur ein Objekt ist: das ist klar gesehen, wenn der Hausvater zuerst das Pronomen „es,“ später aber das Pronomen „er“ verwendet, um Odradek zu beschreiben. Der Hausvater hat viel Angst vor Odradek und sagte, „die Vorstellung, daß er mich auch noch überleben sollte, ist mir eine fast schmerzliche.“<sup>4</sup> Ist es nur Kafka, der hier spricht, oder die Stimmen von Europäern im Allgemeinen, die hier sprechen? In allen Fällen, ist es klar, dass Kafka das Leben eines Juden verstanden hatte, und er wußte, dass die Beziehung zwischen Juden, sich selbst, und anderen Europäern prekär war.

Kafkas Angst ist auch in seinen anderen Werken zu finden, insbesondere in seinen Schriften über seinen Körper. Zwei Musterbeispiele von seinen körperbezogenen Werken sind „Die Verwandlung“ (1915) und „Ein Hungerkünstler“ (1922). Kafkas Verhältnis zu seinem Körper ist wichtig, weil er seine eigenen Ängste verinnerlichte, was oftmals in seinen Texten zu sehen ist. Cynthia Ozick, eine jüdisch-amerikanische Schriftstellerin und Essayistin, schreibt, „Kafka was tall - six feet or more. The shriveling of Gregor Samsa hiding under the sofa; the wasting of the Hunger Artist...all these intimate a smallness, a fearfulness, an obloquy, the self-concealing littleness of dread.“<sup>5</sup> Kafka war groß, aber in seinem eigenen Verständnis von sich selbst, war er so klein. Der Hungerkünstler verhungert und wurde vergessen, und so sah Kafka sich selbst; als ein Schwächling. Gregor Samsa in „Die Verwandlung“ verwandelt sich wirklich und wird ein Ungeziefer, der sich in der Ecke versteckt und unsichtbar sein muss.<sup>6</sup> Kafkas

schlechte Gesundheit wird in Gregor Samsa reflektiert. Sander Gilman, ein Akademiker, der sich auf jüdische Geschichte und Medizin in seinem Werk konzentriert, schreibt über Kafka und Kafkas Betonung auf seinen eigenen Körper. Laut Gilman, repräsentiert Kafka die Nervosität der Juden, weil es in seiner Zeit gedacht wurde, dass Juden die nervösesten Leute waren. Kafka hasste seinen Körper, aber es gab nichts, was er dafür hätte machen können. Wie Gregor, fühlte sich Kafka, dass seine schlechte Gesundheit persönliche Schwäche reflektiert. Wie Gilman schreibt: „Jews understand this as a reflex of the displacement of Jewish anxiety“ und „projects these qualities onto the body and illness (sham or real) results.“<sup>7</sup> Kafka verinnerlichte seine Ängste in seiner Arbeit und seinem Körper. Kafka sah seinen eigenen Körper als klein und schwach, und beschrieb also seinen Körper in einer ähnlichen Weise in seinem Werk.

Wie Kafkas Werke, hat Woody Allens „Shadows and Fog“ Elemente von selbstzweifel und Angst gegenüber dem Judentum. Die Figur, die Woody Allen in dem Film darstellt, heißt zuerst „Kleinman.“<sup>8</sup> Er ist „a timid clerk in the kind of unidentified Middle European city once so beloved by Kafka.“<sup>9</sup> Kleinman hat eine nervöse Natur, was den Zuschauer an Kafkas Gedanken über seinen Körper erinnert. „Authority here is absolute and inscrutable“ und Kleinman weiß, dass die anderen Leute ihn wie ein „coward or a worm or a yellow-belly“ sehen.<sup>10</sup> Die Natur der Mitbürger, wie die Antisemiten von Kafkas Zeit, zwingen Kleinman, klein und nervös zu sein. Auch ist Kleinmans Beziehung zu seiner Religion unklar. Er wird oft gefragt, ob er religiös sei, und wie Kafka, ist er

4 Ibid.

5 Cynthia Ozick, „Tall Kafka and His Sister.“ *Bomb* no. 65 (1998): 24. Accessed March 14, 2017. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40337491>

6 Kafka, Franz. Die Verwandlung. 1915. Provided by Anna Souchuk.

7 Sander Gilman, *Franz Kafka, the Jewish Patient*. (Great Britain, Routledge: 1995): 65.

8 *Shadows and Fog*. Directed by Woody Allen. (Orion Pictures, 1992. DVD. MGM Home Entertainment, 2005)

9 Vincent Canby, „Woody Allen on the Loose in Kafka Country,“ *The New York Times*. Review of *Shadows and Fog* directed by Woody Allen. (Orion Pictures, 1992. DVD. MGM Home Entertainment, 2005.) <http://www.nytimes.com/movie/review?res=9E0CE5DC123FF933A15750C0A964958260>. Accessed March 14, 2017.

10 Canby, „Woody Allen on the Loose...“ and *Shadows and Fog*, dir. Allen.

unsicher. Beide Männer verinnerlichen ihre Religion aus Angst, und das verursacht dann nervöse, schwache, und vielleicht ungesunde Körper. Allen kann Kafka am besten repräsentieren, weil er ein “Little Man’s” Komiker war und für “his urban (read “Jewish”) neurosis and his sad, bespectacled *punism*” bekannt war.<sup>11</sup> Kleinman und Kafka sind nervös wegen ihrer Ängste über ihre jüdische Identität. Es ist nur ein Prozeß, aber man zeigt sich in diesen beiden Figuren. Kafkas Nervosität gegenüber seinem Judentum manifestiert sich in Allens Darstellung von Kleinmans Körper. Die nervösen Körper von Kafka und Kleinman repräsentieren ihre Ängste vor dem Judentum, die dann körperlich ausgedrückt werden.

<sup>11</sup> Sanford Pinsker, “Comedy and Cultural Timing: The Lessons of Robert Benchley and Woody Allen,” *The Georgia Review* 42, no. 4 (1988): 834. Accessed March, 14 2017. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41399477>.

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———. “Der Hungerkünstler.” 1922. Provided by Anna Souchuk.

Es war Kafka unklar, was genau das Judentum für ihn bedeutete, aber durch seinen Körper entwickelte er ein Bild von seinen Gedanken und Gefühlen. Kafka lebte in einer lästigen Zeit für Juden. Er verinnerlichte einige Gedanken seiner Zeit und durch seine Werke wurden seine Konflikte, Jude zu sein, sehr präsent. Man kann nicht genau sagen, was Kafka dachte, in seinen Texten aber sieht man den klaren Ausdruck seiner Angst dem Körper gegenüber. Auch durch Kafkas Werke gibt es viele Metaphern, die seine Angst und die Angst anderer Europäer über das Judentum reflektiert hatten. Ähnlicherweise zeigt Woody Allen durch die Figur Kleinman die gleiche Angst als Kafka. Kleinman und Kafka sind beide nervös, weil sie beide ihre Ängste vor dem eigenen Judentum verinnerlichten. ■

———. “Die Sorge des Hausvaters.” 1920. Provided by Anna Souchuk.

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# PROLIFERATION OF IMAGES: THE IMPACT OF SHEIKH AMADOU BAMBA AND THE MOURIDIYYA ON SENEGALESE ART

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Senegal has a rich contemporary artistic tradition, starting with Léopold Sédar Senghor's École de Dakar in the 1960s. Promoted by Léopold Sédar Senghor, a Catholic president in a predominately Muslim country, this movement faced criticism due to colonial undertones and a disregard for issues facing citizens living in the slums of Dakar and other cities.<sup>1</sup> Later, young artists started a counter movement known as *Set-Setal*, a push to beautify Dakar and protest the lack of funding and resources.<sup>2</sup> Encompassing music, writing, and art, it is the street graffiti inspired by this movement that is of particular interest in this paper, especially that influenced by the image and teachings of the Senegalese Sufi sheikh Amadou Bamba and his *Mouride* Sufi movement which originated in Senegal. The imagery of Bamba combines with the public service message of *Set-Setal* to create a simultaneously religious and political body of work throughout the public spaces of Dakar. This has, in turn, influenced academy and gallery artists looking to break with previous teachings of the École de Dakar. Bamba's impact has been far-reaching, and his image has become a permanent part of Senegalese culture. As such, artists need neither be Muslim nor *Mouride* to engage Bamba's teachings and message personally and visually.

In order to understand the evolution of Senegalese art, one must first understand the significance of Sufism, specifically the *Mouridiyya*, plays in cultural unity. Although Senegal is a secular country, 94% of its population identifies as Sufi, and a large percentage of that number practice within the *Mouride* sect.<sup>3</sup> A devotional and mystical aspect of Islam, Sufis follow the teachings of a particular "saint," or *wali Allah* (friend of God).<sup>4</sup> Sheikh Amadou Bamba attained this status during his lifetime, and as such, a large segment of the population have become familiar with the teachings of Bamba through devotional practice. Countless images of Sheikh Amadou Bamba flood the streets—in shop windows, bumpers, and the walls themselves—showing the influence and mythic status that Bamba has attained. Bamba made it his goal to restructure Islam as a more personal connection to God, and his growing number of followers caused concern in the French colonial leadership.<sup>5</sup> This fear prompted the French to exile Bamba from Senegal between 1895 and 1902. Yet this exile solidified Bamba's influence, as his exile was compared to that of the prophet Mohammed from Mecca.<sup>6</sup> For non-*Mourides*, Bamba has become a commonplace,

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1 Elizabeth Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow: Art, Politics, and the Avant-garde in Senegal, 1960-1995* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 156-7.

2 Donal Cruise O'Brien, "A City That Keeps a Country Going: In Praise of Dakar," *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* 44, no. 1 (2008): 9.

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3 I have not been able to find exact figures on the number of *Mourides* in Senegal, with sources ranging between 25% and 40% of the wider population. Laura L. Cochrane, "Bamba Merci: The Intersections of Political and Spiritual Graffiti in Senegal," *African Identities* 14, no. 1 (October 23, 2015): 7.

4 Allen F. Roberts and Mary Nooter Roberts, *A Saint in the City: Sufi Arts of Urban Senegal*, (Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History, 2003), 53.

5 Eric Ross, *Sufi City: Urban Design and Archetypes in Touba* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2006), 49.

6 Allen F. Roberts and Mary Nooter Roberts, "Mystical Graffiti and the Refabulation of Dakar," *Africa Today* 54, no. 2 (2007): 53.

## FIGURE 1

Photograph of Sheikh Amadou Bamba, 1913  
Djourbel, Senegal  
First published in Marty, 1917



secularized symbol of colonial resistance, and “his poetry and his legacy is a part of Senegal’s religious and cultural heritage.”<sup>7</sup>

Images of Bamba are omnipresent in Senegal. Stemming from a single photograph, taken in 1913 while Bamba was under house arrest by the French colonial regime, the image of the Sheikh is seen as a grounding moral presence for the nation<sup>8</sup> (Figure 1). Although it was meant only as a colonial record, the photograph has taken on a life of its own. The white robes and intense shadows that obscure parts of Bamba’s body foster a sense of divinity and connection to God. This is defined by *Mourides*

as his *baraka*, or divine energy that emanates from the photograph as a connection between his human and spiritual self.<sup>9</sup> The invisibility of both hands and one foot suggest to believers that Bamba is not entirely present in the photograph.<sup>10</sup> Rather, it emphasizes his saintliness as he belongs in the realm of God, evidenced in Bamba’s own writing when he states “I am not a man of this world, but of the other; I see only God.”<sup>11</sup> The *baraka* evident in the photograph is compounded by multiple representations of the Saint, which *Mourides* employ to create protective wards and welcoming symbols for followers.

*Mourides* are often derided by other Muslims for their divergent devotional behaviors. The intensity with which followers recreate imagery of Bamba shows a dedication to the life of the saint that could be interpreted as eclipsing reverence to the Prophet Mohammad. Artists produce intensely personal works steeped in the concepts of *baraka* and *batin*. *Batin* is the “secret side” to all aspects of existence.<sup>12</sup> The shadows of Bamba’s photograph become a visual representation of this *batin*, and taken alongside Bamba’s *baraka* can provide inspiration for all Senegalese artists, regardless of their religion or academic training. As sculptor Moustapha Dimé is quoted as saying, “I’m Muslim but not practicing like the Muslims who go to the mosque every week...For me sculpture is a form of practicing Islam...If you wish, Sheikh Bamba liberated Islam from its shackles because there was a period when Islam was combat.”<sup>13</sup> Dimé’s quote can be interpreted as reconciling the *Mouride* mission within Islam. However, it is this emphasis on the personal connection between the artist and Sheikh Bamba that has fueled one of the most significant artistic movements in Senegal in the past few decades, regardless of religious affiliation. The *Set-Setal* movement, beginning in the late 1980s, introduced a wave of local and religious pride based in improving the

7 Cochrane, “Bamba Merci,” 9.

8 Leslie W. Rabine, “‘These Walls Belong to Everybody’: The Graffiti Art Movement in Dakar,” *African Studies Quarterly* 14, no. 3 (March 2014): 91.

9 Roberts et al., “Mystical Graffiti,” 56.

10 Roberts et al., *Saint in the City*, 50.

11 *Ibid.*, 51.

12 *Ibid.*, 47.

13 *Ibid.*, 157.

infrastructure and aesthetic appearance of the cities of Senegal. Renowned musician Youssou N'Dour, provided inspiration for the movement, named after N'Dour's song "Set," a call to action to clean a city the government had forgotten.<sup>14</sup> Including a noted increase in public depictions of Sheikh Amadou Bamba, *Set-Setal* invoked religious devotion to instill a sense of duty in citizens and artists to keep the streets clean.<sup>15</sup> Many of these images also prompted a sense of community, as Bamba is seen as a respected figure by non-*Mourides* as well as followers. While the *Set-Setal* movement lasted only a short time, it has influenced graffiti artists as well as gallery-based artists since its inception.

Translated from Wolof, *Set-Setal* means "to make clean, to make proper."<sup>16</sup> One can understand why this was used as the movement's name, as it was borne of a need for urban development and the beautification of many streets. Almost all of this beautification involved graffiti. It has been described as "a statement of protest on the part of the city's youth,"<sup>17</sup> and "a force to cleanse and beautify the disintegrating spaces."<sup>18</sup> Interestingly graffiti has never been illegal in Senegal, making the tradition distinct from many other graffiti cultures worldwide.<sup>19</sup> There was a distinct political component to *Set-Setal*, as a reaction to the policies and politics of Senegal's first president Léopold Sédar Senghor, continued further by his successor Abdou Diouf.<sup>20</sup> Senghor is credited with creating the École de Dakar, intended as a response to

colonialism in the formation of a national artistic tradition in Senegal. This was a continuation of his development of Negritude philosophy during his time in Paris. Negritude, as defined by contemporary Aimé Césaire, was the "simple recognition of the fact of being black, and the acceptance of this fact, of our destiny as black people, of our history, and of our culture."<sup>21</sup> However, critics accuse Senghor of promoting an art too similar to European modernism but instilling an *Africanité* that verged on the reductive and primitive.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, Senghor's policies bankrupted the government, as he used 25% of the annual budget for the arts.<sup>23</sup> While commendable, this resulted in a later period of neglect in public resources and infrastructure.<sup>24</sup>

Many of the murals produced during the *Set-Setal* movement included images of Sheikh Amadou Bamba, showing the prevalence of the *Mouridiyya* in Senegalese culture. When describing the reason for creating images of Bamba, current graffiti artist Mad Zoo said:

People would piss in the street and throw garbage all over...and when someone would ask them to explain themselves, they would tell you the street doesn't belong to anybody, so I have the right to make it dirty... So [the participants of *Set-Setal*] decided to go and represent religious personalities on the walls and people didn't have the courage to go and piss in front of those religious figures.<sup>25</sup>

This interpolation of religion into public art linked to a mission to "reinscribe local perceptions and histories into the cityscape,"<sup>26</sup> making a grassroots youth movement that incorporated a myriad of influences from politicians to musicians, popular culture images and depictions

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14 *Ibid.*, 135.

15 O'Brien, "A City That Keeps a Country Going," 9.

16 Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow*, 205.

17 *Ibid.*

18 Rabine, "These Walls Belong to Everybody," 91.

19 *Ibid.*, 90.

20 The job of describing the intricacies of Senegalese politics has been done by many researchers before me and would deviate from the thesis of this paper. However, Elizabeth Harney succinctly describes the contentious views on Senghor's politics and legacy thusly: "While many praised the profundity of his thought, clarity of his vision, and depth of his commitment to 'black civilization,' others regarded his legacy more skeptically, arguing that his approach to black subjectivity was both reactionary and naïve." Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow*, xxii.)

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21 *Ibid.*, 21.

22 *Ibid.*, 94.

23 Joanna Grabski and Elizabeth Harney, "Painting Fictions/Painting History: Modernist Pioneers at Senegal's Ecole Des Arts: [With Commentary]," *African Arts* 39, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 38.

24 Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow*, 205-6.

25 Rabine, "These Walls Belong to Everybody," 94.

26 Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow*, 215.

## FIGURE 2

Pape Diop  
Vignette from Mural c. 2004  
Médina neighborhood, Dakar, Senegal  
Copyright Allen F. Roberts and Mary Nooter Roberts 2004, with permission for this publication, all other rights reserved.



of folk figure Mammy Wata.<sup>27</sup> It also instills a sense of public ownership, and preserves the desire to maintain the quality of the art and the cleanliness of the surrounding area.

Pape Diop is a graffiti artist who exemplifies the idea of using multiple representations of Sheikh Amadou Bamba to amplify the power of Bamba's *baraka*. He evokes the work of artist Assane Dione and Senegalese reverse-glass painting, creating bust-like portraits of Bamba in multiple places throughout Dakar.<sup>28</sup> Some critics also draw parallels in Diop's work to the spiraling, spiritual nature of protective amulets in the form of mystical squares known as *khatems*.<sup>29</sup> Building up his images as reliefs, Pape Diop uses silhouettes and shadows to create a contrast between the wall and the graffiti.<sup>30</sup> He achieves this by

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 211-12.

<sup>28</sup> Roberts, et al., "Mystical Graffiti," 57.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

## FIGURE 3

Papisto Boy  
Mural painting segment of Sheikh Amadou Bamba 1997  
Bel-Air Factory, Dakar, Senegal  
Copyright Allen F. Roberts and Mary Nooter Roberts 2003, with permission for this publication, all other rights reserved.



layering images of the Saint on top of each other, creating a repetitive motif that materializes Bamba's *baraka* for the viewer<sup>31</sup> (Figure 2). Using darker pigments, the images overlap to create layers hidden one under another, also visually evoking *batin*.<sup>32</sup> Repeating this in multiple places throughout Dakar, notably in the Western Corniche, Pape Diop places his graffiti works in the "parts of Dakar most haunted by colonial depression."<sup>33</sup> This placement delegitimizes the architectural history of colonialism in favor of the universal message of Bamba's teachings, thereby instilling a sense of hope and beauty in its viewers.

One of the most recognized wall artists in Senegal is Papisto Boy. He has painted multiple images of Sheikh Amadou Bamba, but this is just one aspect of his oeuvre. Papisto Boy is most recognized for his mural on the walls of the Bel-Air factory in Dakar (Figure 3). Sadly in disrepair by 1994, this constantly changing work functioned as a *de facto* museum, showcasing historical

<sup>31</sup> Roberts refers to this layering as "proximal empowerment," or a sense of being "in the picture." This echoes the ability to feel the presence of Bamba throughout Dakar's urban layout but consolidates it into a single image and location. Roberts, "Mystical Graffiti," 61.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

#### FIGURE 4

Papisto Boy  
Mural painting segment of Bob Marley and Cheikh Lo, 1999  
Bel-Air Factory, Dakar, Senegal  
Copyright Allen F. Roberts and Mary Nooter Roberts 2003,  
with permission for this publication, all other rights reserved.



scenes, political figures, and images of modern culture.<sup>34</sup> As Bel-Air is an industrial slum neighborhood, the majority of the audience for the mural do not interact with the official museums in Senegal, which are seen as remnants of a colonial and elitist tradition. As such, Papisto Boy's Bel-Air factory mural became a place where history was created by citizens, responding to "local and global challenges of contemporary life."<sup>35</sup> People gathered around it to sing *zikir* (Sufi songs of remembrance) and undertake collective devotional practices.<sup>36</sup>

In a way, Papisto Boy creates a *lieu de mémoire*, as the mural becomes a continuation of history and a representation of his *Mouride* faith. Sheikh Amadou Bamba is himself considered a *lieu de mémoire*, as his *baraka* can be harnessed by all who create his image.<sup>37</sup> The mural places images of Bamba and the *Mouride* "way of reasoning" in a global context with the inclusion of figures such as Bob Marley, Che Guevara, and Jimi Hendrix (Figure 4). Papisto Boy refers to these figures as fellow saints, bearing the message of Sheikh Bamba

through their work. He considers Bob Marley especially an "uplifting apostle of human dignity."<sup>38</sup> The portraits become, in their own right, altars to these individuals, similar to both religious iconography as well as memorial graffiti images present in cities like New York and Los Angeles. Each image is infused with the individual's essence, repeating the *baraka* of Bamba in cultural figures.<sup>39</sup> By painting musicians, Papisto Boy references his involvement in the *Set-Setal* movement of Senegalese art.

Graffiti is the art of the youth in Senegal, yet the inspirations for these artists have changed over the years. While the *Set-Setal* movement was started in direct response to Yousou N'Dour, it soon expanded to include other musical and artistic figures, before eventually dying in the 1990s.<sup>40</sup> However, the influence of Sheikh Bamba never waned; some graffiti was only allowed on walls if a portrait of Bamba was added.<sup>41</sup> Currently, young *graffeurs* identify with the hip-hop movement, still including imagery of the saint. Newer artists talk about discovering graffiti through American rap CDs and magazines,<sup>42</sup> and produce hip hop crews within Dakar, such as *Doxadem* and *RBS*.<sup>43</sup> Graffiti artists have divided themselves into two generations: "*les grands frères*" and "*les jeunes*."<sup>44</sup> Their practice echoes the generational distinction of academy and gallery artists of the *École de Dakar*, yet the artists come from the same low-income demographic as *Set-Setal*.<sup>45</sup> This extends the political significance of graffiti, as the artists continue to be seen as a tool to improve the city culturally and aesthetically.

38 *Ibid.*, 123.

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Ibid.*, 135-37.

41 *Ibid.*

42 Rabine, "These Walls Belong to Everybody," 93.

43 *Ibid.*, 99.

44 *Ibid.*, 93.

45 Students of the *École des Arts du Sénégal* generally identify with one of three generations, beginning with the first in the 1960s directly influenced by Senghor's Negritude doctrine and emphasis on modernism. This paper will touch later on artists of the third generation, who attempt to express more political messages in their work.

34 Roberts, et al., *Saint in the City*, 134.

35 *Ibid.*, 135.

36 Roberts, et al., "Mystical Graffiti," 60.

37 Roberts, et al., *Saint in the City*, 48.



**FIGURE 5**

Mad Zoo  
 Portrait of Leopold Sedar Senghor, 2016  
 Graffiti, Aerosol Paint  
 Dakar, Senegal  
 Open source image

*Jeune graffeur* Mad Zoo (b. 1987), creates paintings of cultural figures in a similar manner as Papisto Boy, providing historical and religious images and history on the walls of the city (Figure 5). He believes there is an imperative for *graffeurs* to educate their viewers, saying “the Senegalese *graffeur* cannot break this tie with his people.”<sup>46</sup> Graffiti in Senegal breaks from international counterparts as the artists refrain from tagging their individual signatures. Instead, they include repeated written phrases, usually from other artists and almost always in the indigenous Wolof language. These tags employ the sharp lines indicative of graffiti worldwide, without the material resources of many other regions.<sup>47</sup> Artists also use bubble lettering, and Mad Zoo incorporates Chinese calligraphy and Arabic script into his written graffiti.<sup>48</sup> These tags often include the *Set* tag, meaning “cleanliness,” which became the title for the graffiti movement in the 1980s. This seems to be a concerted effort from the graffiti artists to assert their individuality over Western artists’ bubble letter writing styles.<sup>49</sup> It becomes a badge of honor

When discussing graffiti and wall murals, impermanence is built in due to the materials used. Papisto Boy’s murals were in a state of disrepair, as the industrial house paints fade quickly without constant supervision and retouching.<sup>50</sup> Unfortunately, Papisto Boy’s was bulldozed by authorities, drawing attention to the difficulties of poor artists and residents in receiving artistic assistance from the government.<sup>51</sup> Current artists like Mad Zoo take the lack of resources in stride, developing an art form in using the limited spray paint colors available. As Big Key says, “Here we don’t have enough [spray paint] colors, only the basic ones. That teaches you a lot because with the experience of managing what you have, you can do better..You take a side of the tip and press lightly. It’s a technique you learn with respect to pathetic equipment.”<sup>52</sup> Even then, most artists are unable to afford spray paints, using brushes, rollers and acrylics for as much detailing as possible.<sup>53</sup> However, the artists are determined to maintain artistic freedom from sponsors, sometimes at the expense of materials, as well as the education system described by Mad Zoo as “not anchored to our African realities [from when] the African francophone countries...were French colonies.”<sup>54</sup>

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> The inclusion of Chinese and Arabic-style writing is drawn from the *graffeurs*’ desires to blur the lines of international graffiti styles, similar to their referencing of US hip-hop. *Ibid.*, 101.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Harney, *In Senghor’s Shadow*, 205.

<sup>51</sup> Roberts, et al., *Saint in the City*, 149.

<sup>52</sup> Rabine, “These Walls Belong to Everybody,” 89-90.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

**FIGURE 6**

Papisto Boy  
Mural painting segment of Malcolm X with Poem, 1999  
Bel-Air Factory Mural, Dakar, Senegal  
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Language, religion and graffiti often converge on the streets as *jeune graffeurs* incorporate Wolof text into their tags and images in a direct reaction to French colonial influence. In this sense, they break away from more established *graffeurs* like Papisto Boy, who includes a lot of text written in French in his murals (Figure 6). It has been argued by Fiona McLaughlin that *Set-Setal* also aimed to “legitimize the urban language [Dakar Wolof]

**FIGURE 7**

*Bamba Merci* tag, 2012  
Spray paint graffiti.  
Senegal  
Image courtesy of Laura L. Cochrane.



by committing it to written form.”<sup>55</sup> If this is true, then the absence of written Wolof in Papisto Boy’s murals points to a limited ability to bridge the language gap between scholarly and public learning. Only 10% of Dakar’s population speaks French,<sup>56</sup> as opposed to the 80% who speak Wolof,<sup>57</sup> meaning that the art of younger *graffeurs* is more accessible to a wider population than earlier works.

Interestingly, Dakar Wolof employs a number of French loan words.<sup>58</sup> This extends to the *Mouridiyya*, as the common term *Mouride* is a francized spelling of the Arabic term.<sup>59</sup> This mixing of languages has become a political tool, both in metropolitan Dakar graffiti and the countrywide tag “Bamba Merci.” In May 2013, tags reading “Bamba Merci” began popping up not only in Dakar but throughout Senegal, especially in the city of Thiès (Figure 7). This was the result of a *Mouride* rally in Dakar

55 Fiona McLaughlin, “Dakar Wolof and the Configuration of an Urban Identity,” *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 14, no. 2 (December 2001): 154.

56 O’Brien, “A City That Keeps a Country Going,” 7.

57 McLaughlin, “Dakar Wolof,” 159.

58 *Ibid.*, 162.

59 As the two are interchangeable, I have so far utilized both “*Mouride*” and “*Mouridiyya*” in this paper. However, it is important to note common academic usage veers toward the francized *Mouride* as opposed to Arabic transliteration *al-Muridiyyah*, especially as use and ownership of language is one of the topics of this paper.

facilitated by religious leader Sëriñ Modou Kara Birahim Mbacké (otherwise known as Kara). During the event, Kara used both Wolof and French to express devotion to Sheikh Amadou Bamba: “Bamba Fepp, Bamba Partout, Bamba Merci.” This translates as Bamba Everything, Bamba Everywhere, Bamba Thank You.<sup>60</sup> As a mantra, this was taken and repeated by graffiti artists in much the same way that images of the Sheikh have been duplicated and reproduced. However, it worked differently from these images, as the tag shared formal qualities to political graffiti that has been repressed, but was allowed to multiply due to the religious overtones.<sup>61</sup> The government most likely felt ill-advised to halt the replication of an overtly religious tag, even while it was being used in a political context. The slogan was also repeated by non-*Mourides*, another sign of the equalizing nature Bamba has on Senegalese culture.<sup>62</sup>

As graffiti became popular in Senegal to promote urban renewal in the face of governmental neglect, studio artists have used the imagery of wall graffiti to make political statements. Trained at the École des Arts du Sénégal, these artists identify with the “third generation” of the École de Dakar. One such artist, Birame Ndiaye (b. 1968), produces consciously graffiti-like work to emphasize both the degradation of colonial-era buildings in Dakar and their use as message centers and meeting places for poorer citizens. His 1999 series “*Mur mûr*” (*Old Wall*) could even be seen as inspiration for Pape Diop’s graffiti that appeared starting in 2004. Ndiaye’s paintings include layers of collage on canvas with text and figural images interspersed throughout<sup>63</sup> (Fig 8). However, art in this vein can be seen as a capitalization and bastardization of graffiti art started by and for poor communities. Graffiti artists like Mad Zoo and Big Key produce work with limited resources while academy-educated artists like

## FIGURE 8

Birame Ndiaye  
 Mur mûr (Old Wall), 1999  
 Mixed media on canvas, 91 x 61 cm  
 Collection of the artist  
 Copyright Joanna Grabski, with permission for this publication, all other rights reserved.



Ndiaye reap the benefits of a gallery and biennale system as they “suggest the compositional logic and aesthetic of wall graffiti.”<sup>64</sup> Within a neocolonialist system, as the art academy is intrinsically, artists are expected to discard the Senegalese pride evident in many of the *graffeurs* to gain customers. An anonymous artist stated, “I have a tendency towards the global; I speak Wolof, French, and English...I am a man of the world.”<sup>65</sup> This can be seen as the artistic

60 Cochrane, “Bamba Merci,” 4.

61 *Ibid.*, 7.

62 *Ibid.*, 10.

63 Joanna L. Grabski, “Dakar’s Urban Landscapes: Locating Modern Art and Artists in the City,” *African Arts* 36, no. 4 (Winter 2003): 34-5.

64 *Ibid.*, 30.

65 *Ibid.*, 39.



legacy of Senghor, himself a member of the Academie Française and an arbiter of modernist culture in Senegal.<sup>66</sup>

Moustapha Dimé (1952-1998) was an artist who bridged the gap between gallery and street. Using mainly recycled materials, Dimé restricted himself in a way similar to young *graffeurs*. Speaking of his process, he said “I work just as other *Mourides* do in places like the Colobane junkyard.”<sup>67</sup> Dimé saw his sculpture as an act of prayer, and salvaged materials in following with Bamba’s teachings on environmental conservation.<sup>68</sup> Artists who create in Colobane are described as *résistants*, as they create a marginal economy out of recycled materials.<sup>69</sup> Not only is it a junkyard for artistic material, but Colobane is a vibrant market in which all generations of artistic Dakarois interact. Said to be where hip-hop was introduced to Dakar, it makes sense that gallery artists like Dimé would find inspiration in this setting.<sup>70</sup> Colobane is an example of where art meets public interaction, with images devoted to Sheikh Amadou Bamba present throughout.

Artists still working within an academic framework often draw from religious experience in an attempt to both increase authenticity and connect to a more organic audience. Chalys Leye converted to Mouridism as an adult, and a majority of his art is inspired by *khatems*.<sup>71</sup> As a contemporary of Birame Ndiaye, Leye draws from Sufi Mouridism for aesthetic and abstract art, effectively bridging a divide between first and second generation artists within the École de Dakar. They also recall the

graffiti images of Pape Diop, as his *Khatem Series* of paintings build up from the canvas in similar ways to Diop’s pigmented images of Bamba. Using paint, tar, wood, and metal, they also draw similarities to the recycled materials of Moustapha Dimé’s sculpture.<sup>72</sup> Leye thus draws a line between the mystical history of the *Mouridiyya*, public arts of Dakar graffiti, and formal elements of the École de Dakar.

These artists share the experience of encountering the image of Sheikh Amadou Bamba. Regardless of religious identity, the understanding of Bamba as an anti-colonial and revolutionary thinker has become a unifying feature in the art of Dakar. Artists as diverse as *graffeur* Mad Zoo and sculpture specialist Moustapha Dimé understand Sheikh Bamba’s image as a call to work, pushing for representation of the urban people of Senegal.<sup>73</sup> They then draw from each other, as evidenced in Birame Ndiaye’s canvases that borrows heavily from graffiti wall art, and likewise Pape Diop’s images that layer upon each other much like Chalys Leye’s work. The influence *graffeurs* have had on other artists is also indicative of the importance of public assembly and activism. As École de Dakar artists are trained in a system organized by the political forces that *graffeurs* critique in both their art and conversation, this sharing of technique and perspective transcends a religious framework. Amadou Bamba and his teachings become the common denominator with which these artists interact, and with that the discussion expands to include an investigation on the wider definition of Senegalese identity through a colonial, political, and global framework. ■

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66 For the purpose of this paper, I create a thematic distinction between graffiti and gallery art. While I describe graffiti artists in *Set-Setal* as reacting against the more international and colonialist teachings of the École de Dakar, the fact that Senegal was colonized means artists will deal with that history in some way. This is not a black or white situation, as the world is increasingly globalized, and creating art in that framework opens the possibilities to multiple Senegalese identities.

67 Roberts, et al., *Saint in the City*, 208.

68 Harney, *In Senghor’s Shadow*, 167.

69 *Ibid.*

70 *Market Imaginary*, Directed by Joanna Grabski, (United States, Senegal: Indiana University Press, 2012), DVD.

71 Roberts, et al., *Saint in the City*, 193-194.

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72 *Ibid.*, 195.

73 Roberts, et al., “Mystical Graffiti,” 67.

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# THE PARENTAL STATE: A STUDY OF THE WISCONSIN CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM DURING THE PROGRESSIVE ERA

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Helene was on her third foster home. The first home to which she was indentured claimed that she was “not a child [they] care[d] to keep.” At her second indenture home, the foster mother left her husband, resulting in the foster father sending her back to the State Public School for Dependent and Neglected Children (SPS) in Sparta, Wisconsin, because a farm was “not a proper place for a little girl now that there was no woman to mind the house.” Helene had been committed to SPS at age 8 after her biological father had died and her mother had been admitted to the Baron County Poor Farm in 1908 due to old age and ill health. Because children were not allowed to reside at poor farms, there was little her mother could do to keep their family together. Helene was admitted before the mothers’ pensions act was passed in 1914, meaning that poor single mothers were not believed to be able to provide the best care for their children and thus received no assistance from the state that would allow them to stay with their children. Despite Helene’s mother’s efforts to retrieve her from the institution, her requests were futile and Helene remained in the system until she aged out in 1918 at age 18.<sup>1</sup>

Helene’s case highlights several important features in the typical SPS experience. Poor children were often taken away from their biological families, placed in an institutional setting, and then placed into foster homes on indenture contracts where the thought was that poor children would be raised to be more productive citizens by foster homes than if they were to remain in their biological family’s homes or in the institution.<sup>2</sup> Once admitted to SPS, the state became the legal guardian of the child and thus acted as the parental force in the children’s lives. The state also acted as a middleman between biological families and their children by monitoring correspondence between the two and physically separating them from each other. The goal of SPS was to provide a temporary housing situation at the school in Sparta, where the child would be trained in gender-specific trades before being indentured out to homes selected by SPS officials.<sup>3</sup> These indentured children would continue to be monitored by the state from a distance; however, once indentured, the state largely entrusted foster parents to raise the child in a way that would produce productive citizens. Many children under state care were indentured out as sources of labor to multiple families throughout their time under SPS authority, with a very low percentage of legal adoptions ever taking place, demonstrating that the indenture system was often not the most nurturing. Children under state care were separated from their biological families until their eighteenth birthday because

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1 Children’s names have been changed to protect their identity; however, county of origin and county where students were indentured have remained the same. Names have been randomly selected off a list of the top 1,000 baby names from 1910. Last names of children are only present in cases where biological family members are involved and have been randomly chosen from a last name generator. Foster family names have also been randomly selected. Wisconsin Child Center Children’s Records, 1886-1953, Call number: 1976/135; 1992/169, Boxes 1-98, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, WI (hereafter referred to as WHS).

