

INTERRUPTED SILENCE

**Actively Engaged Intellectuals,
Intellectually Engaged Activists**



**compiled and published
SPRING QUARTER 2024**

A Warm Welcome

to the Spring 2024 Edition of INTerrupted Silence

As we approach the end of another academic year, it's time for reflection, celebration, and anticipation of what lies ahead. This year has been filled with challenges, achievements, and moments of growth that have shaped us in ways we might not yet fully comprehend.

Warmer afternoons allow for forgiving breaks between each assignment and remind us of the summer break that seems so much closer in our calendars than in our realities of late-night study sessions. To those who will not be returning to campus next quarter, may your future journeys be prosperous and full of adventure. Our faculty, staff, and student communities have no doubt prepared you for any endeavor you pursue.

This quarter was special not only at DePaul but internationally. Students of all majors decided to apply not only their academic insights to the real world but also their dedication to change and transformation. Our campus has proven to be more than a place for learning- it's also a place where passions are ignited and ideas are nurtured.

Over the course of over two weeks in May, the center of campus was suddenly bustling with students, faculty, and community members. Mutual aid was practiced twenty-four hours a day with free meals and various tents dedicated to supplies, medical equipment, and snacks. Art in all forms emerged throughout the quad and students' demands for justice could be heard, seen, and felt around the world.

DePaul's campus had extended its borders beyond the quad, the city, and even the country. Concepts and theories from one of our core classes— Identities and Boundaries— had manifested outside the classroom. Students recognized peripheries and dared to confront them. This edition of *INTerrupted Silence* features the courage of students to challenge and defend worldviews, and our department publishes such work with great honor.

Thank you to our faculty, staff, and students for another abundant year of teaching and learning. As we navigate through life, may we refer to Ghassan Kanafani's wisdom: "You have something in this world, so stand for it."

Sara Aqariden, *Editor*



Rage, the Flower Thrower by [Banksy](#)

HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS

INTuesday International Film Night Series

Israel's Gaza War: Causes and Consequences
with Mouin Rabbani

Gaza: A Public Health Catastrophe with Dr.
Chandra Hassan

Against a State of Forgetting with Emmy
Yoneda

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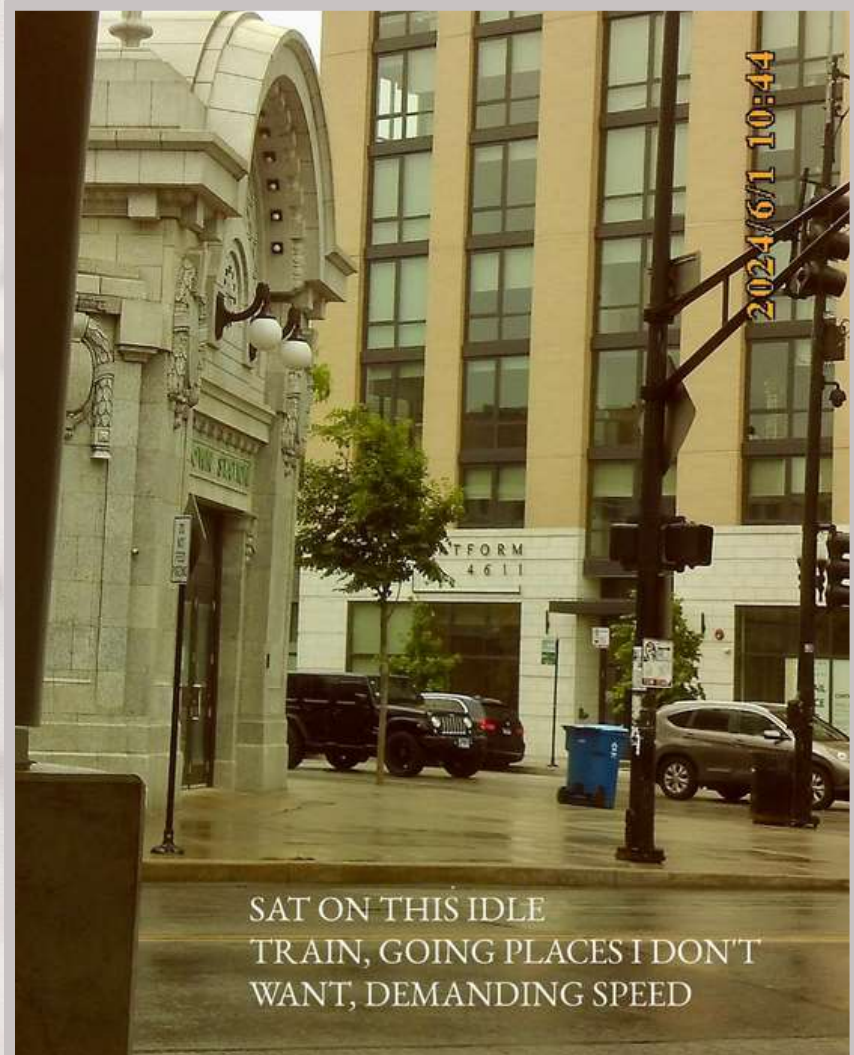
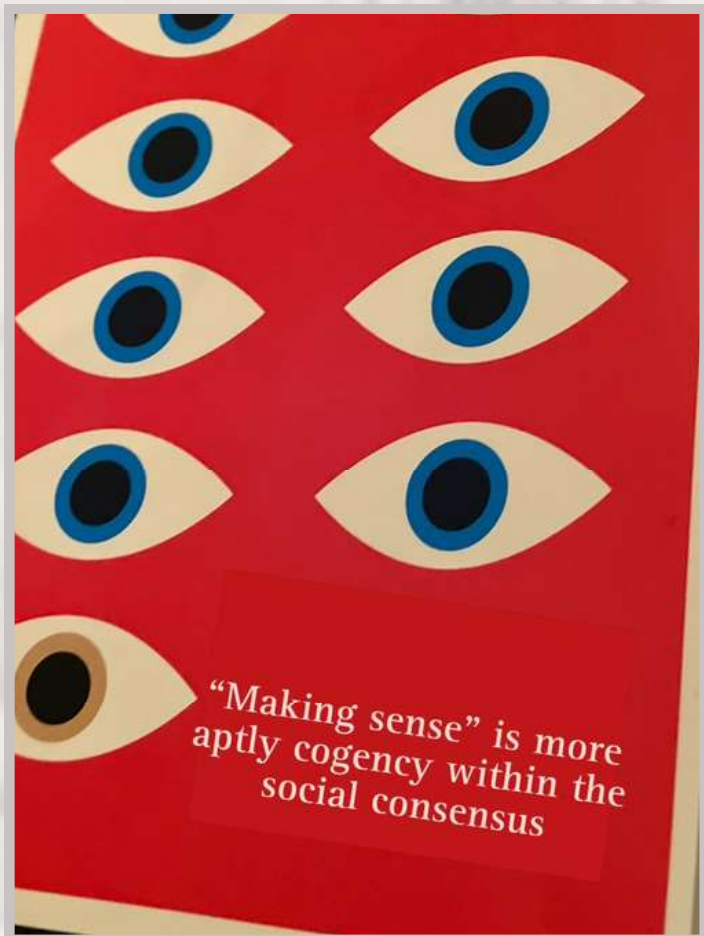
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haikus from everyday life

Rosbel Garza



Professor Malik

What is a book every INT student should read?

