This volume is dedicated to
Dr. Lawrence Bryant
Letter From the Editor

It is my profound pleasure to edit and introduce the 2010-2011 edition of The Chico Historian. This volume represents the collaborative efforts between students and CSU, Chico’s dedicated faculty. The papers presented here are a small sampling of the student work done at Chico, but they highlight the diversity and the value of historical inquiry. For many of the authors in this volume seeing their work published is a new experience, while others are a familiar name to this journal. In either case, their work is appreciated and it is both my honor and that of this year’s editorial board, to highlight their writing.

This volume was made possible through the continued enthusiasm and support for student work on the behalf of the entire history department. I would also like to specifically thank Dr. Stephen Lewis for his advice and support throughout this process. Dr. Laird Easton for his dedication to The Chico Historian. Dr. Jason Nice and Dr. Jessica Clark for their constant support to students. Professor John Boyle for his continuing support. Claudia Beaty for the million little things she has done to assist this journal. Finally, I would like to thank my editorial board for their hard work throughout this semester.

Christopher Lasley
Editor
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The Philosophy of Kurt Riezler

Bryce Havens

With the exception of scholars of modern German history, the name Kurt Riezler is scarcely known to many people. Despite his relative obscurity, Riezler played a unique and significant role in German history. As the personal assistant and confidant of Theobald von Bethman-Hollweg, the Chancellor of the German Empire from 1909 to 1917, Riezler performed many political duties. He served as a speechwriter and advisor on foreign policy. He wrote the September Program, which stated the war goals of Germany for the First World War. During the war, he worked as a foreign attaché in Stockholm and in Moscow after the Bolshevik Revolution. After the war and the collapse of the Empire, he became a strong supporter of the Weimar Republic, going so far as to help undermine the conservative Kapp Putsch and the communist Bavarian Soviet Republic. In addition, he briefly served as the chief advisor to President Friedrich Ebert until finally leaving politics in 1920 to devote the rest of his life to writing philosophy and teaching.\(^2\)

Although the events of his life have been well documented, Riezler’s written works have received considerably less attention. Historical examinations of German foreign policy, Imperial Germany, and Germany’s role in the First World War almost always mention Riezler, albeit briefly and generally without great detail.\(^3\) Wayne Thompson’s work *In the Eye of the Storm: Kurt Riezler and the Crises of Modern Germany*, published in 1980, remains to date the only book-length study of his life. Although the work is mostly biographical, it does provide a brief overview of some of Riezler’s most important pre-war works, though Thompson admits that an examination of these works “would be [a] study in itself.”\(^4\)

One of Riezler’s most important, widely read, and somewhat controversial pre-war works was *Grundzüge der Weltpolitik in der Gegenwart* (*The Fundamental Features of Contemporary World Politics*).\(^5\) Written in late 1913 and published only months prior to the outbreak of war in July 1914, *Grundzüge der Weltpolitik* was a work of political philosophy. Riezler sought it to function both as a socio-politico-economic examination of contemporary European and world affairs and as support for the moderate political agenda of the Bethmann-Hollweg government. As such, *Grundzüge der Weltpolitik* was primarily concerned with the maintenance of peace in an industrial age fraught with growing political movements such as nationalism and socialism, imperialism, the economic interdependence of nations, and the decline of German power, prestige, and culture. Riezler juxtaposed sound political and economic observations with a philosophical worldview [*Weltanschauung*] deeply influenced by the traditions of German idealism, romanticism, and historicism.

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1 This paper is actually Chapter Two of my MA thesis. The thesis as a whole is a philosophical and historical examination of Kurt Riezler’s work *Grundzüge der Weltpolitik in der Gegenwart*, though this portion focuses exclusively on Riezler’s personal philosophy.


4 Thompson, *In the Eye of the Storm*, 24.

5 Due to the length of the title, this work will be referred to in the text as *Grundzüge der Weltpolitik*. 
Despite these astute and practical observations, Riezler’s work suffers from many of the deficits of these traditions; namely philosophical ambiguity, a teleological view of history, and the primacy of the powerful nation-state as superior to that of individual rights. The purpose of this thesis is to offer a philosophical and historical study of Grundzüge der Weltpolitik by examining its intellectual influences and the political and social contexts in which it was written.

The intellectual atmosphere in Germany during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century remained heavily under the influence of German idealism and romanticism. Reacting against the scientific empiricism, impersonal objectivity, and universal human ideals espoused during the Enlightenment, philosophers such as Johann Gottfried Herder, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Johann Gottfried Friedrich Fichte, and romantic literary figures such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Novalis, and Friedrich Hölderlin articulated new views of politics, history, and philosophy, including the nature of the state, and the role of the individual in society. Rather than stressing the rational and objective method of science, they emphasized the primacy of human emotion, the uniqueness of peoples, and the spiritual quality of nature and individuals. Everything was subjective as the source of truth lay within the heart of each individual. Also central to idealist and romantic thinking was the shared inner striving of all peoples to find and identify with some higher, mystical element. These ideas took hold most strongly in the German-speaking states of central Europe and ultimately became the source of the nationalism that developed in Germany during the mid-to-late nineteenth century.6

In order to examine Riezler’s philosophy, it is first necessary to survey some of the critical ideas that deeply shaped the nature of his thought. Riezler’s greatest influence was undoubtedly the philosophy of Hegel. Combining Enlightenment ideals of reason and empiricism with romantic notions of spirit and emotion, Hegel sought to create a grand philosophy of everything.7 He was greatly concerned with human freedom, which he believed could only be obtained in its highest form when it was realized by means of the nation-state. As Friedrich Meinecke observed in Cosmopolitanism and the National State, “[Hegel] found himself with a type of individualism which judged historical life and the state according to the requirements...of the rational individual striving for intellectual and spiritual freedom.”8

Hegel also believed that the nation was an organic entity that developed out of smaller individual parts such as communities. Developing over time in a teleological progression of history, the nation represented the highest form of reason and the ultimate goal of history.9 With the purely rational nation-state as the final purpose of history, Hegel believed that individuals were ultimately dependent on the “supra-individual entity” of the nation. The purpose of the nation was to maintain itself and “reconci[le] the freedom of the individual to the authority of the state.”10

Hegel undoubtedly influenced Riezler’s conception of the state and his philosophy of history. Fichte seems to have equally affected Riezler regarding his view of the political struggle between the forces of

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7 Meinecke, Cosmopolitanism and the National State, 197.
cosmopolitanism and nationalism. In 1804, he published *Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters* (a title remarkably similar to Riezler’s *Grundzüge der Weltpolitik in der Gegenwart*). In this work, Fichte argued that his current age was corrupt and diseased. He called for the establishment of a new state of “enlightened mind” so that human progress might advance to a higher level. He criticized “patriotism of the soil” and called for a turning to “light and justice.”\textsuperscript{11} Fichte described the need for individual self-sacrifice to a universal whole out of which a commonwealth could be created where all people would devote themselves to the service of humanity. “[N]othing can live by itself and for itself, everything lives in the whole, and the whole continually sacrifices itself to itself in order to live anew.”\textsuperscript{12} According to Fichte, this desire for sacrifice and cooperation between peoples and states represents the essence of cosmopolitanism.

Fichte’s cosmopolitanism, however, changed in 1807, after Napoleon Bonaparte’s invasion of Germany and the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire. In his *Addresses to the German Nation*, Fichte desired to instill a sense of patriotism in the German people. He elaborated the great need for national education and called for an awakening of the German spirit. Despite his strong call to patriotism, some scholars have argued that Fichte’s appeal to nationalism remained tempered by an undercurrent of cosmopolitanism. Kuno Francke described the difference between Fichte’s two works as being one of nuance. In the *Grundzüge* he made “an appeal to the highest and noblest in man” whereas in the *Addresses* he made the same appeal to the “highest and noblest in the German.”\textsuperscript{13} Meinecke explained that the tension between Fichte’s cosmopolitanism and nationalism resulted from his wrestling with the problem of how “to bring the actually existent State into harmony with the best State.”\textsuperscript{14}

Another intellectual who informed Riezler’s philosophy was Wilhelm Dilthey. One of the most important, yet least well-known of the great German thinkers of the nineteenth century, Dilthey is best known for his work concerning history as a science and his methodological and theoretical distinctions between the natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaften*) and the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*). Dilthey described natural sciences, such as biology, chemistry, and physics, as being primarily occupied with generalizations and the establishment of laws, whereas the human sciences of history, economics, anthropology, and psychology, deal with individuals, sequences of events, and the interconnection between the two.\textsuperscript{15}

Lastly, the great historian Leopold van Ranke’s conceptions of history and the state also left a mark on Riezler. Ranke, the progenitor of the objective study of history “as it actually happened,” presented several abstract and theological ideas that Riezler seems to have adopted, although it is hard to discern if this influence was direct or indirect. Scholars such as Meinecke have noted that a degree of nationalism permeated Ranke’s thinking. Like Hegel and Fichte, Ranke saw the state as an organic individual. States

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item Quoted in Francke, “Cosmopolitanism in German Romantic Thought,” 185.
\item Francke, “Cosmopolitanism in German Romantic Thought,” 185-86
\item Meinecke, *Machiavellism*, 373.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
represented the product of the "thoughts of God" and as such, were ends in themselves to which the individual was subordinate. In addition, individuals found their existence in higher forms such as communities and, above all else, the state.16 This emphasis on the state seems to stem from Ranke’s interest in power. Louis L. Snyder noted that Ranke saw in organized religion and the power-state “the highest manifestation of civilization.” Ranke believed that power had a “spiritual essence, an original genius that has its own life.”17 Meinecke also quoted Ranke as saying that there is no difference between power and the state, “for the idea of the State originates in the idea of a certain independence, which cannot be maintained without the corresponding power.”18

Rank most obvious influence on Riezler is evident in his views of history. Georg Iggers, in his book The German Conception of History, wrote that Ranke believed history was a guide to uncovering “philosophical truths,” “metaphysical realities” and "immutable, eternal principles.” 19 Unlike many philosophers and scholars, who rejected transcendence and objectivity, Ranke held the belief “that Justice, quite as much as Truth, Beauty, and Goodness, forms an ideal of human life.”20

These profound influences led to the complex and, at times, rather ambiguous nature of Riezler’s philosophy, which scholars have largely neglected. However, to understand Grundzüge der Weltpolitik, one needs first to consider its philosophical underpinnings. This philosophy is most readily apparent in Riezler’s conception of three things: a teleological view history, the organic nature of individual organisms, and the relationship between “individuals” and “supra-individuals.”

In Grundzüge der Weltpolitik, Riezler aimed to produce a practical theory of world-politics.21 According to Riezler, it is important to “identify the factors and their relationships, the driving forces and their interplay...to contemplate the present Weltpolitik as...a given state of nature, in which we...can calculate the future.”22 Given Riezler’s intended purpose, it was necessary for him to focus solely on that which was essential for politics. “But what,” Riezler asked, “in political events [Geschehen] is essential and non-essential?”

One can only make this distinction by studying history. When history fails to separate the essential from non-essential, then it is not history, but merely a “narrative of random past events.” It does not provide a “unity of the events, only a chronological stringing together of disparate events.”23 Although history might initially seem like mere narrative, true history reveals an “inner connection of the events” and shows the relationship between “necessity and contingency.”24

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17 Quoted in Louis L. Snyder, German Nationalism: The Tragedy of a People, Extremism contra Liberalism in Modern German History (Harrisburg, PA: The Telegraph Press, 1952), 136.
18 Meineck, Machiavellism, 385.
19 Iggers, The German Conception of History, 72-73
20 Quoted in Meinecke, Machiavellism, 381.
21 Prior to writing the Grundzüge, Riezler had written a more theoretical work of politics. See Kurt Riezler, Die Erforderlichkeit des Unmöglichen: Prolegomena zu einer Theorie der Politik und zu anderen Theorien (München: G. Müller Verlag, 1913).
23 Ibid., ix-x.
24 Ibid., xi
Riezler defined history as a science. He argued that is the only appropriate and capable method for studying politics and other human affairs. Unlike the natural sciences, which are concerned with experiments, formulas, repetition, causation, and inorganic material, history studies individual and unique events, which cannot be repeated, and people, which cannot be experimented on.\(^{25}\) Since history only deals with individuals and particular events, “the more an event affects the future, the more significant it is for history.” History, therefore, as an epistemology, represents the “knowledge of the causal relationships of the past,” but as a science, it is the study of “individual events.”\(^{26}\) Political events, however, “have thousands of causes,” so they cannot be isolated through causal experiments.\(^{27}\) In the realm of the natural sciences, causes, effects, and forces of nature are part of the “inorganic, dead world.” In the sphere of politics and human affairs, these events and forces, which Riezler broadly defined as the “tendencies,” deal with “the living organic [das lebendige Organische].” Hence, Riezler was not concerned with “causal forces...but rather teleological tendencies.”\(^{28}\)

Riezler identified two types of tendencies that define and in some way propel history—the national and the cosmopolitan. These tendencies will be discussed in greater detail in Chapters Three and Four. For now, it is important to discuss how they relate to Riezler’s understanding of history. Politics for Riezler was nothing other than the “conflict of men and nations.” This Hobbesian “war of all against all” results from the conflict between the national and cosmopolitan tendencies. This clash stemmed from the different natures of the two tendencies, which Riezler believed were found “not in the ideas of people, but in the things themselves [in den Dingen selbst], and only in the first because it is [also] in the last.”\(^{29}\) Both are at odds with one another, “and every political event is in some way a result of this confrontation.”\(^{30}\) History is thus both teleological and dialectical. This dialectical confrontation of the national and cosmopolitan tendencies defined various epochs of history, some being cosmopolitan in nature, others being national. Riezler described the time in which he was living as one dominated by a newly awakened and uniquely strong sense of the national tendency.\(^{31}\)

Riezler never wavered from his conception of history and its teleological process. In an article entitled “The Historian and Truth,” written after the Second World War, Riezler described in detail what he only spoke of vaguely in Grundzüge der Weltpolitik. History is a science—its purpose is to seek the “truth.” However, unlike natural science, it does not seek laws, but rather “it is content with describing the particular.”\(^{32}\) By reporting on “unique particularities,” the historian paints a picture of a “dynamic field, a constellation of forces and factors, geographic, economic, social, political, ideological, [that] comes to life.”\(^{33}\) This portrait is that of human nature, which is both ever changing and ephemeral. Citing the example of Jacob

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\(^{25}\) Ibid., x-xii.