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2 For a contemporary example outside Wisconsin, see Linda Gordon, *The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

3 U.S. Children’s Bureau, “Children Indentured by the Wisconsin State Public School,” Publications 150-160, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Children’s Bureau, 1925), 4.

of the belief that poverty and crime could only be solved by separating children from the negative environment perpetuated by living in poverty.<sup>4</sup>

As the Progressive Era developed, so did the notions of how child welfare should be provided.<sup>5</sup> Progressive reformers thought the best place for children was at home with their biological families. The notion that society should reward mothers for raising productive citizens resulted in the decline of institutions and the rise of in-home care in the form of mothers' pensions that aimed at keeping the biological family intact. Mothers' pensions were introduced in 1911 in Illinois as part of the national effort made by middle-class maternalists to provide governmental compensation to mothers raising productive citizens.<sup>6</sup> The maternal state that developed during this time marked the government's increased interest and presence in its citizens' lives.<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately, there is little evidence that mothers' pensions reached their full potential in Wisconsin as seen by the maintenance of SPS during this time. The reality that persisted was evidence that child welfare policies remained largely unchanged, despite the passage of Wisconsin's mothers' pensions in 1914 that would have encouraged the decline of the institutional setting if adopted fully. Despite these changing ideals, SPS continued to take in poor children and place them in families chosen by the institution that were perceived to be better rather than keeping them with their biological

families. This is evidence that regional differences existed in the enactment of welfare policies.<sup>8</sup>

As seen in Helene's case, the mediation of correspondence between the state and the biological families was typical. Even after numerous requests from Helene's mother to retrieve her daughter, Helene remained at the institution. The state often mediated relations between the biological families and the child on behalf of what the state perceived as the child's best interest. Severing the child from all ties to his or her previous life was thought to limit the negative effects of poverty in order to reform the child. By entering the institution, the child became totally under the guardianship of the state who sought to retain it by any means possible. Therefore, parental control was rarely returned to the biological parents, even after desperate pleas and changes in lifestyle.

The archival research undertaken for this project spanned four months at the Wisconsin Historical Society located in Madison. I chose to look at two ten-year periods before and after the 1914 implementation of mothers' pensions in Wisconsin to see if any changes developed in the records regarding admittance. There were about 4,470 records available from this twenty-year span, so I developed a system for randomly selecting a representative sample of just under 200 students.<sup>9</sup> These records varied in size and information, but generally included the county of origin for the child, where the child was indentured, and any medical records. Sometimes, there was a reason for

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4 There was a changing notion that juvenile delinquents were victims of their circumstance, rather than their delinquency being an inherent thing within them. Molly Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work: Women, Child Welfare, and the State, 1890-1930* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 54.

5 Historians generally label the Progressive Era as occurring roughly 1896-1920.

6 Maternalists sought to politicize motherhood. Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work*, 3-9.

7 Mink, *Wages of Motherhood*, 34.

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8 There were regional differences to this pattern. See, Thomas Krainz, *Delivering Aid: Implementing Progressive Era Welfare in the American West* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 2.

9 The list only showed the student's name, date of birth, and commitment number. Because it did not include the date of commitment, which is what I was interested in, I had to guess if the student would have been admitted between 1904 and 1924 based off their unreliable commitment number and date of birth. The average age of students entering SPS was between 6 and 8 during this time, so I looked for birthdates between 1898 and 1918, 6 years before the dates of commitment I was looking at. Furthermore, I alternated which gender I was looking at with boys being chosen from even numbered pages and girls being chosen from odd numbered pages in order to get an accurate representation from both genders.

commitment listed. I devised an Excel spreadsheet to keep track of all the information, including the name of the child, commitment number, date of birth, date of commitment, indenture information, and more.

This study will demonstrate the ideals and reality of the Progressive Era welfare reforms regarding children. SPS is a prime example of the failure to incorporate Progressive reforms like mothers' pensions that valued the biological family into its system, in favor of the continuation of a more traditional institutional system, all while still claiming to have the best interest of the children in mind. What often ended up happening with the transference of parental guardianship of a child to the state was that the state's interests were being met in their attempt to create productive citizens, while the best interests of the child was not taken into as much consideration as the state perhaps believed. The expectations Progressives had for a drastic change in how welfare was distributed was not the reality at SPS, as this institution continued more outdated techniques of welfare.

In 1885, state legislators recognized the need for an alternative solution to house the poor and orphaned children of Wisconsin. The legislature established a state school, where "dependent and neglected" children would be sent with the goal of creating upstanding future citizens by removing them from the influence of their perceived morally inferior, poor, biological families. Soon, three dormitories, known as cottages, were established with the capacity to hold 130 children total. It soon became evident that more housing would be needed and five more cottages were erected from the years 1888 to 1912 in order

to accommodate 140 to 270 students at any given time.<sup>10</sup> In order to provide the best care possible to the children during their stay at SPS, these dormitories all included showers, playrooms, lockers, toilets, a large workroom, and living space for staff, as well as a separate bed and bath for a matron.<sup>11</sup> The matrons, known as the "Mothers of the cottages," served as substitute maternal figures in these students' lives, heading the disciplinary actions and the nurturing aspect admitted students would otherwise have missed due to being separated from their biological mothers. As one superintendent said about the matrons, "While the discipline might be firm, love dominates, and the children are led in the same manner they would be if they were in well-regulated homes."<sup>12</sup>

SPS was founded as a temporary training facility that would prepare boys and girls in gendered trades that would be desirable to foster families around the state looking to indenture children for company and labor.<sup>13</sup> This challenged the notion many Progressive reformers had that children should not be separated from their biological families and should experience a "true childhood" free of large amounts of labor. Nevertheless, SPS continued to thrive throughout the Progressive Era

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10 Information taken from the statistical reports in the biennial reports between 1904 and 1912. State Public School, *Ninth Biennial Report of the State Public School for the Biennial Period Ending June 30, 1904* (Madison, WI: Democrat Printing Company, 1905). State Public School, *Report of the State Public School for the Biennial Period Ending June 30, 1908* (Madison, WI: Democrat Printing Company, 1909). State Public School, *Twelfth Biennial Report of the State Public School for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1910* (Madison, WI, 1910). State Public School, *Thirteenth Biennial Report of the State Public School for the Biennial Period Ending June 30, 1912* (Madison, WI, 1912).

11 The dormitories where the children were housed were known as "cottages" within the institution. These large buildings were all two stories with a basement and ranged from 8,500 to 14,175 square feet. Wisconsin Child Center Records, Box 1, WHS. To see what a cottage at SPS looked like, see Appendix 2.

12 State Public School, *Seventh Biennial Report of the State Public School for the Two Fiscal Years Ending September 30, 1900* (Madison, WI: Democrat Printing Company, 1901), 283.

13 State Public School, *Ninth Biennial Report of the State Public School for the Biennial Period Ending June 30, 1904* (Madison, WI: Democrat Printing Company, 1905), 338-340. U.S. Children's Bureau, "Children Indentured by the Wisconsin State Public School," 4.

and increased its indenture practices. The process of indenturing was somewhat lax, despite officials alleging the rigorousness of it. Families around the state, and sometimes even families from neighboring states who heard of this program, could fill out a form and send it into the headmaster at the institution who would review it with his agents. The form asked the applicants for a complete list of members of the family; the religion of the wife and husband; why they were looking for an indentured child; any physical preferences like appearance, age, or sex; the value of any property they owned; and the distance to the closest school and train station. The wait list was long, and families were frequently waiting for months, if not years, for a child who met their specific criteria. It was common for foster families to list the reason they wanted the child as being for companionship, although this was usually coupled with wanting the child for light chores or help around the farm.

Most of the families requesting indentured children were in rural communities and owned farms. Boys were requested to help with chores and farm work. Requests for boys aged 12 to 14 to help with chores around the house and farm were most popular in the spring when the agricultural season began.<sup>14</sup> Families in town who were looking for help with housework or help with their other children would most likely apply for girls like Tessie, who was indentured for “light housework.”<sup>15</sup> Seeing boys in more rural areas and girls in towns was common because of the different gender-specific tasks.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, children could also be returned to the institution if the indenture family did not think the child had received the

proper training during their temporary stay at SPS.<sup>17</sup> This child would either be returned to the complaining foster parents or, more likely than not, would be indentured to a new family, creating an unstable environment for the most of the children.

After the initial screening of the applicants’ paperwork, SPS agents made house calls to decide if the family was worthy of a child. Thousands of applications for indenture were sent to the institution every year, and it was up to the agents of the school to make a home visit to determine if the applicant was moral enough with a well-kept house to raise children. Some applicants were automatically rejected because of their shoddy living conditions or their lack of education, both of which were determined at the discretion of the agent. The agent thus had the sole responsibility to judge the applicant’s suitability after only one visit, hardly enough time to actually gauge whether the child would be best suited for that family.<sup>18</sup>

Agents were expected to visit the child every four months, although this was rarely practiced because of the large amount of children out on indenture across the state. While a child was out on indenture, the state lacked direct control of the child. To compensate for this lack of control, the families were asked to fill out forms once every two months that would give the headmaster some sense of how the child was faring, along with a platform for the foster parents to complain about anything that they deemed was wrong with the child, like if the child was being too “lazy” with their chores or acting out. If the family required immediate attention in disciplining the child, the foster parents could write to the headmaster threatening to send the child back to the institution. The headmaster would then determine if their complaint was valid and would

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14 State Public School, *Twelfth Biennial Report of the State Public School for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1910* (Madison, WI, 1910), 220.

15 Tessie was indentured three times by different families, the last of which wanted help with “light housework.” She was eventually sent to the Industrial School for Girls in Milwaukee because of her alleged promiscuity among town boys. Wisconsin Child Center Children’s Records, 1886-1953, WHS.

16 State Public School, *Report of the State Public School for the Biennial Period Ending June 30, 1908* (Madison, WI: Democrat Printing Company, 1909), 373.

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17 Louella was returned to the institution from one of her many foster homes two years after her initial placement and then was returned back to the same foster family a few months later. She was then indentured to another family just a few months later. Wisconsin Child Center Children’s Records, 1886-1953, WHS.

18 State Public School, *Report of the State Public School for the Biennial Period Ending June 30, 1908*, 367-368.

usually write to the child directly telling them to behave or they would be sent back to SPS. If absolutely necessary, an agent could visit the child and talk to them, although this was rarely done as agents were too busy making their normal house calls. Emily's foster parents wrote to the superintendent saying that she was "inclined to be lazy," and so the superintendent wrote to Emily requesting she behave.<sup>19</sup> The state parented these children from a distance, using the institution as a tactic to compel them into submission of their foster family. Not only was the state trying to keep tabs on the children, but the foster parents were using the state as a disciplinary figure in the child's life. This diminished the family environment that Progressive reformers valued by substituting the state as parental figures in a child's life rather than honoring the traditional family structure that placed parents, biological or not, as the sole supervisors of children.

The primary concern expressed by the state was the issue of education for poor children.<sup>20</sup> This value of education increased the number of children being sent to institutions if families, especially impoverished ones, could not provide adequate education or firm discipline at home.<sup>21</sup> Many children were sent to SPS because their biological parents could not afford to send them to school or did not see the importance. These children may not have had transportation to the schoolhouse, may have needed to help out around the house, or may have even been bullied for having immigrant parents who did not speak English, as was the case with Ralph Pavlovic. The son of Serb-Austrian immigrants, Ralph and his siblings were often persecuted in school, resulting in his superstitious mother refusing to send them back. His mother, described as being "very peculiar probably [had] psychosis of some kind," was jailed for thirty days, and Ralph was sent to SPS.<sup>22</sup> The state sought to educate children of Wisconsin in any means possible, even if that meant sending them to an institution to get an education.

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19 Wisconsin Child Center Children's, 1886-1953, WHS.

20 Kleinberg, *Widows and Orphans*, 7-8.

21 Crenson, *Invisible Orphanage*, 249.

22 Wisconsin Child Center Children's Records, 1886-1953, WHS.

Although the stated goal of the school was to provide education for the children in its care, this was often put on the back-burner when the children were placed out on indenture as the cheap labor the child could provide became more important than the child's education.<sup>23</sup> When the child was placed on indenture, the foster parents were required to sign a contract stating the child would attend at least four months of school. The contract also stated that the child would complete up to the state-provided eight-grade education. Despite these education contracts, it was not uncommon for foster parents in rural areas to withhold the children from school for long periods of time in favor of the labor the children could provide around the farm.

Teachers of indentured children were required to send in report cards to SPS, detailing the child's academic and social progress, as well as their attendance. SPS officials then contacted the foster parents of the children who were not attending school on a regular basis, warning them that the child must attend school more often or the child would be returned to SPS. These threats were rarely documented as enforced, and the child more often than not remained at the indentured home. This is evident in the case of Truman, a young boy indentured to a farmer and his family. The farmer misunderstood how much schooling Truman was required to attend, as the primary concern of the farmer was not Truman's education, but rather the labor that Truman could provide. When the SPS superintendent was made aware of this from a report card from the local school marking the many absences of Truman, the superintendent wrote to the foster parents threatening to return him to SPS for an education. The foster father appealed to the superintendent to let Truman stay with them and was granted this request, with the condition that Truman complete the minimum amount of schooling required per year.<sup>24</sup>

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23 Crenson, *Invisible Orphanage*, 212.

24 Truman later won a full scholarship to University of Wisconsin-

Madison, but was not supported by the state during this time. Wisconsin Child Center Children's Records, 1886-1953, WHS.

The act of indenturing children to families was not unique to Wisconsin. Across the United States, orphanages placed out children in order to be able to accommodate more poor children. Progressives viewed being in a familial setting in foster homes as more intimate than an institutional setting if a child absolutely could not remain with their biological family.<sup>25</sup> However, the indenture system was flawed, often caring more about quantity of children cared for rather than the quality of their lives. Every now and then, reports of neglect in the foster homes from concerned neighbors, preachers, or teachers were sent to the school who would then send an agent to investigate. Children indentured in homes even wrote to the headmaster with any concerns they had, only to be dismissed a majority of the time, with the headmaster refusing to return the student to the institution or investigate. Such was the case of Rosa.<sup>26</sup> She wrote to the institution that she was being overworked and did not feel comfortable staying at her foster home, but her complaint was ignored. It was not until she was able to borrow a stamp from a neighbor and mail a letter to her brother, who then wrote the institution claiming that she was being held as a form of “white slavery” and was being threatened and sexually harassed by the foster family’s son and farm workers, that the superintendent took notice. She was finally removed from the home, five years after her initial placement. The communication between SPS officials and the children out on indenture was paternal in nature, as the superintendent and agents at the school often refused to take children’s claims seriously, citing that children often “made things up.”<sup>27</sup>

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25 Crenson, *Invisible Orphanage*, 211.

26 Wisconsin Child Center Children’s Records, 1886-1953, WHS.

27 For example, Stewart stole things growing up and falsely reported he was overworked and starved by his foster family to visiting agents. He was not removed until his foster family decided his attitude was too rowdy to deal with years later. Wisconsin Child Center Children’s Records, 1886-1953, WHS.

Instead of direct communication between the child and the biological family, the superintendent would instead intercept letters to the children at SPS where he would decide if the letter contained worthy enough information to pass on to the indentured child. The state acted as a middleman between the biological family and their child, exerting control. While the state claimed this was for the best interest of the child, this was another way to completely separate the child from their old life in order to form them into “ideal” citizens. SPS sought to separate the child completely from his or her old life from the moment he or she entered the institution.<sup>28</sup>

Progressive reform movements did not always infiltrate previously established institutional settings meant to aid the poor. Furthermore, these reform movements did not occur overnight and often took years to implement within state welfare systems. SPS largely embodied earlier beliefs without adapting to new policies that would retain the integrity of the biological family unit. The state often showed a distrust of those from the impoverished biological families of children being sent to SPS because of their perceived immorality or ignorance. Further showcasing the distrust the state had for the biological families, SPS acted as a middleman between the biological family and the children in its care by limiting interactions between the two in order to shape the children into better citizens absent of perceived immoral biological families or the negative environment associated with poverty. This control the state had on the biological families was a manifestation of distrust of the lower classes by the state contradictory to Progressives’ ideal of a classless society in the eyes of the state. Reluctance to accept new reform ideas aimed at keeping the biological family together was a stark contrast to the philosophies of the Progressive Era and could be considered an impediment to progress in welfare actually being made. ■

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28 Wisconsin Child Center Children’s Records, 1886-1953, WHS.



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Allison Carvalho | *Womyn*



Allison Carvalho | Month 3



Allison Carvalho | Month 5

# BEATING WOMEN: ANALYZING DARABA IN THE QUR'AN

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**ABSTRACT** Ever since the holy Qur'an has been translated, so has the term *daraba* in *Surah* (chapter) 4, *Ayat* (verse) 34 (4:34). Over time, well-regarded male Islamic scholars have translated *daraba* to mean "to scourge" or "to beat," implying that Islam permits the physical abuse of women at the hands of men. In this paper, I will utilize Amina Wadud's book *Qur'an and Woman* to develop an analysis that challenges both the assumptions that the Qur'an condones physical violence against women and that the Holy Scripture teaches that women are inferior to men. By examining both Wadud's contemporary-feminist translation and classical male translations of pivotal Arabic terms in *Surah* 4:34, especially *daraba*, this paper explores the logical trajectory of Wadud's arguments and analytical moves in discussing Islam's true stance on the treatment and equity of women. Suggesting that *daraba* holds alternate amicable meanings by translating it as "to leave" or "to let go," feminist Islamic scholars, like Wadud, bring to light the dangerous repercussions that the "to beat" translation can have on relations between Muslim men and women. Feminist interpretation of *Surah* 4 presents an alternative dialogue that challenges using the Qur'an as justification for gender inequality and physical violence. With this research, scholars can take a holistic approach to counter the contemporary stigmatizing and Islamophobic narrative.

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## Introduction

Since the advent of Islam (640-829 A.D.), the Qur'an has served as a major source of guidance for its believers. Though there is only one version of the Qur'an, there are a multitude of translations of this holy scripture, and, for as long as it has existed, so have its various interpretations. As humans, interpreters hold their own understandings of the world; therefore, their preconceived biases often play an integral role in interpretation.

A common misconception about what Islam deems permissible—with the Qur'an [mis]used as justification—is the belief that men have the right to hit women. One particular chapter, or *Surah*, that deals with the treatment of women is chapter (*surah*) 4, in which matters of

women's rights, obligations, and marriage laws are discussed. In verse (*ayat*) 34 of *Surah* 4, the term *daraba* has been commonly translated as "to scourge" or "to beat" by well-recognized Islamic scholars and has created this implication that Islam permits the abuse of women at the hands of men. By juxtaposing the interpretations of *Surah* 4:34 as made by esteemed Islamic scholars Marmaduke Pickthall, Abul A'la Maududi, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Amina Wadud, and Laleh Bakhtiar, this paper focuses primarily on the use of *daraba* in *Surah* 4:34 and what both male and female interpreters of this verse have interpreted this term to mean throughout time, their methodologies of arriving at said interpretations, and these interpretations' effect on gender relations within Islamic society.

## The Qur'an & Interpretations of *Surah* 4:34 by Three Male Exegetes

The Qur'an is a revelation sent by God to mankind to guide the worldly affairs of God's human creations; thus,

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it is necessary to stay mindful that this text is unlike any other, as it is a prescriptive book with an ethical agenda. An individual's "operations on the earth are shaped by their worldview (and vice versa)," and there is always a potential for conflict when religious evidence from the Qur'an is utilized in a conversation that involves a difference in opinions (Wadud 62).

For countless years, three especially reputable Islamic scholars and exegetes have been well recognized for their efforts of translating the Qur'an in its entirety. English Islamic scholar Marmaduke Pickthall and South Asian scholars Abul A'la Maududi and Abdullah Yusuf Ali have published English translations of the Qur'an, which have served as substantial references for English-speaking Muslims. All dating from the 20th century, the three distinct English translations of Surah 4:34 as made by Pickthall, Maududi, and Yusuf Ali respectively are below:

Men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property (for the support of women). So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded. As for those from whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them. Then if they obey you, seek not a way against them. Lo! Allah is ever High, Exalted, Great. (Pickthall 4:34)

Men are the managers of the affairs of women because Allah has made the one superior to the other and because men spend of their wealth on women. Virtuous women are, therefore, obedient; they guard their rights carefully in their absences under the care and watch of Allah. As for those women whose defiance you have cause to fear, admonish them and keep them apart from your beds and beat them. Then, if they submit to you, do not look for excuses to punish them: note it well that there is Allah above you, Who is Supreme and Great. (Maududi 4:34)

Men have authority over women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth. So righteous women are devoutly obedient, guarding in [the husband's] absence what Allah would have them guard. But those [wives] from whom you fear arrogance - [first] advise them; [then if they persist], forsake them in bed; and [finally], strike them. But if they obey you [once more], seek no means against them. Indeed, Allah is ever Exalted and Grand. (Yusuf Ali 4:34)

Culturally and socially driven world views, such as those that adhere to the attitude that women serve "primarily" as obedient, domesticated caregivers, are a personal perspective and remain a significant factor when interpreting Qur'anic verses pertaining to gender from (especially) a male lens. By using Wadud's critique of the simple term "primary," I would like to add to the conversation of how the belief that a woman's main duty is strictly reproductive downplays her contribution to society and general human value in the eyes of men. Wadud argues that the use of the term "primary" to describe a woman's "duty" of childbearing is often viewed in a negative light, as it implies that women are only capable of being mothers. However, nowhere in the Qur'an does it indicate that "childbearing is 'primary' to a woman" (Wadud 64). It does recognize that women are the sole human beings capable of bearing children; however, this fact is often confused with the social and cultural attitudes that individuals associate with being a mother or child-bearer. The society-driven belief that a woman's "place" is at home, where she "should" be taking care of her children and remaining "obedient" and faithful to her husband, is an example of how an individual's "earthly operations" (as mentioned earlier) are driven by their perception of the world, and, in this case, not the Qur'an.

#### **Surah 4:34 Revisited Through a Feminist Lens and the Deconstruction of Arabic Lexicon**

When Wadud interprets Surah 4:34, she utilizes a deconstructive method to analyze the below passage

and the terms in brackets to guide her translation of the controversial terms in the passage itself. She dismantles the origin of each controversial term to locate where and how exactly exegetes have managed to interpret certain terms to make it seem as if Allah has given men permission to mistreat women. The following passage that Wadud dissects is put in her own analytic words:

Men are (*qawwamuna 'ala*) women, [on the basis] of what Allah has [preferred] (*faddala*) some of them over others, and [on the basis] of what they spend of their property (for the support of women). So good women are (*qanitat*), guarding in secret that which Allah has guarded. As for those from whom you fear (*nushuz*), admonish them, banish them to beds apart, and scourge (*daraba*) them. Then, if they obey you, seek not a way against them. (Wadud 4:34)

Pickthall translates the Arabic term *qawwamuna 'ala* as “Men are in charge of...,” Maududi translates it as, “Men are the managers of the affairs of...,” and Yusuf Ali translates it as “Men have authority over...” Ultimately, these exegetes use different terms to convey one very similar message: men are the superior sex, while women are their subordinate. The Arabic *qama* is the root of the term *qawwamun* (plural of *qawwam*), and it means “to stand,” “make something stand,” or “to establish something.” When *qama*, or related terms like *qawwamun*, *qawwam*, *qiwamah* or *qa'im* are used in the context of the Qur'an, it usually involves either the establishment of religion or prayer, guarding/taking care of something or someone in a fair manner, or continuity in the action taking place. For example, in Surah 4:134, the term *qawwamun* is used in the sentence, “O you who believe! Be *qawwamun* with fairness,” which advocates the idea of continuously standing by, or taking care of, someone or something in a just manner (Karim 2007).

Wadud analyzes the term *qiwamah* in the context of the relationship between a husband and wife. By looking at other scholars, like Sayyid Qutb, Wadud argues that

providing for a female gives a male the privilege of being *qawwamuna 'ala* the female. Qutb says, “The man and the woman are both from Allah’s creation and Allah...never intends to oppress anyone from His creation” (Wadud 72-73). Using Qutb’s argument to vouch for the notion of equality between the sexes, Wadud explains how both the man and woman together are valuable members of society and, speaking strictly in biological terms, each has a particular responsibility. In this case, the woman must bear the child, since this responsibility is of “grave importance” and “human existence depends upon it” (Wadud 73). So while she procreates, what is the man’s responsibility? According to Wadud, “The Qur’an establishes his responsibility as *qiwamah*: seeing to it that the woman is not burdened with additional responsibilities which jeopardize that primary demanding responsibility that only she can fulfill” (Wadud 73). Moreover, the husband must provide everything in his power to continuously guard, take care of, physically protect, and (materially) sustain the woman and her needs, while she is fulfilling her “primary responsibility” (biologically speaking).

Thus, to be *qawwamuna over ('ala)* something or someone means to guard, maintain, or take care of that something or someone in a proper and fair manner. The term denotes not superiority, but rather responsibility; therefore it is vital to make a distinction between ‘responsibility’ and ‘superiority.’ A more accurate translation would indicate that men are the protectors and maintainers of women, and the husband bears the responsibility of protecting, caring for, and fulfilling his wife’s religious and worldly needs. It does not mean—as it has been widely misconceived—that a husband maintains the right to behave obstinately towards his wife or subject her to his will. His status as a “protector” and “maintainer” is more a position of responsibility or liability, rather than a position of authority.

Next, Wadud strategically uses the term *faddala* to explain that God “prefers” some creations over others; however, this preference is not in regards to man or woman (gender

in general), but that “humankind is preferred over the rest of creation” (Wadud 69). Surah 17:70 of the Qur’an honors this statement, as it says, “Verily we have honoured the Children of Adam. We carry them on the land and the sea, and have made provision of good things for them, and have preferred them above many of those whom We created with a marked preferment” (Pickthall 17:70). In the context of Surah 4:34 when *faddala*, or preference, is interpreted as “Allah hath made the one of them to excel the other” (Pickthall) or “Allah has made the one superior to the other,” (Maududi) or “Allah has given one (authority) over the other” (Yusuf Ali), a very clear hierarchy amongst the sexes is established, simultaneously creating a power dynamic between man and woman. According to the Qur’an, however, the only power that is supreme, the most merciful, and omniscient is God Himself, and even the thought of “obeying” a man, a mere creation that is the work of God, is considered a sin. Therefore, when Allah has made “one to excel” the other, or “one superior” to the other, or “one” is given “authority” over the other, Wadud argues that this is not God stating his preference for a man over a woman or giving men permission to dominate over a woman, but rather, *faddala* discusses God’s preference of His human creations (all humans, regardless of gender) over His other creations.

Also, the Arabic *qanitat*, similar to the term *nushuz*, is interpreted as “obedient” by all three male exegetes in Surah 4:34 when specifically discussing how a woman “should” behave towards a man. However, by implementing a critical analyses done of the entire Qur’an and keeping in mind the vital notions of gender and context, Wadud argues that the terms *qanitat* and *nushuz* are “used with regard to both males (2:238, 3:17,33:35) and females (4:34, 33:34, 66:5, 66:12)” to describe “a characteristic or personality trait of believers towards Allah” (Wadud 74). *Qanitat* and *nushuz*, or obedience, are not meant for a man (again, reinforcing the fact that no man deserves obedience, since human beings are merely God’s creation, therefore only He deserves all the praise and obedience), and since the terms are used in regards to

both males and females, they are not exclusively utilized to denote a woman’s behavior towards a man, because, technically, he must maintain that characteristic or trait of obedience towards God himself. Wadud is very clear and analytical in her linguistic approach, and her knowledge on related lexicon is clearly exemplified by the fact that she merits the linguistic context when both translating and applying guidance in the Qur’an.

### **Daraba**

The term that Pickthall, Maududi, and Yusuf Ali translate as “scourge,” “to beat,” or “strike” is *daraba*, and this interpretation has caused quite some controversy and misunderstanding in regards to the treatment of women in Islam both in the past and in today’s society. In the 1970s, W. Montgomery Watt, a Scottish historian and Islamic Studies professor, wrote a review of Pickthall’s translation of the original Qur’an that was published in 1930, where he praised the authenticity and correctness of said translation. Watt claims that because this English version of the Qur’an was approved by high ranking Muslim authorities in Egypt, it should replace preexisting “inferior” Qur’an translations and be considered the best and most accurate English version of the Qur’an to date (Watt 377). If people who teach Islamic Studies and spread information about the religion, like Watt, accept and believe that Pickthall’s translation is absolute, they will go on to teach others what Pickthall has so mistakenly translated, such as that the Qur’an allows Muslims to mistreat women because *daraba* is claimed to mean “scourge.”

In an attempt to provide a more contemporary interpretation of the 1,400 year old Qur’an, female scholars decided to delve into some of the more controversial and gender-oriented chapters that often went unquestioned, but proved problematic in practice. Today, female scholars, like Wadud, are analyzing and interpreting verses in the Qur’an, especially those associated with gender violence, like Surah 4:34, with the intention to invalidate the notion that Islam permits violence against women. Although the



term *daraba* has been widely interpreted for many years to mean “to beat,” after being examined from a female perspective, it is also said to mean “to leave” or “to let go.”

In *Qur'an and Woman*, Wadud pays very close attention to the term *daraba* and its context in different parts of the holy scripture, and has come to the conclusion that “to beat” cannot be the right translation of *daraba*. She believes a better translation could be “to leave” or “to strike out on a journey.” In her book, *Qur'an and Woman*, she states, “...*daraba* does not necessarily indicate force or violence. It is used in the Qur'an, for example, in the phrase ‘*daraba Allah mathalan...*’ (Allah gives or sets as an example...). It is also used when someone leaves, or ‘strikes out’ on a journey” (Wadud 76). The method with which Wadud translates *daraba* to mean “strike out” does not refer to “striking out” against women, as has been so widely thought for so many years; rather, it refers to “striking out” on an adventure. The fact that the verb “to strike” is a homonym in Arabic, a word that has the same spelling yet holds different meanings, is one of the causes for the misinterpretation of *daraba* and belief that the Qur'an allows beating women.

### Contradiction of Other Verses

Another progressive feminist Islamic scholar, Laleh Bakhtiar, also argues that beating women is not promoted in the Qur'an, nor is Pickthall's translation accurate because Islam is a religion of peace and its holy scripture—the word of God—would not possibly advocate violence to its followers. Bakhtiar's argument coincides with Wadud's, as it also attempts to tackle the debate of *daraba* often being translated out of context, which could result in the term adopting a completely new meaning if analyzed incorrectly. In an article that Bakhtiar wrote for *The New York Times* in regards to the term *daraba*, she states:

The ‘beat’ translation contradicts another verse, which states that if a woman wants a divorce, she should not be mistreated. Given the option of staying in the marriage and being beaten, or divorcing, women

would obviously leave...Debates over translations of the Koran—considered God's eternal words—revolve around religious tradition and Arabic grammar. (Macfarquhar 2012)

Bakhtiar explains how another verse in the Qur'an advocates “letting go” of a woman if there are disputes within a marriage. Unfortunately, till this very day, some followers of the Qur'an still believe that the translation of the term *daraba* gives them permission to beat their wife, as opposed to simply parting with her. Without even giving a second thought to the rest of the *ayat* (verses) in the Qur'an that promote or discuss the reasonable option of divorce, this one term is taken out of context and wrongly used to a person's advantage.

Similar to Bakhtiar, Asghar Engineer, an Indian-Muslim reformist writer and activist, agrees that the Qur'an could not possibly give a man permission to beat his wife in one verse, and in all the rest encourage treating her with respect and compassion (Engineer 2012). The Qur'an, the word of God, would not be perfect or legitimate if it were to contradict its own teachings. In a news article, Engineer says:

All verses on the treatment of wife, or even after divorce, say that wives should be treated with *ihsan* and *maruf* (i.e. good and morally approved behavior). The Qur'an also says that Allah has created love and compassion (*mawaddat* and *rahmah*) between husband and wife. If a husband is allowed to beat his wife, love and compassion have no meaning left between the two whatsoever. (Engineer 2007)

All throughout, the Qur'an encourages acting in a kind and just manner towards one's partner; therefore, basing one's actions and beliefs about gender equality on one controversial passage gives followers the misleading impression of what Islam deems acceptable.

Seeing that the Qur'an promotes egalitarianism and

gender equality, Bakhtiar was compelled to look into the controversy over the meaning of *daraba*. She argues that it was most unlikely that God, the most merciful and compassionate, would be against granting equality for all his creations, and, on top of it, allow for the mistreatment of women at the hands of men. This dilemma led her to look into alternate interpretations of the word *daraba*, which over the centuries had been conveniently defined by the *‘Ulama* (male Muslim scholars) as “to beat,” and, as such, had been widely adopted by male translators like Pickthall, Maududi, and Yusuf Ali. Laleh Bakhtiar’s translation of Surah 4:34 in her book, *The Sublime Qur’an*, is as follows:

Men are supporters of wives because God has given some of them an advantage over others and because they spend of their wealth. So the ones who are in accord with morality are the ones who are morally obligated, the ones who guard the unseen of what God has kept safe. But those whose resistance you fear, then admonish them and abandon them in their sleeping place, then go away from them; and if they obey you, surely look not for any way against them; truly God is Lofty, Great. (Bakhtiar 2009)

Bakhtiar argues that the rightful interpretation of *daraba* is “to go away,” and, in her book *The Sublime Qur’an*, she provides three major reasons as to why this is so. Firstly, if *daraba* were to be translated into “to beat,” it would be a direct order to its followers. The Prophet Muhammad, however, when living his life in accordance with the teachings of the Qur’an, never acted on Surah 4:34 by beating any of his wives. Although it can be debated that the Prophet does not necessarily have to carry out every command in the Qur’an, what is crucial is that, out of everything in the Qur’an, he chose to not carry out this command in particular. Bakhtiar argues that perhaps this is because there was no such command—one that commanded men to beat women—in the Qur’an at all, and it has been misinterpreted all this time. Bakhtiar’s second reason revolves around the fact that, for the past

1,400 years, *daraba* has held over 25 various meanings. From these many choices, Bakhtiar says, “why choose a meaning that goes against both the legal and moral principles of the Qur’an and the *Sunnah* (a record of Prophet Muhammad’s actions) of the Prophet?” (Bakhtiar 2009). The final, and most persuasive argument of why *daraba* most likely means “to go away,” as opposed to “to beat,” is because promoting violence towards women in the Qur’an contradicts another verse that favors divorce as the best option to an unsuccessful marriage (Mir 111).

### **Equality of the Sexes as Discussed in the Qur’an**

If one were to look back at other *ayat* (verses) in the Qur’an that deal with male-female relationships, one would see that they say that man and woman are created equal and hold the same rights. The Qur’an supports gender equality, and, as proof, Surah 4:1 states, “O mankind! Be careful of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate...” Both man and woman were created from a single soul, clearly indicating that one is not superior in creation to another and that they both come from the same source, God. In fact, the only superior entity is God Himself (the creator of man and woman). What is often misunderstood is the difference between what religion (in this case, Islam) teaches, and perspectives on gender from what a culture practices. As Wadud argues, the Qur’an is not a culturally specific text, rather a universal text. Therefore, the Qur’an recognizes that a difference between a man and a woman exists; however, it does not specify what kind of behavior is considered “masculine” (like hitting), and what is considered “feminine” (like obedience).

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, by analyzing the various translations of the term *daraba* as presented by both male and female exegetes, we are provided with insight on what Islam does and does not encourage in regards to the treatment of women. We have looked at the various meanings in context as provided by scholars Pickthall, Maududi, Yusuf Ali, Wadud, and Bakhtiar in their respective time periods

and perspectives (male vs. female). It is often misconstrued that Islam is a religion of violence that oppresses and subordinates women; however, by exploring Wadud's arguments, analytical moves, and argumentative style, we can conclude that this stance is both uninformed and improbable for multiple reasons.