Orientalism by Edward Said

What projects are you currently working on?

An edited volume on Teaching with Thomas Sankara and an article called A Meditation on Engaging Shadows.

If you could take any INT class, which one would you take?

Kaveh Ehsani's Marx class.

What does a teaching day look like for you?

Fun and exhausting. It's intense. I try to meet students where they are and consider how to connect the intellectual questions and content to our current lives.

What topic would you like to teach but haven't been able to?

Medieval Political Thought of the Islamic World. It is a precursor to the Enlightenment, but without the imperialist political project carried in Enlightenment Thought. It can highlight the politics of knowledge.

Why did you want to be a professor?

I didn't. I did a PhD because I had burning intellectual and political questions that I wanted to investigate with mentorship. But it has been an incredible journey!

An analysis of zines and articles examining what “gender” can encompass.

By Kate Dybas

Bitch, the Puberty Issue - Metagender & the slow decline of either / or coming to a media outlet near you!

Metagender & the slow decline of either / or coming to a media outlet near you!, by Lisa Voldeng and Lauren Kloppenverg creates a new term, “metagender” (Voldeng and Kloppenverg, 1998). In this excerpt in the zine *Bitch, the Puberty Issue*, Voldeng and Kloppenverg assert that “our society is built on opposites” (Voldeng and Kloppenverg, 1998). Black or white, straight or queer, man or woman, rich or poor, and so on. The authors argue that the binaries are “rooted in us even more deeply, perhaps that we can fathom” (Voldeng and Kloppenverg, 1998). After explaining the binaries, the authors offer their own idea of a revisioning of gender and coin the term “metagender”. Voldeng and Kloppenverg describe the term as such:

Metagenderism is the disunion of the unified gender rank, ultimately rendering the roles, as well as gender completely irrelevant... It is the unlimited superset of all possible (non)genders and gender (non)identities, of individual and cultural existence free from binaristic categorization and definition (Voldeng and Kloppenverg, 1998).

Voldeng and Kloppenverg maintain that the concept of metagenderism allows people to “shapeshift” and procure “(non)genders” and “gender (non)identities” (Voldeng and Kloppenverg, 1998). In other words, metagenderism allows for people to assume gender roles that go outside of the typical “man or woman” binary that is so ingrained in our lives. In “*Nongayindoda*”, Zethu Matebeni examines multiple terms with similar meaning as “metagender” (Matebeni, 2021).

Matebeni - Male Daughters and Female Husbands

The first two terms Matebeni explains are “male daughter” and “female husband” in which a transfer of land from a father to a daughter (because there was no son) allowed that daughter became a “male daughter” because she was allowed to own that land (Matebeni, 2021). This then allowed the male daughters

to acquire “female husbands” because they would need someone to help with the domestic responsibilities that they would no longer be able to do because they had the new task of managing land (Matebeni, 2021). Like metagenderism, these two terms allow women to shapeshift into different identities and assume a (non)gender. The roles of male daughters and female husbands are not genders within the strict man and woman binary, it is something entirely new and not very explored, in the words of Voldeng and Kloppenverg, these (non)genders allow for people, specifically South African women in this case, to “play with what is to be traditionally or nontraditionally male or female (Voldeng and Kloppenverg, 1998). When colonialism reached South Africa, it enforced the binaries of “man” or “woman” that Voldeng and Kloppenverg describe in their excerpt in *Bitch, the Puberty Issue* which leads to the removal of male daughters and female husbands and removed the economic power that women had from their statuses of male daughters and female husbands (Matebeni, 2021). Despite this, new terms that played with what gender could be developed in South Africa.

Matebeni – Nongayindoda and Unongayindoda

The second set of terms that Matebeni examines are “nongayindoda” and “unondayindoda” (Matebeni, 2021). In the examples that Matebeni uses, she explains that “nongayindoda” relates to how a woman can resemble a man in the way she dresses and acts (such as her father) and also used as a derogatory and degrading term (Matebeni, 2021). To clarify what the term can mean, Matebeni recalls two different uses of the word. The first use of the term comes from Mfundu, a woman in a village who has been called this term for many years and shares that she (Mfundu) never took offense to being called “nongayindoda” as it elevated her status, was used to describe the clothes she wore, and compared her to her father, going as far as to say that in some sentences, the women who called Mfundu “nongayindoda” did so with an adoring tone (Matebeni, 2021). If we examine this use of “nongayindoda” in comparison to Voldeng and Kloppenverg’ metagenderism, it is clear that “nongayindoda” is a gender (non)identity term, as nongayindoda has nothing to do with Mfundu being a woman and has everything to do with the way she presents herself such as wearing shorts and t-shirts (Matebeni, 2021).

The second use of “nongayindoda” that Matebeni describes is from a story. The story is about a woman who makes the difficult decision to leave her abusive husband, and one of her reasons for leaving him is because he calls her

“nongayindoda” in a demeaning way (Matebeni, 2021). In this instance, the term “nongayindoda” is used to vilify the woman, it is an insult that means that she is ugly and undesirable (Matebeni, 2021). Voldeng and Kloppenverg would argue that like in the case of Mfundi, this use of nongayindoda does exactly as they state metagenderism does, it allows for the “playing” or in this case a new way to describe a term that doesn’t have everything to do with her being a woman (Matebeni, 2021).

After examining the uses of “nongayindoda”, Matebeni examines the word “unongayindoda”. She shares that the term “unongayindoda” means “one who almost looks like a woman” (Matebeni, 2021). What is interesting about this definition of the term is the fact that the word “one” rather than “man” is used when referring to the person who almost looks like a woman (Matebeni, 2021). The use of the word “one” shows that “unongayindoda” is a new role that encourages people to explore what gender and gender expression can be beyond the binary of “man” and “woman”, recalling back to Voldeng and Kloppenverg’s ideas on metagenderism (Voldeng and Kloppenverg, 1998).

ZINES 101

What are they?