\(^{26}\) Ibid., x.

\(^{27}\) Ibid., xii.

\(^{28}\) Ibid., xiii.

\(^{29}\) Ibid., 4.

\(^{30}\) Ibid., 3.

\(^{31}\) Ibid., 4.


\(^{33}\) Ibid., 388.
Burckhardt's *Griechische Kulturgeschichte*, Riezler declared that it is possible for a historian to report the facts inaccurately but still "tell a true story about the dynamic field, whereas the accurate facts of another tell a false story or none at all."34 Thus, historical interpretation is subjective and dependent on the historian.

The historian's narrative is merely a description of what *is*. In between the lines of this narrative, however, the good historian sheds light on what Riezler called the "eternal humanum." This humanum clearly shows the influence of Ranke and his belief in metaphysical and immutable truths. It represents everything that man is, wants, can be, ought to be; it is his fears, cares and carelessness, his magnificence and meanness. In Riezler's words, the humanum typifies "historical man, man as he moves and is moved in the movement of history....[It] is but the eternal frame of his mutability."35 By devoting himself to the "particularity of a bygone past" the historian, unwillingly and perhaps unknowingly, transforms into "a great interpreter of an eternal humanum which he denies in theory."36

This view of history is intimately connected to Riezler's conception of the organic nature of the individual. Everything from the smallest cell to the nation-state is an organic, individual entity with its own unique traits. Riezler described the Volk, the most complex form of individuals, as "a living whole. It can only be understood by the analogy of that which is living [das Lebendige], and by that living whole, which is clearest and most well-known to us, the human being [Menschen] itself."37 Unlike many of the Romantics, however, Riezler rejected the notion that a Volk was solely determined by the similarity of its people.38 "A Volk is somewhat different than the sum of its ethnic members [Volksgenossen]...Neither the similarity of race nor of language suffices."39 Riezler did not discount the importance of shared similarities that bind people together, he only insisted that an inner complexity makes defining the Volk difficult, for every Volk is just as incomprehensible in juxtaposition to its individual members as a person is to his or her individual cells.

Because Riezler was educated in the classics, he believed that Aristotle's concept of entelechy, as found in his work *Physics*, best described the organic nature of individual organisms. Although never clearly defined by Aristotle, entelechy represents the realization of potential or the guiding principle of an organism. Joe Sachs, in his article "Aristotle: Motion and its Place in Nature," explains entelechy as a "continuing state of completeness," or an end point, one which can only be maintained by a continual expenditure of energy.40 In his theoretical work of politics, *Die Erforderlichkeit des Unmöglichen*, Riezler clearly used a slightly modified form of this entelechy. He described the essence of the Volk as lying not in some "achieved fulfillment" but rather in the future, for which it is searching: "It belongs to the essence of this essence,...as well as that of the individual, and its totality is only the unity of a striving for something higher."41 However, just as Aristotle's conception of the entelechy requires an organism to continue to exert energy once it has reached its end,

34 Ibid., 381.
35 Ibid., 385.
36 Ibid., 388.
38 The German word Volk can refer to a nation as a political unit or a group of people with a shared history, language, and ethnicity.
39 Ibid.
Riezler also believed that individuals must continue to strive for something higher. “Man, driven by the deepest pathos, never arrives at any kind of final realization.” Thus, Riezler’s teleological view of history is a tragic one without any ultimate end or conclusion.

This striving characterizes all life forms, from “the smallest to the largest.” It is the “pathos” of life itself. It instills in every organism the desire to be part of something greater. Each individual organism has a larger, more complex “supra-individual” above it, which it strives to join. In Grundzüge der Weltpolitik, Riezler distinguished between three levels of supra-individual entities: the clan, the Volk, and the nation. As organisms, all are equally alive. All three want to “grow and develop” so that they may eventually evolve into the next higher level. “The clan wants to become a Volk just as the Volk wants to become a nation.”

This desire of living organisms for growth and development, which Riezler called either the Lebensdrang or Lebenswillen, is not simply a Hobbesian desire for self-preservation. “Its inclination is not preservation, but rather development, the eternal will to grow and broaden without end into the distant, unreachable and impossible goals.” Here Riezler distinguished between two types of growth, “an extensive, and an intensive, a growth in breadth and a growth in depth.” All organisms naturally grow and reproduce; they desire “power and space.” However, an organism can grow too fast and spread itself thin, thus endangering its own existence. An intensive growth, which Riezler vaguely described as a “cultural self-awareness,” “uniqueness,” and “the strengthening of the inner organic connection,” must accompany the extensive growth. Without intensive growth, it is impossible for supra-individual units to develop into their respective higher forms. Riezler admitted that this process of developing from one form to another is very complex and that it is uncertain when exactly one form advances to the other. It simply depends on the degree of self-awareness, inner unity, and a sense of “autonomous personality.”

The desire and ability of individual organisms to reach an ever-higher level of unity and self-awareness was critical for Riezler on metaphysical grounds. It symbolizes the individual’s desire for transcendence and immortality. Much like Ranke, who saw peoples and states as the ideas of God, Riezler believed in a divine nature in the relationship between individual and supra-individual beings. “The Volk is a way to God for every individual...the only true way, and if the people cease to believe in themselves and this one true way, so they cease to be people.” Every individual organism, from plants to people, struggles against death, which is “the inner necessity of its essence.” However, supra-individuals (family, clan, Volk, and

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42 Quoted in Thompson, In the Eye of the Storm, 31. This is also a Faustian concept and shows the influence of German literary movements such as classicism and romanticism. Indeed, Leo Strauss asserted, “I believe he [Riezler] was formed by [Johann Wolfgang von] Goethe more than by any other master.” See Strauss, What is Political Philosophy, 234.
43 Riezler came to this conclusion after Germany’s defeat in the First World War. He believed, in the end, that history had no overall meaning or direction. It was nothing but a “constant battle among many goals, and it incessantly thwarts its own intentions and gets tangled up in its own ropes, cannot find its way, and starts all over again...” Progress was no longer a “historical fact,” but a “moral requirement” and “all meaning” would be dependent on “man’s work and man’s task.” Quoted in Thompson, In the Eye of the Storm, 188.
44 Riezler, Grundzüge, 10.
45 Ibid., 11
46 Ibid., 10. Emphasis added.
47 Ibid., 12.
48 Ibid., 11-12.
49 Ibid., 13, 15.
50 Riezler, Die Erforderlichkeit des Unmöglichen, 203.
nation) are not destined to die. “The individual tree must grow and die, but the forest is eternal.” Supra-individual organisms can die too, but it is not inevitable as with individuals. Rather, it is a contingency.

Riezler considered the nation-state the most important of the supra-individual entities. Just as the Volk is the individual’s path to God, the nation represents a crucial element for the Volk. For Riezler, the state personified a body, and its Volk was its soul. As a body, the state operates as an “outer organization of the inner solidarity” of the Volk. Its purpose is to act as an instrument, primarily a political one, for the will of the people. Riezler thus rejected Hegel’s idea of the “cunning of reason” whereby the unseen spirit of the absolute accomplishes its own ends by causing men to strive unknowingly for a higher ideal.

Riezler also rejected the ideas of John Locke and other social contract theorists regarding the formation of the state. He argued that the modern nation-state only came into existence after being “found” by its Volk. In earlier times, primarily the Middle Ages, both state and Volk existed independently, but the feeling of belonging was not strong enough to bring them together. The individual was divided between the two because “the belonging to a state had less to do with the belonging to a [Volk].” Despite this inability to find belonging in one another, Riezler claimed that Volk and state searched for another throughout the centuries. Like man and woman, who instinctively know that they belong together, Volk and state during this time did not entirely understand one another. Every Volk must inevitably search for its state, and the process whereby the two ultimately find one another is different from Volk to Volk. Despite this uneven development, Riezler declared that the self-discovery of the two [Sichfinden von Volk und Staat] represented “the most profound event of modern history.”

Riezler, like most liberal intellectuals who preceded him, viewed the state as an organism of immense importance. Many of his predecessors, such as Hegel, Fichte, and Ranke, believed that the nation-state was the greatest form of organic individual; it was the final political end goal of all human endeavors. Despite numerous similarities in thought, Riezler’s notion of the state differed from his predecessors. For Riezler, nation-states were not the ultimate goal in theory. They too, declared Riezler, “want to become, in an ever greater sense, a nation; to grow in breadth and depth. They want to be, to a greater and greater degree, a totality [Ganzes], and as such, to forever become more profound and [continue to expand] more broadly.” The only word Riezler could think of for such an entity was humanity [Menschheit]; humanity as the “nation of nations, as the inspired body, as the unity of a personality.”

Although fitting of Riezler’s own unique philosophy, where individual organisms are always striving to be part of something greater, this belief bears some resemblance to the Romantics’ view of the state. As Meinecke observed, most Romantics, such as Fichte, believed that the German nation was “the

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51 Riezler, Grundzüge, 34.
52 Ibid., 60.
53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid., 59. This idea is remarkably similar to Fichte’s conception of the nation. As Krieger observes, Fichte believed that the nation came about by a unity between state and Volk, or “the relationship of individuals and of states to fundamental reality and thereby to each other can be consummated only through the nation.” See Krieger, The German Idea of Freedom, 190.
56 Riezler, Grundzüge, 18.
57 Ibid.
representative and universal nation of all mankind.”

Unlike the Romantics, Hegel believed that during all epochs of history one nation acted as the “bearer of the universal spirit in its current stage of development.” In describing humanity as the “nation of nations,” Riezler was simply taking the next logical step. By doing this, he denied in theory that one nation was the universal representative of all humanity. However, in practice, Riezler knew that every nation that was “strong, proud, and conscious of its nature” believed that it was the only “true [and] best representative of human culture...the only right way to humanity.” Nonetheless, he rejected this belief as being nothing more than a national and cultural form of religious belief. Every Volk believes that its God is the one true God, and so every nation believes that it is the best nation and the best representative of human culture.

Despite his emphasis on the superior nature of the state as a supra-individual entity and an instrument for political power, Riezler remained dedicated to the autonomy and unique quality of the individual. Although the individual is “rooted” in its respective Volk, it is “not so tightly bound on the Volk...It is indeed part of the Volk, but not only a part. It has its own task, its own goal, [and] its own value.” All individuals are separated from one another due to traits such as language, nationality, and class. However, all individuals share a common humanity, which, according to Riezler, was the “concept of an ideal...the striving tenor of all human accomplishments.” It is not a surprise that the philosophically oriented Riezler believed that the greatest human endeavor was the struggle for the truth. “There is only one truth,” declared Riezler, and “the striving for the ideal of truth connects and unifies not nations, but the individuals of [all] nations who take part in this struggle.” Geniuses and great artists, for example, represent the best quality of their respective Volk and its achievements, but they also belong to a larger humanity and common struggle. Therefore, individuals have two ways to strive for their ultimate goal, as members of a nation, and as individuals who “can and should strive for themselves alone.”

Riezler’s Weltanschauung was one deeply influenced by the great minds of the idealist and romantic traditions of German philosophy. Their ideas informed his view of history as a teleological process in which the organic individual continually strives to be part of something higher. The greatest supra-individual entity to which the individual could belong was the nation-state. Despite the power of the nation-state, Riezler did not see the individual as being subordinate to it. Rather, he saw it as an autonomous personality that strove to find the truth. This belief in the unique quality of the individual Mensch and its struggle for meaning led Leo Strauss to conclude that Riezler’s politics, particularly his conception of nationalism, were “fundamentally republican and at least on the verge of becoming fully democratic.” In addition, Riezler believed that the striving of the individual was also the source of the dialectical tendencies

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58 Meinecke, Cosmopolitanism and the National State, 201.
59 Ibid.
60 Riezler, Grundzüge, 18-19.
61 Ibid., 19.
62 Ibid., 40.
63 Ibid.
64 Ibid., 41-42.
65 Ibid., 43.
66 Strauss, What is Political Philosophy?, 238-239.
that influenced politics and fueled historical development. “In the duality of the roles of man,” he wrote, “who is simultaneously an autonomous individual and a member of a supra-individual personality, arises the national and cosmopolitan tendencies.”67 Let us now turn our examination to these tendencies.

Selected Bibliography


67 Riezler. Grundzüge, 41.
The Black Death in Florence, Italy, 1348-1350: Impact on the Christian Religion

Kayla Hudson

An unstoppable force swept through Europe in the fourteenth century leaving at least one-third of the population dead. No one was safe, not man or woman, old or young, wealthy or poor, laity or clergy and all shivered in fear at its name: Plague. Between 1348 and 1350 the Black Plague impacted the Christian religion in Florence, Italy through massive population loss, failure of the Church to live up to expectations and its increase of corruption, a shift toward individualistic faith, and the rise of the Flagellant movement. The Black Death caused mass population loss that severely affected the Catholic Church’s authority. Medieval writer Giovanni Boccaccio reports in the Decameron that “one hundred thousand human beings are believed to have lost their lives for certain inside the walls of Florence.”