First, the Qur'an itself does not place inherent values and duties on men and women individually, nor does it delineate particular "roles" for each gender. Male scholars who interpret the Qur'an are undoubtedly influenced by the notion of a woman's "primary" biological function—childbearing—when determining her "role" and "value" in society. This personal bias consequently plays into each exegete's interpretation of certain Qur'anic passages, especially those dealing with gender. Second, throughout the entire text, the Qur'an encourages Muslims to behave cordially in a time of disagreement with a significant other, and God would not possibly guide His creations to act in one manner and then contradict his own word

and tell them to behave in another (especially one that involves belittling another). Third, this particular verse has been translated by male interpreters for centuries, therefore became widely accepted, until feminist Islamic scholars like Wadud and Bakhtiar decided to challenge its controversial interpretation. Lastly, the Qur'an advocates for the equality of men and women, so to give permission to men to violate and mistreat women—their equal—indicates a power dynamic where women become submissive and men are superior. The Qur'an also mentions far too many times that the best option in times of disagreement between spouses is divorce, and better than that is peace. Resorting to violence most certainly does not embody the principles of equality, nor does it equate with the Muslim belief that only God is most superior, most merciful, and most high. Islam is a religion of peace and, in accordance to the Qur'an, men and women are created equal and must act justly. ■

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# THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE WHORE, VIRGIN, AND MOTHER COMPLEX: REPRESENTATIONS OF GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND FREEDOM IN SEAN O'CASEY'S *JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK* AND EDNA O'BRIEN'S *COUNTRY GIRLS*

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Thirty years apart, the women in both Edna O'Brien's autobiographical novel *The Country Girls* and Sean O'Casey's play *Juno and the Paycock* seem to face similar struggles as mothers, daughters, and women in Irish society. *Juno and the Paycock* revolves around the dysfunctional Boyle family, headed by the mother, Juno, and her unemployed husband, Jack; it is set in the tenements of working-class Dublin in the early 1920s, the time of the Irish Civil War. *The Country Girls* focuses on two female characters, Caithleen Brady and Bridget Brennan. Set in the 1950s, it details the experiences of a generation of families that still feel the effects of the Great Famine. Following the Irish tradition of mother figures like Kathleen Ni Houlihan, the older mother figure of nationalism, the mothers in both of these works represent the struggles of female identity and the work of motherhood; they are depicted as figures of strength, grace, sacrifice, and duality in their prescribed social roles as women in Irish culture. However, their daughters rebel against those social roles and the traditional categorizations of virgin, mother, and whore as they seek to find and establish their own identities.

*Juno and the Paycock*, O'Casey's most famous play, is largely based on his experience of being born into a Protestant working-class family in Dublin. Soon after his birth in 1880, his father died, and he and his many siblings,

some of whom died early deaths, were raised by his mother on her own.<sup>1</sup> Unable to attend school due to an eye disease, O'Casey lived with his family in poverty and at a young age, he began to work as a laborer.<sup>2</sup> Many believe that O'Casey's love for his mother is visible in his writing; as one critic comments, "O'Casey's veneration of his own mother was very much against the current of the tide" of looking down on mothers, especially in the creation of the character Juno Boyle in 1925, "one of the most positive characterizations of the mother figure."<sup>3</sup> Juno's reversal comes swiftly and clearly in Act Three when she decides to take care of her pregnant daughter instead of staying with her husband after the death of Johnny, her son.<sup>4</sup> Juno is the only one who works in her family. She supports not only her husband, "Captain" Jack, who avoids work due to an imagined pain his legs, but also her daughter, Mary, a trade union worker on strike, and her son, Johnny, who lost his arm in the War of Independence. This sets up Juno as the sacrificial mother to her tainted, deflowered daughter, embarking on a new life devoted to supporting Mary, even though Mary's pregnancy is socially taboo. Instead of feeling resigned through wifely duty to a miserable life with her husband only steps from where her son is killed, she pushes these feelings of duty aside.

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1 Sean O'Casey, "Juno and the Paycock," in *Irish Drama, 1900-1980*, ed. C6il6n D. Owens and Joan N. Radner (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1990), 227.

2 *Ibid.*

3 Bernard Benstock, "The Mother-Madonna-Matriarch In Sean O'Casey," *The Southern Review* 6, no. 3 (1970): 603.

4 *Ibid.*, 211, 216.

She is like O'Casey's other mother figures in standing out as a positive example who helps other women and resists patriarchy.

O'Casey highlights both the mother and the virgin in this play almost immediately, as the themes are easily identifiable in the choice of his characters' names. Juno is named for the queen of the Gods in Roman mythology, who also looked after women. Her pregnant daughter is named Mary, a reference to the Blessed Virgin, though she becomes pregnant by a schoolteacher later in the play.<sup>5</sup> As the play begins, the roles of mother and virgin are standard in their development. The audience watches Juno and her two children interact. Mary is reading the paper for more details about the death of their neighbor's son, Robbie Tancred, and Johnny calls for a glass of water from his room. Meanwhile, Juno complains about her husband's unemployment, and complains further with the arrival of Jerry, a suitor of Mary's and member of the Labour Movement, who comes to tell the Captain about an available job. Juno immediately becomes annoyed by this news, as she knows her husband will not take the job, stating, "I killin' meself workin', an' he shruttin' about from mornin' till night like a paycock!"<sup>6</sup> Though her language is figurative here, its feelings of desperation and fatigue point to the fact that her life is incredibly difficult. Her strength as a mother, her "basic saintliness," does not necessarily or wholly relate to her "creed nor her class," but rather it comes from her being "thoroughly hardened by the meanness of her existence."<sup>7</sup> She is supporting three unemployed people, two of whom who have no future of employment, and is also expected to fulfill her duties of mother and wife. The Captain seems to be particularly clueless to her value, as symbolized by his lack of awareness of the Greek goddess Juno. He claims to have given her the nickname "Juno" because she was "born an' christened in June; I met her in June; we were married in

June, an' Johnny was born in June."<sup>8</sup> In reality, her name is about her permanent connection to him and their family because, as Cathy Airth, an Irish Studies professor, comments, "she treats Boyle, not as the 'head' of the house, but as a child in need of supervision"<sup>9</sup> as opposed to the traditional father or patriarchal figure in charge. The humor surrounding Juno and the Captain's relationship infuses the farcical nature of many of their exchanges, especially in the first act; "as such, it emphasizes that Boyle's masculinity and his position in the home is a masquerade, stressed by his parading."<sup>10</sup>

Mary, on the other hand, stands apart from her mother in her attitudes regarding labor and in the relationships she has with two men courting her, one whose affection she desires more than the other. While she is virginal in the sense of her romantic life, she is much more liberal in comparison to her historical context. As mentioned earlier, her name is a direct reference to the Blessed Virgin, and O'Casey's characterization of her tends to blur the traditional definitions of virgin and whore. In the eyes of her patriarchal upbringing and culture binaries, Mary should either be a pure daughter looking for a husband to support her, a nun, or a pure, single woman. Instead, she belongs to a striking trade union, but still cares about the color of ribbon that she wears in her hair, a nod to her desire for choice in dress and self-expression in feminine fashion.<sup>11</sup> She reads progressive literature as well, like Ibsen's social dramas of the time.<sup>12</sup> The emphasized connection to these works of literature connect directly to her romantic life, pulled between two suitors, a tension-filled scenario: Jerry Devine, the 25-year-old neighbor who likes Mary more than she likes him, and Charlie Bentham, a 25-year-old teacher who belongs to a higher

5 Benstock, *The Southern Review*, 603; O'Casey, *Irish Drama, 1900-1980*, 275.

6 O'Casey, *Irish Drama, 1900-1980*, 235.

7 Benstock, *The Southern Review*, 606.

8 O'Casey, *Irish Drama, 1900-1980*, 249.

9 Cathy Airth, "Making the Least of Masculine Authority: Sean O'Casey's 'Paycock' and 'Plough and the Stars,'" in *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 32, no. 2 (2006): 43.

10 *Ibid.*, 43.

11 O'Casey, *Irish Drama, 1900-1980*, 234.

12 *Ibid.*, 244.

class.<sup>13</sup> Though Jerry expresses a desire to marry Mary, she refuses and refers to the possibility of his marriage with someone else once he has a better job.<sup>14</sup> Mary is following a more traditional view of class and marriage, as she seems to think that dating a more well-off man like Bentham, though she has a job, will be better for her social standing. He is also the bearer of good news: her family should be coming into some money thanks to the death of a cousin on her father's side.<sup>15</sup>

O'Casey allows the audience to see the traditional Irish mother in action in his depictions of Juno and her daughter in Act Two. Juno starts to decorate the home, buys a gramophone, and sets up a tea for Bentham. Mary bustles about to get ready for Bentham, worrying about his concerns, her dress, and entertaining him.<sup>16</sup> Things in the family seem to be in patriarchal order, so Juno and Mary do not need to fill the role of empowered women, as their work is no longer the sole source of familial income. When Johnny panics about a votive light before the statue, Juno comes by his side comforting him, a mother doting on her child while she pleases her guests and husband at tea.<sup>17</sup> Mrs. Madigan, the clueless but kind neighbor, joins the neighbors and remarks to Bentham, "You're goin' to get as nice a bit o' skirt in Mary, there, as you ever seen in your puff. Not like some of the dhressed-up dolls that's knockin' about lookin' for men when it's a skelpin they want."<sup>18</sup> As Mary dresses up for Bentham and sings for him, meeting the patriarchal modes of feminine behavior, she is clean and proper in comparison to other girls.

However, Juno and Mary's traditional roles fall apart in Act Three, showing O'Casey's transgressive ideas of mothers and daughters in action. Two months have passed since the news of the will, no money has come in, and Bentham has not contacted Mary in a month. At first, she speculates that Bentham didn't think their family was "good enough

for him," but Juno says she thinks it's more connected to the men her father brought to tea.<sup>19</sup> Returning to a home ransacked by the family's creditors after she takes Mary to the doctor, she vehemently defends Mary to her husband in light of the newly discovered news that Mary is pregnant. Her virgin status in Act Two has now changed to whore, especially because Bentham is nowhere to be found. When the Captain says that she'll need to leave, Juno says, "If Mary goes, I'll go with her," and when Johnny criticizes her, citing "disgrace," she tells him to be quiet.<sup>20</sup> When it is clear that no money will come, the Captain leaves for the bar, and Johnny continues to complain, but again, Juno stands up for herself, declaring: "Who has kep' th' home together for the past few years-only me? An' who'll have to bear th' biggest part o' this throuble but me?"<sup>21</sup> No longer the domestic goddess who is caring and kind, she lashes out to defend what she believes is right, regardless that it makes the Captain and Johnny seem lazy and rude.

As Juno deals with the creditors, Mary and Jerry's meeting continues to solidify her status as a loose woman. At first, Jerry states his love for Mary and that he "wants to forget" that she left him, citing the Labour Party's belief that "humanity is above everything."<sup>22</sup> But when Mary discloses that she is pregnant, Jerry asks, "My God, Mary, have you fallen as low as that?" though he immediately realizes the severity of his comment, tries to backpedal, and contradicts his Labour statement. Mary, however, makes a sharp critique of him and society at once, stating, "Everybody'll think the same...it's only as I expected—your humanity is just as narrow as the humanity of others."<sup>23</sup> In times of crisis, these women are the sharpest critics of men, as their traditional roles have been compromised and tainted. With nothing to lose, Mary stands up for herself despite being labeled a whore.

The final straw falls with the death of Johnny, as Juno "evolves into full awareness," not just of "her sorrows...

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13 *Ibid.*, 234; 248.

14 *Ibid.*, 241.

15 *Ibid.*, 250.

16 *Ibid.*, 254-255; 261.

17 *Ibid.*, 258.

18 *Ibid.*, 259.

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19 *Ibid.*, 268-269.

20 *Ibid.*, 276.

21 *Ibid.*, 278.

22 *Ibid.*, 279.

23 *Ibid.*

but for those [commonalities] that she shares with other mothers.”<sup>24</sup> Upon the news of her dead son, Juno immediately springs into action out of her grief, stating “Come, Mary, an’ we’ll never come back here agen. Let you father furrage for himself now.”<sup>25</sup> She plans for them to stay at her sister’s, and when Mary proclaims her baby will have no father, Juno says, “It’ll have what’s far bether—it’ll have two mothers.”<sup>26</sup> Her sadness is immediately replaced with action, with her humanity circumventing her “conventional conformity,” which is the “paramount triumph of the mother.”<sup>27</sup> This decision is heroic and showcases the immense power of mothers, something O’Casey may have felt strongly about in regards to his own mother.<sup>28</sup> Though her daughter is now a whore in the eyes of patriarchal society, Juno is able to overcome the grief she feels over Mary’s pregnancy and Johnny’s death in the freedom she feels from her husband and the strength of her role as the matriarch. This demonstrates Juno’s development of “maternal agency,” a term used by feminist theorists to discuss the importance of a mother seeing herself as an individual. At the end of the play Juno outright rejects the values and ideas her patriarchal context has placed on her and starts to “form an alternative culture” for both her and Mary, embracing new values over the old patriarchy she struggles against throughout the play.<sup>29</sup>

Different in its characters’ senses of freedom, but similar in the roles the women aspire to, Edna O’Brien’s *Country Girls* invites the reader to watch the passing of womanhood and motherhood’s challenges from mother to daughter. Born in County Clare, Ireland, to a family led by a misfortune-plagued, drunk father and a hard-working mother, O’Brien faced so many of the same challenges that her protagonists Kate and Baba did that

her trilogy is considered autobiographical.<sup>30</sup> Her father was an alcoholic, and her mother “worked like a demon,” paralleling Kate’s family more than Baba’s.<sup>31</sup> In *Country Girls*, she destabilizes “the foundational myths of the Republic” by representing rural Irish women as sexual beings as opposed to the “nationalist image of Irish women as chaste, ethereal beings.” This allows her to explore Irish women’s responses to “the romantic myths of Irish womanhood and male chivalry” in a postcolonial Ireland.<sup>32</sup>

The novel opens with Kate and her mother awaiting the arrival of her drunken father, setting the bad example for Kate that she should wait for men regardless of their deeds in the hope that marriage or another social exchange will save her. When Kate learns that her mother has died while in a boat with another man, this sets an example for Kate that women should define themselves by “their sacrifices and woes,” especially regarding men, and that a woman should hold onto the “quixotic hope” that an affair or another man could save her.<sup>33</sup> Though her mother expresses traditional tenderness towards Kate in the brief section of the novel where she is alive, such as by giving Kate treats and staying awake to make sure that she wouldn’t choke on a candy that she fell asleep with, this doting is eclipsed by her dramatic death and ruinous liaison.<sup>34</sup> Swiftly, she moves from mother to whore in the eyes of society and even her daughter. She is a strong example of O’Brien’s ability to craft complex mother figures. Though she works hard to be caring and kind, she cannot avoid their financial ruin or protect Kate and herself from possible abuse, a victim of her husband and her historical period in that women were expected to be married and could not escape.<sup>35</sup> In her resemblance to

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24 Benstock, *The Southern Review*, 615.

25 O’Casey, *Irish Drama, 1900-1980*, 282-283.

26 *Ibid.*, 283.

27 Benstock, *The Southern Review*, 616.

28 *Ibid.*, 623.

29 Maria Keaton, “Maternal Agency in ‘Juno and the Paycock,’” in *New Hibernia Review / Iris Éireannach Nua* 3, no. 4 (1999): 86.

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30 Rachel Cooke, “Edna O’Brien: ‘A writer’s imaginative life commences in childhood,’” *The Guardian*, February 5, 2011.

31 *Ibid.*

32 Eileen Morgan, “Mapping Out a Landscape of Female Suffering: Edna O’Brien’s Demythologizing Novels,” *Women’s Studies* 29, no. 4 (2000): 450.

33 *Ibid.*, 458-459.

34 Edna O’Brien, *The Country Girls*, (New York: Penguin Group, 1987), 5.

35 Morgan, “Mapping Out a Landscape of Female Suffering: Edna O’Brien’s Demythologizing Novels,” 459.



the Shan Van Vocht, the poor old woman who represents Ireland, O'Brien shows how women suffered from the effects of Irish policy regarding divorce and abuse as much as colonialism, especially in terms of patriarchy and poverty.<sup>36</sup> Though she may have felt freer by focusing on the life of her daughter, Kate's mother must never have felt free, caught as she was between the roles of mother and whore.

After the death of her mother and the grief that follows, Kate transfers the same idea of a quixotic hope to her own life.<sup>37</sup> Though she and Baba go off to convent school, her romance with Mr. Gentlemen continues to grow. Even after her mother dies, it is hard for Kate to see the "damaging consequences for women of dysfunctional relationships with men."<sup>38</sup> So she continues to pursue her own affair with Mr. Gentleman, naively believing that their relationship will blossom into something more. This is damaging to Kate and her future: she is motivated to be expelled from the convent, her chance for a good education and a middle-class life, because of her romance.<sup>39</sup> She begins to see Mr. Gentleman as a father figure as much as an older lover, becoming submissive to his needs.<sup>40</sup> She is an epitome of the heroine of late-nineteenth-century nationalist literature, such as Nora in Ibsen's *A Doll House*, as she searches for herself in a male-dominated setting.<sup>41</sup>

In contrast, Baba's mother, Martha, evokes the Virgin Mary in her looks, but leans towards the tendencies of a modern woman whose marriage feels like a domestic jail. While at first she rebels against her status as married woman by wearing provocative clothing and visiting the local pub, she makes a reversal into becoming a mother. She is described as having "a pale Madonna face with eyelids always lowered, and behind them her eyes were

big and dark so that you could not see their color, but they reminded one of purple pansies. Velvety."<sup>42</sup> While Kate's mother was trapped by abuse and the need to provide for her child, Martha feels angry about the societal need to marry her husband because it intruded upon the possibility of higher social standing and her career as dancer.<sup>43</sup> Her complaining becomes ritualistic, a constant reminder to her children of what she had to leave behind.<sup>44</sup> This is reflected in Baba's later actions, as she believes moving to Dublin will make her sophisticated and allow her to interact with high-class men reflective of her mother's wishes in her own thinking.<sup>45</sup>

In their friendship, the two girls express the problematic knowledge of womanhood and sexuality they gained from the examples of their mothers. Specifically, their virginal status as young country girls is tainted by this knowledge. Baba's decisions to pursue older men and Kate's infatuation with Mr. Gentleman and the giving away of her virginity show how Irish girls can see "themselves and their social possibilities in romanticized terms," which comes to influence their expectations of their life.<sup>46</sup> Though the girls feel like they are making the choices of free, liberal women, the effect of their mothers' examples is detrimental. They float between living as virgins and as party girls; this sets them apart from the good country girls and the "bad" city girls, but neither role seems to fit well. Their use of a sexual story to expel themselves from the convent shows the "fundamental incompatibility" of what they have learned subconsciously from their mothers' actions: sex has use and power in society even though it is a taboo topic.<sup>47</sup> Kate's romanticized views are demonstrated as damaging, though she feels free in her choice to follow Mr. Gentleman. However, the

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36 *Ibid.*

37 *Ibid.*, 458-459.

38 *Ibid.*, 459.

39 O'Brien, *The Country Girls*, 109.

40 *Ibid.*, 101; 163.

41 Morgan, "Mapping Out a Landscape of Female Suffering: Edna O'Brien's Demythologizing Novels," 457.

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42 O'Brien, *The Country Girls*, 30.

43 Morgan, "Mapping Out a Landscape of Female Suffering: Edna O'Brien's Demythologizing Novels," 460; O'Brien, *The Country Girls*, 32.

44 Morgan, "Mapping Out a Landscape of Female Suffering: Edna O'Brien's Demythologizing Novels," 460.

45 O'Brien, *The Country Girls*, 145.

46 Morgan, "Mapping Out a Landscape of Female Suffering: Edna O'Brien's Demythologizing Novels," 461.

47 *Ibid.*, 462.

“recalcitrant” Baba “holds out the possibility of moving beyond” these views of romance toward “greater self-reliance.”<sup>48</sup>

Though the women in these works move between the roles of mother, virgin, and whore, their fluidity allows the reader to see that women are not set in static roles. Rather, their actions are reactions to their context and historical moment. Juno and her daughter Mary end up in unfortunate circumstances, but the triumph of Juno in the role of the mother over her alcoholic husband seems to suggest that O’Casey felt that mothers were powerful and important members of Irish society. They were not just cooks and caregivers, submissive to their husbands whom they chose to survive in society, but women who make choices to help themselves and other women. In

O’Brien’s *The Country Girls*, Kate and Baba’s mothers vacillate between mother and whore, doting on their children but wishing for other lives or escape from their marriages. However, their motherly tendencies cannot obscure the lessons the girls glean: men will always be a source of unhappiness and pain, but they are worthwhile in exchange for a comfortable life. Though none of these women end up in wholly positive situations, O’Casey and O’Brien’s depictions of these women and their experiences allow readers to see that these women are not just unthinking models of the mother, whore, or virgin, but rather are complex people who are hoping to find their ways in societies that work against them. ■

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48 *Ibid.*, 459.

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# L'ACCETTAZIONE DI SÉ E DELL'ALTRO IN IGIABA SCEGO E GABRIELLA KURUVILLA

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**ABSTRACT** With the growing population of first and second generation immigrants in contemporary Italy, there has also been a growth of literature written from the perspective of Italians of different backgrounds that deals with the issue of diversity. Through a close reading of the autobiographical works of two multicultural women writers—Igiaba Scego's novel *La mia casa è dove sono* and Gabriella Kuruvilla's short story "India"—this essay seeks to better understand the meaning of "otherness" and how it relates to confidence in oneself and trust in others. The comparison drawn between the two texts provides a clearer image of the effect the feeling of "otherness" has on the two Italian writers and draws distinctions between their views on their respective roots.

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Il fenomeno dell'Italia multiculturale è un evento recente ma anche uno crescente. L'immigrazione in Italia attraverso gli anni non è un fatto nuovo, ma dagli ultimi decenni la crisi italiana degli immigrati ha cambiato l'opinione degli italiani sugli stranieri. Il cambiamento è stato soprattutto nelle città, dove le strade italiane sono gradualmente diventate luoghi pieni di gente di diversa origine e colore. Alcune di queste persone sono nuove al paese, altre sono figli di immigrati, la seconda generazione, ma in tutte queste persone c'è la sensazione di essere un «altro.» In questo articolo, analizzerò il primo capitolo del libro di Igiaba Scego *La mia casa è dove sono* e il racconto di Gabriella Kuruvilla «India» dal volume miscelaneo *Pecore nere* per confrontare le diverse opinioni che gli italiani multiculturali hanno sulla loro origine. Userò le letture di queste scrittrici per analizzare il significato che «l'alterità» ha per queste donne e riflettere su come accettare le differenze degli altri può beneficiare le persone e l'Italia di oggi.

L'immigrazione in Italia è stata un fenomeno recente che ha cominciato a raggiungere cifre significative al volgere dell'ultimo secolo. Infatti, l'Istituto nazionale di statistica indica che la popolazione di residenti stranieri in Italia è aumentata da circa 211,000 persone nel 1981 a circa 5 milioni di persone nel 2014 (3). Uno dei risultati di questo aumento sono state le tensioni fra i residenti in Italia, cittadini nati nel paese da genitori italiani e immigrati di prima o seconda generazione. Questa ansia di appartenere a una cultura nuova da parte degli immigrati ha creato anche un nuovo stile di letteratura multiculturale in Italia. Come spiega Caterina Romeo, questi scrittori migranti hanno aperto «una breccia nell'immaginario italiano che storicamente ha associato la popolazione italiana alla bianchezza, o all'assenza di colore e alla *normalità*» (134). Storie come i racconti di Scego e Kuruvilla, che parlano dell'intersezione tra l'italianità e l'alterità, hanno portato alla luce e affrontato l'idea dell'identità in una Italia nuova e diversa. In un certo senso, attraverso le loro storie, Scego e Kuruvilla hanno introdotto le categorie di razza e dell'altro nel dibattito culturale del paese.

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Per parlare della sua cultura, Scego comincia il suo racconto alla stessa maniera delle fiabe somale, «*Sheeko sheeko xariir*,» o, in italiano e come dice Scego, «Storia, storia oh storia di seta» (9). Queste righe non solo segnalano l'inizio di un viaggio per trovare le sue radici in una città lontana, ma mostrano anche lo stile con cui Scego racconta la sua storia – usando le sue due lingue e le sue due culture. Infatti, il primo capitolo del libro è scritto nella stessa maniera, collegando la città dove Scego è nata, Roma, e la città della sua famiglia e dei suoi antenati. Scego parla delle differenze fra le fiabe italiane e somale, la differenza fra le due culture e le città di Roma e Mogadiscio ma, alla fine, dice che per lei queste città sono «come gemelle siamesi, separate alla nascita» (11). Sebbene queste due città e culture siano diverse e causa di divisione fra le persone intorno a lei, per Scego esse costituiscono parti essenziali del suo essere che proprio attraverso questo libro lei cerca di unire.

Il progetto nel quale Scego si è avventurata per collegare queste due culture e città, e alla fine arrivare a una immagine più vera di sé, comincia dopo la guerra civile di Somalia che ha distrutto la città di Mogadiscio. A questo punto la famiglia di Scego abita in altri paesi, i suoi parenti adesso hanno una vita in altre città dove sono considerati «altri». Per lei, loro e i suoi ricordi di Mogadiscio sono gli unici legami a un luogo che non esiste più. Per Scego e la sua famiglia, il progetto di disegnare una mappa di questa città comincia solamente come una maniera di recuperare la cultura che hanno perso. Però, come spiega Scego, lei non è completamente somala, c'è una parte di lei che è esclusivamente italiana. Scego spiega: «L'Italia era il mio paese... l'ho sempre sentito profondamente mio. Come del resto lo è la Somalia» (17). Attraverso i suoi racconti non solo impariamo le difficoltà di essere diverso e avere un'alterità visibile ma anche di temi seri: il lutto di una città morta, le cicatrici che lascia il colonialismo e il razzismo fisico e verbale contro le persone che si vedono diverse.

Il racconto di Kuruvilla comincia con lo stesso scopo del capitolo di Scego: ritornare a una città che esiste come una memoria lontana – sebbene il viaggio sia stato fisico – e cercare di trovare il suo posto nella cultura dei suoi genitori. Come spiega Kuruvilla, lei ritorna alla terra di suo padre 30 anni dopo una brutta esperienza della sua infanzia. Quando parla del suo precedente viaggio in India quando era bambina lei dice: «ceravo di non avvicinarmi a nulla e a nessuno, per mantenere una distanza di sicurezza... non sapeva come gestirmi. E integrarmi» (70). Nel suo viaggio come adulta, Kuruvilla trova che la sua esperienza in India non è cambiata. Lei si sente ancora straniera in una cultura che dovrebbe accoglierla: gli odori sono forti, le strade sono sporche e gli indiani la considerano strana. In breve, lei trova: «la stessa atmosfera umida, calda, squallida e soffocante che mi aveva tolto il respiro quando ero bambina» (70).

Per Kuruvilla, il viaggio attraverso i villaggi d'India è principalmente un viaggio di scomodità. Attraverso il viaggio le continua a mancare il paese dove è nata ma sente dentro di sé il dovere di continuare a ricordare che una parte di lei è ancora indiana. In un passaggio Kuruvilla confessa che l'unico momento nel quale si sente accettata dalla gente è quando c'è uno scambio di denaro fra lei e gli indiani. Lei dice: «Io turista sono, e mi sento» ma allo stesso tempo «io volevo essere considerata una di loro, uguale a loro» (72-73). Alla fine del racconto, Kuruvilla continua ad avere lo stesso sentimento di rifiuto senza capire le ragioni per le quali lei non è accettata: «sto cercando di comporre un puzzle senza averne i pezzi» (82). Per Kuruvilla, il viaggio verso la accettazione degli altri e di se stessa non è finito.

Come spiega la filosofa italiana Michela Marzano, il processo di accettare le differenze degli altri e sviluppare la fiducia verso gli altri parte dall'accettare le differenze che abbiamo all'interno di noi stessi e dall'aver fiducia in noi stessi. Marzano spiega che per arrivare all'accettazione dell'altro è importante prima amarsi

come persone e accettare tutte queste differenze che abbiamo dentro noi stessi – giacché l'amore, per lei, è la radice della fiducia in sé (54). È solo dal momento in cui le persone hanno fiducia in loro stesse che «si comincia ad accogliere la propria alterità, che si può poi imparare ad accettare l'alterità altrui» (55). Se ci basiamo su questa comprensione dell'alterità e dell'accettazione, è più facile capire alcune delle ragioni per la differenza fra il punto di vista di Scego e Kuruvilla. Per esempio, in un momento di introspezione, Scego si chiede chi lei sia in realtà: «sono afroitaliana? Italoafricana? un fastidio? Negra saracena? Sporca negra?» (31). Scego si appropria delle etichette che gli altri le hanno dato, cominciando con parole innocue che parlano della sua origine e multiculturalismo e proseguendo fino a insulti ricevuti dalla gente che non la accetta. Per una persona multiculturale, queste etichette possono formare la base dell'identità personale. Scego, piena di fiducia in se stessa, invece arriva alla sua risposta, lei è un crocevia di culture, ma, soprattutto dice: «sono solo la mia storia» (31). Attraverso le sue domande Scego trova che lei non è solo una combinazione di culture separate e stereotipi negativi, e invece mostra una forte fiducia e accettazione di se stessa. Sfortunatamente, la storia cambia quando è raccontata dal punto di vista di Kuruvilla. Come Scego, anche Kuruvilla si fa domande per scoprire la propria realtà ma alla fine arriva a una risposta più negativa: «ero una creatura che originava stupore e imbarazzo, un'enigmatica confusione tra Oriente e Occidente» (75). Le differenze fra le due donne sono ovvie, dove Scego vede ponti tra le città della sua origine, Kuruvilla vede una separazione. Soprattutto, quando facciamo un confronto fra lo stile nel quale le due raccontano le loro storie possiamo vedere che Kuruvilla non riesce a trovare la fiducia in se stessa.

Le differenze nella capacità di avere fiducia negli altri tra le due scrittrici si vedono chiaramente nel loro racconto. C'è, per esempio, la maniera nella quale parlano dei loro ricordi d'infanzia nei loro rispettivi paesi. Quando parla dei suoi ricordi Scego dice: «Certo, avevo più dimestichezza con Roma... Però in quella cartina c'era una parte delle

mie radici. Mi dovevo sforzare per ricordare quelle strade, viste con gli occhi di bambina» (26). Dopotutto, e come spiega Scego, il disegno di Mogadiscio è fatto da lei e i suoi parenti per onorare e non perdere l'unica cosa che rimaneva della città: «avevamo bisogno di quel disegno, di quella città di carta per sopravvivere» (21). Il discorso interno di Kuruvilla invece è completamente opposto al sentimento di necessità che Scego esprime nel non volere perdere le sue radici. Quando Kuruvilla parla dei suoi ricordi del paese di suo padre, lei spiega che «quella terra, per me, per troppi anni, ha rappresentato uno spazio irraggiungibile... da non conoscere: cancellare» (71). Dopo, quando arriva in India e le tornano in mente tutti i suoi ricordi d'infanzia, Kuruvilla spiega: «Volevo dormire, dormire, dormire. Dimenticare, dimenticare, dimenticare» (71). Nelle loro storie possiamo vedere come Scego ricorda caramente le fiabe somale che sua madre le raccontava nella sua infanzia, mentre Kuruvilla ha solo il ricordo di una bambina spaventata che si nasconde dietro le gambe di suo padre da una cultura straniera. Per le due donne, l'essere multiculturale crea sentimenti diversi dentro di loro e di conseguenza influenza la maniera nella quale possono accettare l'alterità all'esterno.

Infatti la incapacità di Kuruvilla di accettare la sua cultura e le sue radici si può vedere in maniere più discrete. C'è, per esempio, la maniera in cui le scrittrici si riferiscono alle loro culture. Nel suo libro, quando Scego parla dei suoi parenti e della gente della città di Mogadiscio usa delle parole che suggeriscono l'unità fra lei e gli altri membri della sua cultura. Come già detto prima, Scego combina inoltre le sue lingue per parlare della sua storia (13). Nel caso di Kuruvilla, c'è un sentimento di separazione fra lei e le altre persone. Prima di tutto, lei parla degli indiani come gli «altri», usando sempre il pronome «loro» quando si riferisce a questo gruppo di persone. Nel caso di Kuruvilla, l'uso di un pronome plurale crea una frattura più grande fra lei e gli indiani. Quando Kuruvilla e il suo fidanzato visitano Goa, la destinazione turistica per eccellenza in India, lei può vedere come «gli indiani, visti come corpo estraneo alla loro stessa patria, sembrano esistere solo per

offrire servizi» (78), mentre lei è considerata una turista. Infatti, c'è un momento nel quale un ragazzo le chiede se può fare una foto con lei. Kuruvilla, sorpresa per questa domanda, gli vuole spiegare che anche lei è indiana ma non ci riesce: «non conosco l'hindi, balbetto l'inglese, parlo solo italiano» (78). In altre parole, i problemi che Kuruvilla ha quando prova ad accettare la sua cultura sono, da un lato, il risultato di non poter accettare la sua alterità interiore.

Dall'altro lato, l'intolleranza viene da una idea sbagliata del significato dell'accettazione. Come spiega Marzano nel suo libro, accettare l'altro non vuol dire diventare l'altro o trasformare l'altro in noi stessi. Lei spiega come «ogni qual volta si parla di integrazione, infatti, c'è il rischio di ridurre l'altro all'identico, allo stesso» (32). Da questa frase possiamo capire come una integrazione vera dell'altro non vuol dire cambiare una persona per assimilarla, ma creare un sistema nel quale c'è un vero cambiamento di se stessi e fiducia negli altri. Per questa ragione, Kuruvilla ha tanti problemi nel tentativo di essere parte della cultura indiana. Per esempio, lei spiega: «volevo che tutto un popolo mi accettasse, mettesse da parte le sue tradizioni, i suoi dogmi e le sue caste. Gettasse se stesso, per accogliermi» (72). Per accettare la sua cultura e per essere accettata, Kuruvilla cerca di cambiare un popolo intero e farlo più simile a lei senza cambiare lei stessa o avere fiducia negli indiani. Sfortunatamente per Kuruvilla, questa idea sbagliata dell'accettazione causa una incapacità di essere accettata e accettare gli indiani. Nel suo racconto, anche Scego mostra i risultati negativi di provare a cambiare la gente per cancellare «l'altro» e assimilarla. In un racconto che parla di una alterità non interculturale, lei parla di suo fratello che aveva passione per disegnare. Lei racconta come «tutti negli anni gli avevano detto che disegnare era una cosa da bambini» e come lui ci ha creduto. Scego parla di questa storia e si rammarica che suo fratello «avrebbe potuto uguagliare Picasso in bravura, se solo avesse voluto, se avesse studiato» (20). Questa storia non solo è importante per capire come l'assimilazione e il cambiamento dell'altro

creano un sentimento di insicurezza nelle persone, ma anche perché, invece d'accettare, l'assimilazione cambia e cancella quello che è diverso. Come spiega Marzano un'altra volta, «quando si parla di assimilazione, si corre un grave rischio di negare l'alterità» (32).

Nell'Italia di oggi, come in altri paesi, c'è anche la stessa idea sbagliata sulla differenza fra l'assimilazione di un popolo alla cultura e l'accettazione. Però, in alcuni casi la ragione dietro l'incapacità di accettare l'altro - in questo caso gli immigrati - è una amnesia collettiva. Come spiega Laura Harris questa amnesia ha causato la creazione del mito che l'opinione negativa sugli immigrati in Italia sia un fatto nuovo. Secondo Harris, se capiamo il contesto storico possiamo capire come questo sentimento di «alterità» sia stato assegnato prima agli italiani dal Sud. Dopo l'immigrazione verso gli Stati Uniti e il ritorno di alcuni al paese d'origine, o il movimento degli italiani dal Sud al Nord, gli italiani del Sud erano ritenuti primitivi o biologicamente inferiori (608). Questo stesso sentimento contro gli altri è adesso assegnato anche alle persone che immigrano in Italia.

Dall'altra parte, e in una maniera simile, l'amnesia collettiva di cui ha parlato Harris ha cancellato «the experience of Italian emigration, of Italian colonialism, of Fascism, the knowledge of the complexity of Italian society itself» dalla mente degli italiani (603). Come dice Scego nel suo libro, «gli italiani hanno stuprato, ucciso, sbeffeggiato, inquinato, depredato, umiliato i popoli con cui sono venuti in contatto» (17). In altre parole, è importante capire il contesto storico dell'Italia e il colonialismo per capire come il problema non è solo nell'incapacità di accettare gli immigrati, ma anche come l'Italia, che non tanti anni fa ha creato instabilità nei paesi che ha colonizzato, oggi rifiuta la gente che bussa ai suoi confini. Nel suo racconto, Kuruvilla fa un commento anche sul trattamento riservato agli immigranti e agli altri quando dice che anche in Italia «lo straniero, l'emarginato, è l'altro. È l'escluso che cerca di integrarsi, e che viene trattato con disprezzo» (76). Ma tutti questi sentimenti negativi sugli altri possono essere



cancellati se sappiamo di più di loro, se li accettiamo come sono. Secondo Marzano è anche importante sapere le ragioni per le quali la gente non è accettata perché con questa informazione possiamo «rompere il circolo vizioso dell'abitudine e permettere loro di capire che l'altro, l'alterità che si trova... è una ricchezza immensa» (60).