"A zine is a self-published, non-commercial print-work that is typically produced in small, limited batches. Zines are created and bound in many ways, but traditionally editions are made by hand and easily reproduced." -[The Bindery](#)

Why make them?

"Most zine creators reject the commercial aesthetic because they reject the ideology of commercial mass media; rather than positioning readers as consumers, as a marketplace, the zine positions them as friends, equals, members of an embodied community who are part of a conversation with the zine maker, and the zine aesthetic plays a crucial role in this positioning." -[Girl Zines: Making Media, Doing Feminism](#) by Alison Piepmeier

Where can I find them?

We have our very own zine archive in the DePaul Special Collections and Archives reading room located in room 314 of the John T. Richardson Library. Stop by if you need some inspiration or want to read archived zines-- you'll lose all sense of time while you're in there. Chicago is also home to many other locations that distribute zines, like [Quimby's Bookstore](#) and [Gerber/Hart Library & Archives](#). Finally, share them with friends and community members!

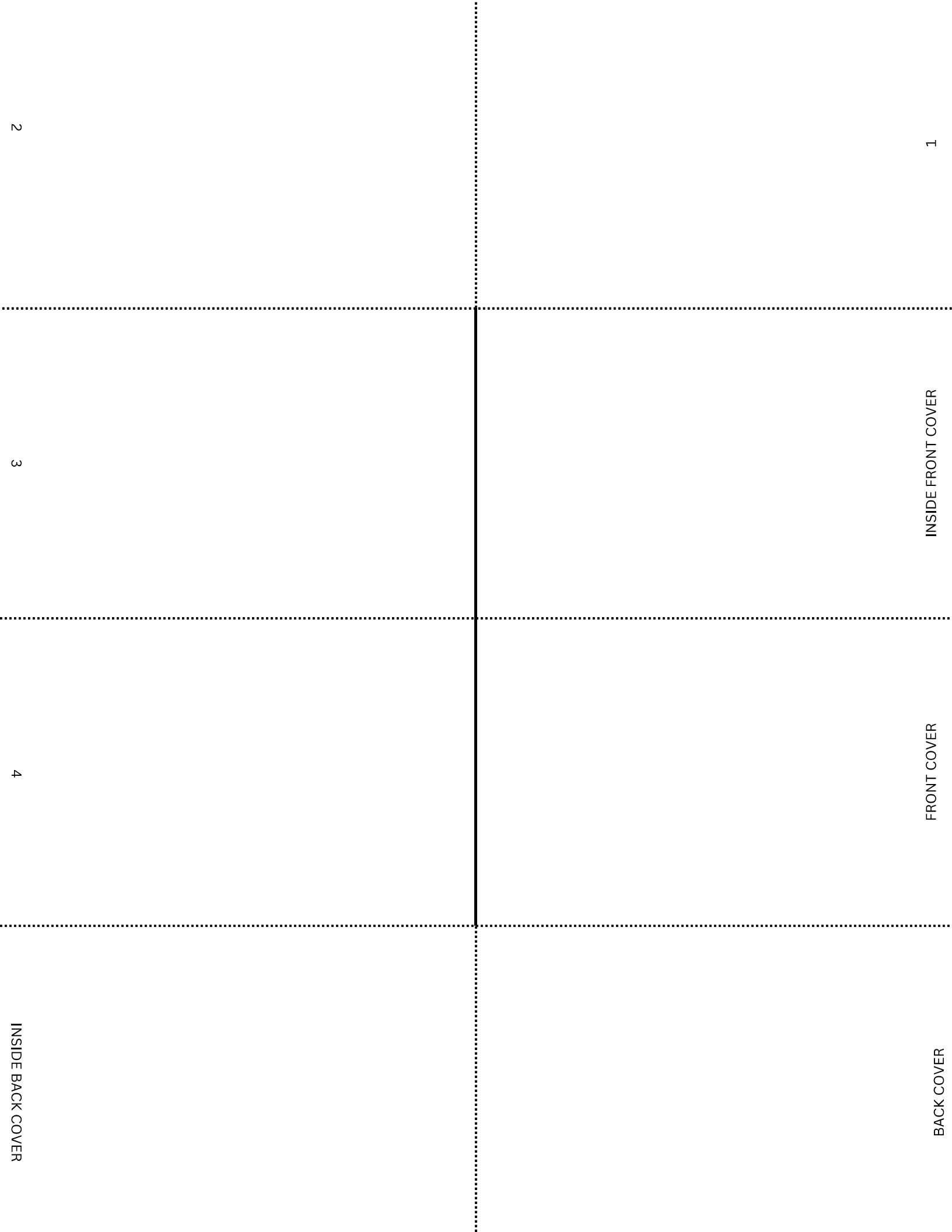
How do I make one?

Use the template on the following page to make your own mini-zine!

Step 1: Fold the paper along all the dotted lines.

Step 2: Cut the paper along the solid line (fold in half to cut along the fold)

Step 3: Pinch the corners to fold it into the zine. Do this by folding the paper lengthwise, taking the edges and pushing them towards one another. You can also search up a diagram if you need extra help.



1

INSIDE FRONT COVER

FRONT COVER

BACK COVER

2

3

4

INSIDE BACK COVER

Professor McIntyre

What is a book every INT student should read?

Parable of the Sower by Octavia Butler

What projects are you currently working on?

An anti-memoir of living through a period (2016-present) when things fall apart.

If you could take any INT class, which one would you take?

There are too many to pick just one! If I had to pick, I'd probably go with Gil Gott's international law sequence.

What is your favorite class to teach & why?

Any class where we are able to form a community that is able to engage in meaningful conversation.

What topic would you like to teach but haven't been able to?

I once proposed a Focal Point Seminar titled "Bullshit and Assholes". It got turned down. I'd still like to teach that course.

Why did you want to be a professor?

That was so long ago and there were so many partially-thought-out reasons at the time. I think the one that stuck was autonomy. I do my work with no one looking over my shoulder, no one telling me how to teach my classes, no one telling me what to research, no one telling me which committees I have to serve on. (This rosy picture isn't quite true, but it's closer to being true of this job than any other job I know).

Exchange Networks as a Beacon for Imperial Expansion; An Analysis of the Mongol Silk Road and the British Transatlantic Slave Trade

By Gear Palmer

Introduction.

Since the beginning of human development, networks of commerce have been used as systems of exchange for both goods and ideas. Throughout history, interconnected networks have been dominated by imperial powers in efforts of expansion and conquest. Although reaching and affecting the entire global political-economic-cultural community, the facilitation of trade by empires has been achieved for the sole purpose of self-preservation and prosperity. In reflecting on the historical international trade networks, the two most significant are the Silk Road and the Transatlantic Slave trade.