1 However, historians believe that contemporaries such as Boccaccio exaggerated the death toll in their accounts so much that it appears more people died in Florence than actually lived there at the time.2 Health records indicate that the city may have lost up to seventy percent of its citizens in the span of a few years. This extensive loss of life can be attributed to the Black Death as well as the famine which struck Europe just prior to the arrival of the Plague.3 Contemporary Florentine, Giovanni Villani, describes how priests who did their clerical duty and confessed the sick and those nursing the sick often became ill themselves and died. This meant that the vast numbers of dead and dying could not be confessed and given sacrament because those who had the authority to perform the rituals were dead.4 Monasteries outside of the walls of the city suffered greatly because the close confines of the holy houses caused the disease to spread rapidly.5 According to Boccaccio, divine and human laws and authority suffered greatly because even members of the clergy were not spared from the epidemic. Many priests were dead or sick and could not fulfill their duties to the Church or enforce its authority, so “everybody was free to do as they pleased.”6 The Church’s authority was compromised by the deaths of its clergy.

The Church further lost authority over its flock of congregants as fear took hold of people’s hearts. Moral degradation ran rampant in Florence as people began to look at death with terror rather than view it as a happy release from earthly bondage.7 Surrounded by death, people began to reflect more upon life and became more concerned with making the best of their short lifespan.8 The Catholic Church, weakened by the loss of so many of its clergy, did not have the power or authority to stop the vast number of desperate, frightened people who chose to live life to its fullest by directly engaging in what the Church called the sins of

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5 Boccaccio, 17.
6 Ibid, 9.
gluttony, sloth, and lust. For many, the fear of falling ill became even greater than the fear of God punishing them for being selfish. Countless citizens of Florence abandoned their dead and dying friends and relatives hoping to survive the pestilence themselves. Traditional forms of burial and rituals associated with death were abandoned in the face of the horrifying plague and the rate of death it caused, leaving many to be buried without the last rites and in unconsecrated ground. Custom and belief dictated that each individual be place in his or her own grave with a priest presiding over the burial. However, the rate of death was so high that the amount of holy ground and individual plots available was insufficient. To solve this dilemma, hundreds of corpses were dumped into huge trenches “and they were packed in there with dirt, one on top of another, like a ship’s cargo, until the trench was filled.” Fear of death and the high death toll negatively affected the Church’s authority.

The Plague struck fear into Florentines, and when the Church failed to live up to expectations people began to question its authority and sanctity. As recorded in the Decameron many medieval people believed that the plague was God’s punishment for sinful mortals. In Florence, severe famine in 1347, raids by unemployed mercenary soldiers, and the bankruptcy of banking houses that caused economic instability had preceded the Black Death. When the devastating Plague arrived, the constant stench of rotting bodies, the sheer number of corpses, and the notion that no one knew who would be stricken next, inspired fear unlike any other into people. This fear of plague in addition to the other recent crisis caused Florentines to look to lessons from the Bible and, like people across Europe, they believed that the world was coming to an end and the apocalypse was upon them. Since it was believed that the Plague was God’s wrath, at first many people turned toward the Church to help them. The primary means by which the Catholic Church sought to halt the Plague was through prayers, vows, and construction of religious monuments. Churches and pillars dedicated to saints, the Virgin Mary, and the Holy Trinity sprang up across the city. However, the Church failed to provide the necessary support and solace expected during the calamity. The eyewitness account of Matteo Villani discusses how the efforts and medicines of doctors failed to help the sick and even prayers and supplications of priests did not halt the rapid spread of the disease, nor curb the number of those who died. Many people asked why the Church had been unable to predict that the wrath of God was coming and warn its flock to be better behaved to avert the onset of the plague. It was not until after the Black Death struck that the Church pointed out the wicked sins of its followers. As the death toll rose higher and higher, people began to take note that the clergy died as often as the laity and those who did not die fled. During the

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10 Boccaccio, 11; Fiero,3.
11 Boccaccio, 13.
12 Ibid., 7.
15 Ibid., 84.
16 Deaux, 87.
18 Ibid., 211.
descent of the Black Death on Florence, the clergy neither showed moral superiority or invulnerability from the pestilence. These facts shook people's faith in the power and sanctity of the Church. The Church failed to aid in halting the Plague, so people began to question its authority.

The corruptness of the Church was well-known in the late 1340s, and the Plague only aided in the deterioration of the religious institution’s image in many Florentine’s eyes. The preceding decades had done little to inspire the people’s confidence in the Church, so when the plague struck, many disillusioned and pessimistic people turned away from it. The second story of the first day in the Decameron talks about the well-known laxity of the Church at the time of its writer, Giovanni Boccaccio. In 1348, the Friar, Johannes of Winterthur, and the Westphalian Dominican, Heinrich of Herford, described the corruption of the Church with the memorable statement, “The shepherds of the Church feed themselves instead of their flocks, these they sheer or rather fleece; their conduct is not that of the shepherd but of the wolf!” When the Plague struck hard and the Church’s efforts to curb the onslaught failed to prove effective, more than one Florentine Catholic began to wonder if the well-known corruption of the Church itself was what had “so aroused the wrath of God.” The Church claimed that it was the sins of the laity that had brought on the Plague, but some people went so far as to interpret the Plague as a warning to the profligate clergy. The corruption of the Church only worsened with the onset of the Plague. Although the monks and nuns who lived in monasteries had dedicated their lives to God, even some of them found no solace in religion in the face of so much death and broke their vows by engaging in “pleasures of the flesh.” The loss of so many priests so quickly to death left the Catholic Church scrambling to find replacements. These priests were often not as spiritual, or educated as their predecessors and, not only were many unsuitable candidates appointed, but many novices were pressed into positions of responsibility before they were ready. Throughout Florence, many Catholics died or saw others die without the comfort to the last Unction, not only because priests died, but because many of the healthy priests fled the city in fear. Abandoned citizens of Florence accused the fleeing priests of being selfish and more concerned about saving their earthly bodies from the plague than saving the souls of their parishioners. Already suffering from moral degradation and inefficient bureaucracy, the Church’s working order broke down even further “in the fact of the social crisis produced by the plague.” Priests deserting their flocks and the continued failure of the Church prompted some people to turn away from the holy institution.

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21 Boccaccio, 40.
22 Deaux, 178.
23 Nohl, 179.
24 Fiero, 5.
25 Boccaccio, 17.
26 Ziegier, 212.
27 Nohl, 81.
28 Ziegier, 211.
29 Potter, 58.
While the power and spiritual authority of the Church decreased, religious fervor increased, although not without changes to beliefs. Constantly surrounded by death, Florentines were more aware of the power of God. When they saw a priest misbehave, they were more likely to seek out alternative means of attaining salvation than the interference of the Catholic Church on their behalf. Although the Church disgusted many people, most did not turn their backs completely on Christianity. Rather than question “God’s Truth,” they chose to see that the individuals within the institution as imperfect vessels of the Truth. As an alternative, people turned more toward individualistic faith, even after the plague subsided and the priests returned. The obsession with the death brought about by the Plague made the living more aware of their need to secure their salvation, although not necessarily through the Catholic Church. Mysticism and lay piety became popular as well as pious charity. Countless desperate people donated wealth and riches for the erection of altars and bells for masses in the hope of receiving God’s mercy in return. A few are known to have surrendered all of their earthly possessions. The Company of Or San Michele in Florence received 350,000 florins worth of donations to support various religious and philanthropic functions. Pilgrimage was another form of individual religious action. Pilgrims directly performed a religious act by visiting a holy place, which left no need for a priest to intercede on their behalf. The sheer fact that so many people fled Florence, like the ten protagonists in the Decameron, reveals a shift in religious beliefs. Instead of waiting for God to intervene, those who left the city took their lives and futures into their own hands. The Decameron demonstrates a shift in religious belief, for although the ten protagonists remain dedicated to the idea of God’s omnipotence, they believe that their futures are determined by fate, luck, and chance rather than their own actions. Furthermore, the characters do not stoically accept pain and suffering, instead they seek to enjoy life, suddenly aware of how precious it is. As the glory of the Catholic Church faded in the eyes of many Florentines, they turned to a more individualistic faith colored by alterations in beliefs due to their experience with the Black Death.

While many medieval people turned to more individualistic religious practices, a group known as the Flagellants formed as something of a rival to the Catholic Church. Although the organized practice of flagellation began in the Germanic dukedoms during the Black Death, the practice spread throughout Europe, so it seems likely that some groups of Flagellants reached Florence. The Flagellants, like many of their contemporaries, believed that the Plague was God’s wrath, but, unlike most others, they took more drastic steps. The Brotherhood of the Flagellants believed that they took the burden of repentance of other people’s sins upon themselves. To do so, they abided by a strict code of behavior that included not accepting alms; not

31 Deaux, 179.
32 Gottfried, 84.
33 Ibid., 87.
34 Nohl, 92.
35 Ziegler, 217.
36 Gottfried, 86.
38 Gottfried, 79.
bathing, shaving, or conversing with women; and confessing to the Master when any rule was broken.\textsuperscript{40} The most masochistic behavior of the Flagellants was when they whipped themselves with a spiked leather whips in public twice a day and once at night in private.\textsuperscript{41} Contemporaries report that sometimes the Flagellants whipped themselves with such thoroughness that the spikes attached to the leather had to be wrenched from the flesh.\textsuperscript{42} While they struck themselves, the Flagellants would chant hymns, pray for the end of the plague, and make the sign of the cross.\textsuperscript{43} Each new member of the Brotherhood of the Flagellants was required to wander from town to town with the group and follow the strict rules for thirty-three and a half days in respect for the number of years Christ lived before he was crucified.\textsuperscript{44} Members of the Flagellants were primarily lay people. In fact, priests were forbidden to become Masters, the leaders of Flagellant groups, which reveals that this movement was separate from the Church\textsuperscript{45}. The Flagellants’ hymns may represent the first time religious hymns were publically sung in lay languages. The movement also represents how people were so disgusted and disillusioned by the corrupted, inefficient Church that they began to take matters into their own hands by directly appealing to God without the aid of the clergy.\textsuperscript{46} The Flagellants were a reactionary group who were active and enthusiastic, but did not create many constructive ideas or programs. Perhaps the Flagellants hoped to create a rival to the Catholic Church, but the Church was not weak enough at the time, nor were the Flagellants strong enough for that to happen.\textsuperscript{47} The Flagellant movement petered out eventually, but it began as a movement that arose as a united alternative to reaching salvation than the Catholic Church and an attempt to end the Plague.

The Christian religion was deeply affected by the Black Plague in Florence, Italy between 1348 and 1350. The city of Florence saw the loss of possibly 40,000 of its inhabitants, including many of its clergy. This high rate of death resulted in many people dying without the last rites and being buried in mass graves as opposed to individual plots. There was widespread belief that the plague was God’s wrath and at first many looked to the Catholic Church to combat it, but when the holy institution failed live up to expectations and people noticed its increase of corruption, a shift away from the Church toward individualistic faith became popular. In one famous instance, a group of laity formed the Brotherhood of the Flagellants to attempt to halt the Plague themselves and seek salvation without the Church interceding on their behalf. The Black Death spread the disease of fear faster than it spread the plague itself and the combination of fear and the Plague altered religion in Florence forever.

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\textsuperscript{40} Deaux, 180.
\textsuperscript{41} Oakley, 115.
\textsuperscript{42} Deaux, 180.
\textsuperscript{43} Deaux, 181.
\textsuperscript{44} Oakley, 115.
\textsuperscript{45} Deaux, 180.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 182.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 185
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**Secondary Sources**


failure, politics and collective memory in ireland: a century of commemorating the easter rising

christopher lasley

the centennial celebration of the easter rising will be defined by ireland’s economic and political situation in 2016. as the irish entered the new century their future never looked brighter, and the economy enjoyed a growth rate unmatched in western europe. in 2004, the economist marveled at the republic’s transformation from the doldrums of the 1980s, “surely no other country in the rich world has seen its image change so fast.” in 2008, fortunes switched as recession grabbed hold of the celtic tiger. in the aftermath of financial collapse and the resulting eu and imf bailouts, the easter rising centennial commemoration in 2016 will likely take on a new, and distinctly less-celebratory atmosphere.

as the centennial nears since patrick pearse, james connolly and their compatriots seized dublin’s general post office, current economic and political issues will invariably define the way the easter rising is celebrated and remembered come 2016. many in the republic believe ireland’s agreements with the imf and the eu damage the nation’s sovereignty and insults collective memory of the “struggles of the last 200 years.” this profound change in the national mood, since the start of the global recession, is not lost on ireland’s new taoiseach (prime minister), enda kenny. a few days before the 2011 national elections, which dethroned brian cowen and the fianna fail party, kenny connected his political agenda to the memory of the easter rising and insisted the republic set itself toward fiscal solvency in time for the centennial. if the taoiseach sticks to his word, “sending the imf home” will become a component of the centennial celebration plans.

by linking the memory of the easter rising to ireland’s sovereign debt woes, kenny demonstrated how memory of the past shapes a nation’s understanding of the present. as ian mcbride succinctly described the political nature of commemoration, “what we choose to remember is dictated by our contemporary concerns.” in the last ninety-five years, irish elites and non-elites have battled to shape collective memory of the easter rising. through public commemoration, published writing and film, elites have manipulated collective memory for political and ideological gains. from the golden jubilee of 1966 through the troubles (1969-1998), memory of the rising (as expressed by paramilitary organizations like the provisional ira) fueled sectarian violence in northern ireland, and disrupted elite commemorations of the rising for decades.

in 2006, the republic’s leaders reasserted control over the memory of 1916. the ninetieth anniversary reflected the political agenda of post-troubles ireland by broadening the term “irish” to include all historical

2 celtic tiger is the popular term used to describe the irish economy, do to its similarity to yearly economic growth in east asian countries.
and political traditions on the island. As we look ahead to the centennial in 2016, it is already apparent that elites, like Enda Kenny, will shape and define the nature of the commemoration celebration.