Infatti, nel mondo globalizzato di oggi è quasi impossibile vivere senza accettare la gente multiculturale che abita intorno a noi. Come spiega Carla Lunghi, oggi «le società... non possono mai dirsi monoculturali nel senso che non si esauriscono in un legame esclusivo con un'unica appartenenza ma si nutrono del gioco e della scelta fra molteplici riferimenti culturali» (61). Oggi, l'alterità è dappertutto e prima arriviamo all'accettazione degli altri, meglio sarà per la società e per la pace individuale di ognuno di noi. In un episodio del suo racconto, Kuruvilla arriva a Goa, una città turistica in India, e descrive questo

luogo e diversi tipi di persone: «È pieno di israeliani, americani e, chiaramente, europei» (78). In questa scena possiamo vedere come la globalizzazione è arrivata anche in paesi che crediamo monoculturali, e come nel mondo di oggi è impossibile vivere senza accettare il multiculturalismo che è già presente ovunque.

Come impariamo dalle storie delle due scrittrici italiane di seconda generazione, l'accettazione dell'altro può diventare una sfida se non c'è una conoscenza delle ragioni per le quali escludiamo colui che è diverso. Da una parte, avere fiducia nelle altre persone deve cominciare con la fiducia in noi stessi e quello che è diverso dentro di noi. Di conseguenza questa fiducia creerà la possibilità di integrare gli altri senza assimilarli o cancellare questa alterità delle altre persone. Questa accettazione non solo è necessaria per avere una pace individuale, ma è essenziale per la prosperità della società pluralista di oggi. ■

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Gareth Kaye | *Untitled Profile*

# RESTRICTIVE IMMIGRATION POLICY INFORMED BY NATIVIST SENTIMENT

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**ABSTRACT** Anti-immigrant sentiment fuels restrictionist immigration policy that primarily targets Latinos. In this paper, I attempt to uncover the roots of anti-immigrant sentiment that fuels the drumbeat for restrictive immigration policy. I argue that racism and white supremacy are key ways that Latino life becomes devalued. Next, I connect white supremacy to border militarization, which has normalized Latino death via the “racial state of expendability.” Also, I discuss how racial scripts have linked racism directed at Mexicans to historical racism that has been directed at all people of color. I explain how these scripts socially brand Mexicans and Latinos as invaders, second-class citizens, and disposable laborers. Finally, I present the Arizona State law known as SB 1070 as a case study for understanding the restrictive nature of immigration policy in the U.S.

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## **Rhetoric and Race: Racializing Latinos as the “Other”**

Immigration policy in the U.S. is often discussed in terms of fear and security. Latinos both documented and undocumented are the source of major demographic change, which has provoked nativists' reactions to Latino immigration as well as anti-immigrant discourse and policy. Latinos are frequently seen and discussed as the racialized “Other” in immigration debates. Since the beginning of the early 20th century, Latino immigration has been linked with “violence, criminality, deterioration of communities, and...with the drug trade on the southern border” (Davies, 2009, p. 378). This creates a discourse in the media and in politics that demonizes Latino immigration, usually as a threat to the white homogeneity of the U.S. Since Latinos make up the largest immigrant group in the United States, they are the center of all discussions and debates regarding immigration in this country (Davies, 2009; Migration Policy Institute, n.d.). Additionally, Latinos make up most of the undocumented immigration to the U.S. as well. According to Silva,

“Latinos comprise 77 percent of the approximately 1 million undocumented immigrants in the United States” (2016, p. 72).

Harvard professor of political science Samuel Huntington’s 2004 essay “The Hispanic Challenge” encapsulates the conservative argument against Latino immigration, according to Davies who describes it as discourse that demonizes Latino immigration (2009). Its main argument is that Latino immigration will bring about the downfall of the dominant white culture or mainstream Anglo-Protestant culture. Huntington believes that Latino immigration will cause a cultural division in the United States and the erosion of Anglo-Protestant values such as the English language, Christianity, religious commitment, the rule of law, individualism, and the Protestant work ethic (Davies, 2009, p. 378; Huntington, 2004). He focuses on Mexican Americans particularly but argues that all Latinos are not assimilating in the same way as the European immigrants of the 19th and 20th century. “The single most immediate and most serious challenge to America’s traditional identity comes from the immense and continuing immigration from Latin

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America, especially from Mexico, and the fertility rates of these immigrants compared to black and white American natives” (Huntington, 2004, *In this new era*, para. 6). His evidence of this is Latinos’ alleged lack of allegiance to the U.S., their bilingualism, and their unwillingness to assimilate. For example, he takes issue with Spanish-language retention among Latinos, arguing that it is eroding the use of English and thus the national identity of the U.S. He notes how bilingualism is prevalent among Latinos, observing that Census data shows that more than 29 million people in the United States speak Spanish at home (10.5 percent of all people over age five). Because of the scale and scope of Latino immigration, he believes that Latino immigration and Latinos’ unwillingness to assimilate is facilitating the use of Spanish through successive generations. If Latino immigration continues, it will lead to the “Hispanization” of the U.S., and it will “challenge the existing cultural, political, legal, commercial, and educational systems to change fundamentally not only the language but also the very institutions in which [Latinos] do business” (Huntington, 2004, *Massive Hispanic immigration*, para. 37). What he is doing here is describing Latino immigration as a threat to mainstream Anglo-U.S. society.

Citrin, Lerman, Murakami, and Pearson test Huntington’s claims of the threat of Hispanic immigration to U.S. identity using extensive survey data from national and Los Angeles opinion surveys as well as data from the U.S. Census in their empirical analysis. They conclude that Hispanics pose no threat to the national identity of the U.S. Their analysis is limited only to cross-sectional data, and they note that data on assimilation trends is also quite limited. They test to see if Hispanics, including the second and third generations, are indeed “less likely to be monolingual in English, less committed to the individualist ethos of self-reliance and hard work, less likely to identify themselves as Americans, and less patriotic” (Citrin et al., 2007, p. 32). They find that linguistic assimilation of Hispanic immigrants is indeed occurring from one generation to the next regardless

of age, education attainment, or the ethnic makeup of their residential environment. According to Pew survey data, “only 6 percent of first generation immigrants are English dominant, compared to 32 percent of the second generation and 71 percent of third generation Hispanics, only 2 percent of whom are Spanish dominant” (Citrin et al., 2007, p. 36). Additionally, Hispanic linguistic assimilation is on par with other immigrant groups. Huntington was also concerned about bilingual enclaves and attachment to Spanish that would make Latinos less likely to identify as “American”, but by the third generation, Hispanic bilinguals prefer an American identity over the Latino or country of origin identity choice, according to a Pew survey from 2002 (Citrin et al., 2007, p. 41). Also, Hispanics are not more or less religious than whites, and they do not have a lower commitment to the values of self-reliance and hard work. In short, the multiple surveys that Citrin et al. make use of suggests that Latino immigration is no threat to American values and American identity.

The discourse of demonization of the invading Latino “Other” stokes white, nativist fears of Latinos and leads to draconian, restrictionist immigration policies. Take for example Proposition 187, the 2005 Secure Borders Initiative (SBI), or the Arizona State Senate Bill 1070 (SB 1070). Proposition 187 (Prop 187) or the “Save Our State” law was passed in California in 1994 and denied access to public services such as access to schools and hospitals to undocumented immigrants. It also required law enforcement to report undocumented immigrants to the California Attorney General’s Office and to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Prop 187 was eventually killed and voided in the courts in 1999 (Barreto and Segura, 2014, p. 177). Davies describes SBI as an initiative to “transfer funds to the new migration military” by hiring defense contractors to build walls, physical fences, and detention centers, as well as secure the border with various surveillance technologies. This is part of a move that treats illegal immigration as a law and order issue (Davies, 2009, p. 379). SB 1070 was passed

in 2010 in the state of Arizona and is considered one of the strictest and broadest anti-immigrant laws enacted in decades. One of its provisions includes the “mandatory detention of individuals who are arrested, even for minor offenses that would normally result in a ticket, if they cannot prove they are authorized to be in the United States” (Theodore, 2011, p. 90).

Valentino, Brader, and Jardina have documented how white ethnocentrism and media priming are associated with negative views of immigration and a favoritism for a restrictive immigration policy in their empirical analysis. “While general ethnocentrism was a quite powerful predictor of white opinion on immigration in our data, the specific comparisons between Whites and Latinos was doing most of the work” (2013, p. 164). They find that ethnocentrism specifically directed at Latinos fuels negative views of immigration and beliefs that immigrants are stealing jobs, degrading American values, and abusing government benefits. The more a white person favors their own group over Latinos, the more likely they will favor a restrictionist policy agenda as documented by this analysis. Similarly, Lee and Ottati find that the tendency to evaluate an ethnic out-group more negatively than the ethnic in-group, known as in-group-out-group bias, does indeed determine opinions on restrictive immigration legislation, specifically Prop 187 in this study. They found in one of their experiments that Anglo-American participants had stronger support for Prop 187 when it affected a Mexican immigrant than when it affected an Anglo-Canadian immigrant (Lee & Ottati, 2002, p. 631). Another study found that that perceptions of the cultural threat of Mexican immigrants or the “perceived harm caused by immigrants with distinct morals, norms, and values” induces more prejudice or more negative reactions than the potential integration of immigrants from respondents’ home country (Zárate, García, Garza, & Hitlan, 2003, p. 100). This study was conducted with college students from the University of Texas, including Anglos and Latino participants.

Interestingly, most economic concerns do not have a statistically significant relationship with negative views of immigration and restrictive immigration policy among whites in Valentino et al.’s analysis. National economic concerns were not found to be significantly related to support for restrictive immigration policy and negative views of immigration. Additionally, respondents’ membership in a variety of economically vulnerable groups such as laborers and the unemployed does not significantly affect policy views on immigration. However, personal financial insecurity was associated with support for restrictive immigration policy, but the association is not as strong as that of attitudes about Latinos and opinions on restrictive immigration (Valentino et al., 2013).

Additionally, Valentino et al. note that white ethnocentric attitudes towards Latinos and its association with favoritism for restrictive immigration policy appear to be correlated to the rising trend of news coverage on Latino immigration since the 1990s. For example, “the year Prop 187 was on the ballot and voted into law in California, attention to immigration in general and Latino immigration spiked in the news” (Valentino et al., 2013, p. 160). Media bias and media priming may play a role in driving ethnocentric attitudes among whites. The media is known to perpetuate stereotypes and racism towards Latinos. For example, one study found that stories about Latinos in news coverage make up less than 1 percent of all news, and of that less than 1 percent, the stories largely focused on are of Latino crime, terrorism, and illegal immigration (Negrón-Muntaner, 2014, p. 13).

Chavez also notes that the media stokes support for restrictive immigration policy. According to Chavez, “the media gives voice to commentators, pundits, informed sources and man-on-the-street observers who often invoke one more of the myriad truths in the ‘Latino Threat’ narrative to support arguments and justify actions. In this way, media spectacles objectify Latinos. Through objectification... people are dehumanized, and once that is

accomplished, it is easier to lack empathy for those objects and to pass policies and laws to govern their behavior, limit their social integration, and obstruct their economic mobility” (Chavez, 2008, p. 7). Thus, it seems very possible that the media plays a role in creating negativity towards Latinos, which in turn leads to negative views of Latino immigrations among whites.

Where does this hostility towards Latinos originate? The short answer is racism and white supremacy. Latinos are racialized and oppressed by the dominant white order of the U.S. and the system of racial hierarchy where Latinos occupy a lower rung. Latinos have been racialized by whites as a non-white, inferior “race,” defined in terms “of both real and alleged physical characteristics, with phenotypical characteristics typically linked closely to cultural characteristics of the targeted group” (Feagin & Cobas, 2013, p. 16). In a society dominated by white supremacy via the white racial frame, the racialization of Latinos justifies their subjection to a second-class citizenship in the U.S. where they are excluded from the vast amount of social and economic capital that whites have secured for themselves via systemic racism and colonialism. Thus, Latinos face personal and societal discrimination, from hostile encounters with racists to systematic oppression in the form of lower socioeconomic mobility. One example of a microlevel oppression would be how Latinos are frequently put down for using Spanish and told not to speak it in public (Feagin & Cobas, 2013). The system of racial hierarchy and oppression of Latinos is the backdrop that fuels white fears and ethnocentric attitudes of the threat of Latino immigration. White supremacy demonizes and devalues Latino life leading to oppressive immigration policy that has at times violated the civil and human rights of Latino migrants (Silva, 2016).

### **Racism and Border Militarization**

White ethnocentric attitudes fuel border militarization and restrictive immigration. As Marquez explains, there has been increased spending since the 1990s to prevent “illegal” immigrants from crossing the border, resulting

in an “epic increase in immigrant deaths..., coupled with a broader surge in violence that has victimized Latino immigrants and citizens alike” (2012, p. 474). Ever since the United States started increasing the budget of the Immigration and Naturalization Service in the 1990s and the Clinton administration’s push to concentrate new resources along corridors used most heavily by migrants in a concentrated border enforcement policy, there have been about 1,700 deaths reported to the Mexican Consulates along the Southwest border from 1994 through mid-2001 (Cornelius, 2001, p. 669).

Marquez explains that the border has always been militarized as part of how a sovereign state maintains power and control over the citizenry. The increase in border killings is justified by the racial state of expendability, a state that dehumanizes and Other-izes Latino/as. Violence in this context becomes normalized against migrants (Marquez, 2012). Border militarization is the transfer of public funds to weaponize the border using walls, fences, detention centers, and surveillance technologies provided by defense contractors. The securing of the border treats illegal immigration as a law and order issue that should be dealt with using punitive measures rather than a civil violation (Davies, 2009). This normalizes violence against migrants crossing the border and allows Border Patrol, who racially profile Latinos, to take lives with impunity like that of fourteen-year-old Mexican citizen Sergio Hernandez Guereca who was shot dead by U.S. Border Patrol for allegedly throwing rocks near the border (Marquez, 2012).

As Marquez explains, “shooting deaths at the border have increased by nearly threefold since border militarization was implemented in the mid-1990s” (2012, p. 486). According to Marquez, the U.S maintains its authority via the racialization of Latinos. By Other-izing Latinos, the state can justify the subjugation of Latinos and the militarization of the border to protect the Anglo-Saxon settler colony from the “Other”. The state maintains border violence against Latino immigration so ruling

elites in the U.S. can “reinforce their hegemonic influence over the masses at times when such influence was deficient due to growing frustrations among the masses of failing economies or government corruption” (Marquez, 2012, p. 484). This might explain why border security and restrictive immigration are often on the forefront of elected officials’ policy agendas (both Democrat and Republican), such as Bill Clinton’s push for a border militarization strategy or Donald Trump’s famous multi-billion-dollar wall along the border of Mexico, a centerpiece of his 2016 election platform.

In short, a key purpose of border militarization is indeed to take the lives of migrants coming to the U.S. for a better life. Racism devalues black and brown bodies. “Raciality immediately justifies the state’s decision to kill certain persons—mostly (but not only) young men and women of colour—in the name of self-preservation. Such killings do not unleash an ethical crisis because these persons’ bodies and the territories they inhabit always-already signify violence” (Marquez, 2012, p. 479). This is supported by Smith’s concept of the three pillars of white supremacy, specifically the pillars of genocide and orientalism. White supremacy that exists in U.S. society is based on the logic that “indigenous people must disappear” and must always be disappearing to justify claims to indigenous land by non-Native peoples (2012, p. 69). Let us consider for a moment that a considerable portion of the United States was stolen from Mexico in the Mexican-American War of the 1840s. Restrictive immigration policy could be considered a way to both disappear indigenous people (e.g. migrants from Mexico) as well as to protect claims that non-natives have on stolen land in the U.S. This logic of genocide might explain how the U.S. justifies a border militarization policy that kills migrants crossing the border because border policy is there to protect those claims to U.S. land while disappearing/killing indigenous people from Mexico (Molina, 2010; Smith, 2012). The logic of orientalism defines the U.S. as a “superior civilization” and “marks certain peoples or nations as inferior and deems them to be a constant threat to the well-being of

empire” (Smith, 2012, p. 69). This also justifies migrant deaths on the border and is a logic that devalues migrant lives because the U.S. is in a constant war to keep migrants from Latin American out of the U.S.

In the context of white supremacy and the racial state of expendability, it makes sense that draconian immigration policy is sanctioned by the state because that is how the state maintains its power. The public, desensitized to the plight of immigrants, sees immigrants as intruders, and the state justifies violence and restrictive public policy against them.

### **Racial Scripts Facilitate Restrictive Immigration Policy**

Molina describes how since the 1920s, there has been a long history of Mexican Americans being compared to other racialized groups and portrayed as second-class citizens and invaders who are inferior and deportable. She explains that Mexicans were (and still are today) racialized through racial scripts where whites regularly compare Mexicans to other marginalized groups like African Americans and Native Americans to portray them as inferior and less desirable. During the 1920s to 1930s, there was much debate around Mexican immigration, especially in the House and Senate where several bills, debates, congressional hearings framed Mexican immigration as a threat to the U.S. There is no Supreme Court landmark case that marks Mexican Americans as inside or outside of legal or social citizenship, but comments from Albert Johnson, the Chairman of the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization in the 1920s, reveal the use of racial scripts in an attempt to create quotas on immigration from countries in the Western Hemisphere to restrict Mexican immigration. He did this by comparing Mexican immigration to slavery, arguing that Mexican immigration would create a race problem similar to how the Civil War started with a race problem. In an immigration hearing from 1926, Johnson stated, “who would have thought at the time that a fearful racial problem would have come, leading to a great war, from the introduction of those blacks? This committee knows that one person in every

twelve in the United States is black skinned” (as cited by Molina, 2010, p. 163).

Molina argues that there was a conflict between maintaining racial purity and exploiting the labor of Mexicans. Note that Mexican immigration continues to this day to be primarily labor migration. Another example of racial scripts at work is a letter written by a West Coast eugenicist named C. M. Goethe, which was sent to his California representative in 1928. He talks about Mexicans’ “hopes of gaining for his children the precious genes of Nordics, that the latter may become mestizo,” and asks “does our failure to restrict Mexican immigration spell the down fall of our Republic...?” (as cited by Molina, 2010, p. 164). This is a racial script linking Mexicans to “past miscegenation fears about Africans American and Asian men” (Molina, 2010, p. 164).

Additionally, those seeking to relax immigrations laws such as agribusiness in California would use the racial script “birds of passage” to describe Mexicans as desirable over Puerto Ricans and Blacks but also uniquely deportable and disposable. All of this is done to guarantee a cheap labor force for those business groups with no expectation that those immigrants would ever stay in the U.S. In short, the racial scripts of the past are still used today to inform who belongs and who does not. These scripts have helped perpetuate racism and anti-immigrant sentiment in the U.S for the past two centuries, according to Molina. Racial scripts are important for understanding how things like the war on immigration and the war on drugs are built on the “criminalization of African Americans, Asian Americans and Latinos to enforce policies of discipline and punishment, detention and deportation that overlap, and are reinforced” by homeland security (as cited by Molina, 2010, p. 172). Racial scripts inform how the discourse of fear and security is created and justifies restrictive, draconian immigration policy of today.

### **Draconian Immigration Policy**

The current state of immigration policy in the U.S. specifically targets the undocumented in an attempt to get them to self-deport in a strategy called “attrition through enforcement.” As Theodore suggests, “Having failed to form an effective political coalition at the federal level capable of enacting their preferred legislative proposals, restrictionists have resorted to immigration reform by stealth through their attempts to materially degrade conditions of everyday life for immigrants through state and local legislation and administrative agreements” (2011, p. 96). Some of these include direct enforcements measures to arrest and detain individuals for immigration violations, indirect enforcement such as penalizing landlords for renting to the undocumented, and public benefits statutes that deny the undocumented access to a range of services and institutions like health care benefits (Rodríguez, 2008, p. 592-593). Supreme Court cases provide a precedent vesting immigration policy as the sole domain of the federal government, not state and local governments. States have bypassed these rulings by arguing that they can make policy pertaining to “immigrants and immigrant incorporation” not immigration policy (Theodore, 2011, p.92). However, this is still immigration policy and has led to a ground swell of immigration policy at the state and local levels, both good and bad.

The bad side of this is that states are criminalizing the undocumented via laws like the anti-immigrant, Arizona law known as Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act, or SB 1070. According to Theodore, it is considered one of the strictest and broadest anti-immigrant law enacted in decades. It seeks to codify the “attrition through enforcement” strategy. These kinds of laws attempt to banish the undocumented from the United States by making “life so miserable for unauthorized immigrants that they break their community ties, distance themselves from friends and family, and quit their jobs and pull their children out of school to leave the country” (Theodore, 2011, p. 95). This is truly an insidious law that



criminalizes undocumented immigrants, very right to exist.

SB 1070 was passed in the state of Arizona in 2010 amid major criticism from opponents like the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund who argue that SB 1070 engages in racial profiling and will lead to numerous civil rights violations. According to Theodore, only a few months after it was signed, similar bills like SB 1070 were introduced in at least fifteen other states. This law has served as model legislation for other states and local governments seeking to banish the undocumented. What it primarily does is empower local law enforcement to engage in immigration-enforcement efforts that have typically been the domain of the federal government. For example, it requires “law enforcement authorities to determine the immigration status of a person if reasonable suspicion exists that the person is an alien who is unlawfully present the United States.” It also allows officers “to arrest a person if the officer has probable cause to believe that the person has committed any public offense that makes the person removable from the United States,” all without obtaining a warrant (Theodore, 2011, p. 94).

Again, SB 1070 is the criminalization of immigrants who have come to this U.S. to make a better life for themselves in a land supposedly of immigrants. However, the wave of anti-immigrant policy fails to recognize immigrants’ contribution to our society as well as their fundamental humanity. SB 1070 is just one part of numerous “illegal immigration relief acts” that do such things as “impose penalties on landlords who rent living quarters to unauthorized immigrants and on employers who hire undocumented workers” (Theodore, 2011, p. 93). Other examples include laws on the books in Georgia, Oklahoma, Colorado, and Virginia that require “state and local police to verify the status of those who have come into their custody” or Prop 187 that denied access to public services such as access to schools and hospitals to undocumented immigrants in California (Rodríguez, 2008; Barreto & Segura, 2014).

What is the motivation behind SB 1070? Anti-immigrant sentiment likely fueled by racist and ethnocentric ideology, racial scripts, and the racial state of expendability. All of these criminalize a human as “illegal” simply for existing. We know this based on the comments of the chief sponsor of SB 1070, State Senator Russell Pearce, who employed a very similar justification as Huntington for the passage of SB 1070. “I will not back off until we solve the problem of this illegal invasion” (as cited by Theodore, 2011, p. 93). “Flagrant pronouncements of ‘illegality’ function to deny rights by criminalizing unauthorized immigrants-individually and collectively-while simultaneously reducing the likelihood that rights will be extended, or even maintained, through federal legislative means” (Theodore, 2011, p. 97).

The militarization of borders and the criminalization of the undocumented is justified by the supposed threat to national sovereignty that Latino immigration poses. As Theodore explains, the “attrition through enforcement” strategy is a draconian form of social control and banishment that “attempt(s) to dislocate and exclude already-marginalized persons from a jurisdiction based on a set of ascribed characteristics” (2011, p. 100). In the end, restrictionist immigration policy such as SB 1070 does not reduce the presence of the undocumented (especially in the wake of market liberalization via the North American Free Trade Agreement), but only contributes to migrant deaths and the immiseration of the lives of the undocumented (Theodore, 2011). Silva notes that the increasing deaths at the border are part of the U.S. Operation Gatekeeper of 1994 that deliberately made border crossings more dangerous to halt illegal immigration. This U.S. border policy violates both migrants’ Fourth and Fourteenth Amendment rights but also violates Article 1 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Silva, 2016). This and SB 1070 are inhumane policies fueled by racist ideology that devalues, erases, and even kills Latino lives.

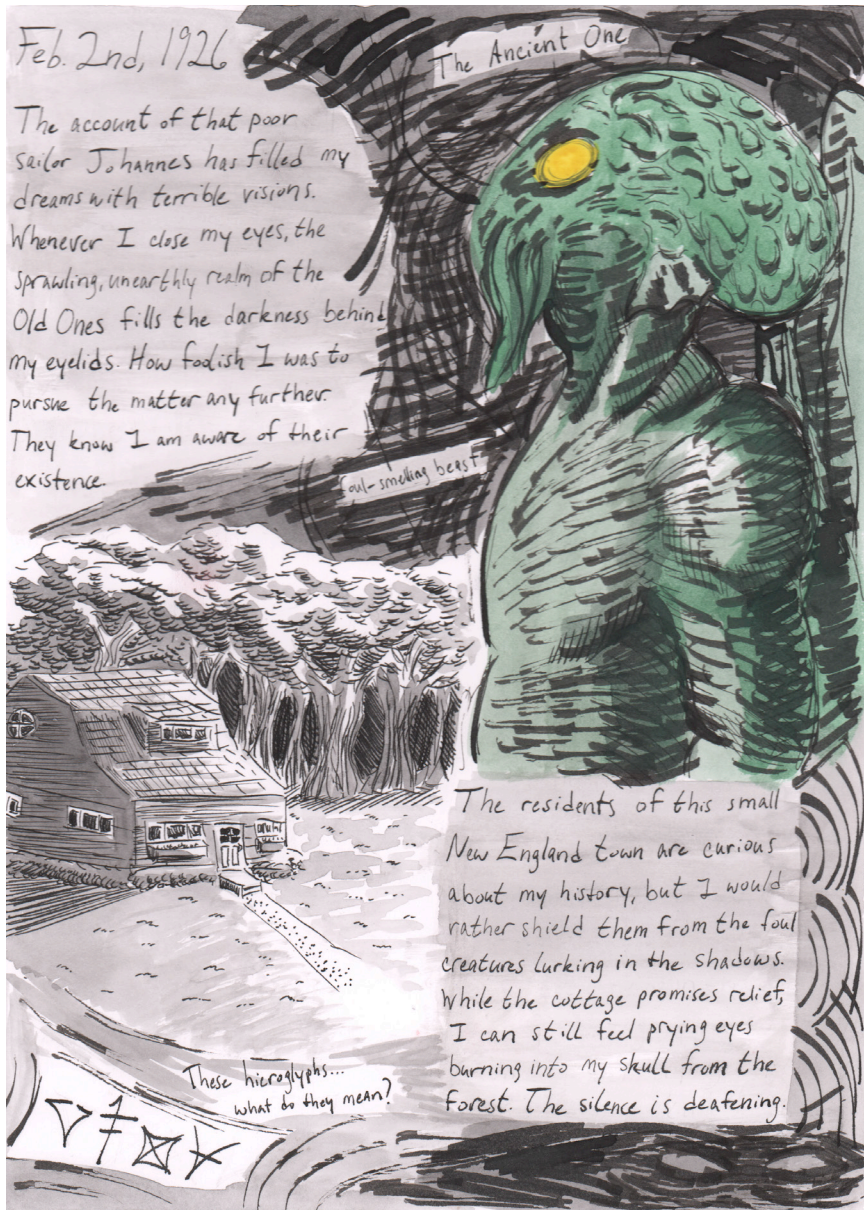
### **Embracing Ethical Immigration Requires Confronting Ethnocentric & Racist Attitudes**

In this paper, I demonstrate how Latinos have been racialized as the “Other” via systemic racism and the use of racial scripts. This racism is the foundation of ethnocentric attitudes among whites that continues to lead to restrictive and inhumane immigration policy. Racism devalues Latino life and sanctions the U.S. government to militarize the border, leading to the death of migrants crossing the border in search of a better life. This is a gross injustice but also a violation of human rights. Additionally, I document the injustice of SB 1070 that seeks to criminalize the undocumented by banishing them from public spaces and utilizing local law enforcement to facilitate deportations. All Latinos regardless of citizenship bear the brunt of restrictive immigration policy because of the proximity of the Latino panethnic group to this issue . As Silva explains, Latinos

are more vulnerable to the costs of restrictive immigration policy. For example, most of the undocumented living in the United States are from Latin America. Latinos are also more likely to have a close friend or family member who could potentially be deported because of restrictive immigration policy, according to a 2013 survey from PEW Hispanic Research (Silva, 2016, p. 72). Additionally, since images of Latinos crossing the border are so frequently associated with immigration policy by politicians and the media, immigration policy has been racialized around Latinos, and this affects all Latinos regardless of their immigration status. We must move towards an ethical immigration system considering the inevitable demographic change in the U.S. in the future. However, there also must be a paradigm shift in order to address systemic racism directed at Latinos that is the source of restrictive immigration policy. ■

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Charlotte Mukahirn | *Murmurs from Afar I*

# FARMER, HOOKS, AND MCFAGUE: A SYNTHESIZED ANALYSIS OF PODIUM BUILDING

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A program of study on peace and justice would need to focus on curating and fortifying the skills necessary for students to become instruments of peace. Through the study of human rights theory, social movements, nonviolence, gendered resistance, and various forms of peace and justice, building the program would invite students to interrogate the political system of the imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy in which they are situated. This political system, hereafter *dominator culture*, is dependent on keeping certain populations excluded and exploitable (hooks 84). So, what would be valid strategies by which the dominated can attempt to navigate their sociopolitical situation within dominator culture—and, eventually, liberate themselves from the chains of dominator culture? One such strategy has been the development of podiums for the voices of the dominated, marginalized populations. The word ‘podium,’ defined by Merriam-Webster’s dictionary, refers to a “raised platform for a speaker.” While the literal definition has strategic and tangible value in the context of the on-going process of fostering social change, I am more interested in using the word in a figurative sense. By ‘podium’ I mean a space or vehicle that can be occupied by marginalized populations, which ensures that their voices will be heard, taken seriously into account, and given the same consideration as privileged voices. The question

is how such a metaphysical space should be created? I suggest that we can turn to the works of Paul Farmer, Sallie McFague, and bell hooks for answers. Each of these voices provides insights that, in conversation with each other, will allow us to formulate a prescription for the development of a podium for marginalized voices that will aid in their liberation from dominator culture.

In *Belonging: A Culture of Place*, bell hooks offers an explanation of how dominator culture has achieved the exclusion of marginalized voices from popular discourse in social justice. While her work specifically names an analysis of the black/white relation, her conceptualization of dominator culture can reasonably be applied to all populations occupying the space outside of and on the peripheries of the white capitalist patriarchy. She suggests that much of the critical work of post-colonial intelligentsia entertains the “fascination with the way white minds...perceive blackness, and very little expressed interest in representations of whiteness in the black imagination” (hooks 91). That is, the dominators have historically focused on the relationship of the dominated to them, rather than the relationship of the dominated to the dominators. This, she argues, is a symptom of a white supremacist society, which inevitably—and by design—produces white supremacist academia. Such a situation has created a discourse on social justice and dynamics of power in which the voices of the dominated are rendered not only without value, but *invisible*. The genius, albeit evil genius, in this relationship is that by rendering the voices of the marginalized invisible, the dominator culture

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has also made the dominators 'invisible' to the dominated; it has created the "myth of whiteness" that protects the dominator from the racialized other. hooks uses an essay by Richard Dyer to fortify her conception of the "myth of whiteness." Dyer writes, "Power in contemporary society habitually passes itself off as embodied in the normal as opposed to the superior" (hooks 94). It is this pseudo-normalcy that gives legitimacy to structures of domination, especially whiteness. The dichotomy between the goodness of white and the evil of black has been so enshrined in what has been called "common-sense thought" that we have been socialized to believe the fantasy. There is, then, a pure 'us' and an evil 'them' that does not deserve a voice and is effectively incapable of having a voice because the 'other' in the dominator culture is something less than human. From hooks' perspective, what must be done to create a podium for those rendered voiceless by dominator culture is that "hegemonic discourses, and the holders of hegemonic discourse, should dehegemonize their position and themselves learn how to occupy the subject position of the other" (hooks 98). That is, discourses on 'otherness' and their examination of its political and social effects should consider the converging positionalities from which they are constituted in order to minimize the hegemonic power of whiteness.

Sallie McFague, similar to hooks, enters the conversation on voices of the marginalized by saying that dominator culture has its focus of power in *us vs. them/ dominator vs. dominated* dichotomies. Speaking from an economic perspective, she says, "Economics is about human well-being, about who eats and who does not, who has clothes and shelter and who does not, who has the basics for a decent life and who does not. Economics is about life and death, as well as the quality of life. Economics is not just about money, but about sharing scarce resources among all who need them" (McFague 119). McFague observes that we are members of a society that accepts, almost without question, an economic theory that supports insatiable greed on the part of individuals. Society has

accepted market capitalism as the way things are and must be. Market capitalism, like all power structures, as hooks would suggest, has been normalized to the point of "common sense." However, the belief that market capitalism represents the normal or pinnacle version of society is a dangerous misconception. McFague says that market capitalism is a type of economics that allocates scarce resources on the basis of individuals successfully competing for them, not with regard to the needs of the planet's inhabitants nor with an eye to its sustainability. It provides a model for how scarce resources might be allocated, not a description of how they must be allocated. The realization that economics is not a hard science, but an ideology, is the first step in seeing things differently. McFague suggests ecological economics as a necessary alternative to market capitalism. Ecological economics is an ideology of economics for the well-being of the whole "household" of planet Earth and all of its creatures. This model claims that human beings, while greedy, are even more needy. We depend on the health of all the other parts of our planet for our very existence. Market capitalism denies an important fact: "unless the limited resources of the planet are justly distributed among its myriad life forms so they all can flourish, there will be no sustainable future for even the greediest among us. We cannot live without these other sources of our existence..." (McFague 121).

These two readings of the dominator culture illustrate the genesis of a voiceless, dominated people. Both McFague and hooks make it very clear that society as we know it depends on a paradigm of dichotomy between "us" and "them," between "haves" and "have-nots," and between "those with rights" and the "rightsless." hooks provides that this dominator culture has been sustained for centuries because it has been normalized. That is, we have been socialized to believe that these dichotomies are normal. Such normalization has seeped into liberal human rights doctrine, the very vehicle upon which the social justice community has attempted to build a podium for marginalized voices. The ultimate failure of the social

justice community is described in the work of Paul Farmer (M.D.), *Pathologies of Power*.

In this work, Farmer offers a critical analysis of liberal human rights doctrine by indicating several detrimental key failures of this prevailing doctrine. According to Farmer, the key problem with this prevailing doctrine, the issue from which all of its other short fallings emerge, is that it “presupposes ‘that our society enjoys an equality that in fact does not exist’” (Farmer 221). Presupposing that society at large enjoys these equalities causes liberal doctrine to decontextualize human rights abuses, which Farmer notes are of paramount importance if we are to understand and promote effective human rights policy. Additionally, Farmer suggests that liberal human rights doctrine lends too much of its focus to the promotion and protection of civil rights. His critique here is that civil and legal rights cannot be obtained or exercised without the protection of social and economic rights. The combined effect of these inadequacies of liberal human rights doctrine has been the implementation of a human rights agenda that focuses on the effects of human rights abuses, rather than the underlying causes. Farmer makes a plea for the understanding that “rights violations are, rather, symptoms of deeper pathologies of power and are linked intimately to the social conditions that so often determine who will suffer abuse and who will be shielded from harm” (Farmer 7). In the neoliberal era, those who suffer the “brunt” of human rights abuses are the poor. *Pathologies of Power* presents a human rights theory based on the conception that structural violence is the root and underlying cause of human rights abuses. For this reason “human rights abuses are best understood (that is, most accurately and comprehensively grasped) from the point of view of the poor “who are the victims of gross structural violence in the neoliberal era. In *Pathologies of Power*, Paul Farmer attempts to redefine human rights doctrine in the context of structural violence and employs liberation theology to propose a solution that demands a “preferential option for the poor.”

Farmer’s “preferential option for the poor” means that resources and efforts to alleviate and prevent human rights abuses—vis-à-vis structural violence—should be delivered with a preference to those most at risk for suffering. Farmer suggests, “just as the poor are more likely to fall sick and then be denied access to care, so too are they more likely to be the victims of human rights abuses, no matter how these are defined” (Farmer 138). This idea is rooted in liberation theology, the paradigm by which Farmer develops his solution for attacking structural violence and human rights abuses. The most important point for us in Farmer’s *Pathologies of Power* is that while human rights can and should be declared universal, the risk of having one’s rights violated is not universal (Farmer 231). We should take this point into account when fighting structural violence and attempting to build podiums for marginalized people. In our neoliberal world, the poor are the victims of the most violent suffering; thus adequate human rights discourse demands a preferential option for the poor. In the context of this analysis, this means that we need to ensure that discourse on liberation of the marginalized is focused first and foremost on what the marginalized have to say rather than on what do dominators have to say about them.