An empire, unlike a nation-state, has no economic, military, racial, or religious unity. Purpose and outlook are the only possible fundamentals that unite an empire (Sanghera, 87, 2021). Even these are debated. According to historian, Frederick Cooper, empires are large, expansionist political units that reproduce differences among the peoples and places they conquer (Cooper, 40, 2014). In ruling, empires manage different subjects differently through exploitation, unbothered by their production of violence (Cooper, 40, 2014). The minority of self-declared leadership controls the governing and directive of the entire empire. In this leadership, actors of power may be united in purpose and outlook, yet the majority of the empire, being conquered subjects, will not agree to this directive. Through the ruling minority, the establishment of economic exploitation, violence, and annexation of land all produce class hierarchies among the governing populations. These hierarchies, imposed for economic expansion, occur on the basis of race, ethnicity, class, and or gender. Through networks of commerce, these hierarchies are escalated.

In validating social and class hierarchies, empires establish legal codes and procedures, invented and indoctrinated by the ruling class. Legal codes justify violence, imperial expansion, and rights to property as a state-legitimizing influence (Elkins, 19, 2022). Empires issue these rules in a top-down approach, further ensuring a superior hierarchical role over others. In action, empires achieve power through the extension of political agents that command a social hierarchy and establish long-term methods of economic production. In focusing on economic production as a beacon for imperial expansion, the following essay will analyze the interconnected trade networks of both the Mongolian and British Empires. By utilizing the trade networks of the Silk Road and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, both empires expanded imperial power by expanding economic growth. Both economic expansions influenced the social environments and were validated by political procedures. According to Karl Marx, empires create both spatial occupations and internal hierarchies. In his *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Ko Unoki evaluates that empires create,

“a struggle for domination between different social classes that have been present with human beings from historical times to the present, with each class struggle ending in either a revolutionary reconstruction of society or the ruin of the contending classes.

Whether to fulfill the aspiration of recognition by others or to resist class oppression, as Hegel and Marx respectively suggest, the attempts of Homo sapiens to dominate one another over the course of human history have been made in parallel with the development and establishment of various social orders and systems such as feudalism, slavery, dictatorships, and absolute monarchies. Along with the establishment of social orders, from time immemorial the human race has witnessed the rise and fall of empires..” (Unoki, 11, 2012).

The following essay argues that interconnected networks of exchange, in the case of the British and Mongolian Empires, advance imperial growth and overwhelmingly contribute to both the rise and the fall of an empire.

Mongol Empire.

Between A.D 1205 and 1350, the Mongol empire reigned over the longest international trade economy and land empire in history (Abu-Lughod, 8, 1991). Led by Genghis Khan, the launch of this empire emerged through his collection of nomadic tribes. Through raids and invasions, these tribes annexed land across the Eurasian steppes (Mijbas, 293, 2020). In acquiring territory, Khan’s landmass established direct contact between Europe and China for the first time in over a thousand years (Abu-Lughod, 170, 1991). The Mongol Empire stretched from Eastern Europe to the East China Sea, from Siberia to the Persian Gulf, consuming all of Central Eurasia (Beckwith, 2009).

The land of the Central Asian Steppes was barren and infrequently populated by sedentary tribes and nomadic herders (Abu-Lughod, 154, 1991). Many groups left the moderately productive land for better opportunities in Mongolian trading towns and more fertile land (Abu, 155). During this period, the world followed a Sinocentric order, looking towards China for cultural innovation and economic opportunity (Frank, 116, 1998). China’s guidance, although profound, occurred through the control of trade networks. These relations acted as tributaries in a larger world economy (Frank, 116, 1998). Cities such as Samarkand, on the northern route by the Black Sea, prospered under Mongol protection and linked Central Asia (Frank, 57, 1998).

The thirteenth-century economic development of Europe depended on trade with the East. The economic success of Venice demonstrates this. Situated between Europe and the East, Venice was a key player in connecting Eurasian trade exported from the Mongol Empire to European ports (Frank, 56, 1998). Not until the eighteenth century did European cities meet the level of cultural growth, economic exchange, and higher quality of life, previously seen by their Eastern counterparts (Blayes, 3, 2020).

British Empire.

This narrative is separate from the later Eurocentric historical model. In the nineteenth century, Europeans rewrote history to a Eurocentric perspective for imperial interests. In doing so, with self-declared power, European imperialists turned Westward for expansionary endeavors (Abu-Lughod, 19, 1991). These imperial endeavors were partly a response to Europe’s encounter with the Mongol empire. As the British Empire rose to power, they utilized the same imperial methodology of trade networks to expand their empire. While the Mongol Empire was powered by merchant mercantilism, the British Empire was powered by the demands of Capitalism, utilizing merchants, but mostly slave labor for labor production.

After expeditions to the Americas, in the early 17th century, Britain began seizing land from Native Americans and developing their own English colonies. In addition to Britain, Western powers of Spain, Portugal, France, and the Netherlands, also claimed land in both North and South America to establish colonies (Morgan, 8, 2016). The desire for American territory stemmed from the rich soil and climate. The Americas contained a warmer climate than any European country and their soil was far richer for land cultivation. Land cultivation occurred on plantations where European empires aimed to grow financial capital through luxury goods.

Staple crops in these plantations consisted of tobacco, rice, cotton, and coffee (Morgan, 8, 2016). These goods were transported back to Europe for their development and consumption. The production of goods was catered towards European consumers; smoking tobacco, taking snuff, sugar used for cooking, and sweetening coffee and tea, and rice for various meals (Morgan, 8, 2016). The role of the colonies, like the role of Mongol expansion Eastward, was financial and geographical accumulation.

Paralleling the establishment of the 'New World' was the establishment of a global slave trade emerging from Africa. In finding mass labor to support the financial goals of the British empire, imperialists looked to Africa. Before colonial involvement, the pre-existing African communities followed a local slave economy. Once European empires made contact with African countries, Europeans facilitated coerced relationships with African chiefs to exploit the use of slavery. In doing so, European powers proliferated the slave economy to an international scale, outweighing and overpowering objections from local leaders. Jamestown, Virginia was the first British colony in North America, settling in 1607 (Morgan, XV, 2016). Only fourteen years later did the first arrival of Africans enter this settlement. This arrival was the beginning of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

British Transatlantic Slave Trade.