Since this paper delves into the relationship between “elites” and “non-elites” in the construction of Irish collective memory, it will benefit our discussion to examine what the word elite means in this specific context. Over the course of Ireland’s past, the distinction between elites and non-elites has changed with time. In medieval and early modern Ireland, this distinction separated people based on which side of a castle wall they dwelt.6 During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Irish elitism presupposed a person’s wealth, ownership of a landed estate and Protestant religious identity.7 Since the founding of the Irish Free State in 1922, Irish elitism no longer denotes physical or caste barriers. The term elite is applied throughout this paper as way of grouping national figures (like Easter Rising survivors), Irish politicians and intellectuals into a single category. By this method, we will be able to identify long-term trends in elite and non-elite relations, as they pertain to Irish collective memory and commemorations of the Rising.

In the spring of 1916, republican rebels turned the center of Dublin into a warzone. After decades of attempting to find a diplomatic solution to the “Irish question,” in 1914 the United Kingdom passed the Government of Ireland Act. The bill granted the island with limited sovereignty and the right to establish a parliament. The outbreak of the First World War put implementation of the bill on permanent hold. For Ireland’s radical nationalists, the war and the failure of Parliament to implement the Home Rule bill became justification for armed rebellion. On April 24, 1916 Connolly, Pearse and a force of roughly 1,600 armed men seized strategically valuable locations around Dublin, including the General Post Office (GPO) on O’Connell Street. After declaring themselves “the Provisonal Government of the Irish Republic,” the rebels fought British soldiers and police for six days with the hope that rebellion would spread across the island. By the end of the week, British forces crushed the Easter Rising. Though the rebellion failed militarily, the Easter Rising left an indelible mark on Irish identity and politics.8

To understand the importance of the Easter Rising in Irish culture and politics, it is first necessary to explore the relationship between the past and collective memory.9 By studying the way nations and societies remember and celebrate moments of importance (like the approaching centennial), historians better understand the relationship between the past and the present. The choice of the word memory in collective memory is hardly accidental. In the sense of understanding the past, collective memory denotes the same flaws, selectivity and emotion as human memory. Our modern understanding of collective memory is a product of Maurice Halbwachs’s 1950 work, On Collective Memory. In his groundbreaking book, Halbwachs argued that because people spend their lives surrounded by others, it is impossible to separate the individual from the group. Thus our memory of the past is not constructed individually, but rather shared collectively.10 He believed societies construct and express collective memory out of an innate desire to connect with the

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6 David R.C. Hudson, The Ireland that We Made (Akron: The University of Akron Press, 2003), 12.
9 I use the word past purposefully. Because history is always a constructed and subjective interpretation of the past, it is too ambiguous and muddies our use of the term collective memory. Conversely, the past is always the past, whether we claim to understand it or not.
past. Through the celebration of national holidays, construction of monuments and parades, Halbwachs believed collective memory forged a connection between the past and the present.11

Halbwachs’s *On Collective Memory* opened the historical field to new ways of understanding the past. As Jaques Le Goff argues in his book, *History and Memory*, the study of collective memory “constitutes a major change in historical vision.”12 Le Goff believes the entry of collective memory, as a historical field, has expanded our understanding of the past to include commemoration, oral history and other new primary sources of knowledge. These new fields come from areas “shared by the public at large, which is obsessed by the fear of losing its memory in a kind of collective amnesia.”13 In the process of safeguarding the past, collective memory takes on the personality of those in present.14

When collective memory is expressed on the national level we reach the crossroads where history and politics meet. As James Fentress and Chris Wickham argue in *Social Memory*, “Almost all political rhetoric depends on the past as a legitimation device.”15 The clearest example of these political expressions is found by examining national holidays, like Bastille Day. States choose to remember specific moments from the past in order to create national purpose. As professor Lawrence Bryant once asked this author, what can be said about identity from the fact that the French national holiday is Bastille Day, and not the approval of the *Declaration of the Rights of man and of the Citizen*? By choosing to remember the storming of the Bastille, the government influences French national memory to achieve political goals.16

The power and importance of collective memory has the ability to make wounds of the past fresh again. In recent years, the use of memory in reconstructing national identity created international controversy in reaction to the way Japanese history textbooks remember the nation's imperial past.17 In several high school history books, Japan’s imperial legacy is either abridged or completely omitted from the national narrative. Here we are presented with an example where the crimes of the past are whitewashed in order to promote patriotism and national cohesion.18 In constructing national identity, forgetting can be as valuable as remembering.

In exploring the phenomenon of collective memory, researchers regularly find meaning through exploring the importance of national tragedy. The sociologist Ron Eyerman of Yale University observed that “trauma must be understood, explained and made coherent through public reflection and discourse.”19 Since the national memory only has room for a few historical events, Eyerman’s argument helps in understanding why “trauma” is such a reoccurring theme in commemorations, especially in Ireland. When tragedies are

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11 Ibid, 78, 79
13 Ibid, 95.
16 Ibid, 130, 131, 136.
placed in the context of identity, collectively experienced traumas have the uncanny ability to foster national cohesion among survivors.20

Public commemoration is an ever-changing top-down effort to control collective memory and thus influence the development of national identity. As John R. Gillis argued in, Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity, collective memory changes over time to “suit our current identities.”21 Elites (including the state and public figures) organize and control the process of commemorating the past for the express purpose of defining national identity. For public commemoration to succeed, mass attendance is first required. If we return to Halbwachs’s argument that people have an innate desire to bridge the gap between the past and the present, we can understand why elite constructions of the past, in the form of commemoration, are able to attract the public’s attention.22 National identity is thus shaped through elite sponsored commemoration and by the sense of belonging found through group participation in festivals and parades.23

Now that a clear understanding of the relationship between collective memory, national identity and elite constructs of mass commemoration is established, we will better identify these trends as they pertain to Ireland and the Easter Rising. As Ian McBride eloquently argued in History and Memory in Modern Ireland, Irish collective memory is a product of “the remembrance of injustice and persecution, endurance and deliverance.”24 This sense of victimization is of particular interest in the study of Irish identity because in Ireland’s past, commemoration has spilled over into violence. In compliment to McBride’s assertion, Rebecca Graff-McRae states in Remembering and Forgetting 1916, “In Ireland, in particular, the word (commemoration) carries with it the weight of conflict, and the promise of overcoming differences.”25 In Ireland, the way the past is remembered influences both politics and society in profound ways.

Elite sponsored celebrations of trauma and failure created the modern picture of Irish national identity, especially among the island’s pro-republican population.26 Commemorations, or “communal acts of remembering and celebration,” as Roy Foster describes them, have a long history in Ireland.27 The year 1898 saw republicans and tourists fill Dublin’s streets with celebration of the United Irishmen’s rebellion. Memory of Wolfe Tone’s failure of 1798, though a crushing defeat that left Ireland no closer to independence, inspired parades and the construction of over thirty memorials across the island.28 These centennial celebrations are significant to understanding Irish collective memory in the early twentieth century. In celebrating the failure of 1798, republicans focused on Wolfe Tone’s patriotic sacrifice and his military strategy. The United Irishmen chose to attack British authority at a moment when London found itself distracted with other foreign concerns, like war with France. Eighteen years after the centennial celebration, the IRB acted out
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Tone’s “lesson,” which the centennial celebrations of 1898 retaught to a new generation, “England’s difficulty is Ireland’s opportunity.”

The centennial commemoration of the United Irishmen’s rebellion roused the republican passions of the Easter Rising’s leadership, and defined their strategic planning. For James Connolly, Patrick Pearse and the other rebels of 1916, memory of Wolfe Tone’s “lesson” proved more impactful than the historical reality of his failure and execution. In the Easter Proclamation (distributed on the day of the Rising) Pearse believed the collective memory of Ireland’s past rebellions would inspire the general population to join him in arms: “In every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty: six times during the past three hundred years they have asserted it in arms.”

After Pearse read and distributed the Proclamation one observer took a copy, predicting it might become a collector’s item, “They’d be worth a fiver each some day, when the beggars were hanged.” Even at its start, Dubliners realized that the Easter Rising would make an impact on Irish collective memory.

After six days of violence, Pearse’s surrender brought an end to the Easter Rising. Immediately after the ceasefire, public opinion showed strong disapproval for the rebellion. Many Dubliners believed the rebels planned the plot alongside the German government in order to hinder the war effort. Since nearly 200,000 Irish fought in the First World War, many saw the Rising as treason against the Irish people. As British officers transported rebels to prison, crowds “showered them with rotten vegetables.” In early May, Dubliners tried to make sense of the chaos, violence and damage caused to the city’s center. One editorial appearing in the Irish Independent vilified the rebellion as “doing the enemy’s work.”

British conduct after the rebellion’s pacification greatly influenced Irish collective memory of the Easter Rising. By late May, the military executed fifteen men and arrested hundreds of suspected members of revolutionary and socialist organizations. Even members of Parliament had their doubts about the appropriateness of executing the rebels and implored general John Maxwell to spare the lives of Ireland’s “ignorant and misguided rank and file of the rebel army.”

British authorities, in wanting to avoid an international incident, spared American-born Éamon de Valera of the firing squad, making him the only commander to survive. By surviving the Rising, de Valera became a living national icon and (as we will see) greatly influenced collective memory, as well as Irish politics, for the next half-century. By executing Pearse, Connolly and thirteen others, “British authorities behaved more and more in the manner that IRB desired.” As the “Irish question” turned into a war of independence, memory of the Easter Rising became the catalyst for the independence movement.

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32 Lee, 156.
36 Foster, Modern Ireland, 484, 485.
After the executions, elite interpretation of the Easter Rising as a heroic sacrifice by Ireland’s martyred patriots altered collective memory. In two years time an unpopular rebellion, aided by draconian British reaction, became firmly established in the national conscience as the pivotal moment in the cause for independence. In the summer of 1916 W.B. Yeats wrote his famous poem *Easter 1916*. He chose not to have it published until the middle of the Irish War of independence in 1920, when it would have the greatest political affect. Today it is impossible to separate the memory of 1916 from Yeats haunting poem: “I write it out in a verse/ MacDonagh and MacBride/ and Connolly and Pearse/ Now and in time to be/ wherever green is worn/ are changed, changed utterly/ A terrible beauty is born.” By using poetry to affect Irish collective memory, Yeats set a powerful precedent that demonstrated the power and danger of the arts in altering Identity in Ireland. By invoking the names of Ireland’s newest martyrs, Yeats’s fueled national passions during (and long after) the Irish War of Independence (1919-1921). Graff-McRae believes that, as a poet, Yeats’s commemorative work gave character and identity to an unborn nation. In the process, the poet altered the “nationalist narrative” to include “the role of violence in effecting revolutionary change.”

In formulating collective memory, the year 1916 is significant to both republicans and unionists. The events of that year furthered divisions between Ulster and the rest of Ireland in terms of politics and collective memory. While Catholics and Protestants, unionists and republicans alike fought and died in the First World War, the Battle of the Somme holds an important place in the collective memory of Ireland’s Protestant community. On July 1, 1916 the 36th Ulster Division lost roughly 5,000 men in a single day during one of the bloodiest battles of the First World War. In wake of this tremendous loss, grief and sorrow among the Protestant community transformed Northern Ireland’s sense of collective identity. In the North, the sacrifice made at the Somme did not enter popular memory as an example of “victimization,” the way the Easter Rising did in the Republic. Rather, Northern Ireland’s Protestants celebrate their noble sacrifice alongside the Battle of the Boyne (July 12: 1690). Both “Irlands” identity with a militant past, but the memory and context is significantly different. While the martyrs of the republican cause fought and died to stop conscription in Ireland and denounced the island’s involvement in the war, Ulster’s heroes came bravely to the United Kingdom’s defense. As Graff-McRae argues, “the Easter Rising and Battle of the Somme... have become entrenched as founding myths for the majority community in each state.”