Using these conceptualizations of “otherness” and hegemonic discourse according to dominator culture, we can begin to formulate an analysis of how we have been approaching podium building according to popular discourse and what must change in order for podium building to achieve what it actually sets out to do. In our mission to become instruments of peace, we find ourselves “raising our voices for those who cannot raise their own.” While it is important to do so, we often overlook why and how these marginalized/dominated voices have been silenced and continue the white supremacist imperialist patriarchal hegemony of the discourse. If we dehegemonize the discourses by considering the intersecting positionalities of social justice and giving attention to the voices of those who have been silenced, the possibility of liberation from dominator culture is far

more likely to be realized with extreme work. This means that we need to develop a safe space for marginalized voices by providing education, integration, and paradigm disruption. We have to educate society at large to unlearn the current dominator culture, while at the same time educating the marginalized to navigate their position within dominator culture while it stands. Integration is necessary in that, while hegemonic discourses of social justice continue to exist, voices of the dominators must be flanked by voices of the dominated. It is the dominated voices that can with extreme authenticity convey the necessity of a paradigm shift away from dominator culture. With education and integration, the dominator culture paradigm could be disrupted. Society at large would then be able to understand our intimate interconnectedness as humans. McFague notes that, while humans are greedy, they are even more so needy. Human needs will only be fully met when we come together--when we are all seated together at the figurative table. ■

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# GETTING BEYOND CARTESIANISM: AN INVESTIGATION OF SELF AND OTHER IN THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL TRADITION

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## I. Introduction: The Cartesian Legacy

In the insightful and synthetic work, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics and Praxis*, Richard J. Bernstein illuminates the ways in which many philosophical projects of the twentieth century can be read as bold attempts to get beyond the constraining legacy of Cartesian philosophy. Though his focus there is principally on the reevaluation of the Cartesian conception of rationality, his basic orientation can be extended to other aspects of the Cartesian legacy that underwent similar critique and transformation during that period—in particular, the rigorous distinctions drawn between *res cogitans* and *res extensa*, mind and body, or subject and object. When one turns to the phenomenological tradition, one finds a sustained re-description of what it is to be a subject or self and a vigorous questioning of the ‘objective’ character of the world in which we find ourselves. This critical and constructive project will be the focus of this paper, and it will be unfolded in two ways.

First, we will take up two short yet rich works from within the phenomenological tradition—Jean-Paul Sartre’s *The Transcendence of the Ego* and Edith Stein’s *On the Problem of Empathy*—with an eye toward their specific critiques and constructive revisions of the Cartesian dichotomies. Through Sartre’s work we will consider whether the self is best conceived as a kind ‘homunculus’, standing over against and in the background of one’s experiences, or whether the self is not something quite different. Then,

through Stein’s monograph we will explore a particular problem that emerges within a Cartesian framework in light of its commitment to the ‘objective’ character of the world—namely, how we ought to account for or describe our experience of other people. In a sense then, Sartre’s text will serve to problematize the ‘subject’ side of the dichotomy while Stein’s will problematize the ‘object’ side. Collectively, they help construct a picture of human life as immersed in rather than over against a world that is not best understood as ‘objective.’

Second, the discussion of these works will reveal certain themes that run through the whole of the phenomenological tradition. These themes have broad implications for how we think about the world, what it is to be human and what it means to do philosophy. In highlighting these themes, my aim is to begin constructing an outline of the philosophical paradigm at stake in phenomenology. Importantly, I do not take this task to be straightforwardly descriptive in a way wholly divorced from normative considerations. On the contrary, weaving together the narrative of a tradition involves putting forth claims as to what that tradition *ought* to mean, what makes it valuable, and how it ought to proceed. With these considerations in mind, we can begin unfurling Sartre’s biting critiques of the Cartesian self.

## II. Jean-Paul Sartre: Plunged into the World of Objects

As we noted above, Sartre’s principle concern in *The Transcendence of the Ego* is the question of whether the self is justly conceived as something standing over against and hovering in the background of one’s experiences. Sartre is deeply critical of such a conception of the self,

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offering a radically different picture in which the self is *imbedded in* the world. Yet, appreciating Sartre's critique will require articulating more precisely what belongs to the traditional view against which Sartre is reacting.

In *The Transcendence of the Ego*, Sartre describes the traditional position by writing that "For most philosophers the ego is an 'inhabitant' of consciousness."<sup>1</sup> To say that the ego is an inhabitant of consciousness is first of all to say that all consciousness involves an awareness of oneself as conscious. This feature of conscious life is what we mean to capture when we speak of self-consciousness or self-awareness. Yet more importantly, taking the ego to be an *inhabitant of* consciousness is not merely a statement about the *fact* of self-consciousness; it is a statement about its *structure*.

On this view, the I might be imagined as a kind of homunculus seated within oneself, looking on at and taking in the cinematic display of experience. Thus, for example, in the act of viewing a painting there is at once a viewing of the painting and a looking on at or perceiving of this act of viewing by the I seated within consciousness. What is distinctive in this account is its two-tiered structure. Here, what accounts for the self-aware or self-conscious dimension of our lived experiences is a higher-order consciousness that takes these experiences as its object.<sup>2</sup>

For the traditionalist, what is supposed to underwrite this understanding of self-consciousness is the banal observation that whenever we reflect upon any of our conscious experiences, we quickly discover that they are inhabited by an I. In reflecting upon the viewing of

the painting, I would apprehend that 'I am viewing the painting.' Similarly, when we are called to give an account of what we are doing by another, we invariably make reference to an I. Thus, if I am stopped in the midst of my unreflective absorption in the painting and questioned by another as to what I am doing, I will say something like 'I am viewing this painting.' In both cases, what appears to be true is that there is an I situated within conscious life aware of and monitoring the fullness of experience.

It is here that Sartre raises his objection—namely, that the traditional view unjustifiably takes the structures disclosed in reflective consciousness to be true of all lived experience. When asked how she knows that the I is an inhabitant of consciousness, the traditionalist will point to the fact that when I reflect upon an experience, I discover an I involved in that experiencing. To this point, Sartre responds that at most what is discovered is an I involved in *that experiencing*. That is to say, what is discovered is that within *the experience reflected upon* there is an I. This does not yet say anything about the absence or presence of an I within *the very act of reflecting*. Certainly in reflecting, I might learn that 'I am viewing the painting'; but I do not yet learn and cannot yet say for sure whether I am the one reflecting. Indeed, to do so would require another reflective act in which I reflect upon the act of reflecting. However, this simply reproduces the problem since this act of reflection will also involve an unreflected moment whose first-personal character is not yet obvious. Because "all reflecting consciousness is, indeed in itself unreflected, and a new act of the third degree is necessary in order to posit it," we can never definitively determine that all consciousness involves the presence of an I.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the traditional view is simply unacceptable.

Having completed the critical part of his investigation, Sartre turns toward his constructive revision of the character of selfhood and self-consciousness. One way to summarize his critique of the traditional perspective is

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1 Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego: An Existentialist Theory of Consciousness*, trans. Robert Kirkpatrick and Forrest Williams (New York: The Noonday Press, 1957), 31.

2 Dan Zahavi makes a similar point, writing that "we become aware of being in the first-order mental state by some higher-order perception or monitoring." Dan Zahavi, *Subjectivity and Selfhood: Investigating the First-Person Perspective* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2005), 17-18.

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3 Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego*, 45.

that, in its reliance upon theoretical reflection, it cannot disclose the authentic character of unreflective or pre-reflective consciousness. It is this task of un-concealing unreflective consciousness that Sartre takes up. Yet there seems to be an ineluctable difficulty, for it appears that there is no path toward getting hold of an experience other than through theoretical reflection. Sartre dissolves this issue through pointing out that “every unreflected consciousness, being non-thetic consciousness of itself, leaves a non-thetic memory that one can consult.”<sup>4</sup> Put differently, one can reflect upon consciousness in two related though critically different ways. Returning to the example of viewing a painting, one can reflect by looking on at or perceiving oneself viewing the painting. However, one can also reflect on the conscious event by simply re-attending to or re-viewing the painting itself. This is the sort of gesture Sartre has in mind when he writes that “I must direct my attention to the revived objects, but *without losing sight of the unreflected consciousness*, by joining in a sort of conspiracy with it and by drawing up an inventory of its content...”<sup>5</sup>

What such a “conspiracy” with unreflected consciousness reveals is nothing like an I that stands over against my experience. Thus, in Sartre’s example of an act of reading, “while I was reading, there was consciousness of the book, of the heroes of the novel, but the *I* was not inhabiting this consciousness. It was only consciousness of the object and non-positional consciousness of itself.”<sup>6</sup> Importantly though, Sartre does not completely dismiss our common-sense intuitions about self-awareness or self-consciousness. Earlier, I made a distinction between what I called the *fact* of self-consciousness and its *structure*. Sartre’s central objection is to the particular structure of reflexive self-awareness suggested by the traditional view—namely, a hierarchically ordered one. In its place, Sartre introduces the notion of consciousness’s non-positional consciousness of itself.

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4 Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego*, 46.

5 Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego*, 46.

6 Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego*, 46-47.

To understand what Sartre means by non-positional consciousness, we can compare it to its counterpart in positional consciousness. Positional consciousness is the typical form of consciousness in which consciousness is of something else – that is, it stands over against and is positioned opposite its object. Non-positional consciousness is that peculiar sort of consciousness that does not stand over against something in an objectifying manner, but rather could be characterizing as a consciousness *in*. Rather than a reflective mode, non-positional consciousness is a sort of familiarity and at-homeness in one’s consciousness in the course of living. In this familiarity and at-homeness, it makes little sense to speak of an autonomous I sitting over against one’s experiences and perceiving them as they go by.

Here then we find a decisive rejection of the classical Cartesian subject-object distinction in which an autonomous and self-sufficient subject enters upon and stands over against a world of indifferent objects. The subject is no longer self-sufficient or autonomous; instead, its very unity and its being what it is are constituted by its engagement with the world. Sartre, in characteristically eloquent fashion sums up his point thus:

When I run after a streetcar, when I look at the time, when I am absorbed in contemplating a portrait, there is no *I*. There is consciousness *of*...and non-positional consciousness of consciousness. In fact, I am then plunged into the world of objects; it is they which constitute the unity of my consciousness; it is they which present themselves with values, with attractive and repellant qualities—but *me*, I have disappeared...<sup>7</sup>

This picture of selfhood as the familiarity and at-homeness in being deeply involved in the world finds concrete expression in what sociologist Richard Mitchell calls “flow experience.” In giving his account of this mode of being, Mitchell quotes an anonymous rock climber who

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7 Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego*, 49

says of climbing that “you are so involved in what you are doing you aren’t think of yourself as separate from the immediate activity.... You don’t see yourself as separate from what you are doing.”<sup>8</sup>

Through his critique of the Cartesian picture of subjectivity and self-consciousness, Sartre brings to light two things that are characteristic of the phenomenological tradition, one methodological and the other substantive. This substantive point is what we have just now been elucidating—that is, that being a self is not a standing over against but a being embedded within the world through absorbed involvement in worldly activities. This way of thinking about human life is one that pervades the phenomenological tradition and finds particular expression in Martin Heidegger’s *Being and Time*. Therein we learn that “Dasein finds ‘itself’ proximally in *what* it does, uses, expects, avoids—in those things environmentally ready-to-hand with which it is proximally concerned.”<sup>9</sup> It would be wrong to suggest that what is at stake is simply a turn away from contemplative and toward practical life in an attempt to revalue the two ways of being in the world. Instead, this understanding of human life ought to precipitate a wholesale reconceptualization of both the contemplative and the practical.

This reconceptualization is rooted in a profound methodological turn that pervades the phenomenological tradition—namely, recovering philosophy as a hermeneutics of everyday pre-reflective life. As we saw, Sartre is deeply committed to “joining in a sort of conspiracy” with unreflected consciousness so as to recapture its distinctive character. What is sought after is an unfolding of everyday life in all its variety. This methodological commitment becomes more explicitly

thematized in Heidegger’s *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. There he writes of a certain naïveté that should characterize ontological inquiry:

Ontology is naive, then, not because it does not look back at all to the Dasein, not because it does no reflecting at all—this is excluded—but because this necessary looking back toward the Dasein does not get beyond a common conception of the Dasein and its compartments and thus—because they belong to the Dasein’s general everydayness—does not expressly emphasize them. Reflection here remains within the rut of pre-philosophical knowledge.<sup>10</sup>

For Heidegger, as for much of the post-Husserlian phenomenological tradition, philosophy at least in part should be an exercise in unfolding that which is always already appearing within everyday pre-philosophical pre-reflective life. It should be an exercise not in transcending our mundane humanity but in unfolding it toward its insights into what it is to be human.

### III. Edith Stein: The Appearing of Human Life

The Cartesian dichotomy of subject-object has implications not only for what it means to be a subject but for what it means to be an object. More accurately, the Cartesian framework takes up the world that presents itself to us *as objective*. As objective, the world is composed of bodily, material things extended in space; in other words, the sorts of beings to which modern physical sciences address themselves. This objectifying picture of the world gives rise to a certain daunting problematic: if our only points of access to other beings are their physical bodies and their concomitant behavior, how can we ever know whether there is mental life lurking behind and informing that bodily thing? In short, how can one ever empathize with, i.e. make sense of the conscious life of, another? A typical response to this perplexing issue has been to see a

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8 Richard Mitchell, *Mountain Experience: The Psychology and Sociology of Adventure* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983) quoted in Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time Division I* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991), 66.

9 Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1962), 155.

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10 Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 110-111.

sort of inferential logic at work in our imputation of mental states to other persons. We observe that when we undergo particular mental states, these states are accompanied by particular behaviors and actions. As such, when we see a similar concatenation of behaviors and actions in other beings we make the analogical inference that these beings too must be undergoing similar mental states. To concretize this picture, when I step on a thumbtack, I feel intense pain, my face contorts wildly, and I let out an uncontrollable scream. So, when I witness someone else impale their foot on a thumbtack, contort their face wildly and let out an uncontrollable scream, I impute to them that mental state, “feeling-intense-pain.”

Though a typical response, this line of thought is perplexing and unwarranted. To begin with, imagining our experience of others to be grounded in acts of inferential and analogical reasoning saddles empathy with an unduly heavy intellectual burden. It seems inapt to think about our experience of others in such a rigidly intellectual way, both given the immediacy of our engagement with others and the empirical fact that infants seem to display this capacity without needing to rely on these intellectual habits. Second, and more significantly, the whole problematic labors under false assumptions and unjustified prejudices that, when removed, enable a far more sensible picture to emerge. For this problematic to even get off the ground, we need to accept a basic dichotomization of mind and body, such that the body is a kind of mechanical matter whose behavior is fundamentally unintelligible and meaningless when disconnected from a mind. That is, for there to be a question about whether there is a mental life lurking behind behavior we need to endorse a sharp break between mentality and bodily behavior. On this view, what we see when we someone smile is strictly speaking not a smile—that is, a gesture inflected with meaning and intelligibility—but a particular contortion of facial muscles. Is this genuinely the best account of our experience? Or does it not distort the ways in which we actually find ourselves in contact with others?

It is precisely this Cartesian dichotomy that Edith Stein takes up in *On the Problem of Empathy*. To critique and oppose such sharp dichotomization, Stein introduces two critical concepts: (1) fusion or “con-primordially,” and (2) “symbols.” While the former seeks to account for the way others show up as *living* beings, the latter seeks to account for their appearance as *affective* beings. Beginning with the former, fusion is Stein’s way of talking about the sort of experience in which we ‘see’ more than is perceptually there, combining information from other networks of sensibility. To clarify her meaning, Stein provides some examples: “We not only see the table and feel its hardness, but we also ‘see’ its hardness. The robes in Van Dyck’s paintings are not only as shiny as silk but also as smooth and as soft as silk.”<sup>11</sup> Importantly, this act of fusion is not one of association. It is not that we see the table and then are reminded of the feeling of its hardness. Rather, ‘con-primordially’ or simultaneously we envisage the table and its hardness. As Stein writes “the sight of the table corner reminds me I once bumped myself on it. However, this corner’s sharpness is not remembered, but seen.”<sup>12</sup>

This phenomenon of fusion not only takes place in our engagement with such things as tables and paintings; it manifests itself in our engagement with our bodies. There is a peculiarity concerning the body of persons. On the one hand, my body is present to me as a network of sensibility and sensation—the body as presented in what Stein calls “bodily perception.” On the other hand, it is present to me as a thing among things, a physical body “out there”—the body as presented in what Stein calls “outer perception.” Yet, by some process these two bodies, the physical body and the living body, are understood to be the same. On Stein’s account, it is precisely this phenomenon of fusion or ‘con-primordially’ that enables the coincidence of physical and living body. As Stein writes, “I not only see my hand and bodily perceive it as sensing, but I also ‘see’ its fields of sensation constituted

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11 Edith Stein, *On the Problem of Empathy*, trans. Waltraut Stein (Washington: ICS Publications, 1989) 44.

12 Stein, *Empathy*, 45.

for me in bodily perception.”<sup>13</sup> Just as with the sharpness of the table corner, or the softness of the silk in Van Dyck’s paintings, the network of sensibility is co-given and seen immediately along with the physical body.

Stein’s contention is that what we see when we engage with others is more than just a meaningless and unintelligible physical body. Instead, we so to speak also see their network of sensibility, their *living* body. As she writes, “[Our own fields of sensation] are ‘co-given’ in the outer perception of our physical body in that very peculiar way where what is not perceived can be there itself together with what is perceived. *The other’s fields of sensation are there for me in the same way.*”<sup>14</sup> There is, however, a critical difference between my experience of my own living body and that of another. Unlike in my own case, in which I can turn more directly to bodily perception and engage with the network of sensibility, the “primordial fulfillment [of co-seen foreign fields of sensation] is in principle excluded here.”<sup>15</sup> There is, then, a certain inaccessibility inherent in the otherness of another’s lived experience. However, this very inaccessibility shows itself in my experience of the other. I, as it were, feel moved by a lived experience that shows itself as in excess of my capacity to grasp it. As Stein puts the matter, “In my non-primordial experience I feel, as it were, led by a primordial one not experienced by me but still there, manifesting itself in my non-primordial experience.”<sup>16</sup>

While the phenomenon of fusion enables us to grasp others as living bodies, the phenomenon of symbolism enables us to grasp their emotional lives. Typically, we tend to externalize our feelings through characteristic expressions. “I blush for shame, I groan with pain, am jubilant with joy.”<sup>17</sup> Yet how should we understand these expressions? On the view that sees our experience

of others as effected through analogical reasoning, expressions are just physical accompaniments to inner states that are helpful in establishing correlations and causal patterns. Stein decisively rejects this account of emotional expression in favor of one that sees expression as a critical part of what we typically understand as mental phenomena. As Stein writes, “as I live through the feeling, I feel it terminate in an expression or release expression out of itself. *Feeling in its pure essence is not something complete in itself. As it were, it is loaded with an energy which must be unloaded.*”<sup>18</sup> The expression of a feeling can be the blush of shame or the groan of pain, but it can also be an action or gesture filled with the energy of the emotion. Indeed, Stein goes so far as to say that even reflective withholding can be an expression.<sup>19</sup> In any event, expressions are always “simultaneously the expression of the psychic characteristics they announce.”<sup>20</sup> In short, for Stein one cannot sharply distinguish the mental from the physical in the realm of the affective inasmuch as expression is inextricably bound up with the very being of an emotion.<sup>21</sup>

Just as in the case of fusion, Stein makes sure to set off this direct and unmediated experience from a more mediated or associative one. In this case Stein takes up a distinction instituted by another phenomenologist,

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18 Stein, *Empathy*, 51.

19 “...the feeling ‘terminates’ in ‘passionate’ expression just as in ‘cool’ reflection.” Stein, *Empathy*, 53.

20 Stein, *Empathy*, 54.

21 Max Scheler, a contemporary of Stein, develops a similar insight in his work, *The Nature of Sympathy*. There he writes beautifully of the phenomenological attitude toward this question: “For we certainly believe ourselves to be directly acquainted with another person’s joy in his laughter, with his sorrow and pain in his tears, with his shame in his blushing, with his entreaty in his outstretched hands, with his love in his look of affection, with his rage in the gnashing of his teeth, with his threats in the clenching of his fist, and with the tenor of his thoughts in the sound of his words. If anyone tells me that this is no ‘perception’, for it cannot be so, in view of the fact that a perception is simply a ‘complex of physical sensations’, and that there is certainly no sensation of another person’s mind nor any stimulus from such a source, I would beg him to turn aside from questionable theories and address himself to the phenomenological facts.” Max Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy*, trans. Peter Heath (Connecticut: Archon Books, 1970), 260.

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13 Stein, *Empathy*, 44.

14 Stein, *Empathy*, 57. Emphasis mine.

15 Stein, *Empathy*, 57.

16 Stein, *Empathy*, 11.

17 Stein, *Empathy*, 51.

Theodor Lipps, between indications, signs and symbols. Indications are things like smoke indicating a fire or the sight and sound of rolling wheels indicating a car. Signs are things like flags planted on the spire of a castle signaling the presence of the king, or flags at half-mast signaling collective mourning. Finally, symbols are things like the cry of fear that symbolizes fear or the sad countenance that symbolizes sadness. With indications, the indicating thing remains the focus of attention. Thus, “the smoke indicating fire to me is my ‘theme,’ the object of my actual turning-toward, and awakens in me tendencies to proceed in a further context.”<sup>22</sup> In the case of emotional expression, however, it is precisely the emotion which is our theme “in such a way that the countenance itself can step entirely into the background.” We attend to the person’s fear or sadness, but not to the particularities of their facial contortions. While signs do share this quality of receding into the background—it is the presence of the king that truly becomes our theme, as the flag recedes—they are nevertheless normative and conventional in a way that symbols are not. That is, signs are constructed by people and demand that we take them up as signs: when you see the flag planted on the spire, you *ought* to take that as a sign of the king’s presence. By contrast, “the sad countenance ‘ought’ not to mean sadness, nor blushing shame”; it simply does.<sup>23</sup>

In short, Stein provides us with a conceptual vocabulary that enables us to complicate the boundaries between mind and body and to articulate the ways in which other people show up for as living, affective people in a direct and unmediated way. The skeptical question in response to such an approach will almost always involve reference to the fallibility of our capacity to detect the correct emotions in others due to our own ineptitude or the other’s dissimulation. How could it be said that we directly experience the emotional lives of others through fusion and symbolism if we find ourselves at times incorrect?

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22 Stein, *Empathy*, 76.

23 Stein, *Empathy* 79.

There are several possible lines of response to this charge, and Stein herself seems to offer two.

At a certain point in her discussion of symbols and signs, Stein alludes to the fact that symbols may still be symbols without having determinate content: “It can also be that the symbol does not yet point in a specific direction. Then it is still a pointer into emptiness so that what I see is incomplete. There is more to it, but I just do not know what yet.”<sup>24</sup> With this in mind, we might suggest that even in cases where we are wrong about the particular emotional life of the other, we have correctly discerned symbolic or expressive behavior that indicates a living and conscious person. That is to say, beyond the specifics of sadness, joy, anger, etc., we can discern in the tone, gestures, etc. of another the pulsating beat of conscious life. Another way to characterize this response is as suggesting that even in appearing opaquely or vaguely, the emotional life of the other still *actually appears to us*.

When Stein explicitly takes up the problem of fallibility, she suggests another response to this difficulty: “As in every experience, deceptions are here also possible. But here, too, they can only be unmasked by the same kind of experiential acts...this deception can only be removed again by empathy.”<sup>25</sup> In other words, it may well be the case that we do not succeed in justly bringing to light the emotional life of another person. Nevertheless, we do not have recourse to some epistemological source that can yield up infallible, certain and firm foundations for our judgments. Instead, the only path toward correcting, clarifying and deepening our understanding of the other’s affective life is through further encounters and further empathetic and eminently fallible acts.

This second response points toward a problematic that has been central to the phenomenological tradition, namely, that of the hermeneutical circle. As a problem endemic

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24 Stein, *Empathy*, 77.

25 Stein, *Empathy*, 86-87

to interpretive efforts, the hermeneutical circle signifies two things. First, the justification for an interpretation can only ever be further interpretations. Thus, if someone challenges my reading of a particular passage, my only recourse is to point toward other passages within the same text that would seem to substantiate my interpretation. Of course, these passages too will be subject to interpretation and so on, *ad infinitum*. Second, the hermeneutical circle signifies the fact that on the one hand, an interpretation of the whole will always be dependent upon an adequate interpretation of the parts, while on the other hand, an adequate interpretation of any part will be dependent upon an interpretation of the whole. One of the contributions of the phenomenological tradition to the discussion of this problem has been the commitment to its ineradicability. What is required is simply continued attentiveness. Yearning for some metaphysical comfort or firm epistemological foundation is neither worthwhile nor necessary. As Charles Taylor writes,

perhaps the only sane response to this [problem] would be to say that such uncertainty is an ineradicable part of our epistemological predicament. That even to characterize it as ‘uncertainty’ is to adopt an absurdly severe criterion of ‘certainty,’ which deprives the concept of any sensible use.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Charles Taylor, “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man,” *The Review of Metaphysics* 25, no. 1 (1971): 7.

#### 4. Conclusion: The Temperament of Life

Through carefully attending to the work of Jean-Paul Sartre and Edith Stein, we have reconstructed a thoroughgoing critique of the Cartesian legacy with its impassable boundaries between subject and object, mind and body, and even *theoria* and *praxis*. Subjects are not autonomous, self-sufficient beings standing over against the world in the guise of an I seated within consciousness. They are beings deeply embedded within the world, enveloped and engrossed in it, finding themselves gathered together precisely through this absorbed activity. Meanwhile, the world is not ‘objective’ in the sense of being an agglomeration of physical bodies extended in space. It is always already disclosed as meaningful and intelligible, filled with life and affectivity. What we discover then, in the phenomenological tradition is a return to a concept in need of rehabilitation after the deformation of its authentic meaning with the rise of modern science and its ideological infrastructure, namely, the category of experience. With phenomenology, experience reclaims its ties to the world of concern, equipment, labor, flowers, emotion, ethics, art, play, sociality, community, etc. In short, experience is once more tied to life. ■



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Amy Martin | *Masked*

# MEDIA COVERAGE OF BLACK LIVES MATTER

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On August 9, 2014, Officer Darren Wilson fatally shot an unarmed Black man, Michael Brown, in Ferguson, Missouri, setting off a media firestorm that would place Ferguson at the epicenter of American race relations.<sup>1</sup> The events of Ferguson, including protests that erupted in response to Brown's death, were discussed so frequently on social media that #Ferguson became the most tweeted hashtag in what was then Twitter's ten-year history.<sup>2</sup> Racial tensions and animosity toward police officers were already high in Ferguson. In 2014, the police issued 32,975 arrest warrants to a population of 21,000 residents and tried an average of 567 non-traffic related court cases per 1,000 residents. By comparison, St. Louis, located just twelve miles southeast from Ferguson, generated only 80 non-traffic related court cases per 1,000 residents.<sup>3</sup> After Brown's shooting, political activists added the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter to #Ferguson tweets to link the concept

to a larger movement.<sup>4</sup> The movement broadly includes themes of police shootings, police brutality, and a racially biased criminal justice system.<sup>5</sup>

The explosion of activism around the Black Lives Matter movement provoked a backlash with two intertwined Twitter response movements: #AllLivesMatter and #BlueLivesMatter. #ALM first appeared on Twitter in August 2014.<sup>6</sup> #BlueLM usage began after two New York police officers were targeted and killed in their squad car in December 2014.<sup>7</sup> Between July 13, 2013 and July 7, 2016, #BLM, #ALM, and/or #BlueLM were tweeted 13.3 million times.<sup>8</sup>

Despite the Twitter-trending status of #Ferguson and #BLM, public opinion data from the Pew Research Center (PEW) revealed that 55.2% of respondents had little to no knowledge or understanding of BLM or its goals (including three-in-ten white adults over 50 never having heard of it).<sup>9</sup> A plausible explanation is that most Americans get their news from traditional sources,

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1 "Black" will be capitalized throughout this paper consistent with the W.E.B. DuBois and Thurgood Marshall philosophy of racial and experiential respect. "Blacks" is to be understood as "Black Americans" or "Black inhabitants of the United States."

2 Monica Anderson and Paul Hitlin, "3. The hashtag #BlackLivesMatter emerges: Social activism on Twitter," *Pew Research Center: Internet, Science & Tech*, August 15, 2016, accessed March 10, 2017, <http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/08/15/the-hashtag-blacklivesmatter-emerges-social-activism-on-twitter/#fn-16486-8>.

3 Shaun King, "Ferguson an apartheid police state: 21,000 residents have a staggering 16,000 open arrest warrants," *Daily Kos*, March 16, 2015, accessed March 15, 2017, <http://www.dailykos.com/story/2015/3/16/1371220/-Ferguson-an-Apartheid-Police-State-21-000-residents-w-a-staggering-16-000-open-arrest-warrants>.

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4 In this paper, #BLM means tweets about Black Lives Matter; #ALM means tweets about All Lives Matter; and #BlueLM means tweets about Blue Lives Matter, while BLM, ALM, and BlueLM refer to the concept or organization of each respective movement. #ALM and #BlueLM proponents overlap and are often combined in this paper (All/BlueLM).

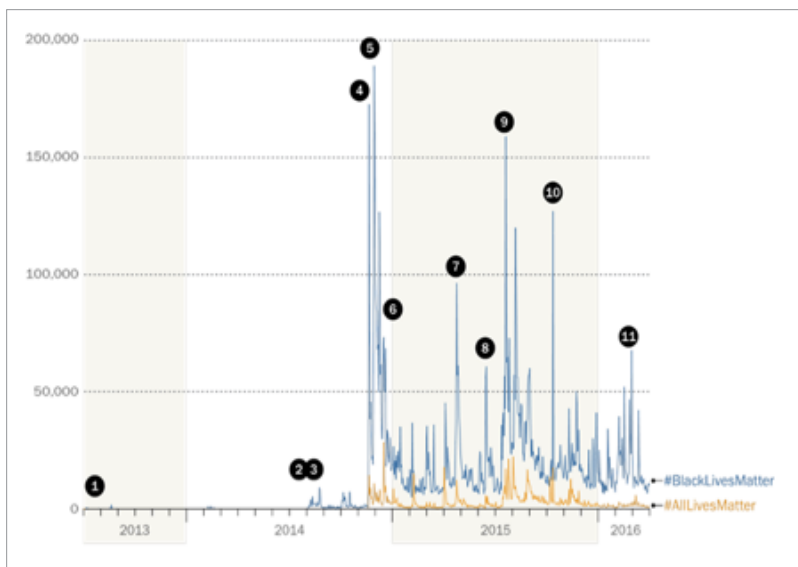
5 Deen Freelon, Charton D. McIlwain, and Meredith D. Clark, "Beyond the Hashtags: #Ferguson, #BlackLivesMatter, and the online struggle for offline justice," *Center for Media and Social Impact*, February 2016, accessed March 14, 2017, [http://cmsimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/beyond\\_the\\_hashtags\\_2016.pdf](http://cmsimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/beyond_the_hashtags_2016.pdf).

6 Monica Anderson and Paul Hitlin, "3. The hashtag #BlackLivesMatter emerges..."

7 *Ibid.*

8 On July 9, 2016 the Dallas Police Officer shooting occurred. The death of five police officers led to a rise in #BlueLM tweets.

9 *Ibid.*



**FIGURE 1**

PEW tracking of frequency of #BlackLivesMatter and #AllLivesMatter

(<http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/08/15/the-hashtag-blacklivesmatter-emerges-social-activism-on-twitter/#fn-16486-8>.)

which did not replicate Twitter’s patterns of coverage.<sup>10</sup> To determine whether this was the case, I examined the newspaper coverage of BLM to discover the extent to which the movement’s coverage excludes older Americans or features substantive gaps.

The purpose of this paper is to explain the movements, to ascertain the extent to which newspaper coverage echoed Twitter patterns, and to assess whether newspaper coverage reflects a partisan bias by state.

### Background

The phrase “Black Lives Matter” was first posted on Facebook in July of 2013 by Alicia Garza, a co-founder of the BLM organization, in response to George Zimmerman’s fatal shooting of Trayvon Martin.<sup>11</sup> Between the disorder in Ferguson in 2014 and July 7, 2016, #BLM was tweeted approximately 11.8 million times.<sup>12</sup> Usage of the hashtag spiked after significant police-perpetrated fatalities of Black people and court decisions (Figure 1).<sup>13</sup>

#ALM was tweeted 1.5 million times in the span of PEW’s study, most occurring after two police officers were targeted and killed in their patrol car in New York (Figure 1, point 6).<sup>14</sup> In 2016, 144 police officers died, 63 of which were by gunfire.<sup>15</sup> At least ten of the 63 victims were targeted and killed for being police officers. Mainstream media extensively covered three police officers killed in Baton Rouge, two killed in Des Moines, and five killed in Dallas.<sup>16</sup>

Animosity spiked after the Dallas shooting. BLM supporters argue that the “Blue Lives Matter” and “All Lives Matter” concepts whitewash problems of mass incarceration and police brutality against Black people. ALM supporters believe that BLM is exclusionary, divisive, or as Mayor Giuliani phrased it, “inherently racist.”<sup>17</sup> BlueLM proponents claim to support police officers, who have difficult jobs and face the risk of death. However, BLM supporters note that the issues are asymmetrical

10 Amy Mitchell et al., “1. Pathways to news,” *Pew Research Center’s Journalism Project*, July 07, 2016, accessed April 04, 2017, <http://www.journalism.org/2016/07/07/pathways-to-news/>.

11 Monica Anderson and Paul Hitlin, “3. The hashtag #BlackLivesMatter emerges...”

12 *Ibid.*

13 *Ibid.*

14 *Ibid.*

15 “Officer Down Memorial Page,” *ODMP*, Accessed March 10, 2017, <https://www.odmp.org/search/year/2016>.

16 Michele McPhee, “The hidden Trump voter — the police” *The Boston Globe*, November 09, 2016, accessed March 5, 2017, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2016/11/09/the-hidden-trump-voter-police/71lMUxHoqBzNCKZzcpH42nO/story.html>.

17 CBC News, “What does it mean when we say certain Lives Matter?”

and police deaths are very low in comparison to Black deaths from police shootings. BLM and All/BlueLM can be situated within the Kahan and Braman's framework of cultural cognition, wherein citizens form opinions through the opinions of those who are close to them. Evidence suggests contemporary citizens digest political information through and alongside interpersonal communities more so than through individual effort to seek empirically sound information. The partisan adaptation of BLM with liberals and Democrats and the All/BlueLM with the conservatives and Republicans has been, in part, due to this phenomenon.<sup>18</sup>

The BLM movement sought to achieve its goals without affiliating with either major political party, waiting to endorse Hillary Clinton until just two weeks before the 2016 election.<sup>19</sup> The Democratic Party included both Blacks and police officers in their platform, stating, "We will push for a societal transformation to make it clear that Black lives matter..." and "Across the country, there are police officers inspiring trust...demonstrating that it is possible to prevent crime without relying on unnecessary force. They deserve our respect and support."<sup>20</sup> In contrast, the Republican Party made no mention of BLM or Blacks in its platform and signaled support for ALM and BlueLM with, "The Republican Party, a party of law and order, must make clear in words and action that every human

life matters."<sup>21</sup> Additionally, in an interview during the Republican Convention, Trump criticized the BLM movement for instigating violence against police and called the group a threat.<sup>22</sup>

Although police forces do not publicly associate themselves with a particular political party, the National Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) endorsed Donald Trump in the months leading up to the 2016 election.<sup>23</sup> Neither Barack Obama nor Mitt Romney received said endorsement in 2012.<sup>24</sup> This support may have been the result of the pro-police position taken by the Republicans, in contrast to the Democrats' more balanced position.

Public opinion data collected by PEW reflects these racial and partisan divides. Supporters of BLM are largely minorities, whites younger than 30, and Democrats (67% of surveyed Democrats were at least somewhat supportive of BLM).<sup>25</sup> Whites older than 65 and Republicans were least likely to support BLM (only 20% of surveyed Republicans were somewhat supportive of BLM).<sup>26</sup>

Social media usage patterns may contribute to this gap. PEW published the following studies on #BLM/BLM and #ALM/#BlueLM-ALM/BlueLM: Hashtag usage data collected between July 2013 and February 2016 and public opinion data collected from February 29 through May 8, 2016. The data revealed that 30% of whites older than 50 have heard nothing about BLM. While roughly 18% of American adults report using Twitter, only 6.4% of

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18 Dan M Kahan and Donald Braman, 2006, "Cultural Cognition and Public Policy," *Yale Law & Policy Review* 24(1): 149-72, [www.jstor.org/stable/40239654](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40239654), Accessed January 2, 2016.