The Transatlantic Slave Trade was the most significant international trade network in history. Not only did this trade proliferate the imperial capabilities, but the British Empire used violence as a means of domination. This triangular route connected European countries to West African ports, exporting African slaves to the Americas and then returning produce and goods to Europe. From Kenneth Morgan's, *A Short History of Transatlantic Slavery*, he writes, "The slave trade formed just one line of commerce followed by vessels from these nations, and was closely connected to direct commodity trades between European ports, Asia and the Americas. The Africans supplied via the slave trade and the goods taken in direct commerce with American destinations were linked to the emergence and growth of a plantation sector that produced staple crops on agricultural estates for exportation back to the Old World" (Morgan, 8, 2016).

The Transatlantic Slave Trade was the dominant supporting agent for the rise of the British Empire. In this exchange network, Britain facilitated its own economic growth, while degrading the local cultures and economies of surrounding life. In advancing the empire's economic capabilities, Britain used chartered merchant companies to monopolize their earnings in the slave trade. The three main English companies were the English Guinea Company (1618-60), the Company of Royal Adventurers Trading to Africa (1660-72), and the Royal African Company (1672-98) (Morgan, 32, 2016). These companies included private investors but were mainly supported financially by the empire. The British-led Royal African Company shipped more enslaved women, men, and children to

the Americas than any other institution (Pettigrew, 11, 2013). This company outweighed both the Dutch and French trades, increasing England's share in the transatlantic slave trade from 33% in 1673 to 74% in 1683 (Pettigrew, 11, 2013).

While these companies directly impacted the economic gains of the British Empire, the regulations attached to chartered companies limited their money-making capacity. In the empire's desire for financial expansion, the deregulation of trade was required. Deregulation was achieved at the hands of imperial policymakers. Before deregulation, the Royal African Company averaged its peacetime capacity at 23 voyages per year (Pettigrew, 11, 2013). Following the deregulation, free trade maritime averaged 77 voyages per year (Pettigrew, 11, 2013). Trade deregulation had the greatest impact on the growth of the British Empire. In the hands of imperial policymakers, written documentation of self-imposed maritime laws validated the imperial desire for economic expansion and political control.

Mongol Silk Road.

The Mongol Empire imposed similar imperial economic strategies. In the Yuan Dynasty, the Ortogh system was exercised almost synonymously with the British charters system. This system, made up of Mongolian merchants, compiled resources to monopolize the earnings and offset the risks of trade (Unoki, 80, 2012). In action, merchants would combine individual assets of men, camels, horses, food, and caravans to undertake long-distance trade exchanges across Eurasia (Unoki, 80, 2012). The Ortoghs provided a joint-stock corporation, similar to the transatlantic trading companies in order to protect resources and advance money-making capabilities. Although these joint-stock corporations were independently run, they were backed and supported by the Mongolian Empire (Unoki, 80, 2012).

From Unoki's *Mergers, Acquisitions and Global Empires*, the text explains that "The Mongol elite and government gave loans to the Ortogh at a rate of 0.8 percent monthly interest, which compared favorably with the rate of 3 percent charged to most borrowers at the time. With these loans, the Ortogh financed their caravans or loaned money to other Chinese merchants at higher interest rates" (Unoki, 81, 2012). By decreasing interest rates, Mongol imperialists encouraged Ortogh's monopolization of trade. These trade associations expanded the financial potential of the Mongolian Empire and supported the use of the Silk Road as a tool for imperial expansion.

In furthering the economic power of the Mongol empire, similar to Britain's deregulation of trade, the Mongols promoted free trade along exchange networks for merchants and products. The Mongols reduced taxes on commercial transactions (modern day consumption taxes), to 3.3% (Unoki, 81, 2012). Consumption taxes were limited so much that Mongolian trade was notably considered free. In doing so, commercial activity was promoted and economic activity increased. Some historians regard this route as the largest free trade zone to ever exist globally (Unoki, 81, 2012).

Through the Mongol Empire, the Silk Road solidified social and class rankings amongst conquered and conquerors, reinforcing the system of empire. The ruling nobility comprised Genghis Khan, his clan, and his descendants. The familial group was the center of power, controlling all foreseeable aspects of the Mongols. Their authority was responsible for conquests and governing the public, conquered class, and merchants. The merchants who benefitted from the Silk Road and free trade were still subjected to disruption from war, political change, and destabilizing trade routes.

Merchants and the public class were subjected to raids on the route in addition to raids on communities. The Mongol Empire derived much power from their conquered sedentary agriculturalists (Abu-Lughod, 154, 1991). Conquered people were forced to provide a percentage of their production as payment to their conquerors. The payments were then divided amongst the Mongol nobility. This further solidified the internal hierarchy. By transferring funds from the populous to the rulers, the class of sedentary agriculturalists was economically suppressed to a lower ranking. In levying taxes, the Mongols exploited the production of sedentary farmers as a method of expanding their empire.

The British Empire similarly confirmed internal hierarchies mainly through the large slave labor force. In accumulating African slaves, the British Empire utilized an internal hierarchy based on race. By following the incentives of imperial expansion, through the transatlantic slave trade, the British Empire monopolized its earnings while creating a fixed social order. In the eyes of the British Empire, Africans were not subjects, only commercial property. Africans were below any internal class or social ranking. Because of this, the empire's internal hierarchy was politically racialized for economic growth and legalized through written documentation. In gaining a commodity for America's labor force, Britians violently captured and transported millions of lives.

Between the sixteenth century and the mid-nineteenth century, an estimated 3.1 million enslaved Africans were transported to the Americas by Britain (The National Archives, 2023). Only 2.7 million arrived at the destination (The National Archives, 2023). The discrepancy in numbers is due to deaths by transportation-related problems. Transportation-related problems account for maltreatment, starvation, physical abuse, torture, and disease which occurred on these slave ships. The pure volume of life displaced and murdered by the British Empire speaks for itself. By creating a forced labor system in the New World, the British Empire desecrated the socio-economic community of Africans globally, enforcing the economic suppression of a class for the economic gains of the Empire.

Fall of British Empire.

The fall of the British Empire occurred in spite of their trade connections and the fractionalization of territory. As the British Empire built colonies in the Americas and continued the importation of slaves and exportation of goods, American colonies established themselves separate from British reign. Colonies now visualized themselves as autonomous from their imperial authority, only connected through Transatlantic trade. The physical barrier between the colonies and the motherland was further adjourned when the empire implemented higher taxes on the exchanges. As previously evaluated, free trade was the beacon for imperial growth. The imposition of taxes, for the financial benefit of the motherland, directly opposed trade relations, and established the British Empire as a separate entity from its colonial subjects. In action, the American colonies, fed up with imperial authority, protested the high taxes on trade. The start of the American Revolution was the end of the British Empire.

Fall of Mongol Empire.