As the “Irish question” became an international spectacle during the Irish War of Independence, Protestants in the North highlighted their community's sacrifice at the Somme to demonstrate where Orangemen stood in the debate, and showed their disapproval of the Home Rule movement. Throughout the twentieth century, Northern and Southern elites formed different collective memories of the year 1916. As we

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37 Ibid, 479.
39 Graff-McRae, 29.
40 The word unionist refers to those that favor continuing Northern Ireland’s political ties to the United Kingdom.
41 David Officer, “’For God and Ulster’: The Ulstermen on the Somme,” in *History and Memory in Modern Ireland*, 160.
42 Graff-McRae, 110.
43 David Officer, 165.
will see in 2006, elite attempts at merging the two “1916s” proved extremely difficult, and demonstrated collective memory’s ability to create lasting divides between communities.44

Following the Irish War of Independence, Ireland experienced violence, turmoil and political change that created long-term implications for Irish collective memory and identity. In 1922 the Anglo-Irish Treaty went into effect and turned the Southern twenty-six counties into the Irish Free State, while the Northern six counties remained in the Union. The treaty recognized the Free State as a dominion, not a fully sovereign republic. Though seen by Easter Rising survivor and politician Michael Collins as an important step toward creating an eventual Irish republic, IRA hardliners (known as the Anti-Treaty IRA) violently opposed both Ireland’s division and its limited sovereignty. The civil war that followed splintered the IRA and pitted Collins against de Valera in a war that lasted until May of 1923. During the fighting an Anti-Treaty assassin killed Collins, adding yet another martyr to Ireland’s collective memory of victimization. With British aid and popular support, the Free State’s Pro-Treaty forces won the war, and de Valera spent the following year in prison.45

Memory of the civil war created a permanent divide in Irish politics. In 1925, de Valera formed Fianna Fáil. The new political party abandoned the IRA’s violence based tactics and campaigned against the Treaty on constitutional grounds. Fianna Fáil’s electoral successes in the elections of 1927 and 1932 is in large part attributed to Irish memory of de Valera as the “incorruptible” living memorial to the Easter Rising.46 Not to be outdone, the party’s main opposition force, Cumann na nGaedheal (later Fine Gael), claimed Michael Collins as their party’s founder.47 Since both organizations claimed an Easter Rising survivor as their ideological leader, collective memory of 1916 became a powerful political tool from the Free State period onward.48

During the Free State years, commemoration of the Easter Rising remained largely decentralized. This is not to say that elites did not want to define and control the Easter Rising’s memory, rather the relative freshness and political implications (differences between Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael) became hard to overcome. Since all major political parties in the Free State saw themselves as the heirs to the rebellion, politicians became gridlocked over memorial planning and the details of commemoration. Though the Free State held yearly parades on Easter Monday, permanent memorials, like the one at the General Post Office erected in 1935, could not be agreed upon until nearly twenty years after the Easter Rising.49

By April 1941 enough time had elapsed for elites to cooperate to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Easter Rising with a massive military parade in Dublin. Though technically a dominion of the United Kingdom, Ireland regularly exploited distractions in Westminster as an opportunity to achieve greater sovereignty. When war broke out in 1939, Ireland flexed its independence and used collective memory of past “victimization” as justification to sit the war out. In the same month that Dublin remembered

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44 Graff-McRae, 111.
46 Foster, Modern Ireland, 525, 526.
48 Graff-McRae, 63.
49 David Fitzpatrick, “Commemoration in the Irish Free State,” in History and Memory in Modern Ireland, 195-197.
the Easter Rising, Belfast lost 745 of its citizens to the German Blitz.\textsuperscript{50} Ironically for a country at peace, Ireland’s twenty-fifth anniversary of the Rising celebrated the nation’s history of armed resistance. The government issued specially made “Easter Rising” medals to surviving participants, including (now Taoiseach) Éamon de Valera.\textsuperscript{51} With Fianna Fáil in control of the Irish Parliament, honoring de Valera though national commemoration became a self-serving act for the party. As part of the commemoration, president Douglas Hyde addressed the massive crowd of over 25,000 troops and countless citizens stretching down the length of O’Connell Street. Hyde did not mention the Rising’s failure, nor did he mention Dubliners throwing rotten produce at the martyred national heroes. Instead, the president remembered 1916 in the context of events that followed the executions, “The chains that bound us began to be broken at last, and gradually they were thrown off.”\textsuperscript{52}

In the history of the Easter Rising’s commemorations, the Golden Jubilee of 1966 stands out as the turning point in the narrative of elite/ non-elite control over Irish collective memory. On March 8, weeks before the commemoration, Dubliners awoke to the sound of an explosion that destroyed the top-half of Nelson’s Pillar.\textsuperscript{53} The bomber, a former IRA member, placed the explosives on a monument celebrating British military achievement over Catholic foes, which loomed over the GPO and O’Connell street. Though he blew up a stone structure, he intended to ignite the national passions and memories of the Irish people during a key moment of historical commemoration. Coincidentally, the explosion damaged several windows in the nearby General Post Office.\textsuperscript{54} Shortly after the bombing, several folk-style songs commemorated the bomber’s work. The most famous of these, “Nelson’s Farewell” by the Dubliners, reinforced Irish collective memory of victimization: “At last the Irish nation has Parnell in higher station than that poor old admiral Nelson.”\textsuperscript{55}

Before March 8, 1966 elites firmly controlled the exclusive right to define the Easter Rising’s legacy. In destroying Nelson’s Pillar, the bomber sent a clear message to the Irish people that 1916 could be commandeered and exploited by sectarian paramilitary groups (like the IRA) for political gain.

For Conor Cruise O’Brien (author, historian and politician) the fiftieth anniversary served as a means to provoke the national passions of those sympathetic to republican politics (violent or otherwise). In his essay, “Embers of Easter,” O’Brien asks his readers whether the Ireland of the present deserves its national heroes, “If Pearse and Connolly could have had a foresight of the Ireland of 1966 would they have gone with that high courage to certain death?” O’Brien believed the “heroes” of 1916 would not be shocked to see the Ireland of 1966 divided, but they would be disappointed so few actively sought to make the country whole again. Throughout his essay, O’Brien treats the memory of Patrick Pearse with the reverence of a saint. He believed it “quite proper and fitting that Dublin should hold commemoration in 1966” as it would allow the Irish to reflect on “the spirit of Easter, 1916.”\textsuperscript{56} Graff-McRae sees O’Brien’s literary work of the late 1960s and

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{Foster} Foster, Modern Ireland, 561.
\bibitem{Eire} “Eire: Easter Medals,” \textit{Time}, April 21, 1941.
\bibitem{Greatest} “Greatest Military Display for Many Years” \textit{The Irish Times}, April 14, 1941 (digital copy).
\bibitem{Nelson} Built in 1808 to commemorate Admiral Horatio Nelson’s victory at the Battle of Trafalgar (1805).
\bibitem{Nelson1} Nelson’s Farewell, by Joe Dolan and the Dubliners, MP3, 1967.
\end{thebibliography}
early 1970s as bound to the republican traditions in the style of Yeats, yet linked via hindsight (by present day observers) to the Troubles, which began three years after the Golden Jubilee.57

The "spirit" of the Easter Rising’s fiftieth anniversary created a strong market for commemorative and historical goods that connected people with Ireland’s past. Bookstores emptied the shelves of their history sections as people felt driven to connect with their nation’s past. In part because, “The effect of the ceremonies is to alert or shame those who have not bothered to study history to take a course of it now. And by this everybody benefits.” 58 In addition to books, consumers snatched up commemorative stamps and other tangible items that provided a connection to the memory of the Easter Rising.

Besides giving the Irish people a motive to buy things and brush up on their history, the 1966 commemoration is in part responsible for ushering in a new chapter in Ireland’s Troubles. Like the parade twenty-five years earlier, the Golden Jubilee filled O’Connell Street with Dubliners eager to watch an estimated six hundred survivors that marched through the center of Dublin alongside active members of the Irish army.59 Elites once again monopolized the memory of 1916. With de Valera now the Republic of Ireland’s president, his speech and involvement in the massive parade provided both Fianna Fáil and the state with the sense of legitimacy.60 Unfortunately for the Ireland’s elites, the collective memory of the Easter Rising changed dramatically as sectarian violence engulfed Northern Ireland.

In response to growing national pride and Anglophobia among the island’s Catholic population, new paramilitary organizations formed in Northern Ireland. The Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) took its name from the famous pro-Union organization from the 1910s. In the radically charged atmosphere of 1966, the armature members of the UVF conducted a handful of indiscriminate killings.61 Three years later matters escalated as a split formed in the IRA’s leadership. The younger members of the IRA split from their Marxist elders and created their own organization in honor of the heroes of 1916: The Provisional IRA. With a name drawn directly from the Easter Proclamation, the “Provos” commandeered the memory of the Easter Rising and changed the nature of commemoration in Ireland for the next forty years.62

Paramilitary organizations redefined Easter 1916 and effectively expropriated the memory of the Rising from elite control. For over three decades the legacy of 1916 became inseparable from the violence in Northern Ireland. As a result, the Republic canceled all military parades between 1969 and 2006.63 Politicians kept the memory of Ireland’s militant origins alive for a half-century and exploited it regularly for political gains. After 1969 the legacy of 1916 served as propaganda that “justified” street violence. As the vast majority of Irish (in all thirty two counties) disapproved of sectarian violence, this created a need to redefine the memory of 1916, and for that matter, Irish national identity along with it. The process of redefinition began

57 Graff-McRae, 39.
60 Graff-McRae, 38, 39.
62 Ibid, 60, 61.
with revisionist Irish historians in the 1970s and 1980s. Ruth Dudley Edwards and Roy Foster both used the past to temper extremism. Edwards's controversial book, *Patrick Pearse: The Triumph of Failure*, reexamines the Easter Rising’s leader in a less than heroic manner. In the example of *Modern Ireland: 1600-1972*, Foster wrote his grand narrative with the desire to see “Irishness” redefined and made “more inclusive” in light of the propagandistic role collective memory played in creating divisions of identity. By commandeering the legacy of 1916, the Provisional IRA permanently altered the way Ireland celebrated its past.

The process of reclaiming ownership of the Easter Rising for the Republic's benefit has been a slow one. During the seventy-fifth anniversary in 1991, the memory of 1916 became the first attempt through state commemoration to make the event more inclusive and reflect Ireland's desire to be seen as a forward thinking member of the greater European community. By the early nineties, the Republic wanted to end the Provisional IRA's influence over the perceptions of the past. To achieve this, the Easter Rising needed to be remembered on its own terms, and not in those of present political problems. An article in the *Irish Times* form 1991 reflected this sentiment, “Easter 1916 was a different world. It must neither intimidate nor antagonize us in today's Ireland.”

By redefining the collective memory of the Easter Rising, elites attempted to change the very nature of “being Irish.”

In 2006, the ninetieth anniversary attempted to balance two very different pasts. National commemorations embraced the Easter Rising’s legacy of armed resistance during Easter 1916, honor Ulster's memory of the Somme and (at the same time) condemn the violent years of the Troubles. In the fashion of 1941 and 1966 a large military parade marched down O'Connell Street. As the tricolor flag above the GPO lowered to half-mast, a young Irish officer stepped forward and read the *Easter Proclamation*. In “recognizing calls to view the Rising in a broader context” the Republic planned a similar commemoration in recognition of the Somme later that year. By blending Ireland’s disparate historical traditions into a single event, elites attempted to alter Ireland’s collective memory. As Graff-McRae believes, “inclusion in remembrance is inclusion into Irishness.”

Beyond politics, collective memory of the Easter Rising has molded and shaped popular culture both in and beyond Ireland. In 1996, Liam Neeson and Alan Rickman starred in *Michael Collins*. The film depicts the political struggle of Michael Collins and Éamon de Valera from the Easter Rising through the civil war. The film’s worldwide release introduced countless viewers to the story of the Easter Rising and the events that followed. Ten years later, and in time for the ninetieth anniversary, Ken Loach released *The Wind that Shakes the Barley*. The film stars Cillian Murphy and follows the story of two brothers caught up in the Anglo-Irish and civil wars. While the film shows the brutality of both the British and the Irish combatants, Loach's Irish republican biases jump off the screen. By focusing on the narrative of Irish victimization, Loach

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64 Roy Foster, *Modern Ireland*, 596.
65 Graff-McRae, 52.
68 Graff-McRae, 53.
attempted to subvert efforts at making the 2006 commemorations more inclusive. In the less political but equally passionate world of Irish-punk rock, memory of the Easter Rising is a source of inspiration for Flogging Molly’s lead singer, David King. The band’s entire musical catalogue came from a typewriter manufactured in 1916. King relies on the memory of the Easter Rising as continual inspiration for his band’s music. It is difficult to determine the impact popular culture is having on the current state of collective memory. However, it is clear that collective memory of the Easter Rising is continuing to shape the way artists interact and interpret Ireland’s past.

In 2011, and with the centennial celebration only five years away, the Republic of Ireland is once again finding contemporary politics influencing collective memory of the Easter Rising. With recent upheavals in Ireland’s political and economic environment it is likely that the celebrations in 2016 will be influenced by both the economic collapse of 2008 and the elections of 2011. Following the unpopular EU and IMF bailouts of 2010, Irish voters dismissed the long-ruling Fianna Fail party and handed the reign’s of power to Fine Gael. The New Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, entered office with the promise of putting Ireland back on track to economic sovereignty by 2016.

From the perspective of Kenny and the Fine Gael party, the sovereignty of the Irish state now “relies on the goodwill of other governments and international institutions.” In the Fine Gael Manifesto published in the lead up to the 2011 elections, the party highlights the importance of the Easter Rising commemorations of 2016. Kenny promises to put “culture at the heart of national identity” by developing a plan to commemorate the Easter Rising’s centennial. Though only a few details have been published, it is clear that Fine Gael wishes to commemorate the Easter Rising’s with a military presence. In a sign that politics still rule collective memory and commemoration in Ireland, Fine Gael plans to issue a special “Michael Collins Medal” to disserving members of the armed forces. Since Collins is recognized as the party’s unofficial founder (as has been discussed), it is no surprise Fine Gael chooses to use Collins rather than Fianna Fáil founder, Éamon de Valera.

Commemoration continues to define both collective memory and national identity in Ireland. Since the centennial celebration of the United Irishmen’s uprising of 1798, the past has served to create political cohesion among the nation’s citizens. In the example of the Easter Rising, the influence of memory on politics manifested during the Troubles in destructive ways, but it has also inspired artistic expression and a means to move past conflict. Commemoration of the Easter Rising always reflects the zeitgeist of the current political climate, and 2016 will not be an exception. In 1966, commemorations, official and otherwise, reflected the growing threat of sectarian violence. For the ninetieth anniversary, the desire to move past the Troubles and work toward a less-constricted sense of “Irishness” filled the air. As Graff-McRae concluded, “The appeal to common experiences and the acknowledgement of painful moments in the Irish past are held as part of a

healing process... [which] allows for a more inclusive version of both ‘Irishness’ and ‘the past.’