19 Thandisizwe Chimurenga. "Black Lives Matter activists endorse Hillary Clinton for president." *Daily Kos*, October 16, 2016, accessed April 04, 2017, <http://www.dailykos.com/story/2016/10/26/1587161/-Black-Lives-Matter-activists-endorse-Hillary-Clinton-for-president>.

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20 "The 2016 Democratic Platform," *Democrats.org*, accessed March 15, 2017, <https://www.democrats.org/party-platform>.

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21 "The 2016 Republican Party Platform," *GOP*, accessed March 15, 2017, <https://www.gop.com/the-2016-republican-party-platform/>.

22 Jeremy Diamond, "Trump: Black Lives has helped instigate police killings," *CNN Politics*, July 19, 2016. <http://www.cnn.com/2016/07/18/politics/donald-trump-black-lives-matter/>.

23 Michele McPhee, "The hidden Trump voter."

24 Neil King Jr., "National Police Union Turns down Romney and Obama," *The Wall Street Journal*, September 07, 2012, accessed April 04, 2017, <http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2012/09/07/national-police-union-turns-down-romney/>.

25 Juliana Menasce Horowitz and Gretchen Livingston, "How Americans view the Black Lives Matter movement."

26 *Ibid*.

Americans over 50 use it.<sup>27</sup> Because the BLM movement largely began on Twitter, older Americans may have had little exposure to its goals. With this in mind, we must examine traditional media.

Newspapers are a significant news source for Americans over 50.<sup>28</sup> Young adults are less likely to retrieve news from print newspapers; however, 39% of adults aged 30-64 get their news from online news services, including digital newspapers.<sup>29</sup> While no academic consensus exists on the extent to which news conglomerates impact opinion formation, research has established that news media has a dominant agenda-setting power. A study published in 2014 asserted that traditional media primarily sets the issue agenda, frames the issues, and determines which attributes of issues are emphasized.<sup>30</sup> However, depending on the issue, mutual and reciprocal “causality” between social media and traditional media can emerge.<sup>31</sup> The study revealed that social issues were reported and discussed on social media at an 8:3 ratio to traditional media.<sup>32</sup> BLM is a social issue. This paper analyzes newspaper coverage, the primary source of information for many Americans.

## Method

I conducted LexisNexis keyword searches by month of US newspapers from August 1, 2014 to March 31, 2017 and collected state-level data on the two-party presidential vote, the frequency of police-perpetrated Black fatalities, and the Black population. The first search used keywords “Black Lives Matter” or #BlackLivesMatter” for articles about #BLM. The second search for articles

pertaining to #ALM and #BlueLM used search terms “Blue Lives Matter,” “Police Lives Matter,” “All Lives Matter,” “#AllLivesmatter,” “#bluelivesmatter,” or “#policelivesmatter.” I included “Police Lives Matter” or “#policelivesmatter” because articles (included in my BlueLM figures) also use these terms to refer to the Blue Lives Matter phenomenon. I coded the articles for #BLM/BLM and #ALM/#BlueLM//ALM/BlueLM by title, date, state of origin, and publication. Sorting articles by date creates a daily frequency count mimicking that of PEW for hashtag usage. I also used these data to compare frequency counts by state.

The assessment includes the overlap of #ALM/#BlueLM//ALM/BlueLM and #BLM/BLM in certain articles, as well as the following elements by state: the Democratic (Clinton) and Republican (Trump) presidential candidates’ percentage share of the 2016 popular vote; counts of police-perpetrated Black shooting fatalities from August 2014 to March 2017; and the population percentage of Blacks.<sup>33</sup>

Newspaper coverage data in the LexisNexis Academic database has limitations. First, the data only cover newspapers, excluding other print, broadcast, cable, or digital media. Second, newspapers from Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Hawaii, Nebraska, New Jersey, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and Tennessee were unavailable. Third, of states included, the number of newspapers varies from one newspaper in most states to 22 in California. Thus, the analysis should be interpreted as a measure of frequency of coverage in papers in a sample determined by licensing agreements and not by random sampling.

The data for police-perpetrated fatalities was obtained from mappingpoliceviolence.org and the *Washington Post*,

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<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>28</sup> Amy Mitchell et al., “1. Pathways to news,” *Pew Research Center’s Journalism Project*, July 07, 2016, accessed April 04, 2017, <http://www.journalism.org/2016/07/07/pathways-to-news/>.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>30</sup> W. Russell Neuman, Lauren Guggenheim, S. Mo Jang, and Soo Young Bae “The Dynamics of Public Attention: Agenda-Setting Theory Meets Big Data.”

<sup>31</sup> Neuman et al. “The Dynamics of Public Attention,” p. 204.

<sup>32</sup> Neuman et al. “The Dynamics of Public Attention,” p. 208.

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<sup>33</sup> “Presidential Results,” *CNN Politics*, accessed March 18, 2017 <http://www.cnn.com/election/results/president>, “2010 Census Results,” *United States Census 2010*, accessed April 2, 2017, <https://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-06.pdf>, John Muyskens, “Police shootings 2016 database.”

which may not have identified all relevant events. State and local law enforcement agencies do not consistently report fatalities to federal agencies. No federal governmental agency officially documents police perpetrated fatalities.<sup>34</sup> Variations in state and local reporting of police killings may result in imperfect measurement. Fortunately, *The Washington Post*, mappingpoliceviolence.org, and others have created databases to track said fatalities and are used in this paper.<sup>35</sup> Finally, the timeframes of the Twitter and newspaper data differ. The PEW study ends in February 2016, while the other data continue through March 2017.

## Results

The preceding discussion yields two hypotheses.

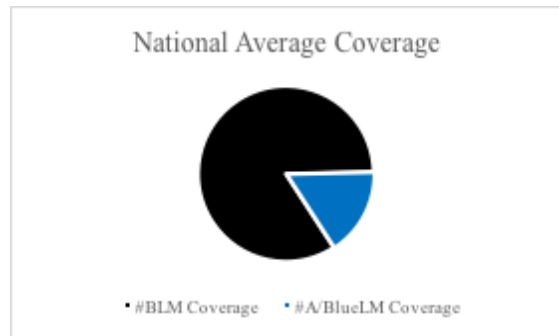
H1: BLM newspaper coverage by state will be significantly correlated with state majority that voted for Hillary Clinton, large urban population (over 80% state total population), high percentage of Black residents (13% or higher), and/or states that have disproportionately high Black fatalities in comparison to the state's Black population.

H2: All/BlueLM newspaper coverage by state will be significantly correlated with state majority that voted for Donald Trump, small urban population (under 80% state total population), low percentage of Black residents (lower than 13%), and/or states that have disproportionately low Black fatalities in comparison to the state's Black population.

Overall, of the articles covered in the analysis, 83.8% mentioned BLM, while those mentioning ALM/BlueLM, and/or Police Lives Matter accounted for 16.2% of data (Figure 2). PEW uncovered an 8:1 ratio for tweets including #BLM versus tweets including to #ALM, including those

**FIGURE 2**

National Average Newspaper Coverage of BLM/#BLM vs. ALM/BlueLM/#ALM/BlueLM



that were in the same tweets.<sup>36</sup> The ratio for articles discussing #BLM and/or BLM versus #ALM, #BlueLM, ALM/BlueLM, #policelivesmatter, and/or Police Lives Matter was 8.4:1. My data revealed a parallel to PEW's findings in coverage ratio.

In comparison to 13.3 million tweets, my search found 11,891 articles addressing these movements, representing 0.89% of tweet volume. However, a 140-character tweet has less impact than a 500-word newspaper article with a guaranteed audience. The 2014 Neuman study found that traditional media and social media exist on a foundation of "interdependence."<sup>37</sup> Spikes in social media attention "are as likely to precede traditional media as to follow it."<sup>38</sup>

Figure 3 shows newspaper data in the top panel and Twitter data in the bottom panel. The similarity of coverage ratios overall suggests that the "buzz" created by social media was echoed in newspaper media. However, spikes in subject matter of newspaper articles versus tweets that discuss the movements do not correlate. While Twitter data reflects reactions to viral videos of fatal police shootings as well as two officers' deaths in a

34 Matt Kiely, "Shots Fired Part 1," *RadioLab* March 17, 2017, accessed March 27, 2017, <http://www.radiolab.org/story/shots-fired-part-1/>.

35 John Muyskens, "Police shootings 2016 database," *The Washington Post*, accessed April 03, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/national/police-shootings-2016/>.

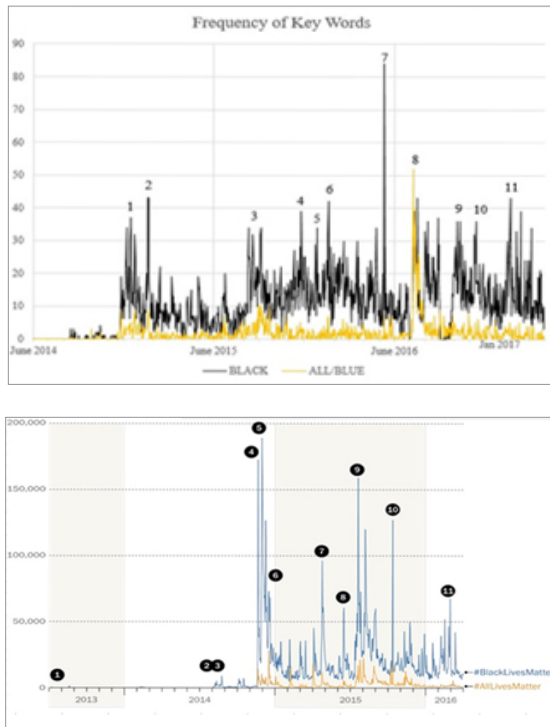
36 Monica Anderson and Paul Hitlin, "3. The hashtag #BlackLivesMatter emerges..."

37 Neuman et al. "The Dynamics of Public Attention," p. 205.

38 Neuman et al. "The Dynamics of Public Attention," p. 206.

**FIGURE 3**

Newspapers (top) versus Tweets (bottom)

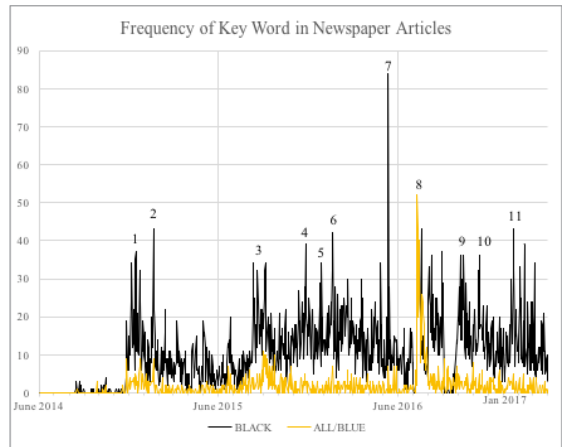


police car, newspaper coverage details BLM protests and interruptions of primary campaign rallies (labeled spikes 1-7 and 9-11), with the fatal shooting of five Dallas Police officers creating a spike at data point 8 (Figure 4).

This analysis reviews newspaper coverage by state using four statistical categories: 1) partisanship (based on general election two-way popular vote percentage), 2) the percentage of population living in an urban center, 3) the percentage of Black population, and 4) the percentage of Blacks fatally shot by police relative to the total fatal

**FIGURE 4**

Frequency of “BLM” and #BLM versus “ALM,” “BlueLM,” “Police Lives Matter,” #ALM, #BlueLM, and #policelivesmatter by day August 1, 2014 to March 31, 2017



shootings by police.<sup>39</sup> The percentage of Blacks fatally shot by police were compared to the Black population’s state percentage to assess disproportion. I used the 27 available months (Jan 2015-March 2017) of the *Washington Post’s* fatal police shootings data combined with 5 months (August 2014-December 2014) of *Mapping Police Violence* as the base in my calculations.<sup>40</sup>

I begin with a table of p-values derived from a regression analysis, in which each aspect of H1 and H2 is compared to the percentage of BLM articles or All/BlueLM articles published by state. H1 and H2 should be imagined as two sides of the same coin, due to the nature of the variables (e.g. the percent vote share Hillary Clinton [HRC] increases as percent Donald Trump [DJT] decreases). Therefore, testing state voting percentage HRC against percentage articles BLM yields the same result as testing voting percentage DJT against percentage All/BlueLM.

39 “Presidential Results, *CNN Politics*,” “Urban Percentage of Population for States, Historical,” *Iowa State University: Iowa Community Indicators Program*, accessed April 5, 2017, <http://www.icip.iastate.edu/tables/population/urban-pct-states>, John Muyskens, “Police shootings 2016 database,” “2010 US Census Results,” *United States Census 2010*.

40 John Muyskens, “Police shootings 2016 database.”



Highlighted values indicate fulfillment of H1 and H2 in the aspect presented.

The hypotheses were designed with four guiding principles: 1) states that voted for one candidate or the other would produce news in-line with that candidate's viewpoint and/or the candidate's party platform; 2) states with higher urban populations were assumed to be Democratic states, and states with lower urban populations were assumed to be Republican states; 3) states with high percentages of Black residents were assumed to drive interest in the issue of BLM more so than states with low percentages of Black residents; and 4) states with disproportionately high fatal shootings of Blacks were assumed to drive more BLM coverage than states with disproportionately low fatal shootings.

The data suggests partisan-reinforcement of newspaper content by state, satisfying the first element of H1 and H2. This phenomenon is simultaneously revealing and unsurprising. The reinforcement indicates United States newspapers reflect partisan alliances to the point of covering one side of the issue much more substantially than the other. Partisan coverage of news is nothing new in the country's short history. Even before the nation formed, most papers operated for the express purpose of providing partisan news and were often subsidized by parties.<sup>41</sup> This fact led to sensationalist reporting, which was nearly extinguished when the prices of operating papers rose. Parties could no longer cover costs, and advertisers demanded the press be more neutral to expand a paper's audience.<sup>42</sup>

Shifts in foreign policy have often correlated with changes in partisan reporting. The 1950s Cold-War era saw the most unity in reporting and politics alike due

<sup>41</sup> James L. Baughman, "The Fall and Rise of Partisan Journalism," Center for Journalism Ethics, October 19, 2016, Accessed May 31, 2017, <https://ethics.journalism.wisc.edu/2011/04/20/the-fall-and-rise-of-partisan-journalism/>.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

**TABLE 1**

Regression Statistics: Percentage BLM Coverage

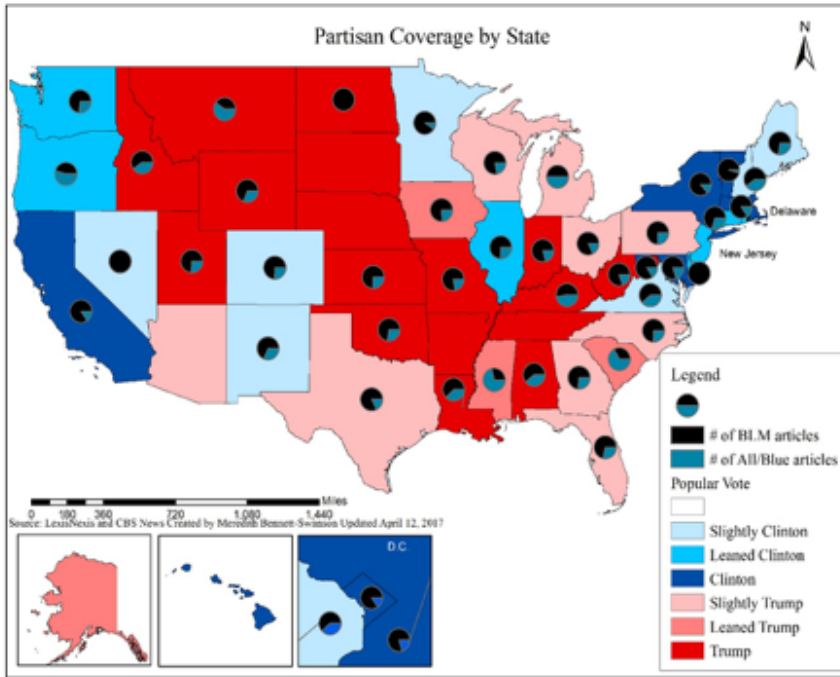
Regression Statistics: Percentage BLM Coverage	p-value	Correlation
Percentage HRC Vote	0.09	0.38
Percentage Urban Population	0.03	0.38
Percentage Black Population	0.32	0.03
Ratio Percentage Black Police-Perpetrated Fatalities to Percentage Black Population	0.24	0.12

to the general foreign policy consensus. The Vietnam War caused a return to partisan reporting as the country divided on the issue. Many Americans today reinforce the partisan leanings of news by how much they believe certain news sources. For example, Republicans are more likely to believe Fox News and to assert other cable news stations are not believable. Conversely, Democrats are likely to believe all cable news except Fox News.<sup>43</sup> Both Democrats and Republicans are more likely to believe local news and newspapers. The fact that both parties trust local news above national news places an obligation on local news organizations to present a balanced and inclusive narrative of national news.

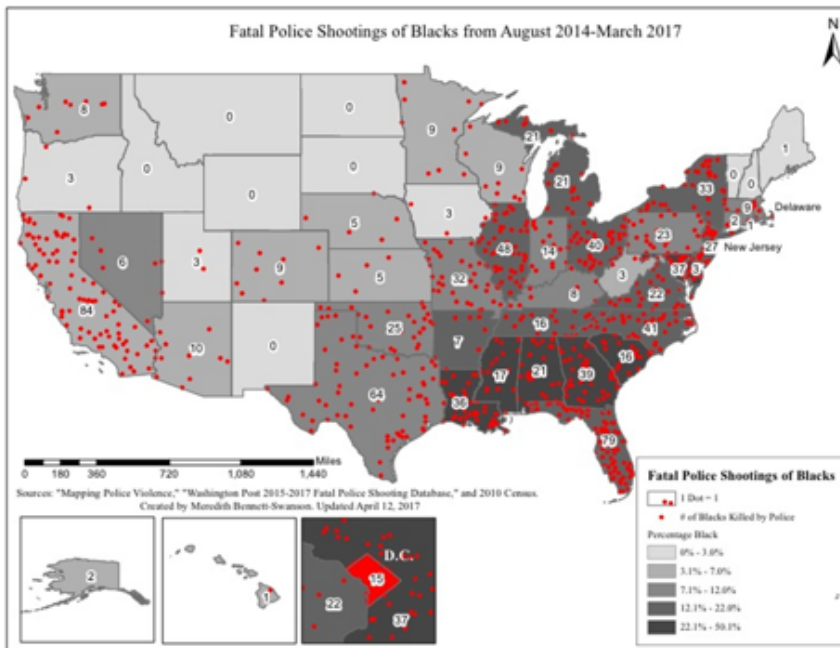
Criminal justice reform is one of the few bipartisan issues in contemporary America.<sup>44</sup> BLM represents a major facet of criminal justice reform, so the fact that reporting discrepancies may apply to it is disheartening. Figure 5 shows reporting of BLM versus All/BlueLM percentages by state in comparison to the voting percentage HRC or DJT. Figure 2 should be used for reference regarding national average percentage coverage.

<sup>43</sup> Mary Pat Clark, "Further Decline in Credibility Ratings for Most News Organizations," Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, August 16, 2012, Accessed May 31, 2017, <http://www.people-press.org/2012/08/16/further-decline-in-credibility-ratings-for-most-news-organizations/>.

<sup>44</sup> James Arkin, "Criminal Justice Reform: There's Bipartisan Hope," RealClearPolitics, May 6, 2016, Accessed May 31, 2017, [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2016/05/06/criminal\\_justice\\_reform\\_theres\\_bipartisan\\_hope\\_\\_130482.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2016/05/06/criminal_justice_reform_theres_bipartisan_hope__130482.html).



**FIGURE 5**  
The Partisan Coverage by State  
Vote  
data  
also



**FIGURE 6**  
Black Population Density  
and Fatal Police Shootings of  
Blacks August 2014-March 2017

suggests that urban states are significantly more likely to cover BLM than rural states. In many ways, this is a reiteration of the previous finding because more liberals live in urban areas while more conservatives live in rural areas. However, it also suggests that BLM may be interpreted as an urban issue and one that is therefore irrelevant to rural readers. Thirty-six percent of Blacks live in cities, 39% in suburbs, 15% in small metropolitan areas, and 10% in rural communities.<sup>45</sup> The majority of the Black population in America does not live in large urban centers, so this issue must not be interpreted as one that only impacts urban populations. Further, 63% of police perpetrated fatalities against Blacks occurred in conservative states, which means the police are nearly twice as fatal to Blacks in conservative states. In spite of this, their deaths and the movement that defends their deaths were covered at a significantly lower rate in these areas. This discrepancy demands attention. Figure 6 below shows the raw number of Blacks fatally shot by police in comparison to their population concentration.

The Black percentage population element of H1 and H2 is built upon the fact that most Black voters are Democrats and few Black voters are Republicans. However, this element was not significantly related to BLM versus All/BlueLM percentage coverage. Populations with a particular interest in a movement that directly addresses Black citizens' experience with police have little access to it through newspapers. The final element of H1 and H2, the ratio of percentage police perpetrated Black fatalities to percentage Black by state, was not significantly related to the percentage of BLM or All/BlueLM articles in the state. Part of H1 is built upon the premise that if a problem targets one group disproportionately, then that problem will receive more attention. Nonetheless, percentage article frequency is not significantly related to states where police perpetrated fatalities are most prevalent nor

do they have a relationship to states with high percentage Black population. The information is not published in areas where it is most needed based on population or disproportional events. Rather, it is stoked by partisanship and location.

### Conclusion

Percentage vote share and percentage urban state population had significant predicting power over BLM versus All/BlueLM coverage; however, BLM versus All/BlueLM coverage was inconsistent with certain elements contained in H1 and H2. These results indicate that BLM may be interpreted as an urban problem and may be largely ignored by newspapers in rural and/or Republican areas. Because of the collection limits, a resounding conclusion cannot be drawn. However, the importance of the BLM movement cannot be understated. Newspaper coverage of the issues diverges from tweet coverage. High frequency tweets responded to viral videos of police brutality, both in support of #BLM and in the defense of all lives with #ALM. In contrast, high frequency newspaper articles responded to BLM events—protests and rallies—with the exception of the Dallas Police shooting (Figure 1). This exception is notable because the newspapers covered the Dallas Police shooting more than the fatal shootings of Blacks. Coverage of events responding to the movement rather than about the context of BLM may be the reason that more than half of Americans do not understand the goals of BLM, have never heard of it, or have not commented. This lapse may have also particularly affected Americans 50 and older, a substantial newspaper audience. Most concerning is the extent to which partisan alliances formed “sides,” suggested by party platforms, around an issue that demands cooperation. When used, cooperation has bred meaningful and productive reform. As Chief of the Daytona Beach Police Department (DBPD), Mike Chitley, who is now County Sheriff, improved policing in the city he served. Chitley required all officers to learn about the racial history of the United States and, in congruence with this history, to discover their

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45 Alana Semuels, “No, Most Black People Don’t Live in Poverty-or Inner Cities,” *The Atlantic*, October 12, 2016, Accessed May 31, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/10/trump-african-american-inner-city/503744/>.

own biases.<sup>46</sup> In a city of 62,000 people, only four police shootings occurred in 2016.<sup>47</sup> Officers were instructed to engage in community policing in accordance with DBPD guidelines, which included knowing which members of the community suffer from mental illness (one-in-five fatal police shootings take mentally ill victims).<sup>48</sup> Their knowledge helped them exercise caution and patience. Additionally, in order to prevent misfires and create time to assess situations fully, DBPD officers were taught to anchor their trigger fingers on the side plate of their guns, rather than on the trigger, when pulling their guns.<sup>49</sup> In 2016, DBPD officers arrested and issued tickets to citizens nearly in congruence to their population samples; sixty percent of those arrested and/or ticketed were white,

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46 Matt Kiely, "Shots Fired Part 1," RadioLab March 17, 2017, accessed March 27, 2017, <http://www.radiolab.org/story/shots-fired-part-1/>.

47 *Ibid.*

48 John Muyskens, "Police shootings 2016 database."

49 Matt Kiely, "Shots Fired Part 1."

and forty percent of those arrested and/or ticketed were Black.<sup>50</sup>

Sheriff Chitley is a member of the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), comprised of police chiefs and sheriffs across the country whose guiding principle is "the sanctity of human life."<sup>51</sup> Eight months after criticizing PERF's principles, members of the FOP adopted portions of them.<sup>52</sup> Although police chiefs and sheriffs represent only a fraction of the problematic criminal justice system, this instance shows action towards police reform is possible and can yield encouraging results. Progress demands recognition of the issues and cooperation in seeking solutions. Media attention, regardless of form, is an important catalyst in the ongoing dialogue for reform. ■

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50 *Ibid.*

51 *Ibid.*

52 *Ibid.*

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Francesca Martino | *Curtain*

# PROFANITY, POWER, AND POPULACES IN PAKISTAN

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In recent weeks, the anti-blasphemy laws of Pakistan have been a major point of discussion in the nation's news outlets. With the death of Mashal Khan, a journalism student accused of blasphemy, and the arrest of Prakash Kumar, a Hindu man charged with blasphemy, the laws have come under intense public scrutiny (Inayat 2017). This paper argues that the anti-blasphemy laws of Pakistan are an important tool to construct a national culture for the country. In the process, the state prioritizes the majority populace and marginalizes religious minorities. The objectives behind these laws stretch beyond theological reasoning. In this paper I draw on several analytical theories to examine the objectives of the anti-blasphemy laws. The subsequent material attests to the power relations that are inherently present in ideas of religiosity and nationalist identity.

The anti-blasphemy laws are found in Sections 295-298 of the Pakistani Penal Code (PPC). They were added to Chapter 15, Offences Relating to Religion, of the PPC during the regime of General Zia ul-Haq (Julius 2016, 95). The PPC was adopted by Pakistan at the time of its creation in 1947. It is derived from the Indian Penal Code (IPC) that was drafted by Lord Macaulay in 1860 (Ahmed 2009, 178) and was created from the Victorian Penal Code. Humeira Iqtidar writes that General Zia had a preference for a certain version of Islam that he used as a basis in creating the blasphemy laws (Iqtidar 2013, 1017) that many

consider to be a part of his Islamicization process. The following points are a brief description of the blasphemy laws:

- 295: Damaging or defiling places of worship of any class
- 295-A: Deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class
- 295-B: Defiling a copy of the Holy Quran
- 295-C: Use of derogatory remarks in respect of the Holy Prophet
- 296: Disturbing religious assembly
- 297: Trespassing on burial places, etc.
- 298: Uttering words with deliberate intent to wound religious feelings
- 298-A: Use of derogatory remarks in respect of holy personages of Islam
- 298-B: Misuse of epithets, descriptions and titles reserved for certain holy personages or places of Islam by Ahmadis
- 298-C: Person of Qadiani/Ahmadi group calling himself a Muslim or preaching or propagating his faith (Julius 2016, 96)

Though the last two laws concerning Ahmadis were established in 1984 under General Zia, a separate bill had been passed negating the right of Ahmadis to declare themselves Muslim under his predecessor, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (Iqtidar 2013, 1017). The difference between the two was that Bhutto lacked resolution, whereas General Zia was more aggressive with these policies (1017). Below I examine how General Zia's particularized version of Sunni Islam is imposed on the Pakistani public through the

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\* This paper was written for REL 300: Theories of Culture and Religion taught by Professor Kalyani Devaki Menon in autumn quarter 2016. The paper was selected for publication by Professors David Wellman, Yuki Miyamoto, Lisa Poirier, and James Halstead of the Religious Studies Student Support Committee.

anti-blasphemy laws and how this particularization has become the foundation of a normalized national culture.

### **Identity crisis of postcolonial Pakistan**

My analysis begins with examining how particular understandings of Sunni Islam have become normalized and how in upholding this identity, Pakistan has been molded into an environment that favors its Sunni Muslim inhabitants. The problem of normalizing a specific version of Islam is an issue that can be traced to the days of the two-nation theory in colonial India. This theory argued that Muslims were in need of their own country if they were to have an equal voice in society. This is problematic because it reinforces an ideology that suggests Muslims and Hindus are incapable of coexisting. At the time of Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the Muslim League, the principle idea behind the creation of Pakistan was clear: it would be a nation for Muslims. The creation was the result of prioritizing ethnic and cultural aspects of being Muslim over its religious context (Toor 2005, 319). In other words, the kind of Islam one practiced was not as important as was belonging to the overall category of “Muslim.” It is clear that in the days of the two-nation theory preceding Partition, a political goal had been outlined under the labels “Islamic” and “Muslim.” This glossing over the specificities of various kinds of Islam and religion in general would problematize exactly what type of identity legislators and state officials understood Pakistan to embody.

Once the state was created and had achieved its goal of a separate territory for Muslims, the question of a national culture and identity needed to be addressed. Toor writes that as long as Pakistan lacked a clear national culture and identity, its own legitimacy and sovereignty would be at stake (Toor 2005, 322). In other words, the culture of Pakistan was a key issue. Citizens needed to identify with the new nation-state if Pakistan was to succeed, especially with the recent withdrawal of the colonial presence. With this pressing question becoming evermore critical to the livelihood of the country, the contradictions between ‘Pakistani nationalism’ and ‘Muslim nationalism’ were

increasingly visible (322). Toor includes an explanation of this contradiction through the work of David Gilmartin:

While Pakistan had stood during the 1940s as a symbol of moral order, transcending the divisions among Muslims, the Pakistan state that emerged in 1947 generally saw its task not as one of integrating diversity, but rather one of imprinting its authority onto a new and intractable territory. The elites who dominated the new state came quickly to mistrust the particularisms of Pakistani society as a threat to the state’s own moral sovereignty (Gilmartin quoted in Toor 2005, 322).

This mistrust can be especially seen through the enactment of the blasphemy laws under the dictatorship of General Zia ul-Haq. The anti-blasphemy laws were one method through which the state illustrated what is and is not acceptable as national culture, or what is and is not “Pakistani.” These laws have caused serious realities of aggression and hostilities directed at those who have been excluded from the standardized image of Pakistan. Following are several cases of violence that have occurred as a result of this push for a homogenized culture.

### **Power and practice**

Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff in *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa* explain how power is embedded in culture and works through hegemony and ideology (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 22). They write that the capacity of humans exercising control over subjectivities and realities is called “agentive” power, or ideology, whereas “nonagentive” power, or hegemony, is exercised through internalization and the unspoken authority of habit (22). Moreover, they define ideology as the “expression and ultimately the possession of a particular social group, although it may be widely peddled upon” (24). In contrast, hegemony is, “the constructs and conventions that have come to be shared and naturalized throughout a political community” (24). The Pakistani government established the anti-blasphemy



ordinances to exercise control over its population by reinforcing a particular Sunni image. For example, Section 295-A under the PPC lists, “Deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class” as a punishable offense (Julius 2016, 96). The “class” that is referred to in the legislation signifies the class of the majority, Sunni Muslims. Because the Comaroff’s link the connection between hegemony and ideology as reciprocally interdependent (25), Section 295-A along with the rest of the anti-blasphemy laws can be understood as embodying both agentic power in principle and nonagentic power in practice. At its basis, hegemony is the internalized aspect of a dominant ideology (25) but its internalization, in this case adopted by the Pakistani government, disguises this very notion. Thus, the anti-blasphemy laws are products of a nonagentic Sunni Muslim normativity that asserts power over citizens namely through controlling religious practices.

The experiences of subjects on the ground further attest to the internalization of this power, without the subjects being conscious of it given its concealed nature. Let us take the example of Asia Bibi. On June 14, 2009, Asia Noreen, a Christian mother of five, went to work picking berries in a rich patron’s yard. She paused to take a sip of water from a bowl that was also being used by other Muslim women. The Muslim women were outraged that Asia Bibi had contaminated the water because she is not Muslim, to which Asia Bibi responded that Jesus would see the ordeal differently from the Prophet Muhammad (Boone and Baloch 2016). The furious Muslim women then told her that to redeem herself she should convert to Islam. To this, Asia Bibi responded, “I believe in my religion and in Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for the sins of mankind. What did your Prophet Mohammed ever do to save mankind?” (Boone and Baloch 2016). Since this instance, she has remained in prison and currently faces a death sentence. It is clear in this example that the religious sentiments of Sunni Muslims were considered hurt. The backlash against Asia Bibi illustrates the naturalization of Sunni Islam in Pakistan. In this case the dominance of

Sunni Muslims in Pakistani society was what evidently possessed the advantage. It is what caused the Muslim women to react in the manner in which they did. As Sunni Muslims, their assumed superiority in the eyes of the state, lead to the prosecution of Asia Bibi. They were troubled with what Asia Bibi had said about the Prophet Muhammad and how her words challenged what they held to be the only truth. Asia Bibi’s words not only degraded the Prophet Muhammad but they also opposed the authoritative power of mainstream Sunni Islam, a power that could only be identified through its application.

The Comaroff’s write that hegemony is rarely contested directly and that once its internal contradictions are shown, the natural comes to be negotiable and hegemony turns into ideology and counter-ideology (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 23-24). As long as Asia Bibi remained silent about defending her faith, the hegemonic order that is mainstream Sunni Islam in Pakistan was perpetuated. But because Asia Bibi chose to speak out against the harassment from upholders of this Sunni culture, the interaction between her and the Muslim women was an exhibition of Sunni Islam and non-Sunni Islam, or ideology and counter-ideology. The tension that intensified between the two parties on the field is the palpable outcome of the clashing between hegemonic Islam and the suppressed, heterodox religions. With this instance specifically, the internal contradictions of the anti-blasphemy laws and the prosecution of religious minorities were problematized on a larger scale than before, calling the attention of religious figures and activists globally.

Understanding power and how it operates requires the examination of its various actors and also of the discourses in which they are present. Michel Foucault writes in *The History of Sexuality Volume I: An Introduction* that power relies on “continuous regulatory and corrective mechanisms” (Foucault 1978, 144). This means that for power to exert dominance and control, there must be something that keeps it operating. Most

capable of reinforcing power are humans and their practices, especially through the “name that one attributes to a complex strategic situation in a particular society” (93). In Pakistan, the discourse of being Muslim has its own power dynamics, be they between the individual and the state or the local community. Likewise, a non-Muslim is also implicated in power relationships in Pakistan but in a manner that poses more danger to their well-being and sovereignty. What is more is that those who resist the norm are also responsible for empowering it. Their resistance is premised on the acknowledgment of the hierarchy of that power itself (144-145). By placing these theories into the context of the anti-blasphemy laws, one is able to see the power relations between the Pakistani government and the marginalized communities that it affects. Those who contradict the anti-blasphemy laws, such as Governor Salman Taseer who was killed for holding these views (Landay and Shah 2011), actually accept and reinforce their hierarchical authority. Pointing out the inefficacies of the problematic legislations begins with accepting their established position in the discourse of power at hand.

Foucault also alludes to an important idea of dissonance and deviance. In the same context referring to the regulatory functions that continue a power discourse, he mentions that “...power has to qualify, measure, appraise, and hierarchize... it does not have to draw the line that separates the enemies of the sovereign from his obedient subjects; it effects distributions around the norm” (144). Dissonant acts can destabilize a system but power will find a way to work around these acts. Power disciplines subjects into performing in a certain way, especially in the eye of the public. Choosing to uphold the norm or rebel against it is, in many cases, not a matter of choice at all due to the regulation of norms by fear, violence, and sometimes, death (53-54). The anti-blasphemy laws even explicitly state that crimes deviating from the Sunni norm are punishable by death. Asia Bibi’s case is exemplary of what Foucault means by regulatory power because her dissonant act has now put her on death row, sending

a potent message to the rest of Pakistan’s citizenry. The following will engage with this same thought but with a focus on another marginalized minority community.

Perhaps the Ahmadiyya population is best representative of the dangers present in the hegemonic power of Zia ul-Haq’s idea of Islam. The Ahmadiyya sect was established in 1888 in colonial India under the leadership of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (Rehman 2014, 409). The principle difference in the Ahmadiyya’s belief system is that they accept Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophetic figure, an idea which is outside the beliefs of the Sunni majority. Two anti-blasphemy laws that are part of the Martial Law Ordinance XX directly concern the Ahmadiyya sect by decreeing that Ahmadis cannot profess their faith verbally nor through writing and that they cannot declare their faith publicly, propagate their faith, build mosques, or make the call for Muslim prayers (Khan 2015, 17). Amjad Mahmood Khan explains that one of the main reasons for the justification of this law by the Federal Shariat Court, the highest religious court in Pakistan, was that Ahmadi practices “angered and offended the Sunni majority in Pakistan” and that it was necessary to control their practices to “maintain law and order” (18). Justice Ghulam Mustafa Chaudhry, who was especially opinionated on the legitimacy of the anti-blasphemy laws, asserted that allowing Ahmadis to practice their faith publicly could lead to a civil war (18). Evidently, the prospect of chaos and civil war, as unlikely as they may seem, have been successful factors in justifying the suppression of this group. By specifying what an Ahmadi can and cannot do, the Pakistani government has outlined what someone must practice and inhabit in order to be considered a true Pakistani who embodies the collective identity of the nation.