The fall of the Mongol Empire, similar to the fall of the British Empire, occurred because of the fractionalization of territory and the decline of trade exchanges. The connection via the Silk Road was an exchange of cultural goods, people, and disease. As the Black Plague festered, merchants carried

the sickness to previously isolated populations (Abu-Lughod, 171, 1991). Through urban hubs, trading centers, and various trading routes, the spread of disease proliferated. This spread affected both merchants and trade itself. While communities were plagued and dying, trade weakened. Because trade was the main instrument in the growth and maintenance of the Mongol Empire, the entire Eurasian network weakened. From the mid-thirteenth century to the end of the fourteenth century, the Black Death led to a global economic depression (Frank, 57, 1998).

The plague was one of two factors that led to the demise of the Mongol empire. Following Genghis Khan's death, Khan's successors divided power and control over the Eurasian trade route. Berke, the third Khan, controlled Southern Russia and eastern Anatolia, Hulegu, the second Khan, controlled Persia, Iraq, and portions of northern India/ Pakistan and Afghanistan, and Kubilai, the fifth Khan, controlled China (Abu-Lughod, 114, 1991). The fractionalization of territory greatly impacted the governing of conquered subjects. Subjects were not controlled as they were prior and tensions between successors impacted the trade connections. Because of this, the Eurasian landmass, unified by the Silk Road, disbanded. Through the division of power and the devastating impacts of the Black Plague, trade along the Silk Road fell, and in turn, so did the Mongol Empire.

Conclusion.

Both the Mongols and the British Empire used interconnected networks of exchange to increase their economic growth, power, and territorial expansion in similar ways. In the Transatlantic trade route, the British Empire monopolized their economy and financial gains by deregulating trade and using voyage trading companies. British trading companies encouraged merchants to invest and combine resources. Additionally, the deregulation of trade allowed both state and private traders the opportunity to increase the volume of voyages and increase production as a whole. In the Mongol Empire, the Ortogh system worked similarly, combining assets to monopolize trade. In doing so, the empire supported group excursions in promoting trade quantities. Additionally, the imposition of free trade along the Eurasian landmass promoted the involvement of international partners, encouraging foreign actors to invest and involve themselves in the Mongolian economy.

As these systems propagated the power and expansion of both empires, they also led to their ultimate demise. While the British Empire imposed taxes on the New World colonies, they created a partition between the two locations of the empire. In attempting to exploit the colonies through Transatlantic taxation, colonies protested against their foreign leaders and broke away from imperial control. Additionally, the fall of the Mongol empire occurred due to the Silk Road's lack of union. Through the fragmented governing by Genghis Khans' successors, the Silk Road trade weakened. The Mongol Empire further declined because of the transmissions of the Black Plague along the Silk Road. Through the extension of political agents that validated their imperial efforts, both empires imposed a social hierarchy to establish long-term methods of economic production. This production, facilitated by the interconnected networks of exchange, led to the development and demise of the British and Mongolian Empires.

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Professor Sharma

What is a book every INT student should read?

1984 by George Orwell

What projects are you currently working on?

Violence and the nation-state in India. It deals with memory, decolonization, and the rewriting of history.

If you could take any INT class, which one would you take?

Reading Marx which was offered this Spring,

What is your favorite class to teach & why?

INT 206: Identities and Boundaries, and INT 306: Global empires.

What topic would you like to teach but haven't been able to?

Contemporary histories of India.

Why did you want to be a professor?

I sucked at regular jobs. I loved reading and writing. And talking about books. It was a no-brainer.

Anything random you would like to share?

I got off X (Twitter) and it makes me very sad, but also saner.

The Encampment

Photography by Nailah



The Encampment

Photography by Nailah





How the American Empire Operates Through Violence

By Shannon Blunt

Introduction

The United States uses tactics of economic and environmental exploitation to maintain control over various nations to support the succession of the American Empire. While not classically defined as an empire, the U.S. operates as an empire through forces of violence specifically exploiting economies and environments internationally and the American empire utilized legalized lawlessness to do so. In *Legacy of Violence: A History of the British Empire* by Caroline Elkins she defines legalized lawlessness as the process of law creation, legalizing, bureaucratizing and legitimating state direction violence when ordinary laws are insufficient in maintaining order and control (Elkins 2022, 35). The United States uses its power and influence to enact legalized lawlessness on subject nations to ensure the domination and succession of the American Empire. This paper uses an anti-capital approach analyzing the impacts of NAFTA. The 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between the United States, Canada and Mexico presents how empires capitalize off the exploitation of labor and environments and how it contributes to the succession of empires, like the American Empire. The NAFTA agreement worsened the economic conditions within Mexico and contributed to the degradation of the environment and ecologies on the border resulting in Americans' ability to capitalize off of cheap labor and products.

Economic Impacts of NAFTA

NAFTA was implemented to improve economic relations between the United States and Mexico. The U.S Customs and Border Protection shares how NAFTA established a free-trade zone in North America which took effect on January 1, 1994. The agreement lifted tariffs on the majority of goods produced by the signatory nations. The agreement also called for the gradual elimination of remaining barriers to international investment and movement of goods between the three nations (U.S. Customs and Border Protection). Under the guise of promoting liberalism and free markets NAFTA deteriorated the economic conditions within Mexico to ensure capital from cheap labor and products. In *Did NAFTA Help Mexico? An Update After 23 Years* by Mark Weisbrot and others they share how Mexico's economy was impacted by NAFTA specifically concerning how the economic and social conditions within the country failed to improve. They share the effect NAFTA had on agricultural employment within Mexico, sharing how the U.S. subsidized corn and other products wiped out family farmers in Mexico resulting in 4.9 million Mexican farmers being displaced from 1991 to 2007. This contributed to a net loss of 1.9 million jobs (Weisbrot et al. 2018, 161). NAFTA gave the United States more freedom to invest internationally and gain more control over finances from the agriculture within Mexico. NAFTA lowered the price for goods within the United States, however, it displaced several workers and

contributed to the increased poverty rates within Mexico as many workers lost their jobs. NAFTA had a different impact on U.S. agriculture than it did in Mexico. In *The Impact of NAFTA on the U.S.* by Mary E. Burfisher and others they share how “the U.S. Department of Agriculture (1997) used a dynamic computable general equilibrium model to assess the effects of NAFTA on rural employment. They calculate the changes in employment with and without NAFTA, finding that U.S. rural employment in 1996 is 0.07 percent higher with NAFTA than it would be without the agreement, with the greatest increases in non-grain crops” (Burfisher et al. 2001, 130). NAFTA had beneficial impacts on U.S agriculture as it allowed for U.S subsidized corporations and U.S operated corporations to have more freedom to engage with the economy in Mexico. NAFTA increased U.S. presence in agriculture resulting in increased profits.