2016 is currently being defined. Following the economic collapse of 2008, and the sweeping change to Ireland’s political landscape in 2011, it is impossible to say whether the mood in 2016 will be jubilant or mournful. What is certain is that the Easter Rising centennial will reflect the political and economic environment of 2016, and introduce a new generation to the collective experience of remembering the Easter Rising.

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**75 Graff-McRae, 211.**
On Christmas Day in 1989, Nicolae Ceauşescu and his wife Elena were executed on television broadcast throughout Romania, thus ending a violent revolution to oust the brutal leader. But even as Romanians celebrated in Bucharest and tore the Socialist emblem out of the center of their nation’s flags, the results of Ceauşescu’s disregard for his people were felt by the most vulnerable citizens of Romania— orphanced children. In 1989, reports emerged that AIDS and HIV infections were rampant among children living in state institutions and that the spread had been both expedited and hidden by the government. By the time that researchers completed testing on potentially infected populations, over 10,000 children carried the HIV and AIDS virus between 1985 and 1989. When the news of the epidemic broke to the public in Romania and around the world, images showed the infants overflowing from cribs, malnourished, dirty, and uncared for and people demanded to know how it could have happened. Ultimately, a series of policies mandated by Nicolae Ceauşescu combined to cause a manmade epidemic of one of the greatest concentrations of pediatric AIDS patients in the world.

When Ceauşescu came to power in 1965, he quickly began implementing plans to boost the economic strength of the nation. One such plan included pronatalist policies intended to raise the population of Romania from 19 million people to 25 million people, providing Romania with a larger work force. In 1966, Ceauşescu passed laws that restricted divorce, abortions, access to contraceptives, and levied additional taxes on couples who did not have children. The laws initially stipulated that women must have at least four children in order to qualify for an abortion, and in 1985 that number was increased to five. Access to contraceptives was even more limited, with similar minimums on children, as well as age and health.

Ceauşescu encouraged women to comply with his laws using pronatalist propaganda. He proclaimed, “giving birth is a patriotic duty” and awarded medals to women according to how many children they produced. The highest honor, the title of “Heroine Mother” was given to mothers of more than ten, and subsequent awards were given to any woman who had more than five children. Although Ceauşescu promoted frequent child bearing, the reality was that Romanian women did not want to have as many children as the state demanded. Without adequate access to effective contraceptives, illegal abortions became increasingly common as women sought to prevent unplanned and unwanted children. Unfortunately, illegal abortions were extremely risky in Romania due to outdated and unsanitary medical practices, performed by often-untained medical professionals. Between the implementation of Ceauşescu’s pronatalist laws in 1966 and the ousting of Ceauşescu in 1989, an estimated 9,452 women died from illegal abortions. Over the same period time the maternal mortality rate tripled. Maternal mortality describes pregnant women who die from pregnancy complications, giving birth, or, more commonly in

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2 Donella Meadows, "Ceauşescu’s Longest Lasting Legacy—The Cohort of ‘67,” Sustainability Institute (January 1990)
7 Kligman, “Abortion,” 404.
Romania, having an abortion. This indicates that women in Romania were dependent on dangerous and illegal abortions to prevent unwanted pregnancies. The desperation that women faced to simply control their own bodies and reproductive health is a telling example of the absolute power Ceaușescu imposed immediately upon gaining control in Romania.

Working-class women had illegal abortions so frequently that the government paid physicians, employers, and Department of State Security members to monitor pregnant women and report on a suspected abortion. If any of the informants suspected that she had had an illegal abortion, she could face fines and imprisonment as well as harassment from members of her community. Ceaușescu told the public in 1986 that “those who refuse to have children are deserters, escaping the law of natural continuity.” To many in Romania, women had a duty and an obligation to their country to produce children whether they wanted them or not. From October 1966, when Ceaușescu began implemental pronatalist laws, until December 1989, when his regime ended, women were constantly coerced into bearing children that they oftentimes could not even care for. For tens of thousands of Romanians, a larger family was not a viable option. Most of Romania lived in poverty, on the edge of starvation, and completely unable to support a large family. The only choice available to Romanians was to send their children away to state run orphanages. As the American ambassador to Romania, Jim Rosapepe, stated in an interview, the results of Ceaușescu restricting abortion and contraceptives was that “a lot of poor families had a lot more kids, therefore more kids ended up in the orphanages.”

The orphanages were owned by the government and placed primarily in the regions of Romania that had the highest concentrations of people, specifically around Bucharest and along the ports to the Black Sea. Following the ban on any and all forms of contraceptives, the orphanages began to steadily fill up and some estimates place the peak of orphans under state care at over 150,000. The state-run orphanages functioned as the Romanian equivalent of welfare or low-income family support and thus, with the increase in children to low-income families, came a surge of orphans. In some cases, families used the orphanages as temporary housing for the orphans until their birth families were financially able to care for them again. In fact, Romanian orphans were rarely orphans at all: 84% still had one living parent and 60% still had both.

Another surge of orphans came in the 1980s when the economy in Romania collapsed. In the 1970s Ceaușescu overinvested in industrialization schemes. He ordered steel factories built when the society did not need them and they lay dormant and unused for years. He ordered coal plants built to open a newly discovered coal-mining region, but the analysts grossly inflated the figures and the coal mined was of such poor quality that it required more energy to process than it yielded. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s Romania “scrambled for heavy industrialization” and neglected both consumer goods and advancing technology on established industries. By

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9 Ibid, 232.
10 Sheilah Kast, and Jim Rosapepe, “Dracula is Dead’ But How is Romania?” Interview by Liana Hansen, National Public Radio (13 December 2009).
12 Kast, et al., “But How is Romania.”
13 Kast, et al., Romanians Survived Communism, 282.
14 Behr, Kiss the Hand, 167.
1975, the Romanian economy was completely ineffective and by 1981 it had begun to show.\textsuperscript{15} Romania’s debts to European nations and the US mounted until they began to cripple the economy. Although the profits from oil production sustained Romania until the early 1980s, production failed to keep up with advances in technology and without oil, no other strong foreign markets remained.\textsuperscript{16}

In order to pay off foreign debts of over $10 billion, Ceaușescu adopted a plan of economic austerity in 1981. He mandated rationing of food supplies, heat, gas, and medicine to save money. He denied the people of Romania basic necessities and the living standard plummeted. Romanians starved across the country, were denied heating in freezing winters, and had no access to modern medicine. All of those supplies were exported and sold abroad to make money for the government.\textsuperscript{17}

Romanians lived at bare subsistence levels throughout the 1980s. When information began to circulate that the country produced enough to support its people but that it exported most domestic goods, this greatly contributed to the revolution that began on December 16, 1989 with spontaneous revolts in Timișoara.\textsuperscript{18} The frustration felt by revolutionaries in both Timișoara and Bucharest can be observed in the transcript of Ceaușescu’s trial before his execution on December 25. The interrogator of the small, impromptu trial asked Ceaușescu “How did you ruin the country so much? Why did you make the peasants starve?”\textsuperscript{19} The anger that the masses had felt for the last decade culminated in Ceaușescu’s trial and subsequent televised execution. Ceaușescu’s response to the question is also an indicator of his perspective on the economic austerity policy. Ceaușescu answered, “It’s a lie. This shows how little patriotism there is, how many treasonable offenses were committed.”\textsuperscript{20} Ceaușescu considered the sacrifices he forced Romania to make to be signs of patriotism and loyalty to the country. He demanded the economic austerity policy as well as his pronatalist laws of Romanians in order to strengthen the country, but as Ceaușescu’s policies became more invasive and excessive, the country was ultimately weakened by a low standard of living and abandoned children.

While Romania’s economy declined, the orphanages and orphans that relied on government funding also suffered. In essence, “Romania’s orphanages were poor because the country was poor” and as the living standard in Romania dropped, it created an “underclass of poor families that could not support their children.”\textsuperscript{21} More families abandoned children as rationing prevented them from caring for their children but orphanages also endured rationing, which prevented them from providing children with food and medicine. The funding that orphanages received, despite the high numbers of children, was woefully inadequate. In 1989, immediately before the end of Ceaușescu’s regime, only 4.2% of government expenditures went to health care and only 2.4% of the gross domestic product. By comparison, Romania’s neighbor Poland dedicated 11% of its GDP to health services.\textsuperscript{22}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[16] Roper, \textit{Unfinished Revolution}, 55.
\item[17] Ibid, 56.
\item[19] Ibid, 113.
\item[20] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
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paternalist state that had demanded them” but they were not actually cared for.23 The state treated them with neglect that resulted in developmental disorders and early, untimely death.

Rationed food and supplies resulted in infants and children that were severely malnourished and under weight. Orphanages and hospitals resorted to an archaic medical practice designed to boost children’s immunity and nourishment—microtransfusions. Microtransfusions were injections of 10 milliliters of whole blood per kilogram of body weight. The blood was supposed to nourish children with iron and protein, as a replacement for their missing food nutrients.24 Although the practice was nearly disregarded everywhere else in the world, Romania continued to use it to boost the immunity of weakened children.25 Unfortunately, the practice was not only outdated, but dangerous: the 1980s saw the introduction of HIV and AIDS, easily passed through microtransfusions.

Auto Immunodeficiency Syndrome, or AIDS, is the advanced disease caused by Human Immunodeficiency Virus, or HIV. HIV is spread through contact of bodily fluids, including sex, blood transfusions, unsanitized needles, or from mother to child during birth. The first cases of AIDS emerged in Africa in the 1960s but it was not a mainstream, identified disease until the 1980s.26 The first case reported in Romania was in 1985 to a bar worker along the border.27 Although it is unclear how the disease managed to pass into the blood supplies used for microtransfusions, between 1985 and 1987 it infiltrated the orphanages and “cut a deadly swath through Romania’s pediatric wards and overcrowded orphanages.”28

In hospitals and orphanages across Romania in 1988, nurses unknowingly injected thousands of children with blood that would eventually infect and kill them. In January 1989 though, the disease was discovered by doctors who originally intended to use children as a control group before testing adults for HIV and AIDS. Dr. Ionel Patrascu began testing children in Bucharest and was alarmed that the first child tested, a 12 year-old girl, was infected. Of the next fourteen children tested, 6 were infected.29 As Patrascu continued his testing exclusively in orphanages, he found that 31 of the first 150 children were infected. Additionally, of those 31 children, 29 of them were under 3 years old.30 The disease was rampant and afflicting the youngest and weakest of Romania’s population. Patrascu’s assistant, Dr. Constantinescu, described his surprise to news organizations later, saying that he and Patrascu “had taken the young ones as a control group, not expecting to find anything.”31 In the worst series of testing, Constantinescu said that of 138 blood samples, 92 were positive. He said that even authorities they showed the results to were skeptical, claiming that the doctors were “playing around.” 32

The unbelievable results of AIDS testing continued to worsen and initial reports claimed that as many as one fourth of children in orphanages had AIDS.33 Testing continued and expanded following the revolution and by

28 Salholz, et al., 63.
30 Bohlen, “Upheaval”.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
33 Codrescu, Hole in the Flag, 96.
1990, 2000 children had already been tested positive. The most alarming facet of these results was that the disease existed almost exclusively in very young children. As many as 94% of positive cases were in children under thirteen years old and the highest concentration was in children between one and three years old. Also, very few of the infected children were born to mothers that had AIDS. The most common way for a child under ten years old to contract HIV outside of Romania was through perinatal transmission during birth, but as the Center for Disease Control concluded in 2001, less than 9% of cases in Romania were contracted in this manner. Doctors were convinced that since “most of the HIV infected children were born to uninfected mothers,” the transmission must be caused by some other form of disease contraction.

Doctors concluded that there were two potential methods of spread: infected microtransfusions injected into sickly children and poor sanitation of needles. These two theories are supported by the fact that nearly three fourths of pediatric AIDS patients lived in hospitals, orphanages, or other state institutions that practiced microtransfusions. In fact, the highest percentage of infected children came from dystrophic hospitals, which were specific institutions that treated malnutrition and sickness related to low birth weight and poor nutrients. These institutions used microtransfusions most commonly and would less have contributed to the infection more than any other type of ward.

Microtransfusions were not the only cause of the spread. Only 39% of infected children regularly received microtransfusions. Contaminated needles were also a concern in hospitals and orphanages because Romanian institutions could not afford disposable needles that ensured sanitation. Instead staff regularly reused needles, oftentimes without sanitation or with inadequate sanitation. Especially when rationing limited the use of electricity and other fuels for boiling water and restricted access to other medical supplies, “doctors used dirty syringes repeatedly.” Sudden power outages in the late 1980s only exacerbated the problem. Infections were dangerous in a country that did not observe medically accepted sanitation processes but they were increasingly common. As much as 57% of the infected children received an intramuscular injection of antibiotics, steroids, or other medicine to boost their metabolism and immune system. Any one of the many injections that children regularly received to combat the effects of malnutrition could have infected them.