This idea of acceptable and unacceptable practices regarding Ahmadis and other religious minorities in Pakistan is deeply troubled. In his book *Orientalism*, Edward Said describes how the Occident came to understand the Orient. His thoughts on knowledge and power as serving the material interests of the dominant

group are especially applicable to cases such as Pakistan. A clear superior power dominates over a minority group in efforts to preserve a national culture and identity. Said writes, “To have such knowledge of such a thing is to dominate it, to have authority over it. And authority here means for ‘us’ to deny autonomy to ‘it’—the Oriental country—since we know it and it exists, in a sense, as we know it” (Said 1979, 32). The Pakistani state’s understanding of Ahmadis and religious minorities is deployed in a manner that is used to control its populaces through denying autonomy to them. Autonomy in this regard can be considered as the lack of religious liberty and the inability to practice one’s faith in public due to the creation of an environment of fear for these communities. Pakistani state officials developed the blasphemy laws (particularly 298-B and 298-C) to use them against the minority Ahmadi community to make sense of a culture that they believe should be representative of Pakistan. These laws were by no means intended to aid or support the Ahmadis. Said states, “In essence such a category is not so much a way of receiving new information as it is a method of controlling what seems to be a threat to some established view of things” (59). The existence of Ahmadis in Pakistani society is perceived as a threat to the integrity of the established Sunni Muslim ideology that most of the population possesses. Despite the unlikelihood of such a small number of Ahmadis posing a real danger to Pakistani society, law officials considered religious identity a top priority to control and preserve. The anti-blasphemy laws were passed to regulate the identity of Ahmadis, as the Pakistani government perceived them to be divergent from the normalized Islamic practices. The workings of power is clearly evident. The Pakistani state regulates its specifications of what is Muslim and what is not Muslim to elucidate the exact cultural norms that a Pakistani Muslim should uphold. This is exemplary of what Said means when he writes that ‘it’ exists, as ‘we’ understand it to exist: ‘we’ use ‘it’ to serve ‘our’ agenda. Ahmadis and other religious minorities are seen as essential to understanding what Pakistan is. Controlling and regulating these communities, in turn, defines

Pakistan as an orthodox Sunni state. The goal is not to rid society of an Ahmadi presence; indeed it is to use them as a model that maintains Sunni norms as acceptable and anything else as abnormal. Therefore, the presence of these communities is vital in order to reinforce the normalcy of the rest of Pakistan. The anti-blasphemy laws do not define Ahmadis and other minorities; the laws use these communities to define Pakistan as a whole.

Additionally, Said writes that powerful discourses like Orientalism can lead to reductionist worldviews and problematic policies (Said 1979, 46). In Pakistan, lawmakers and supporters of legislation that oversimplify the complexities of the many types of Islam that are practiced in the country in turn cause stressful and even dangerous realities for minority communities like the Ahmadis. In December 2015, two Ahmadi men, Abul Shukoor and Mazhar Ahmad, were arrested for alleged blasphemy, although their exact crime remains unstated (Rabwah Times 2015). In 1985, Shukoor was charged with blasphemy for publicizing his Ahmadi beliefs, and five years later he was sentenced to prison for three years after a complaint was filed that he was wearing a ring with a Qur’anic inscription. The accusations were filed by a cleric of the Khatme Nabuwwut movement (Rabwah Times 2015), a Sunni movement that defends the belief that the Prophet Muhammad is the final prophet. In May 2010, two Ahmadi masjids were attacked in Lahore, resulting in the deaths of at least eighty people (Brulliard and Mohammed 2010). These attacks were the work of the Pakistani Taliban located in Punjab, described as an “amorphous Sunni Muslim organization” (Brulliard and Mohammed 2010). These examples are just a few of many pertaining specifically to Ahmadis who have felt some of the most direct and extreme manifestations of religious intolerance. The reductionist binary at the core of these events is Sunni-Muslim/non-Sunni Muslim. The acts of violence and persecution in both cases are carried out by Sunni entities; those who endure the consequences are not Sunni.

### **Managing the masses**

The problems of the anti-blasphemy laws have been discussed at length in light of how they marginalize religious minorities. Additionally, it is critical to better understand how these legislations also control and regulate the majority population. Saba Mahmood, author of “Religious Reason and Secular Affect: An Incommensurable Divide?” points out the fact that legal reasoning, “tends to privilege the cultural and religious beliefs of the majority population” (Mahmood 2009, 86). Although the anti-blasphemy laws of Pakistan undoubtedly ostracized Ahmadis and religious minorities, they can also be understood through the intent to secure and maintain the order of Sunni Islam as it is practiced by the majority of its adherents. Mahmood also writes that in pursuing public order and safety, “the sensitivities and traditions of a religious minority are deemed necessarily less weighty than those of the majority, even in matters of religious freedoms” (88). The enactment of the anti-blasphemy laws are of course biased in favor of regulating the culture and religious practices of the majority of Pakistani citizens, yet they result in worsened conditions for religious minorities in everyday life.

Scholar Humeira Iqtidar also emphasizes this point by writing that the anti-blasphemy laws apply to both Muslims and non-Muslims, though minority communities even Islamic ones like the Ahmadiyya are most affected (Iqtidar 2013, 1018). In the eyes of the state, regulating the majority population would become an increasingly difficult task, if religious minorities were not subject to the same laws. Iqtidar also shares a notable point on the notion of selfhood:

In the case of Pakistan, linked directly to the state’s attempts at managing the identity of the citizen is the formation of a particular kind of selfhood within the Pakistani citizenry: one that is in confrontation with the state over the right to define the correct way of being not just a Pakistani but also a Muslim (1023).

In essence, it is through ensuring that minority populations remain and are treated as such that the boundaries of national culture are revealed. This then enables citizens to recognize whether or not their religious practices coincide with the selfhood that is compatible with the national identity. By declaring Ahmadis non-Muslim, not only did Pakistani leaders define unacceptable religious practices but they also simultaneously encouraged the subject formation of citizens according to practices of the majority. A distinction had been drawn by the state, particularly under Zia ul-Haq’s reign, that pushed the Muslim women in Asia Bibi’s case and the Sunni practitioners in the cases of Abul Shukoor and the Ahmadi masjid attacks to clearly identify themselves as belonging to the acceptable religious identity and not the “deviant” ones. The religious traditions of minorities as Mahmood states, are “necessarily subject” to legislation (Mahmood 2009, 88) like the anti-blasphemy ordinances. This subjectivity enables the normalization of a preconceived national identity.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has aimed to show how the state constructs a national culture through the use of legislation regarding religion and hierarchical power structures. This was argued through using the theoretical frameworks of several scholars to analyze the anti-blasphemy laws of Pakistan in light of their multidimensional points of power. Various instances regarding religious minorities and even the religious majority were utilized to show how the anti-blasphemy laws regulate and manage both groups of citizens. These types of products created by the Pakistani government are also read as an extension of the British colonial project to administer and oversee the Hindu and Muslim populaces of India. Consequently, the nation-state of Pakistan was created and it began its own legacy of nationalist discourses.

Now, Pakistan’s anti-blasphemy laws are being utilized to control the relationships between orthodox Sunni Muslims and those who do not belong to this category.

The Ahmadis who are targeted by name in these ordinances represent clashes in ideologies that are as much political as they are theological. This leads to dialogue on what is considered appropriate for Pakistani culture. Perhaps this is the question that politicians and ordinary citizens should reconsider. When the state uses particular understandings of religion as an instrument to create a nationalist identity, it sets up a situation for its inhabitants in which the majority is empowered while the minority communities are simultaneously subjugated. ■

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Maya Sato | *Pantry at Home*

# GLOBALIZATION, GLOCALIZATION AND THE SYMBOLIC ECONOMY OF THE TACO

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## Introduction

Each culture has a distinct cuisine that is important to understand in order to fully grasp the cultures' scope. Cuisine is a form of cultural capital that has been transformed through historic and contemporary interactions with outside cultures, becoming rearticulated in a multitude of formats within different regional sectors of the global economy. As culture and cultural capital have found a place in both macro and micro processes of globalization, the reproductions of cultural capital have led to ambiguity in how some cultural food dishes are actually prepared as opposed to how they are thought to be prepared.

So, how do the economic markets of globalization, commodified culture capital, and symbolic authenticity produce unique local articulations of the taco? What are different local articulations of Mexican cuisine within Chicago? What does an authentic Chicago taco look like? The impact of globalization on tacos is seen in the US, where tortillas have been outselling hamburger and hot dog buns in American supermarkets and food retail stores since 2010; (Rodriguez 2016) additionally there are also more Mexican restaurants in the US than there are Italian, Chinese, chicken, or seafood restaurants (Americans 2011). The greater Chicago metropolitan region has the sixth-highest concentration of Mexican citizens out of all

American metro regions, (Alberti 2014) with a plethora of Mexican restaurants and taquerias all across the North, South, and West sides. Pilsen, in the Lower West Side, and Little Village, in South Lawndale, are two well-known, prominently Mexican neighborhoods in Chicago that are key nodes of Mexican culture in Chicago. In fact, Little Village is known as the "Mexican Capital of the Midwest," and is home to one of Chicago's largest populations of immigrants without legal status," (Pathi 2017). This project used observations of Mexican restaurants in various Chicago neighborhoods, interviews, and content analysis of Yelp reviews to explore how a cultural dish is consumed within different cultural geographies.

## The Commodified Culture Economy

As the world becomes increasingly flattened through the process of globalization, the ability to participate in the tourism of geographically distant cultures is easier to access and reproduce than ever. Mexican cuisine, specifically tacos, are an exemplary case study of how articulated authenticity is renegotiated and impacted by the social forces of globalization, commodification, and the development of new media-generated contemporary places. Consider two markets that facilitate this global renegotiation: the commodified culture economy and the economy of symbolic authenticity. Tacos are the best vehicle to understand these forces because they are a product of both contemporary and historic globalization, originating from the point in history when scientific knowledge argued that the world was quite literally flat, not in the Thomas Friedman *The World is Flat* globalization understanding, but actually flat.

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The complicated story of the development of the taco began in the Spanish conquest of the Aztec Empire. As European influence filtered in and out of Mexico both before and after Mexico's independence in 1821, every European culture that came in contact with the taco experimented with it, rearticulating its construction using their own unique national and cultural aesthetic and traditional ingredients. The French, Creole, and Indian cuisines aided in the initial design of the Europeanized taco (Pilcher 2017, 79). Self-proclaimed 'taco historian' Jeffrey Pilcher argues that "Mexican food has been globalized from the very beginning," and thus tacos are produced with unique articulations within different cultures and regions (Pilcher 2017, 5). What Pilcher refers to as "the [initial] Mexicanization of European cuisine" (Pilcher 2017, 89) gave the taco a high-society connotation that is contradictory to the widespread Americanized Taco Bell-style Mexican taco that is so popular today.

Commodification is the process of transforming an artifact into a commodity with a quantifiable market value. Thus, cultural commodification is the process of turning a cultural artifact into something with a symbolically-rooted, but not exactly accurately valued, exchange value that may or may not be equal to its actual cultural utilitarian value. Cultural significance encompasses far more than just the market value of the artifact. It incorporates the entire intangible cultural context of artifacts like cultural traditions, myths, or histories that are integral to understanding the culture as a whole. The intersection of commodification and the significance of cultural artifacts produces the commodified culture economy. The commodified culture economy is the global economic market in which commodified cultural signifiers are quantified based on their capital market value. George Ritzer explains that commodified cultural capital can "become nullities as they are modified over time, with much of what makes them distinctive removed so that they can be marketed in a different time period or place," because these nullities are "far easier to distribute...globally than [distributing]

those that retain deep ties to a specific epoch and local area," (Ritzer 2003, 196). Consequently, a product of the commodified culture economy is the development of an economy of symbolic authenticity in which consumers interpret and ascribe value based on their perception of the artifacts' authenticity.

Globalization, the global facilitation and proliferation of interconnected social, economic, and political capital, is expressed in two specific processes within the context of tacos and Mexican cuisine. Essentially any 'thing' can be globalized: the globalized commodities discussed here are culture and cuisine. The globalization of cultural signifiers is the homogenization of a culture and its artifacts in order for it to be interpreted and produced globally outside of the original context and into geographically distant cultures. Similarly, the globalization of cuisine is the global spread the given cultural cuisine that is adopted and adapted by other cultures to fit within the available context.

There are two types of globalization that are particularly relevant in the case of Mexican cuisine: glocalization and globalization. Glocalization is each local culture's unique interpretation of 'the global' within their community that results in different productions of 'the global' within different geographic locations, also referred to here as 'local articulations' or contextual 'vernacular' (Ritzer 2003, 192). Globalization is the imposition of the widespread cultural agenda of individual nations, governments, private corporations, or other major social agents onto a variety of geographic locations with the sole intent of generating economic value and increasing profit (Ritzer 2003, 192). The macro process of globalization is facilitated by the meso processes of glocalization and globalization that are reliant on the existence of the commodity culture economy and an economy of symbolic authenticity.

The globalization of cuisine as a cultural commodity produces both chain and fast-food spaces of cultural representation that can be void of signifiers with



genuine cultural significance. Cook and Crang refer to the commodified cultural economy as the process where “consumed commodities and their valuations are divorced for and by consumers from the social relations of their production and provision through the construction of ignorances about the biographies and geographies of what we consume,” (Cook 1996, 135). This is echoed in David Harvey’s reflection of his own eating habits that, in practice, meals are consumed “without the slightest knowledge of the intricate geography of production and the myriad social relations embedded in the system that puts it upon our table,” (Cook 1996, 135). The sheer ignorance and lack of attention of the cultural history and significance of the Mexican cuisine is both the product and the problem of globalizing and commodifying cultural cuisine.

The economy of commodified cultural cuisine is a major aspect of a globalized market, evident in the mass sprawl of chain restaurants in America. It is easy to distribute commodified Mexican cuisine across the global market because it acts as a safe, working, and economically successful representation of Mexican culture- despite the fact that its culture signifiers, now commodified, commercialized, and removed from their native context, are devoid of their original cultural meaning and articulation. To attract a wider consumer base many restaurants, particularly chain restaurants, employ a homogenous but working model of Mexican culture. Pilcher notes that as Mexican cuisine began to gain global popularity, many restaurants chose to “reproduce a stereotyped hacienda theme with images of cacti, sleeping peons, and china poblanas in low-cut peasant dresses,” (Pilcher 2017, 151). A stereotypically reproduced theme of Mexican cuisine is the Baja cantina, as well as the spread of Tex-Mex and Cal-Mex across the United States. Pilcher also notes that “Music and drinking have become expected features of Mexican restaurants” (Pilcher 2017, 130) demonstrated in the widespread popularity of margaritas and Mexican drinking holidays (for example Cinco de Mayo, sometimes known sometimes as Cinco de Drinko

by American college students). When these homogenous representations become globally synonymous with Mexican culture, it becomes easy to capitalize on the globalized models and perpetually reproduce them across different cultural geographies for economic profit.

### **Spaces and Places of Authenticity**

‘Authenticity’ is a term that has a generally socially understood and constructed definition that has a variety of meanings to different consumers. David Grazian argues that “‘authenticity’ is not so much an objective quality that exists in time and space as it is a shared belief about the nature of places and moments most valued in any given social context....authenticity is rarely a quest for some actual material thing, but rather for what consumers in a particular social milieu imagine the symbols of authenticity to be,” (Grazian 2004, 32, 34). One method of production that counteracts the spread of commodified Mexican cultural capital is the establishment of “niche-based commercial districts that consist of businesses that offer similar kinds of social and aesthetic experiences” that lead to different processes of cultural consumption (Grazian 2004, 32). Globalization, as the antithesis of globalization, is a community’s unique articulation of ‘the global’ within their local context results in different articulations and interpretations of ‘the global’ across different geographic regions.

While commodified cultural signifiers embrace cultural stereotypes, local Mexican enclaves do not strive to reproduce the commodified articulation of tacos and Mexican cuisine, but rather express their unique local vernacular of their Mexican subculture. The conglomeration of Mexican restaurants within Mexican neighborhoods is typically seen as representative of Mexican cuisine due to traditional appearances and distinct differences between Mexican owned and operated restaurants and mass corporate retail chains.

Examples of this local vernacular are seen in the demography of the surrounding ethnic makeup of

the restaurant, often constructing 'hole-in-the-wall' connotations that are generally perceived as accurate articulations of the Mexican cuisine. This is in contrast with homogenous commodified cultural articulations that encourage mass-produced chain restaurants that are void of any local vernacular. The uniqueness of local articulations make stand-alone restaurants more difficult to commodify so they cannot be a globally profitable market, a nod to Ritzer's remark that "there are only so many world-class ballet companies, gymnastic teams, and rock groups, and the profit potential of such groups is limited because they cannot be mass produced" (Ritzer 2003, 195).

Differentiating between 'space' and 'place' is crucial when understanding cuisine as a cultural signifier. 'Space' is conceptualized as a general location. 'Spaces' are void of human interactions, social ties, or connections, they are open areas without any socially constructed significance. Place is on the other side of the spectrum: 'places' are locations that have been constructed, defined, and anchored by social ties and connections. Essentially, 'places' are 'spaces' that have been experienced by societies, creating a significant and contextual cultural meaning of, and within, spaces that transforms them into places. Proper placemaking is key to developing a unique local vernacular that represents a specific community. Cultural myths, traditions, or histories can be conceptualized as signifiers facilitating the shift of spaces into places. The local vernacular of Mexican stand-alone restaurants, as opposed to chain restaurants, embodies the difference between place and space. Mexican enclaves are geographic 'places' because they arise from local articulations of the historic Mexican cultures and subcultures that produce unique experiences and interpretations; chain restaurants are 'spaces' because they develop from the commodified Mexican cultural cuisine that only produces an indistinguishable and homogenous experience that is essentially equivalent for all patrons in any given region.

A contemporary example of constructing 'place' in the new media age is the virtual construction of spaces of online consumption. Online spaces facilitate interactions between consumers and producers and between one consumer and another. For example, the review site Yelp mainly facilitates interactions between consumers: when a consumer posts a review, other consumers preemptively judge the restaurant or shop based on the existing reviews. The consumer-consumer interactions on Yelp turn the individual webpages for each restaurant from online spaces into online places. 'Prosumers' are consumers that not only consume, but also produce rhetoric facilitating and compounding the consumptions of other consumers. Prosumers are the backbone behind the popularity of Yelp; Sharon Zukin argues that "Yelp acts as a reflexive feedback loop, both reflecting popular sentiments about the specific restaurants and helping to form those sentiments...Yelp reviews conceptualize and represent the urban locality in which individual restaurants are located," (Zukin 2015, 3). These conceptual sentiments produce the online intersection of location and identification in regards to consumer tastes.

Grazian notes that there is "a search for the prototypical... community as a symbolic space of authenticity," measured by the community's "ability to project a sense of intimacy, imagined or otherwise," to consumers seeking the experience of a cuisine outside of their own (Grazian 2004, 39). An outsider looking to experience an authentic Mexican taco will thus draw heavily on stereotypes of geographic locations to determine the perceived level of taco authenticity. As Grazian suggests, authenticity can be understood as nothing other than a contextual social construction; it is simply "what consumers in a particular social milieu imagine the symbols of authenticity to be," (Grazian 2004, 34).

## The Economy of Chicago Taco Authenticity

### Methods

I explored these theoretical ideas using three methods: on-site observations, interviews, and a content analysis of Yelp reviews. The restaurants observed in this project were located in three neighborhoods in Chicago: Lincoln Park, Lakeview, and Pilsen. Lincoln Park and Lakeview are two neighborhoods on the Northside of Chicago and are both approximately 80% Caucasian and 7% Hispanic; Pilsen, on the Lower West Side, is 78% Hispanic and 15% Caucasian (Pilsen, 2017). These neighborhoods were selected for popularity, racial and cultural diversity, and convenience. Within each neighborhood, both high- and low-end restaurants were observed. The restaurants in the Lincoln Park/Lakeview area were Tuco & Blondie, Taco Joint, and Taco Burrito Express; the restaurants in Pilsen were Decolores and Taqueria Los Comales 3. Additionally, throughout the duration of this research project, I visited other Mexican restaurants not intended as research sites, but they ended up serving a research purpose, so I recorded observations relevant to the research. These restaurants include Antique Taco in Wicker Park, Taco & Burrito Palace in Boystown, and Taco Bell in Wrigleyville.

Eight individuals selected by convenience were interviewed. The questions asked covered three areas of focus: defining Mexican food, the participant's history and experience with the Mexican culture and cuisine, and the influence of online reviews on their restaurant choices. These questions were asked in order to understand the pre-constructed ideas of Mexican cuisine the interviewee had, coupled with how they interact with online space to generate a real-world opinion.

Yelp reviews, as a cultural text, were analyzed from five Mexican restaurants in Lincoln Park and five in Pilsen. These restaurants were selected because they were all on the top five restaurant list on Yelp when the word "tacos" was searched within the boundaries of each neighborhood. The reviews selected were analyzed as follows: each

restaurant was broken down into five- four- three- two- and one- star reviews, and a random count 10% of reviews for each star-rating were analyzed—unless that figure yielded a number less than 5. When this equated to less than five reviews, an oversample for the sake of having adequate count of data samples occurred: the minimum number of reviews analyzed per star was 5. The 395 total reviews that were analyzed were coded for either explicit or implicit mentions of authenticity or inauthenticity, mentions of Americanized food or decor, mentions of other cultural dishes similar to traditional Mexican, mentions of the cultural artifacts within the restaurant, and any allusion to gentrification. To prevent over analysis of the data, each review was analyzed from the point of view of a consumer seeking an authentic Mexican dining experience rather than a researcher working to draw concrete conclusions about the authenticity of the restaurant. The restaurants sampled in Lincoln Park were: Taco Joint, Taco & Burrito Palace #2, Allende, Los Panchos, and Mayan Palace Mexican Cuisine. The restaurants in Pilsen were Taqueria Los Comales 3, Carnitas Uruapan, El Milagro Tortilla, Decolores Galeria y Sabores, and Panchos Pistolas. By relying on open-sourced, publicly produced data, coupled with a random sampling method, the intent was for the greatest breadth of reviews to be analyzed.

### Findings

There are multiple measures of authenticity that consumers look for. Using research methods of observations, interviews, and a content analysis of Yelp reviews, it can be concluded that the main signifiers of authenticity in the context of Chicago tacos are: what the taco looks like and is made out of, what kind of restaurant it is from and where the restaurant is located, what the inside of the restaurant looks like, and what cultural signifiers it uses as decoration.

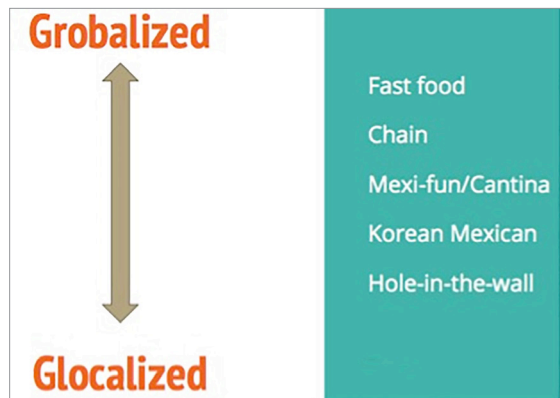
This is where the differences in glocal tacos and global tacos can be seen. The distinct globalization processes result in different *kinds* of tacos and restaurants, but they do not result in clear *distinctions* between the categories

of tacos or restaurants; the different types of tacos and restaurants exist on a continuum. The data gathered distinguishes restaurants from most-globalized to least: fast food, chain/fast casual, Mexi-fun/cantina restaurants, Korean-Mexican fusion, hole-in-the-wall, and standalone restaurants (Figure A).

It is clear that fast food restaurants take an extreme version of grobalization. Restaurants like Taco Bell have achieved global popularity and produce cheap novelty tacos that look interesting though out of context. For example, neither the Doritos Cheesy Gordita Crunch nor the Mexican Pizza from Taco Bell resemble a Mexican, American, or any other culture's depiction of Mexican cuisine. Yelp reviews of Allende (Figure B) demonstrate a clear result of what happens when the original Mexican cultural signifiers are disregarded and replaced with signifiers of the local DePaul student culture: it becomes drunk food, void of any authentic cultural signifiers.

Fast-casual and chain restaurants like Chipotle, Qdoba, Uncle Julio's, Chili's, or On the Border are the Americanized version of Mexican food, working as an approximate articulation of traditional Mexican dishes,

FIGURE A



though the dish itself does not look or taste the same as traditional Mexican dish. Additionally, these kinds of establishments employ the kind of cultural decor that plays on cultural stereotypes such as maracas, sombreros, salsa dancers, cacti, aztec patterns, or mariachi music.

Mexi-fun/Cantina restaurants often embrace both the glocal and grobal to construct their cultural identity with their own takes on food and decor, using the Mexican culture as an influence as opposed to a hard rule for

FIGURE B

★★★★★ 4/18/2015  
 I have yet to find a better **drunk** taco joint in Chicago. And trust me, I've looked. I initially found it back in college at Depaul, where I was minoring in being **drunk** and hungry, and I wish there were more places like it in the city. Especially close to me.

★★★☆☆ 5/5/2007  
 Enough mirrors and free chips with salsa to satisfy any narcissistic Mexican food lovers. It's hard to eat without feeling like you're being watched.

Drop in if you're a **drunk** college fool.

★☆☆☆☆ 9/15/2012  
 Every **drunk** DePaul student that eats here gives it a great review. This place is terrible. I went to DePaul FYI... But there is still no excuse. Have some respect for yourself and eat some real food. Try it sober and you'll regret it.

★☆☆☆☆ 3/26/2014  
 All the people who love this place r **drunk** and 100 percent gring

As a chicano i can tell u that there are so many better taquerias in chicago . It is so sad because almost all the taquerias in Lincoln park suck . With the exception of the one near the addison stop.

FIGURE C



FIGURE D



FIGURE E



identity formation. Each of these restaurants creates food that is clearly a derivative of Mexican cuisine, but still embrace their own articulation of the dish in order to establish their niche in the Chicago Mexi-fun market. Antique Taco in Wicker Park has a potato and poblano taco, (Figure C) Taco Joint in Lincoln Park has a fruit guacamole, (Figure D) and Tuco & Blondie in Lakeview has a crab tostada (Figure E). These are prime example of glocal articulations: it is easy to tell what traditional dishes each articulation is inspired by, but they are produced in a non-traditional aesthetic with ingredients not used in the traditional construction of the dish. Additionally, each restaurant's dishes and aesthetic are unique and do not even resemble each other-- regardless of their geographic proximity. Finally, none of these restaurants use the standard stereotypes of Mexican culture, but instead use the Mexican cultural aesthetic as a stylistic influence.

Another type of restaurant that produces glocal articulations are Korean-Mexican fusion restaurants. Korean Mexican dishes are distinctly different from traditional Mexican dishes, though they are still clearly Mexican-influenced. For example, a dish of nachos from Seoul Taco (Figure F) has kimchi and sesame seeds-- not Mexican, but fitting given the hybrid context. This is certainly not the traditional Mexican nacho style, but because they look similar to traditional nachos they are understood as a Korean articulation of traditional Mexican nachos. This Korean cultural articulation of the taco does not make it any less of a taco, it just makes it a Korean

taco; the epitome of a glocalized dish that brings about its own cultural signifiers of authenticity into a dish from another culture.

Hole in the wall restaurants embrace location as a key signifier of authenticity. These restaurants are typically understood as places located in an ethnic enclave 'off the beaten path.' In Pilsen, where all tacos in the observed restaurants are automatically served Mexicana style, Yelpers (Figure G) found things like police presence and a perception of a sketchy or dangerous location as authentic

FIGURE F



★★★★★ 2/11/2017

Very friendly staff who took our orders. She also made very **authentic** Korean style Kimchi which I enjoyed a lot. Tried chicken and beef taco, a bit salty but very tasty. This place is BYOB and liquor store is just few steps away. Definitely a place to try!!

★★★★★ 4/30/2017

**Authentic** Korean flavors wrapped in delicious tortillas! I highly recommend Seoul Taco!

FIGURE G



★★★★★ 7/29/2016

Awesome little restaurant with an authentic Hispanic environment, good food, and great Spanish speaking clientele.

The neighborhood is kinda sketchy, but I genuinely believes it's a part of the experience.

The place to visit to experience a Hispanic meal, complete with dark neighboring allies and shady figures walking down the nearby sidewalks.

An overall great place to visit...If you don't believe me, ask the 100+ Chicago Police or Sheriffs that visit this establishment on a daily basis. Just follow the Police cars

FIGURE H



and part of the dining experience, and mention these features more frequently than the consumed dish itself.

The process of reproducing a cultural cuisine is driven by two schools of thought: to remain safe and alter the original cuisine as little as possible in order to stick with the traditional perception of the dish, or to experiment and see how far articulations of the cuisine can be pushed while still being generally understood as a derivative of original dish. Tex-Mex and Cal-Mex tacos chose to remain safe and resemble traditional Mexican tacos. Fast-food tacos fall somewhere in the middle, taking on various forms like Taco Bell's Nacho Cheese Doritos Locos Tacos Supreme or the Cheesy Gordita Crunch (Figure H). Extreme articulations of the taco made with python, alligator, kangaroo, or turtle meat are 'glocal,' fully reliant on the ability to obtain these ingredients, pushing the conceptions of how a taco can be produced in different regions based on the cuisine aesthetic of the culture and region.

Another point of analysis for determining the authenticity of a taco is the geographic location from

which it is produced. Geographic location is a signifier of authenticity for many consumers that interpret their taco experience as more authentic depending on how 'Mexican' they perceive the place of consumption to be. The visual signifiers of Mexican culture within the restaurant or neighborhood are key elements consumers use to determine the authenticity of that specific taco. Modern technology provides consumers with websites that allow them to perform a priori research of a restaurant to see what signifiers of authenticity other consumers deem the restaurant to have. This search for an authentic dining experience becomes based on the opinions of other consumers rather of the restaurateurs chefs.

As society and technology evolve congruently with an ever-changing pattern of immigration and globalization, reproducible Mexican cuisine inherently slowly deviates from its original form, producing a "credible approximation of Mexican regional cuisine," (Pilcher 2017, 230) that satisfies the elusive criterion of authenticity. This is echoed in the high frequency of global chain restaurants as opposed to the more distinct glocal stand-alone restaurants.

## Conclusion

The interactions between local Chicago Mexican subcultures, coupled with the macro and micro processes of the global commodification of cultural capital create an economy of symbolic authenticity in which different local articulations of the taco that shape the understanding of what an authentic Chicago taco is. Throughout history, Mexican food has been disseminated across the globe through the process of globalization. The contemporary global spread of Mexican cuisine is facilitated by two specific forms of globalization: glocalization, which produces the local community's articulation of the taco, and globalization, which produces homogenized and commodified cultural signifiers embraced by chain restaurants. The spread of Mexican cuisine throughout history has not been solely facilitated by Mexicans, but also by other cultures that adapt Mexican cuisine into the context of their own culture.

The glocalized and globalized articulations of Mexican cuisine have produced different representations of 'authentic' tacos. Some consumers prefer global tacos piled high with lettuce, tomatoes, cheese, and sour cream on a flour tortilla, while others prefer Mexicana style tacos topped simply with onions and cilantro on a corn tortilla. Resulting chain or stand-alone Mexican restaurants both depict the Mexican culture, though some employ stereotypical cultural signifiers that have been commodified while others prefer to use specific subcultural signifiers that stray from the stereotype of Mexican culture. Cultural signifiers are articulated differently within different contexts that each have unique factors in order to produce different tacos with varying perceptions of authenticity.

Chicago neighborhoods with different sociodemographic makeups and cultural geographies exemplify the contrasting impact glocalization and globalization have on the Chicago taco. Restaurants in the Chicago Northside neighborhoods of Lincoln Park and Lakeview, as well as the Westside neighborhood of Wicker Park

produce glocal tacos that are in an articulation unique to the individual restaurant. What sets these restaurants apart from chain restaurants is the unique aesthetic each restaurant employs; by incorporating and highlighting different features of Mexican culture, these restaurants are able to embrace and portray Mexican culture within their own context as opposed to relying on cultural stereotypes the way chain restaurants do. Restaurants in Pilsen on the Lower West Side are more difficult to categorize as glocal or global; in comparison to the tacos on the Northside, they are less glocal because they are served traditional Mexicana style and have little variation. However, this does not necessarily make them global: these restaurants are small stand-alone mom-and-pop style establishments that do not mass produce their recipes or dishes. They make them the way their families and others in their subcultural context have always made them. While some embrace cultural stereotypes, others simply portray their culture in the way they understand it.

The question still remains: What is an authentic taco in Chicago?<sup>1</sup> It is clear that authenticity is an abstract concept that consumers negotiate based on their unique experiences with the Mexican cuisine. In context, this means that different regions of the US result in different perceptions of authenticity based on regional geography. For example, Tex-Mex and Cal-Mex are slightly different from each other, resulting in different constructions of the taco and their perceived authenticity. In Chicago, the articulations of tacos are partially a combination of articulations from other specific locales within Mexico, Texas, or California.

An authentic Chicago taco, then, is nothing more than what the consumer interprets it to be; an experience at

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1 I will be expanding the scope of this research project to involve more site visits and more in-depth interviews with managers and employees of multiple chain restaurants, standalone restaurants, and food trucks in Chicago to understand how they embrace authenticity within their different establishments. This research is being funded by DePaul University.

a restaurant is only as authentic as the consumer wants their experience to be. The discrepancies between local articulations and the construction of authenticity across diverse geographic regions show the various ways the same cultural signifiers can be interpreted differently. The concept of the authentic Chicago taco then has so many commodified versions that it is intangible, elusive, and, most importantly, inedible. The authentic Chicago taco really is something to taco 'bout. ■

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# CONFLICT IN WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES: RESOURCES FOR INTEGRATING CLASSROOM CONFLICT AND TRANSFORMING ACADEMIC PRACTICES OF COMMUNITY

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"There needs to be established that just because we're in WGS classes does not mean we've transcended the ability to harm. We need this ingrained in the politics and structure of our WGS classrooms."

— Survey respondent

"Safe" spaces are those which make a commitment to acknowledge the oppressions of the people within them. Audre Lorde's speech, "Learning from the 60s," which she delivered at Harvard University in 1982, analyzes the successes, strengths, and ongoing work from the Civil Rights era. "If there is one thing we can learn from the 60s," she says, "it is how infinitely complex any move for liberation must be. For we must move against not only those forces which dehumanize us from the outside, but also against those oppressive values which we have been forced to take into ourselves."<sup>1</sup> Merely calling these spaces "safe" is not enough to keep them accountable to the systems of oppression in which they exist. "There is no simple monolithic solution to racism, to sexism, to homophobia," Lorde continues. "There is only the conscious focusing within each of my days to move against them, wherever I come up against these particular

manifestations of the same disease."<sup>2</sup> Because of the ubiquity of prejudice, these manifestations are virtually as likely to appear inside "safe" spaces as they are externally. Vocalizing commitment to social change is not enough to undo the centuries of unjust stratification of people of color, women, LGBTQ+ people, Muslims, members of the working class, and other marginalized groups. Mass movements for liberation, including current iterations, Lorde and her audience, and the freedom fighters of the 60s, require ongoing dedication to coalition.

Women's and Gender Studies courses offer this community the opportunity to think critically about experiences of oppression and violence. As a queer white woman, the years I have spent earning my degree while locating my place within the larger movement for change have been invaluable to me. I began my career in the English department, where I have also graduated with a Double Major, but it was the WGS community that encouraged me to reflect on my own experiences of violence and oppression in the context of a commitment to ending it. Again, Lorde's words are relevant as ever:

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1 . Audre Lorde, "Learning from the 60s," in *Sister Outsider* (Berkeley: Crossing Press, 2007), 135-6.

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2 . *Ibid.*, 136-7.

Within each one of us there is some piece of humanness that knows we are not being served by the machine which orchestrates crisis after crisis and is grinding all our futures into dust.... Each one of us is a link in the connection between antipoor legislation, gay shootings, the burning of synagogues, street harassment, attacks against women, and resurgent violence against Black people.... Survival is not a theory. In what way do I contribute to the subjugation of any part of those who I define as my people?