Another rising issue stemming from NAFTA was the impact it had on small independent Mexican agricultural workers' wages. In *Looking for Local Labor Market Effects of NAFTA* by Shushanik Hakobyan and John McLaren they use census data for comparative analysis determining the local impacts of NAFTA, specifically laborers and their wages. They found that “reductions in the local average tariff are associated with substantial reductions in the locality’s blue-collar wagers, even for workers in the service sector, while a reduction in the tariff of the industry of employment generates additional substantial wage losses” (Hakobyan and McLaren 2016, 740). The lift on tariffs negatively impacted independent blue-collar workers within Mexico, especially concerning the level of education they received. NAFTA led to independent small-family Mexican farm workers being displaced and put out of jobs. Weisbrot and others share that “according to Mexican national statistics, Mexico’s poverty rate of 55.1 percent in 2014 was higher than the poverty rate of 1994. As a result, there were about 20.5 million more Mexicans living below the poverty line as of 2014 than in 1994” (Weisbrot et al. 2018, 161). NAFTA worked just as intended for the American Empire, by contributing to the worsening economic conditions within Mexico to ensure cheap labor and products to maximize profits for the American Empire.

When capitalism is at the forefront of our domestic and international agendas, empires like the American Empire continue to enforce violence through any means necessary to ensure succession and maximization of profits. In the Ted-Talk “What's Wrong With Humanitarian Aid? A Journalist’s Journey” Linda Polmann shares her experience as a journalist working internationally studying humanitarian aid and its failures. Polmann discovers how humanitarian aid fails to help the innocent because it, like other agencies, focuses on competition and economic profit. Instead of working together, these agencies compete against each other which results in political elites hijacking these agencies to use the aid to continue the poor leaving the innocent civilians to suffer the consequences (Polmann 2011). Polmann compares humanitarian aid to industries and how that leads to its demise. We can use this frame when analyzing NAFTA and how the agreement failed to acknowledge small independent workers. NAFTA influenced the American Empire and Mexico to enforce exploitative practices. In *NAFTA and Labor in North America* by Norman Caulfield he shares how within Mexico during the NAFTA agreement several claims have been reported concerning workers' rights being violated, specifically regarding workers not being able to organize unions. Caulfield shares “in Mexico strong state control over unions via administrative and repressive measures,

including the possibility of control of elections, depositions of leaders, ratification of contracts, strikes, and union decertification, has been the hallmark of the labor relations system” (Caulfield 2009, 69). NAFTA and global industrialization prompted Mexico to change its labor laws, but these changes were not for the benefit of laborers. Laborers were overworked and underpaid and still faced issues of discrimination. Pulling in Polmann’s frames and applying it to NAFTA we see how an agreement that was promoted to increase economic relations between the U.S and Mexico failed to protect common civilians and contributed to the worsening economic and social conditions they experienced, while allowing elites and corporations to utilize the agreement for their own benefit.

Environmental Impacts of NAFTA

Environmental inequalities stem from poverty and NAFTA highlights how environmental injustices have played out between the U.S. and Mexico. Adjacent to the economic impacts NAFTA had on the U.S. and Mexico the agreement also took a negative toll on the environment, specifically in Mexico near the border. In “The Impact of NAFTA on the U.S./ Mexico Border Environment” by Buck J. Wynne he shares the impact the agreement had on the environment, specifically the inequalities Mexico faced. Wynne shares how the natural habitats in and around San Diego Bay have been significantly altered and reduced throughout the last 100 years, with an estimate of 90% of salt marshes and 50% of mudflats being lost due to filling and conversions into urban and industrial uses (Wynne 1994, 17-18). NAFTA increased Mexico's industrialization which led to natural resources being converted into factories to support the demand for agricultural products. The increase in industrialization and production contributed to the pollution and hazardous waste produced by Mexico. Wynne shares how the hazardous waste that was generated in the maquiladoras had to be repatriated to the U.S. or nationalized, meaning the Mexican government would determine if the waste would remain in the country to be recycled. The types of waste which was generated in these factories included acids and liquids which contained metals, organic solvents and cyanide waste which produces great risk to environmental and human health when not handled properly (Wynne 1994, 19-20). NAFTA is one of the leading factors of Mexico’s environmental problems, yet it allowed the U.S. to avoid suffering from the consequences of hazardous waste. The American Empire uses its power to exploit the land within Mexico to ensure that the U.S. does not experience the same environmental consequences.

The American Empire profited from the economic inequalities within Mexico and continued to contribute to the deterioration of the country's environmental conditions. In *Environmental Impact of Agricultural Trade Liberalization Under NAFTA* by Gloria Soto she shares that the implication is that NAFTA’s likely effect contributed to 24% of the jungle and forest loss, the effects were drastically seen in San Luis Potosí where direct conversion of forest and jungles to non-irrigated corn lands were approximately 89,092 hectares which represented almost 40% of the forest and jungles loss between 1976 to the early 2000 (Soto 2012, 483). Environmental inequalities are exacerbated by poverty and NAFTA highlights these inequalities as land is viewed for its economic profit over environmental contribution. Soto shares how an environmental economic point of view sees converting jungles and forests into agricultural

lands because they are classic non-market resources (Soto, 2012, 476). These common and public lands are seen as resources that do not benefit the economy and under capitalism these lands are converted to better serve the economy. NAFTA forgoes the environmental benefits of these lands and works to convert them into economically worthy lands. Soto mentions how at the national level states with the highest plant and animal biodiversity are among the states that exhibit significant land-use change which contributes to the endangerment of species (Soto 2012, 483). Agreements and policies like NAFTA force countries like Mexico to convert their land to keep up with the economic demands which greatly impact their biodiversity. The United States' ability to invest internationally and control agricultural production within Mexico contributes to the environmental degradation the country faced.

Agreements like NAFTA play a role in determining the environmental standards and practices within production. Issues with these agreements and their environmental impacts specifically concern regulations. In *The Effects on NAFTA on the Environment* by Robert K. Kaufmann and others they share how regions with weak or no environmental regulations enjoy comparative advantages and that liberalizing trade could increase the environmental damage by encouraging firms to relocate production in ways where cost of environmental life support services (ELSS) are internalized by environmental regulations as a source of comparative advantage (Kaufman et al. 1993, 223). NAFTA not only contributes to the deterioration of environmental conditions and loss of biodiversity within Mexico, but it also encourages these practices. The American Empire employing these practices allows for the empire to profit from exploitative practices without any regard to the environmental impacts it is having on the country. NAFTA disproportionately impacts environmental conditions in Mexico compared to how it impacts the U.S. The U.S. has more regulations with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) compared to Mexico which contributes to how each nation is able to handle these environmental challenges. Soto shares how when addressing these environmental challenges impacted by agreements like NAFTA there must be "appropriate compensatory income measures to reduce the negative effects on poor farmers, directly related to avoiding land-use change, or supply the necessary financial and technical support to reorientate production toward less competitive products. For developing countries, free trade agreements need to introduce precautionary policies or programs that generate alternative opportunities for those farmers who are affected negatively, particularly the poor ones (Soto 2012, 486). Soto mentions why it's important to prioritize and place attention on farmers, specifically poor farmers with agreements like NAFTA, however, NAFTA specifically operates to ignore these workers to ensure maximizing profits. NAFTA forces independent small-family farmers in Mexico to change their practices and omit their right to natural resources to keep up with the demands of the market and competition from the U.S.