The rapid spread of HIV and AIDS among children can directly be linked to the massive population boom, the underfunding of orphanages that supported that increased population, and the practice of microtransfusions that attempted to combat malnutrition from Ceausescu’s poor policies that crippled Romania’s economy. Once other medical professionals were permitted to travel and research within Romania following the revolution, World Health Organization doctors entered the country and began to confirm the suspected causes. David Hegman, an

36 Ibid, 4.
37 Ibid, 6.
38 Purvis, et al., "Medicine."
41 Bohlen, “Upheaval”.
42 Land, et al., "Relief Workers."
epidemiologist noted in 1990 that he had concluded that the pediatric AIDS epidemic was caused by microtransfusions and by unsanitary needles.\footnote{Simena Ruta, and Costin Cernescu, “The Influence of Social Change on the Evolution of HIV Infection in Romania,” International Journal of Environmental Studies 65, no. 4, (August 2008): 502.}

By the time that the AIDS epidemic had been identified and testing was completed, the number of infected children numbered 12,202.\footnote{“AIDS in Europe,” Family Planning Perspectives 23, no. 1 (1991): 4.} The exceedingly high number represents nearly 60% of all pediatric AIDS cases in Europe in the early 1990s.\footnote{Vera Rich, “Elena Ceaușescu Stifled AIDS Research as Romanian Infection Spread,” New Scientist, (3 February 1990). http://www.newscientist.com/ (accessed 22 February 2010).} But the information about the AIDS epidemic had been stifled and hidden years before the 1989 revolution. Under Ceaușescu the results of disease testing was denied repeatedly. Before 1989, AIDS testing had been completed from 1982 until 1987, and every time reports were returned to the government as negative. The testing was incomplete and falsified in order to please the recipient of the data: Ceaușescu and his wife and second in command, Elena.\footnote{Steven Dickman, “AIDS in Children Adds to Romania’s Trouble,” Nature 343, (15 February 1990): 579.} Throughout the 1980s she and Ceaușescu allowed Romania to admit to having on 13 total cases of AIDS, all in adults and all in foreigners.\footnote{Bohlen, “Upheaval”.} AIDS was used as a pawn by the Ceaușescus to show that Romania was a righteous country that did not suffer from the same kinds of diseases as other nations. The Ceaușescus used the lack of AIDS, although that data was false, as a kind of nationalism. Ceaușescu openly stated first that AIDS was not real and then claimed that it was only a “disease of the West and due to Western decadence” and that was a “capitalist disease.”\footnote{Kast, et al., Romanians Survived Communism, 67.} In Romania, “before the December revolution…AIDS did not officially exist” and the Ceaușescus endeavored to maintain that illusion at the cost of their sickened citizens.\footnote{Bohlen, “Upheaval”.}

Following 1986 though children did sicken, regardless of how Ceaușescu denied the disease. Between 1986 and 1987, the years that doctors believe the epidemic began in earnest, the infant mortality rate went from 23.2 to 28.9 for every 1000 children.\footnote{Salholz, et al., “Watching the Babies Die,” 64.} The peak was attributed to vague diseases without validity but that shared symptoms with AIDS. One such disease was “septicaemia,” which was characterized by respiratory problems similar to advanced AIDS.\footnote{Kozinetz, et al., “Constanta,” 6} But doctors did not link the initial cases with AIDS because, as Dr. Constantinescu stated, “If you are told there is no such virus in Romania why study it?”\footnote{Bohlen, “Upheaval”.} Ceaușescu effectively used his position to shut down research on a virulent epidemic afflicting children for years.

But eventually the doctors began to be concerned for the sick children. In Bucharest, Dr. Patrascu established a ward for patients of septicaemia, with the intent of gathering the patients together and treating them in secret for AIDS.\footnote{Codrescu, Hole in the Flag, 96.} In July 1989, the World Health Organization supplied Romanian doctors with testing kits but Ceaușescu refused to allow them to be used and the data was never sent to WHO.\footnote{Codrescu, Hole in the Flag, 96.} When Patrascu began conducting his own testing, Ceaușescu threatened to imprison him. He publically forbade any testing and refused to allow the doctors to have contact with the international medical community, thereby halting any exchange of information and distancing Romania even more from modern medicine.\footnote{Codrescu, Hole in the Flag, 96.} Even now, twenty years
after the public announcement of the AIDS epidemic, there “are still physician who insist that AIDS is not a real problem in their country.” The level of elaborate denial only served to harm the children that were ultimate victims in this scenario. Ceauşescu’s secrecy in the beginning of the epidemic compounded the problem because of the “willful neglect of the disease.” Realistically, the spread could have been slowed and the lives of the infected children improved if Romania had acknowledged the disease.

The absolute control that Ceauşescu exhibited in the medical sphere prevailed throughout the rest of the Romanian economy and society as well. Ceauşescu’s cult of personality exalted him in every way, portraying him as the ultimate ideal of Romanian culture and society. Propaganda placed him at the pinnacle of all Romanians and thus, anything that he claimed was absolute truth. Even as his popularity waned during economic austerity in the 1980s, Ceauşescu became increasingly rigid to maintain his authority. Any dissent on any subject was considered treasonous. For instance, Ceauşescu’s personal physician at one point claimed that Ceauşescu may be mentally ill and should seek medical attention. Within days, the doctor was found dead after apparently falling from a balcony. The people of Romania quickly learned the lesson: do not challenge Ceauşescu. This is most likely why few doctors attempted to treat AIDS patients after Ceauşescu announced that AIDS did not exist in Romania. Although many of them knew that something was affecting children and perhaps many even knew that reusing needles was reckless, only a small group of doctors at Victor Babeş Hospital in Bucharest spoke out against the practice. The Romanian government coerced the public to trust and obey Ceauşescu unquestioningly, even as he led them dangerously astray.

Ceauşescu also contributed to the spread of disease by poorly investing what little money Romania had during the 1980s into the unnecessary and unreasonably extravagant People’s Palace. The People’s Palace, which began planning for construction in 1978, was the largest building in the world, built to house the entire government of Romania. The total cost for construction exceeded 6 billion lei, but every department located in the People’s Palace already had an office somewhere in Bucharest and to this day, many of the offices within remain unfilled. The construction of the People’s Palace was a terrible waste of resources, especially because Ceauşescu requested that it be redesigned no less than ten times. One of his redesigns included the addition of underground tunnels that held food, medical supplies, and clothes, in case Ceauşescu and his family ever had to retreat underground during a revolt. While Romanian’s were starving across the county and children were dying from lack of medicine, the Ceauşescu family stocked up tunnels with supplies that would never be used. Perhaps the most disturbing feature of the construction of the People’s Palace is that advisors recommended to Ceauşescu that he use the money for health care, advice that he blatantly ignored. In the late 1970s, Ceauşescu’s health minister recommended extending post-natal care for mothers and children throughout working class Romania. He expected the cost to be roughly a

58 Bohlen, “Upheaval”.
61 Bohlen, “Upheaval”.
62 Behr, Kiss the Hand, 222.
63 Codrescu, Hole in the Flag, 171.
half a billion lei. Ceaușescu refused and reallocated the money to the People’s Palace, which ultimately cost twelve times as much to build as it would have cost to provide children with adequate medical supplies.64

The pediatric AIDS epidemic that emerged in Romania in 1989 is an atrocious example of the ineptitude of Ceaușescu and his complete lack of concern for his own people. Ceaușescu caused the epidemic and the eventual premature death of all 12,202 children infected beginning in the first year of his regime with pronatalist policies and culminating with the intentional injection of untested blood as a substitute for basic necessities that he denied his citizens. Ceaușescu rejected any means of combating the epidemic by quelling dissent and isolating Romania’s doctors, creating an environment over three decades that caused one of the worst pediatric AIDS epidemics ever witnessed. As Dr. Jaques Lebes, a French doctor who offered his assistance in 1989, said, “This is an epidemic transmitted through medical acts. That hurts especially.”65 Although he is specifically referring to the act of careless injections and microtransfusions, in a larger sense, the entire situation in Romania was transmitted by Ceaușescu. The anger and frustration that the Romanian people felt towards their leader manifest itself in the violence of the 1989 revolution and remained after his execution in an intense resentment towards Ceaușescu. Especially once reports of the virulent epidemic spread easily in post-Ceaușescu Romania, the resentment remained fierce as Romanians realized that their disposed leader had treated his weakest and smallest citizens, the children of Romania, as dispensable and value.

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64 Behr, Kiss the Hand, 223.
The German Occupations of Russia: Shifting Objectives and Ideologies from Germanization to Annihilation in the Occupied Slavic Lands, 1914-1945
Matt Robertson

In its actual implementation, there is perhaps no more sinister aspect of National Socialist political thought than Lebensraum, the carving out of "living space" for the German Volk in the East. The pursuit of this goal was never in doubt—there could be no future with Hitler as Fuhrer without a war to acquire Lebensraum.¹ The war that followed was one of unparalleled cruelty and violence. Of the commonly quoted figure of over twenty million Soviet fatalities during the course of the war, only one-third were military.² Based on a racial hierarchy that placed Slavs as sub-human (Untermensch), the Germans attempted literally to "cleanse" the land of its Slavic inhabitants. Germany had occupied eastern lands scarcely twenty years before, with a far different objective and a fraction of the violence associated with the Nazi occupation. While the Kaiser's troops were by no means kind overlords, the experiences are incomparable. Yet with only one generation separating them, it is hard to imagine there is not a link between the two occupation experiences.

This paper argues that a link does indeed exist, that the experience of the German occupying force in Ober Ost (the military controlled occupied East in WWI) and the impressions and attitudes learned from that experience directly influenced the development of the racialized Lebensraum ideology and the workings of the Nazi regime in the conquered East. This follows the thinking of the pre-eminent scholar on the subject, Gabriel Liulevicious, who asserts that the lessons from failure of wartime plans in the East during the Great War had profound consequences as they returned in a more radical permutation in Nazi ideology.³

Surprisingly few sources deal directly with the question of just how much the experience in the Great War in the East shaped Nazi policies and actions. This is all the more surprising when one considers how much attention as been paid to the “stab in the back” myth in the historiography of the Third Reich. The reasons for this are varied. The historical community has often viewed the Eastern Front as a secondary front in the history of the First World War, and at least partially, this treatment is justified. The Eastern Front was never the main theatre of operations for the German Army and it saw far fewer troops, perhaps only half as many, as the Western Front.⁴ The Eastern Front also saw a more mobile, familiar style of combat than the famous trench warfare of the Western Front. Lacking in the revolutionary qualities that inspired military, social, and cultural historians to write volumes on the Western Front, the Eastern Front is easily neglected. Liulevicious has called it a "striking gap" in the historiography of the First World War.⁵

Complicating the problem further is the lack of sources from the Russian side. The Russian empire was still largely illiterate at this time, making accounts from the occupied perspective extremely rare. Also, the Soviet government made access to the few sources that did exist exceptionally difficult. Another cause for the gap in knowledge regarding the Eastern Front-experience is the rather dramatic turn of events that took

² “The Germans came not merely to conquer, but to brutalize or destroy entire nations. Rarely has war been conducted so mercilessly.” Bernd Bonwetsch and Robert W. Thurston, The People’s War: Responses to World War II in the Soviet Union (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 1.
³ Liulevicious, 9.
⁴ Liulevicious, 1.
⁵ Ibid., 5.
place in the Russian Empire in 1917. Historians are frequently blinded by the knowledge that the Bolshevik Revolution is about to shock the world. Lost are the detailed workings of an imperial conflict and ethnic struggle in which Germany saw itself as a missionary force bringing Kultur to the backwards masses of the East.6 Gabriel Liulevicious’ War Land on the Eastern Front is the major work that deals with the occupation of eastern lands during the Great War. This lack of scholarship sorely undervalues the long-term impact of the experiences in the East.

It is the opinion of Liulevicious that the experiences of German soldiers on the Eastern Front, in combat and as occupying forces, played a significant role in the radicalized racial attitude of National Socialism.7 Nazi evaluations of the Slavic people as sub-human and undeveloped are linked to the failure of German policies in Ober Ost and the personal experiences of soldiers who served there.8 In classic “Orientalist” fashion, German soldiers in the First World War associated material depravation (due to the lower standard of living) and destruction (due to the “scorched earth” policy of the Tsarist troops) as the normal, eternal state of the east.9 The Germans often characterized Easterners as parasite-ridden infestations on the land they had inhabited for centuries.10 National Socialist ideologues used these memories and associations of the East as chaotic and hopelessly backward to construct the racial hierarchy used to justify the war for Lebensraum.11 The result was attempted genocide of the Jewish population of Eastern Europe as well as the senseless murder, whether by execution or starvation, of untold millions under the Nazi regime in the occupied lands. Ultimately, Germany itself would pay the price for the behavior of its soldiers in these lands deemed “empty,” populated by “backwards” peoples. The goals of the two invading regimes and occupying administrations differed substantially, yet their means (violence, forced migration) and results were eerily similar: the Germans left in defeat while the natives, though battered, remained independent.

The objectives of the occupying Germans greatly affected the severity of the occupation experience. Hitler’s plans for the East are well chronicled, and Geoffrey Megargee summarizes them:

The Nazis aimed to kill off a large portion of the Soviet population, including all the Jews and Communists they could lay their hands on. They condemned millions to more to death through starvation, exposure, disease, and forced labor, as part of an aggressive campaign to conquer the east and turn it into a vast colony for Germany’s future benefit.12

Hitler’s entire foreign policy focused on the pursuit of war for Lebensraum in the East, which meant death for millions in those lands. During the run-up to the First World War, some of the more conservative elements in Germany advocated making lands in the east “clear of people.”13 General Ludendorff lent an ear to these powerful voices. However, by no means did this insinuate the execution of millions of people, as similar rhetoric would in the Third Reich.

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6 Ibid., 7.
7 Ibid., 278
8 Ibid., 278-9.
9 Ibid., 7.
11 Liulevicious, 280.
A fundamental shift in the worldview of the German Army is evident between the First and Second World Wars; otherwise the radical escalation of violence in the Second World War is incomprehensible. The infamous Schlieffen Plan, dubbed “the most important official document of the last hundred years”14 by John Keegan, reveals German goals in the East as exceptionally limited. Schlieffen, like other German military minds of the day, such as Moltke the Elder, feared a war of conquest in Russia’s vast expanses, recalling Napoleon’s disastrous experience.15 With this in mind, Schlieffen sought little more than to fight the Tsar’s army to a stalemate, forcing it out of the war and checking Russia’s perceived war-mongering. The consensus pursued by the military in the execution of the war plan regarding the east was this: defeat France quickly to bring force against slow-mobilizing Russia, and then achieve limited victories in Russian territory to weaken the Tsarist regime and possibly roll back its borders. What actually ensued shocked German military strategists.