“Refuge,” “safe space,” and “sanctuary” have become political buzzwords only because of their subversiveness in the context of current formations of power. As a department, Women’s and Gender Studies explicitly engages with these structures in order to historicize and envision transformative options for ending unjust systems like patriarchy, white supremacy, and class struggle.

Looking back on my undergraduate career in the Women’s and Gender Studies department, I can identify moments of personal transformation which significantly expedited my development of the skills necessary to think critically about oppression, relationships, and community. Most of these moments were spurred by an in-class conflict. Usually, but not necessarily, these conflicts revolved around a disagreement which derailed the schedule of the course and went unresolved before the instructor returned the class’s attention to the material on the syllabus. Sometimes, community was created among those involved who were able to relate to each other’s feelings about the central conflict. Naming these specific conflicts might be injurious to others in the WGS community at DePaul since we are a relatively small department and my location of these conflicts might implicate others involved. Because of this, I refrain from describing specific instances from my experience and instead defer to multiple perspectives in this community to share their experiences of this issue anonymously. My intention for my research and analysis

of this pattern of conflicts which I and others identify is to keep our community accountable to each of its members through dialogue, resources, and transparency in our ongoing commitment to learning and adapting.

The WGS community needs transformative resources in order to integrate conflicts into curricula when they occur in the classroom. By shifting our understanding of conflict from abnormal to typical, individual to communal, and separate from course material to relevant examples of the relationships of power studied in WGS classrooms, students and instructors will be better equipped to address conflict’s impact on our emotions and relationships in order to put into practice our understandings of WGS curricula.

### **Methods**

My original questions guiding this project include: Is a “safe space” the goal of WGS? What happens during conflict in a WGS classroom? Why has a pattern of unresolved conflicts developed in my experience in these spaces and what could I have been doing better to participate in their resolution and/or in the reduction of harm after a conflict? How do others see this issue and what do our perspectives on this have to do with our identities? Whose responsibility is it to keep this space accountable to its power dynamics along axes of race, gender, ability, class, nation, and sexuality?

In order to answer some of these questions and understand the experiences of others in my community, I created and distributed a three-question survey to four WGS core classes, WGS 100, 200, 320, and 395. The survey prompted qualitative responses on the subject of conflict in WGS classrooms. Three instructors and forty students took this survey. The questions appeared as follows:

1. Can you remember a time when there was a conflict in a Women’s and Gender Studies course you took? If so, please briefly describe it (who was involved,

what was the issue, what happened, etc.).

2. Did you find that this conflict impacted your ability to engage with course material, the instructor, and/or other students in the class?
3. What, if anything, do you feel could have been done differently before, during, or after this conflict occurred?

Before the survey was distributed, participants were informed of the following key to clarify the terminology used in the questions:

Please use the following definition to help with the survey on the reverse: *Conflict* (in a WGS course): A disagreement between at least two people (students and/or instructors) which takes place in the classroom. This disagreement probably involves more people in the class than just those who are immediately involved and probably takes up a significant amount of time in the course. Feelings like offense, defensiveness, tension, and anger are likely involved.

This definition describes the aspects of conflict which I am interested in exploring: tension, confusion, shock, and group involvement. Not wanting to discount other forms of conflict, like those that occur outside of the classroom or those which involve a disagreement that is not voiced or discussed by the class as a whole, this definition is a specification for this project's focus.

### Data

When creating and distributing the surveys, I was anticipating responses which echoed my own experiences with conflict in Women's and Gender Studies classes. This was true of the impacts which conflicts have had on students and instructors' experiences of courses and the relationships within them since these responses reflected both the community-building potential for conflicts as well as the potential impasse they create. I was surprised by the varying perspectives on what could have been done differently during the conflict and interpreted this to

reflect the lack of resources which this project addresses and hopes to alleviate. Importantly, the majority of the conflicts detailed in the survey responses centered on the issue of race. Below is a selection of some of the responses to the first question which asked for the specific details of a conflict in a WGS course:

- ...a teacher was using primarily white feminist sources. A lot of women of color in class felt silenced.
- A student in class was defending behavior of white racist southerners with the defense of "upbringing."
- The professor was bold with her racism and it made me feel uncomfortable as a person of color. It was upsetting that many of my allies in class did not speak up or ask if the POC were okay.
- The lack of knowledge one student had and the resistance to understand perspective was deeply disturbing.
- In my Feminist Theories class, we had an issue of someone over self-disclosing a very triggering moment in her life and it was violent and harmful to many of my peers and myself.
- There have been multiple instances of students showing sensitive/violent/triggering content, namely white students. In one course, this happened multiple times; white students displayed videos of harm coming into bodies of color with no reasoning as to why the content was necessary.

The second question asked if the conflict had an impact on the course and the relationships among students and instructors. The following selection of responses is listed in no particular order:

- Yes — the class from this experience on became more clique-ish along political viewpoints particularly around issues of race. There were also students who felt personally attacked by others' body language.
- I found myself furthermore hesitant to situate

myself as an upper class white woman even though I believe my professor handled the situation perfectly.

- Most definitely. It also made me feel regretful of my WGS major for a while.
- The conflict created a divide between students where people no longer liked the offender and those who supported what was said. It also created a space where offending others was okay and students felt they could no longer speak up about being offended, silencing them while those who offended others kept freely speaking.
- This helped me engage more. When I feel as if someone is misrepresenting a topic, I speak up about it.
- No! It actually brought the whole class together in defense of race discrimination within the feminist movement.
- Yes, the class could never engage or dialogue well after that due to a lack of class values.

The final question, “What, if anything, do you feel could have been done differently before, during, or after this conflict occurred?” elicited the most varying responses, including:

- Establishment of an open space in which to voice feelings and concerns about how to learn together.
- Supporting those who were upset by the offensive remarks would be helpful
- Some students could have let others have the opportunity to talk. Criticism of their views should not be seen as an attack.
- If half the class was not WOC I don’t think this issue would have received the attention it did... [ellipses theirs]
- I don’t feel that I could have done anything because I was not involved in the conflict.
- I don’t feel anything on our part (the class) could cause a paradigm shift, only the voluntary perspective to learn of others without bias was the

student’s part

- Establish values early on, trigger warnings, and addressing the issue immediately rather than letting it simmer.
- There needs to be established that just because we’re in WGS classes does not mean we’ve transcended the ability to harm. We need this ingrained in the politics and structure of our WGS classrooms.

### Frameworks

The final response above reflects the intentions behind this project. At first I envisioned these conflicts as breakdowns of communication which create a blockage in a course causing these moments to stand out against the course’s agenda. Looking back on my experience of conflict in WGS, I could have used these resources when I witnessed racial microaggressions and instances of racism in my classrooms. In these moments, I either did not recognize these conflicts as racist or I did not know what I could do to intervene. I remember feeling confused and unsure of my relationship both to the issue and to others in the room. However, my not intervening in instances of racism upheld and silently agreed with its existence despite what I would have said otherwise. I am hoping the resources this project offers are relevant for others’ experiences and that the department finds them effective in maintaining our commitment to recognizing and intervening in racism.

The frameworks of this project draw from Women of Color feminism and Black feminist thought to name and assert the practice of privileging knowledge production among white academics which exists alongside the devaluation of community-based, grassroots, and non-academic knowledges among people of color specifically. The analysis and resources on conflict in Women’s and Gender Studies classrooms offered here are particularly located within my community. This is not to communicate that academia is the epitome of the system of white supremacy, but instead to explore just one area of this ubiquitous, often disregarded hegemony. As a white person in academia,

my writing is in conversation with and accountable to these existing frameworks. I am grateful to the instructors, faculty, and students in Women's and Gender Studies who participated in the survey and/or extended support and resources not only for this project but throughout my years in this department.

The respondents in this project's survey offered a range of how their experiences of conflict impacted the relationships within their classrooms. Some noted divisiveness and "cliques" while others discussed a strengthened sense of community. In the section which follows, the resources from critical race studies, transformative justice, and conflict resolution are particular for this community and aim to redefine how we imagine conflict so that it is more likely to establish accountability rather than divide and exclude. This particularity should not discourage reappropriation of these resources for other communities working towards social justice or other community learning environments since this section itself is an amalgamation of a variety of theorists and writers from disparate backgrounds who have complementary ideas for community accountability, communication, and sustainable movements for change.

### Analysis

90% of K-12 educators is white.<sup>3</sup> At DePaul University, 55% of students enrolled are white and students of color make up 36% of total enrollment.<sup>4</sup> 67% of faculty is white while Black or African American faculty makes up the next largest racial group at 11%.<sup>5</sup> Beyond the identities of instructors, faculty, and students in higher education, many studies argue that multicultural and multiracial curricula often perpetuate the myth of a "post-racial"

system of education and that the most effective social justice pedagogy acknowledges and interrogates the impact of race and racism in students' lives.<sup>6</sup> This project understands Women's and Gender Studies as a transgressive discipline and examines the presence of race and racism both in the content and dynamics of conflict within this field.

*Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks' foundational feminist pedagogical theory, draws on many of the values of popular education that assert education as "a practice of freedom."<sup>7</sup> hooks builds on the work of Paolo Freire to argue that education should invite students' whole selves into the classroom, not just their academic or intellectual selves.<sup>8</sup> This "engaged pedagogy" is transgressive of the foundation of public education, and therefore dominant practices of education, as it was designed not to liberate but to impart lessons in obedience, nationalism, and compliance with systems of oppression.<sup>9</sup> "I found a place," hooks says of feminist theory, "where I could imagine possible futures, a place where life could be lived differently."<sup>10</sup> The chapter, "Theory as a Liberatory Practice," argues that theory is accessible, accountable to experience, and diverse in oral and written traditions as long as it is created with these intentions. She concludes:

[I]n its production lies the possibility of naming our pain — of making the hurt go away. If we create feminist theory, feminist movements that address this pain, we will have no difficulty building a mass-based feminist resistance struggle. There will be no gap between feminist theory and feminist practice.<sup>11</sup>

3 . National Collaborative on Diversity of the Teaching Force, "Assessment of Diversity in America's Teaching Force: A Call to Action," *National Education Association*, October 2004, <http://www.ate1.org/pubs/uploads/diversityreport.pdf>.

4 . DePaul University Enrollment Management and Marketing, "Enrollment Summary – Diversity," <https://offices.depaul.edu/enrollment-management-marketing/enrollment-summary/Pages/diversity.aspx>.

5 . "How Diverse Is DePaul University?" *College Factual*, <https://www.collegefactual.com/colleges/depaul-university/student-life/diversity/>.

6 . Jeanna Gazel, "Walking the Talk: Multiracial Discourses, Realities, and Pedagogy," *American Behavioral Scientist* 51, no. 4 (2007): 532-550; Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, *Racism without Racists: Color-blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States* (Lanham, MD: Roman and Littlefield, 2003).

7 . bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress* (New York: Routledge, 1994) 13.

8 . *Ibid.*

9 . Jonathan Kozol, "Still Separate, Still Unequal: America's Educational Apartheid," *Harper's Magazine* 311, no. 1864 (2005): 41-54.

10 . *Ibid.*, 6

11 . *Ibid.*, 75.

Not only does “Theory as a Liberatory Practice” establish the necessity and benefits of linking theory and practice inextricably, hooks argues that the false dichotomy between the two has occurred in the institutionalization of theory. The notion that theory is only useful for academics is racialized because of the prevalence of white educators and students in higher education. “Work by women of color..., especially if written in a manner that renders it accessible to a broad reading public, is often de-legitimized in academic settings, even if that work enables and promotes feminist practice.”<sup>12</sup> In this way, the privileging of white perspectives within academic circles transcends individual departments and colleges and maintains the larger system of white supremacy in knowledge production and feminist empiricism.<sup>13</sup> To describe this stratification of racial identities, I defer to hooks’ “preference for using the word white supremacy to describe the system of race-based biases because this term, more than racism, is inclusive of everyone.”<sup>14</sup> Higher education maintains a multiracial hegemony in its process of privileging white people and devaluing people of color.

Conflict can be community-defining. The value which difference can have in movements for social change is articulated by Audre Lorde throughout *Sister Outsider* and particularly in “Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference.” “Too often, we pour the energy needed for recognizing and exploring difference into pretending those differences are insurmountable barriers, or that they do not exist at all.”<sup>15</sup> Especially with this project’s focus of racial microaggressions, these instances of resistance offer opportunities to establish boundaries between productive dialogue and marginalizing speech. The term “microaggression” was coined in the 1970s by Harvard psychologist Chester Pierce when it was defined

as “the chief vehicle for pro-racist behaviors” that are “subtle, stunning, often automatic, nonverbal exchanges which are ‘put downs’ of blacks by offenders.”<sup>16</sup> Further explored in Derald Wing Sue’s *Microaggressions in Everyday Life*, these instances of racism are different from overt acts of racial hatred in that they operate more indirectly and subconsciously. According to Sue, microaggressions occur when a member of a dominant culture identifies something aberrant, “other,” or pathological in a person from a marginalized or minority group and affirms a stereotype about or otherwise demeans this person.<sup>17</sup> Considering the frequency of microaggressions, upholding a stereotype interpersonally does not usually result in physical violence; however, microaggressions cannot be divorced from the larger structures of violence<sup>18</sup> through which prejudicial stereotypes are perpetuated.

The distinction between racial microaggressions and racist actions is similar to that of “violation” and “violence” as it is explored in *Common Shock: Witnessing Violence Every Day* by Kaethe Weingarten: “Violation occurs directly between people and indirectly through structural inequities and injustice.”<sup>19</sup> Weingarten argues that in addition to the “victims and perpetrators” of violence and violation, witnesses of these acts are also impacted and therefore have an opportunity to engage with others involved or with the act itself. Reading about violence in the news, hearing about acts of aggression from friends’ experiences, and seeing hostility between others in public are all examples of witnessing acts of violence and violation which may be mundane but leave an impact on all involved. “This book,” the author explains, “will help you become aware of yourself as an everyday witness to violence and violation, and provide

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12 . Ibid, 63-4.

13 . Kum-Kum Bhavnani, “Tracing the Contours,” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 16, no. 2 (1993): 95-104.

14 . bell hooks, *Teaching Community* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 28.

15 . Audre Lorde, “Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference,” in *Sister Outsider*, 116.

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16 . Chester Pierce, “An Experiment in Racism: TV Commercials,” *Education and Urban Society* 10, no. 1 (1977) 65.

17 . Sue, *Microaggressions*.

18 . Johan Galtung, “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research,” *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 167-191.

19 . Kaethe Weingarten, *Common Shock* (New York: Penguin, 2003) 6.

you with tools to cope effectively with its consequences.”<sup>20</sup> Legitimizing the effects of violence on its witnesses does not detract from the suffering of people who experience harm nor the need for accountability from people who harm; instead, acknowledgement of the widespread issue of common shock both addresses its toxicity and provides an opportunity to heal from and transform violent situations.<sup>21</sup>

In the context of a college classroom, the dominant culture privileges white students and academics. Any microaggressions which occur here are related to the delegitimizing of the perspectives of people of color. Disconnecting interpersonal conflicts, like those which can occur around microaggressions, from the systems under which abuse occurs is ineffective in addressing the root causes of these micro- and macro-level issues.<sup>22</sup> Disrupting this precedent requires naming the racial power imbalance when it controls the classroom so that it can be effectively neutralized. The resources this project offers do not recommend calling others out nor do they aim to solve the problem of white supremacy and racial inequality; instead, their most effective use is integrating them into our everyday engagements with one another, whether we are writing a syllabus, posing a question to a class, or leading a group activity, because these are the places where microaggressions and racial biases exist.

In order to contextualize Weingarten’s analysis and strategies for engaging with violence and violation, I employ Aimee Carrillo Rowe and Sheena Malhotra’s metaphor from “(Un)Hinging Whiteness.”<sup>23</sup> Similar to hooks’ preference for the term “white supremacy,” the metaphor of a hinge makes a “distinction between

whiteness and white bodies” so as to decenter white students in classroom analyses of white supremacy and to complicate the notion “that only white bodies negotiate whiteness, benefit from white privilege, or secure white supremacy.”<sup>24</sup> This metaphor evokes the constant negotiation between hinging whiteness to white identities/bodies to hold white people firmly accountable within that articulation; and then unhinging that very conflation to empower white people and people of color, to move within and against its nuanced forces of racial domination.<sup>25</sup> The authors acknowledge the risk involved in distancing white students too much from whiteness since white people can still benefit from privilege even while trying to disrupt it through anti-racist consciousness.<sup>26</sup> Navigating this risk involves directly addressing the benefits of white privilege which white people receive and our complicity in the maintenance of the processes of white supremacy. This is crucial “if we are to resist whiteness in all its complexity as people of color and as white people.”<sup>27</sup>

In a Women’s and Gender Studies classroom, this resistance requires “forging anti-racist alliances which arise out of a shared commitment to social justice.”<sup>28</sup> Our practices of this shared commitment, however, differ depending on our relationships to racial microaggressions. Weingarten’s strategies for compassionate witnessing appeal to “bystanders,” or people who are not directly involved with an instance of violence or violation. Many respondents in the survey expressed doubt and discomfort with their role in a classroom conflict around racism. Although the survey did not ask respondents to specify their race, I can relate to these feelings as I reflect on my own experiences of conflicts in WGS classes. White people are not directly implicated in instances of racial microaggressions

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20 . Ibid.

21 . Ibid.,18.

22 . Gwyn Kirk & Margo Okazawa-Rey, “Identities and Social Locations: Who Am I? Who Are My People?” in *Women’s Lives: Multicultural Perspectives* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 59-68.

23 . Aimee Carrillo Rowe & Sheena Malhotra. “(Un)hinging Whiteness.” *International & Intercultural Communication Annual* 29, (October 2006): 166-192.

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24 . Ibid., 166.

25 . Ibid., 167.

26 . Ibid.

27 . Ibid., 169.

28 . Ibid., 170.

because as the dominant group in academia, we are never asked to justify our inclusion. Therefore, white people in WGS classrooms are the bystanders in instances of racial microaggressions. This is not to disempower people of color from employing strategies from compassionate witnessing in these conflicts but to encourage more white people to engage with them as well. Unhinging whiteness from white people in this situation aims to equalize the access to communication while simultaneously hinging it upon those who benefit from white supremacy and urging bystanders to become compassionate witnesses. In this way, classroom conflict around racial microaggressions moves from an interpersonal to a community issue since (un)hinging whiteness and compassionate witnessing create the space and offer the tools necessary for engaging with racism in our community.

### Resources

Tema Okun's chapter on antiracist pedagogy in *The Emperor Has No Clothes: Teaching about Race and Racism to People Who Don't Want to Know* resonated with my experience of classrooms which have successfully engaged racial dynamics among its participants. The burden of keeping classroom spaces accountable to racial prejudices does not only lie with the instructors but the precedent set by a syllabus or practice which engages directly with these issues is invaluable in addressing microaggressions and biases when they occur. "The process of unpacking a comprehensive understanding of white supremacy requires that we address levels of physical, emotional, and intellectual misinformation and conditioning."<sup>29</sup> The "process-driven product" of developing the critical consciousness of antiracism described in this chapter "begins with personal reflection and relationship-building, moves into analysis and application, and ends with visioning." Okun stresses the "descriptive rather than prescriptive" usefulness of these

pedagogical practices, offering specific applications of each aspect of this pedagogy, including storytelling, community-building activities, and an emphasis on collective strength as opposed to individualism.<sup>30</sup>

This antiracist pedagogy serves as a model of the possible strategies for resolution of microaggressions or other instances of racism in the classroom. The divisiveness and "clique-ishness" described by a number of responses to the second question on the impact of conflicts in the classroom demonstrates the need for facilitated dialogue in order to bridge or integrate differences in the classroom. This dialogue should not exclude the emotions involved in conflict which often paralyze communication and leave the initial instance of racism unaddressed and unresolved. Conflict is a community issue not only because its resolution can lead to deeper connection but also because it puts values into practice. In "The Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism," Lorde explores the issue of engaging with racism in feminist academic spaces underlying this issue: "If I participate, knowingly or otherwise, in my sister's oppression and she calls me on it, to answer her anger with my own only blankets the substance of our exchange with reaction."<sup>31</sup> Lorde's uses of anger are applicable not only for people experiencing and witnessing racism but also for those who have yet to examine these prejudices in themselves. In this way, the antiracist curriculum of Women's and Gender Studies should encourage and strategize interventions in racism and microaggressions when they occur in our classrooms.

### Conclusion

This project is a work in progress. The analysis and resources it offers represent the breadth of research I was able to engage in while completing my Capstone in Women's and Gender Studies. I plan to continue not only to research resources for this project but to continue my

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29 . Tema Okun, "Aspiring to See: An Antiracist Pedagogy," in *The Emperor Has No Clothes: Teaching about Race and Racism to People Who Don't Want to Know* (Charlotte: Information Age Publishing, 2010) 106.

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30 . Ibid., 116.

31 . Audre Lorde, "Uses of Anger: Women Redefining Difference," in *Sister Outsider*, 128.



work in practicing the skills it offers from transformative justice, critical race studies, and conflict resolution.

“Unity implies the coming together of elements which are, to begin with, varied and diverse in their particular natures,” Lorde explains in “Learning from the 60s.” The unity of Women’s and Gender Studies, and any community striving for social change, depends on both the differences and solidarity of its members. When we recognize conflict as the cutting edge of our values of antiracism, respect, and growth, we move from the fear of confrontation which wills conflict not to happen. Engaging with difference continues the work of our feminist and antiracist predecessors which are in community with one another in WGS curricula. ■

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Angela Verish | Spot 2

# HIP-HOP AS A MODERN SOPHISTIC PRACTICE

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The world of hip-hop took over headlines last spring as Remy Ma released her song “Shether,” a near seven-minute soundtrack full of insults aimed at Nicki Minaj. From accusations that she plagiarized lyrics to snide remarks about what she does behind closed doors, Remy Ma used her musical platform to throw a not-so-subtle jab at Nicki Minaj for mocking the disappointing sales of her latest album. Using songs to carry out feuds is not an isolated event in hip-hop culture. For decades, hip-hop’s most popular emcees have composed tracks in which they exchange back-and-forth insults, targeting each other’s talent, actions, and persona. These feuds often take the form of “diss tracks” in which artists incorporate lyrics that subliminally or explicitly jab at their competitors. Whether diss tracks expose a history of “dirty laundry,” as seen between Remy Ma and Nicki Minaj, or gain the imaginary title of “King of New York,” as in the dispute between Jay Z and Nas, they are a form of rhetoric, which embody basic sophistic practices, while functioning in a modern, mediated culture. As a result, hip-hop culture has allowed artists and emcees to use the recording industry, which is often perceived as restrictive, to explore and capture the spontaneity of rhetorical argumentation.

The Western rhetorical tradition dates back to the fifth century B.C.E., a time in ancient Greece when city-states were governed by the people. With no legislators or lawmakers in place, Greek politics relied heavily on public

discussion. This political culture meant that citizens needed to be capable of speaking in public at a moment’s notice, and on any given subject in order to participate (Brummett 6-8). This reliance on public discussion led to a desire for public speaking skills. Citizens needed to be able to propose, defend, and protect ideas, and in certain cases defend themselves against someone accusing them of wrongdoing. Sophists, working as traveling teachers, taught aristocrats how to cater to popular opinion (Guthrie 34). However, their emphasis on pleasing their audience, rather than communicating facts, later came to be seen as manipulative. Sophists gained a bad reputation for their concern with winning an argument over communicating truthful statements, and created a negative image of themselves in which they were seen as “spin makers,” lacking in virtue and being guilty of seducing the public’s opinion with their showy performances (Schiappa).

Sophists often relied on the pleasurable experience of their wordplay to win an argument. This use of language can also be seen in the origins of hip-hop. Daniel Banks argues that the hip-hop genre stems from historical influences of African orature. In his article, “From Homer to Hip-Hop: Orature and Griots, Ancient and Present,” Banks states, “In orature, important cultural information is passed down from generation to generation. It is a living, spontaneous, and responsive art and the oral artist relies on both memory and improvisation. Orature thus has its own logic systems, literacies, and skill sets that are employed to keep cultures alive” (Banks 239). Just as Athenian democracy called for strong public speaking skills to participate in their legal system, West African oral artists, referred to as *djelis* or *griots*, required strong public

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speaking skills to participate in community affairs. They relied on their oral communication skills to engage with important community issues in a way that both transient and permanent community members could hold interest. They used their “bodies, voices, visuals and musical skills to express themselves, share their frustration and pain ... and create a platform for their own healing” (Banks 240). Similar to sophists, griots and djelis used the enjoyment of language to run their community. The performance of an argument was important for getting ideas across, and the emphasis stayed on how well they were able to captivate their audience’s attention.

Similarly, Kermit E. Campbell argues that rapping can be linked to West African oral traditions because like the griots, African American rappers preserve the “African American vernacular tradition through the eloquence of music” (Campbell 24). In his book, *Gettin’ Our Groove On: Rhetoric, Language, and Literacy for the Hip Hop Generation*, he states that black oral tradition has evolved into a contemporary resistance rhetoric. This rhetoric takes the griot practice of “signifying,” or “battle with words” to more of a “narrative form ... one might call storytelling or, more loosely, *rapping*” (Campbell 29).

These similar histories pave a way for hip-hop to be the music genre most well-suited to carry on sophistic practices. Like ancient Greek sophistry, modern day hip-hop is centered around the flow, rhythm, and spontaneity that comes with live performance. Hip-hop artists create a narrative that takes a position on a certain argument and defend it, not with absolute truths, but with a captivating verbal and musical performance. Banks states that “like [West African] oral artists, the emcee also tells of his community issues, its values, its ancestors, its heroes and heroines, its triumphs and its struggles” (Banks 240). Hip-hop tracks, therefore, aim to sway the public toward a specific opinion regarding the community, or individual, doing so through word, rhythm, and rhyme manipulation. Traditionally, there has been a significant difference between emceeing—hip-hop performed spontaneously for

a small crowd—and rapping—hip-hop tracks recorded for the music industry. Banks states that “in hip-hop emceeing and rapping are different.... Emceeing refers to the process of improvisation – rhyming that is done ‘off the dome’ in the moment, in the presence of an audience’s witnessing and critical eye, while the rapper’s words are pre-scripted” (Banks 240). However, this distinction is not as relevant in the contemporary music industry because artists are able to record and circulate their tracks instantaneously. While the modern music industry provides hip-hop artists with the ability to pre-record raps and beats, it does not completely take away from the effect of traditional in-the-moment performance. The new recording platform only creates a different time relation between human-to-human interaction, redefining the phrase “at a moment’s notice” to one that is more applicable to a mediating platform. While a rapper’s words may now be scripted, he or she still acts within a restricted timeframe. Although the rappers communicating within these pre-recorded tracks are not being exposed to the critical eye in immediate time, they are addressing immediate issues and are time-sensitive in terms of the release date of their track or album. In fact, rappers face more pressure to compose an entire soundtrack in response to another artist’s jab, as it will be played over and over to the audience’s “witnessing and critical eye.”

For example, diss tracks are a type of hip-hop soundtrack that directly attack, or respond to another rapper’s attack. Because rappers address a certain claim that was made against them within the song, their response is dependent on *kairos*. In the rhetorical tradition, *kairos* is defined as “the opportune moment” (Crowley and Hawhee 148). In this case, it is the opportune moment of a song’s release date. If an artist does not use that opportune moment, they may face harsh judgment from their discourse community, for they will be seen as weak and accepting of those negative claims. This time sensitivity resembles the importance of immediate response in ancient orature: One of the main factors of winning an argument was always being ready to dispute. Although soundtracks are a form of mediated

culture, which is less about live performance and more about the ability for a song to live on over time, immediate response is still important because an artist cannot wait around while another artist spreads falsehoods about them—especially within a culture and genre that relies on the pride that stems from being “on top.” The processes of contemporary song composition are important because they may amplify argumentative qualities that have traditionally been valued over truth: flow, rhythm, rhyme, and bodily performance. The artist then must decide which is more important in a certain case at a certain time—an immediate response that is less well developed or a virtuoso performance that is less timely.

In her article, “Reading Hip-Hop Discourse in the Twenty-First Century,” Candace Jenkins states, “In the thirty-plus years since its inception, hip-hop has shifted from ... live performance to mediated narrative and become far more openly intertwined with pop culture” (Jenkins 1-2). She argues that while hip-hop is still centered around the flow, rhythm, and spontaneity that comes with live performance, it has adapted to the narrative-based style that media technologies provide the public. The twenty-first century desire to have a storyline intertwined with popular music has influenced the composition of hip-hop tracks, creating a fitting platform for back-and-forth disputes. And hip-hop artists have continued to explore the performative qualities of argumentation.

A pair of emcees who illustrate this very well are Nas and Jay Z, two New York hip-hop artists. Both rappers released records in the mid-1990s that hit the top music charts. And from the beginning, Nas and Jay-Z along with other rappers and fans disputed who best represented the streets of New York. The earliest jab between the two artists can be traced back to Nas’s second album, *It Was Written*, in which its opening song, “The Message,” includes the first of many subliminal shots toward Jay Z. For example, Nas sings, “lex with TV sets the minimum.” This line refers to Jay Z’s first hit album in which Jay Z compared his mind to a Lexus. In his music video for “The

Message,” Nas features himself riding in a Lexus with TV sets inside, alluding to the idea that owning a Lexus does not mean you have made it big. While not a direct jab, Nas later confirmed that Jay Z inspired that line. After his release of the song, he told *Complex*, a hip-hop news outlet, “I saw Jay Z driving a Lexus with the TVs in them. I got rid of my Lexus at that point and I was looking for the next best thing” (Adaso). This example illustrates the importance of immediate response. By releasing his song while Jay Z’s first album was still widely circulating in the hip-hop community, Nas acted kairologically, taking advantage of the opportune moment to subliminally diss Jay Z. In doing so, Nas created an additional opportunity for fans to speculate on the meaning of the line. Jay Z, in turn, responded with his song, “Where I’m From,” joking about how some rappers are too concerned with “arguing all day.” He sings: “I’m from where ni-as pull your card, and argue all day about/Who’s the best MC’s, Biggie, Jay-Z, and Nas” (“Where I’m From”). He points out an important factor within the hip-hop debate, which is that their arguments stem from their aspiration to be the best. There are no logical arguments leading their claims, but rather their pride in the form of well executed language.

Another example of this dispute comes from Jay Z’s song, “This City is Mine,” which was released shortly after the death of Biggie Smalls in March 1997. Because Biggie was seen as the leading hip-hop artist at the time, his death brought along the desire to want to take his “throne” in the hip-hop world. In response, Nas released “We Will Survive,” which addressed the deaths of both Biggie and Tupac. He refers to how he enjoyed the discourse that went on between the two rap giants with his line:

It used to be fun, makin’ records to see your response  
But, now competition is none, now that you’re gone  
And these n-as is wrong - using your name in vain  
And they claim to be New York’s king? It ain’t about  
that. (“We Will Survive”)

While expressing respect to the deceased hip-hop stars, Nas also threw a jab at Jay Z, stating that he is no competition for the greats. Nas points out that hip-hop should not be about being “the king.” It should be about the art.

While their back-and-forth came across as real insults, none of the claims made by Nas and Jay Z, or any other rapping Kings and Queens, were based on truthful statements. They were manufactured claims intended to capture the attention of their audience. Similar to sophists and certain groups of griots, hip-hop artists use “double tongues” in order to entertain listeners. As Campbell states, their performative nature grants them “the right as entertainers ‘to misrepresent the truth and invent lies’ ... to obtain rewards” (Campbell 30). The success of an artist’s argument lies on how well it is performed. Hip-hop diss tracks could be considered a form of sophistry because there is an “off the dome” attack coming from both individuals, yet lacking the substance of truthfulness.

In his article, “Rhetoric in Popular Culture,” Brummett explains, “Greek legacy tells us ... rhetoric occurs in traditional texts (verbal, expository, discrete, and hierarchical)... In the sum, the first Athenian legacy that we have inherited is an assumption that whatever is called rhetoric must have most or all four characteristics of traditional texts” (Brummett 13). While hip-hop diss tracks are not often viewed as traditional texts, they do assume a majority of the traditional text characteristics. Hip-hop artists hold a strong emphasis on the verbal performance of arguments and rely heavily on the flow of word choice in order to respond and create effective disses toward the other person. Their soundtracks are a form of hierarchical competition in which there is always a sense of pride that comes with trying to be the “reigning” rapper and use their performances as a means to explain why they deserve that throne.

Jay Z and Nas went at each other in diss tracks for well over a decade, resulting in their eventual friendship once their beef had gone on too long for their audience to still be captivated. The artists’ battle went on for so long because neither one of them wanted to be seen as the weaker rapper by staying silent. It could be said that their real “beef” had been long over before that ten-year period, but their showmanship encouraged them to keep the act going. This “manufactured” showmanship is a current issue within the hip-hop world. Artists are being paid to create diss tracks in order to gain audience attention. These feuds then proliferate on social media as fans carry on the back-and-forth, making it not about winning, but rather extending the argument as much as possible.

Unlike ancient Western and African rhetorical performances, we are able to listen, reflect, and analyze diss tracks because new media technologies capture the heated responses. Because these embodiments of sophistic practices no longer happen live, they can be prolonged for years through the recording industry. Because of the Greek and African cultural underlining that surround the hip-hop community, sophistic practices were able to live on and thrive. In a way, this modern form of sophistic practice is more complex and multilayered than its original form, as it can be documented and live on forever for the audience’s critical eye. However, a modern form of sophistic practice would not have been possible without hip-hop’s emergence from African rhetorical arts. Hip-hop’s emergence from African orature allowed for hip-hop to be just as free flowing, creating an atmosphere of performance that thrived on heated, on-the-spot debate. The liberty that comes with the hip-hop community allowed for what was once seen as negative to be seen as respectable, and worth the title, King or Queen of New York. ■

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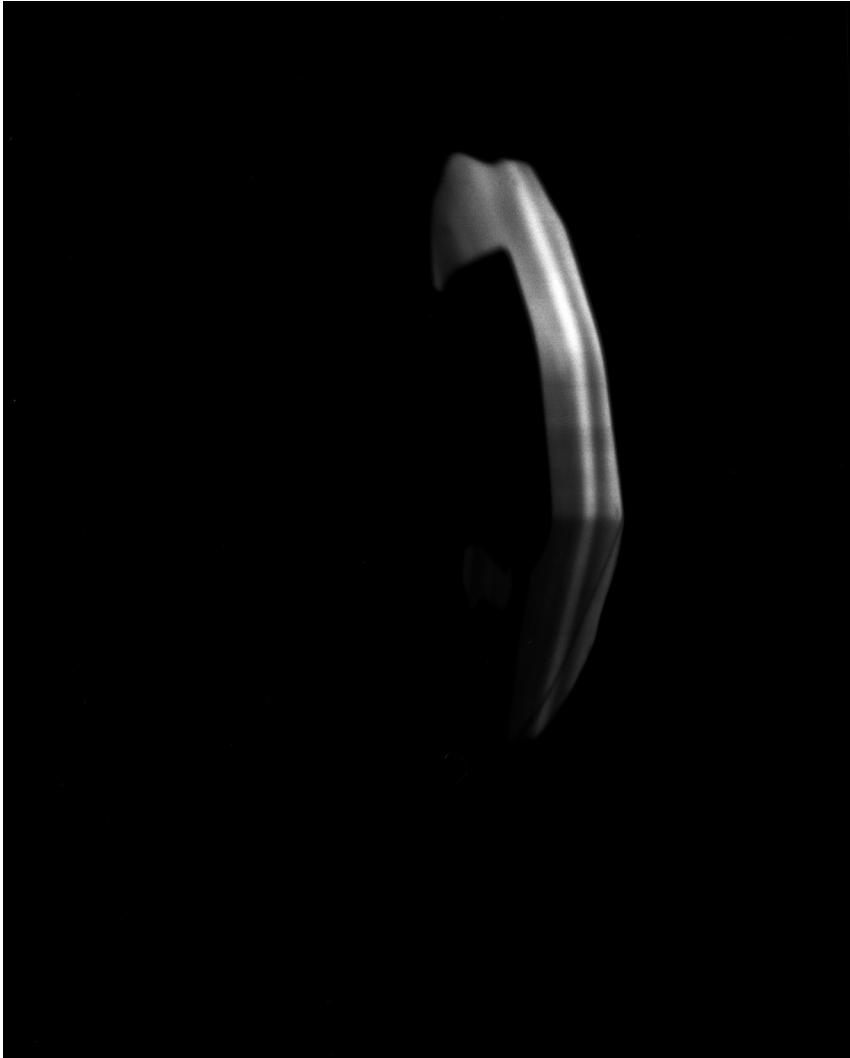
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Julian Van Der Moere | *Jamais Vu* (In-Camera Study)





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