Modern Impacts of American Empire

Analyzing the influence of the American Empire and its impact of operating through violence is important as its practices are deployed today. Throughout this essay the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has been analyzed for its economic and environmental impacts it had, specifically in Mexico, however, the impact of agreements like

NAFTA is still impacting our society today. A continuing issue stemming from the American Empire's use of violence can be seen through the surges of forced migration. During NAFTA forced migration contributed to the poor economy in Mexico. Mark Weisbrot and others share how "the poor performance of the Mexican economy contributed to a surge in emigration to the United States. From 1994 to 2000 the annual number of Mexicans immigrating to the United States soared by 79 percent. The number of Mexican-born residents living in the United States more than doubled from 4.5 million in 1990 to 9.4 million in 2000 and peaked at 12.6 million in 2009" (Weisbrot et al. 2018, 161). During NAFTA forced migration surged due to small independent farmers being displaced and put out of work, forcing them to migrate to the U.S. in hopes of finding work and maintaining economic stability. Economic instability is only one reason that influenced the surge in migration of Mexicans to the U.S. Another reason is due to the environmental deterioration the country is experiencing which is making it inhabitable. In "Environmental Factors in Mexican Migration: The Case of Chiapas and Tlaxcala " by Stefan Alscher he shares how the main environmental problems within Mexico are linked to the degrading quality of soil and insufficient availability of water. Deforestation, excessive agricultural production, and salinization all contribute to degradation of the environment (Alscher 2010, 173-174). Environmental impacts from agreements like NAFTA continue to impact the country and contribute to the migration of Mexicans to the United States and the country increasingly becomes inhabitable for locals. The United States demonizes illegal immigration politically yet fails to acknowledge the role it played in contributing to Mexicans needing to relocate. The American Empire's use of violence and exploitative practices led to worsening the economic and environmental conditions within Mexico influencing the surge and continuation of migration.

Domestic Impacts of the American Empire

The American Empire's influence on subjects doesn't end once people migrate to the U.S. Domestically the American Empire continues to deploy practices that exploit our environment and economies to enforce hierarchies to support corporations and elites. The rise of gig economy and gig work is a perfect contemporary example of how the American Empire intentionally contributes to the deterioration of economies to maximize profits. In "The American Precariat: U.S. Capitalism in Comparative Perspective" by Kathleen Thelen she shares how "gig economy now refers to the phenomenon where instead of being employed in the usual way (on some sort of contract), workers get one-off payments to perform individual tasks (Thelen 2019, 2). Gig economy and gig-work benefit employers as they are not bound by contracts and regulations, however this leaves employees unprotected and at mercy of the market. Comparing the United States to different countries the U.S. lacks crucial benefits that other part-time workers are entitled to outside the U.S. Thelen found that "the vast majority of part-time workers, as well as a very large share of low-income workers do not have access to these core benefits. This applies to well-known differences such as lack of universal health care... but it applies as well to very fundamental benefits such as sick pay, where the United States is the only advanced industrial democracy in which workers have no federally guaranteed entitlement to paid days off" (Thelen 2019, 9). Within the U.S and in our current gig

economy workers are stripped of fundamental rights and protections, these unfair labor practices predominantly impact people of color and those of lower socioeconomic status. People accept these working conditions because they need jobs and cannot afford to wait until they attain a job with better working conditions. These uncontracted jobs allow corporations to avoid laws and regulations to ensure they are not violating workers' rights. The American Empire allows for these types of jobs to continue to ensure the cycle of permanent poverty. If workers are constantly in a position of in-work poverty they will always accept working conditions regardless of how bad they are because they cannot survive without a basic income. By producing workers who are at the mercy of the market the American Empire maximizes its profits at the expense of its workers.

Domestically the American Empire enforces practices which contribute to the degradation of our environment. After China, the United States ranks second in contributing the most to carbon dioxide emissions which negatively contribute to the rising temperatures of our climate. The U.S. continuously employs practices that lead to the deterioration of our environment. One specific example is the 2015 Dakota Access Pipeline (DARL) project, which is a part of the Bakken pipeline project and operates to transport oil. The Environmental and Energy Law Program shares how “the Dakota Access Pipeline was built by Energy Transfer Partners to transport crude oil from Bakken field in North Dakota to Illinois. The pipeline crosses under the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers and Lake Oahe and runs within a half-mile of the current boundaries of the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation, through land taken from the Tribe by Congress in 1958. The DAPL also runs through important cultural and burial sites for Standing Rock and other Tribal nations (Environmental and Energy Law Program). This pipeline threatens the land and its resources within the Sioux Reservation. The DAPL highlights the hierarchies that operate within the American Empire and how the U.S. can utilize legalized lawlessness to change laws to better fit their capitalistic agendas regardless of the harm it may cause to the environment.

Conclusion

The United States operates through violence to enforce economic and environmental exploitative practices to ensure the succession of the American Empire. When analyzing the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement between the United States and Mexico we see how the U. S contributed and worsened the economic and environmental conditions within the country. NAFTA allowed us to compare the inequalities Mexico faced to the effects the United States experienced, highlighting how empires like the United States are able to profit off of poverty in countries like Mexico. NAFTA also reinforced the inequalities of environmental injustices as Mexico experiences more negative impacts from the agreement compared to the United States. It's important to analyze how the American Empire functions as we can continue to see its practices used today. The rise in gig economy and gig work within the U.S. reinforces how the U.S. utilizes hierarchies and exploitative practices to ensure laborers remain stuck in in-work poverty and at the mercy of the market unable to gain true economic stability and freedom to maximize profits for larger corporations and elites. The Dakota Access Pipeline is another contemporary example that highlights the American Empire's use of legalized

lawlessness and how the nation can change its laws to ensure the succession of the empire is always at the forefront despite the negative environmental effects those laws have. The American Empire operates through violence specifically concerning exploitative practices harming economies and environments as a means to gain and maintain control over subject nations and citizens domestically.

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