The Kaiser and his military staff had little interest in colonizing the east, and Germany in general seems to have been barely interested in Russia as a whole. The extent of German society’s sentiments toward Russia at the outbreak of the Great War seems to have been “great fear... allied with contemptuous disregard.”16 The perception of Russia as a saber-rattling colossus, the “Russian Steamroller,” was quite prolific in German thought before the First World War.17 For the Kaiserreich, Imperial Russia conjured up images of “repression, despotism, backwardness... Cossacks and inexhaustible peasant armies, unending human waves... vaguely Russian in character, whatever else they might be.”18 The image of the vast Russian Empire as monolithic proved illusory when the Schlieffen Plan produced a complete reversal of its intended outcome—the war in the West bogged down to stalemate while the German Army, after some initial setbacks, achieved sweeping victories in the East. After the Battle of Tannenberg, the German Army faced the unanticipated (and indeed, hardly hoped for) scenario of having conquered vast swaths of territory inhabited by a population maddeningly diverse. What was to be done with these utterly foreign lands and people? It is time now to turn to Ober Ost, where imperial Germany would try its strength in the unexpectedly conquered Baltic regions of the Russian Empire.

It is important, when comparing occupation policies between the Nazis and imperial Germany, to specify the geographical areas of comparison. For various reasons – mostly geopolitical in the First World War, and mostly racial or ideological in the Second World War—different regions had vastly different experiences. This paper will deal exclusively with the Russian and Baltic occupation experiences.

During the Great War, occupied Poland received a civil administration was designed from the beginning to become a German vassal state.19 Poland was to be a separate entity, independent, albeit in name only. The conquered Baltic and Belorussian territory, administered directly by the German Army and known as Ober Ost, had a much different experience than Poland, with whom the German occupiers were far more familiar. It is in Ober Ost, an area roughly half the size of the United Kingdom, from 1915 until shortly after

15 Keegan, 29-33.
16 Fischer, 370.
18 Liulevicius, 22-23.
19 Liulevicious, 7.
the Armistice of 1918, that the German Army implemented policies with results that would color Nazi perceptions of the East, to catastrophic consequence. The failures here, misread by Hitler as examples of the inferiority of the eastern peoples, “encouraged unreal and brutal ambitions” in the East for an entire generation of German soldiers, indoctrinated to various degrees by National Socialism’s racial ideology, itself informed by the experience in Ober Ost.

It is a social axiom that first impressions heavily influence our overall thoughts and feelings on any interpersonal relationship. General Erich von Ludendorff’s first impression of the people who inhabited the newly acquired eastern lands was a tragic one. Ludendorff, the military overlord of Ober Ost, as with many of his subordinates, found the material state of the Baltic peoples revolting. It should be noted that with the Russian empire on the verge of collapse, the scorched earth policy of the Tsar’s army, (including the removal of all entire factories to the Russian far-east), and the devastation wrought by war itself, Ludendorff found the region in the worst state imaginable. German soldiers, upon entering captured towns, felt transported back in time by the lamentable state of existence here. Germany had conquered a de-modernized area, which had barely entered the modern era to begin with. Ludendorff perceived these lands as vacant of culture and underutilized by the population. Here was an opportunity: Ober Ost offered escape from fractured life in imperial Germany, a proving ground for the German ideal. The German Army could “reshape the lands and peoples, making them over to pave the way for permanent possession.”

The selection of the German Army for the task of reshaping the lands and native populations was important. To Ludendorff, and indeed much of German society at the time, the Army was the embodiment of Kultur, and it became the mission of the Army to bring Kultur to the unordered masses of the east. Deutscher Arbeit, “German work,” would be the means by which the Army would reshape the natives. Germans, as the administers and givers of order, embodied by the Army, would give German form to the inhabitants of Ober Ost, thereby legitimizing their presence there and winning over the allegiance of the population who would, ideally, be grateful for their liberation from Russia. This implied that the process of Deutscher Arbeit could justify any ends. It was the German process and cultural work (Kulturarbeit) that was ultimately important, not the immediate wants and desires of native populations, or their suffering under German rule. The German Army had carte blanche to use any means necessary to achieve the vague ends of ordering the spaces and races of the east.

There was plenty for Ludendorff and the army to order. Almost immediately, the image of the monolithic Russian Empire dissolved into apparent chaos before their very eyes. Estonians, Latvians, Lithuaniens, Jews, Russians, and the heretofore unknown ethnicity of “Belorussians”—or White Russians—

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20 Ibid., 21.
21 Ibid., 20.
22 Ibid., 19.
23 Ibid., 14.
24 Ibid., 44.
25 Ibid., 7-8.
26 Ibid., 7.
27 Ibid., 45-46.
28 Ibid., 46.
awaited the German administrators at every corner. Language, so crucial to German identity, proved to be a poor indicator of ethnic identity in Ober Ost. For a nation such as Germany, which had worked so hard to bring order to its own empire, the people of Ober Ost presented a nightmare of sorts to the German mind. Perhaps dubiously, in light of the Final Solution, Yiddish-speaking Jews, more Germanized than other Baltic populations, were major points of contact and conflict for the Germans as they implemented policies and learned about the Easterners. The eventual failure of Ludendorff’s objectives would not reflect well, in the minds of Nazi ideologues, on the trustworthiness of Jews in the East.

In addition to the ethnic and linguistic challenges posed by the population, there was a more pressing issue for the German mission in the East: the constant danger of disease. There is, perhaps, no more immediate and memorable feature of Germany’s experience in the East than the legacy and rhetoric of the East as disease-ridden and dirty. Frequently emanating from POW camps, typhus, cholera, and lice epidemics were routine on the Front and in Ober Ost. Soon, prisoners from the East working in Germany presented a threat to German civilians as carriers of these diseases, long successfully combated in Germany. This made the German population especially susceptible to infection. The very existence of Easterners became a threat to the safety of the Volk. While there are no calls for extermination such as in National Socialist ideology, Germans began equating the East with disease and Slavs as parasitic by nature. In terrifyingly prescient scenes, prisoners and civilians alike in the East were rounded up at gunpoint, stripped, and forced into mobile gas-chambers for delousing. The inevitable violence and mass-humiliation of German sanitation policies did not endear the bringers of Kultur to the natives.

To remake Ober Ost in the German image, populations would have to be sorted, educated, sanitized, and lands developed. Clearly, Ludendorff needed to a massive social-matrix overhaul to achieve his goals. To begin this process, Ludendorff enacted a policy of Verkehrspolitik, controlling land by commanding all movement in and through it. The military became “possessed by a vision of a total control and channeling of energies.” Communities were uprooted, neighborhoods realigned on ethnic boundaries, railroads rebuilt, and the Germans began forced relocation programs. The totality of the German presence dwarfed that of the Tsar’s in the previously largely autonomous region. With movement and structure being “ordered,” the Germans turned to reshaping the natives themselves.

Akin to other European imperial projects, Ober Ost wasted no time publishing an Atlas of the Division of Peoples in West Russia, essentially “ordering” the peoples into category for potential incorporation into the German state system. The Germans printed newspapers in German, ostensibly to further German prestige; however, the language barrier immediately alienated the populations to whom they were supposedly addressing. The army staged productions of German theatrical works designed to instill in the natives a
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respect and admiration for the achievements of German culture. These shows were mandatory viewing—people were literally marched into the theaters at gunpoint by German soldiers, then forced to pay to see the production, performed in a language they did not understand. This scattershot approach to enculturation, not surprisingly in hindsight, failed miserably in its goals. However, as in one particular sphere, the development of national identities among the subject peoples, the Germans succeeded too well for their own liking.

By 1917, German administrators in the region sought increased native participation in governance in order to ratify permanent German rule. With many hours spent encouraging national ideas among ethnic groups in Ober Ost, when German rule began to show signs of weakness, ambitions for independence soon stirred among the various ethnic groups in the region. Ober Ost was in danger of reaping a bitter harvest. When German callousness and supposed cultural superiority mixed with frustrations that natives were not learning the lessons of Kultur and taking on the characteristics desired of them, violence ensued. The administration blamed the lands and peoples of the East for this conflict, labeling them disorderly to their very essences. This created a pattern of violence in which German soldiers took out their frustrations on the native populations.

In the spirit of Deutsche Arbeit, the brutality the soldiers inflicted upon civilians rarely resulted in punishment. In the rare instances they were punished by their superiors, soldiers fell back on generalizations about natives as intractable and blamed them for creating circumstances that pushed Germans to violent ends, frequently provoking more violence. Soon the vague goals of Ober Ost created a massive bureaucracy of soldiers with no idea how to accomplish their ill-defined goals, often leading to racial conflict.

It is an axiom of pre-Soviet Russian history that Russians, while always poor, never starved. Assuming material deprivation and low nutrition standards perpetuated permanent famine in the East, the military supervisors of Ober Ost were caught unawares when starvation became a rallying cry for natives. When the mismanagement of foodstuffs an the continued Allied blockade of Germany resulted in famine for the natives and shortages for German troops, Germans and native alike began black market trading and thievery on a large scale. Germans saw the pernicious influence of the inherently criminal natives in these activities, thought impossible of a German Army. These elements, when combined with the escalating violence in Ober Ost, German rule in the East became untenable to the native population. German officials observed natives complaining, “The Russian knout hurt once in a while – the flat of the Prussian broadsword hurts all the time.” Gabriel Liulevicious has dubbed this “the breaking point.” Roughly in early 1917, native populations began desperate and disorganized resistance. The German mission in the East was failing just as the most menacing threat to German objectives emerged, the Bolshevik Revolution.

38 Ibid., 141.
40 Ibid., 144.
41 Ibid., 181.
42 Ibid., 107.
43 Ibid., 171.
44 Ibid., 187.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid., 181.
Now the peoples of Ober Ost were carriers of a new disease feared above all others, international communism. Refugees from Russia as well as members of the newly created Red Army penetrated the border of Ober Ost, and, thanks to the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, newly acquired Ukraine. Communists and partisans were an ever-present threat, culminating in the assassination of a German General. In Ober Ost, movement in towns was severely restricted, while masses of troops struggled to hold territories now teeming with revolutionary ambitions.\textsuperscript{47} Hundreds of thousands of troops remained in the East, as the army was afraid to move them to the Western Front fearing the troops themselves were “infected with revolution.”\textsuperscript{48} The war in the West was going poorly, and soon the soldier-missionaries of Ober Ost would be stuck behind enemy lines in the chaotic east, severed from their homeland.

When Germany surrendered to the Allies in the face of overwhelming American force, Germany faced a quandary. The occupation had been a “miserable experience” for German soldiers, many of whom battled disease and homesickness in strange lands to whom they had no attachment.\textsuperscript{49} Now, with their plans of permanent possession and colonization in ruins, the Germans had achieved a complete military victory yet had completely failed in their objectives for the occupation. This led to the development of a potent dual myth for Germans who looked eastward in the years before the Second World War. First, it was possible to win a war of conquest in the east, as the German Army had irrefutably defeated the Tsarist forces.\textsuperscript{50} Second, the inhabitants of the east had proven impossible to reform, underutilized their land, and inhabited a chaotic and dirty region in constant danger of collapse. Germanization had failed totally. Many Germans came to regard easterners as unable to reform and hopelessly inferior.\textsuperscript{51}

The image of the East, which had started off so mysterious and vague, had solidified into the dirty, diseased, Jewish-Bolshevik threat we associate with National Socialism by the end of the First World War. To a new generation of Germans, especially the young minds of National Socialism (Rosenberg, Himmler, Hitler), the east was a vast, empty land of \textit{Raum und Volk}, “spaces and races.” The land needed of cleaning and clearing of a people who had proven incapable of self-rule and were now understood as fundamentally un-German. Brave German troops, as characterized by Ludendorff, had been “stabbed in the back” by revolutionaries and agitators from the East (forgetting Germany’s own hand in “revolutionizing” the Russian Empire), and whose noble goals were thwarted by the hulking, dirty, easterners—the very opposite of the German spirit.\textsuperscript{52} This was the place where Lebensraum was to be found.

When considering the results of Nazi occupation policies in the East, it is useful to remember that the Nazis started off with far different goals in mind than their counterparts in the Great War. The German Army

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 211.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 287.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., 3.
\textsuperscript{51} Geoffrey Megargee summarizes the effect of this failure on German thinking regarding the eastern peoples: The local population, Jew and gentile alike, seemed alien and primitive to the Germans. Under the combined influence of prejudice and experience, many German soldiers saw the eastern peoples as latently criminal, inferior, dirty, and diseased. From the top down, many believed that their role was to bring “civilization” to the region, but that mission gave way in part to feelings of frustration, hopelessness, and disgust as attempts to “reform” the inhabitants—efforts that were often clumsy, offensive, and even brutal—failed. Many Germans concluded that the easterners were beyond reforming, and that future attempts to control the area would have to take a more absolute form (Megargee, 2).
\textsuperscript{52} Liulevicious, 219.
did not expect to become an occupying force, and once it was apparent that there was an opportunity in the East, Ober Ost took up goals that, though bandied about in conservative circles, had not been policy prior to the victories in the east of 1915. The Nazis went about their business in a very different manner. While ordinary German citizens may not have realized the horror that Hitler would unleash in the Soviet Union, anyone familiar with Hitler knew exactly what he thought of the Slavs and the Jews in the East. He discussed the war for Lebensraum, which would be of an extraordinarily brutal character, at the first meeting with his senior generals.\textsuperscript{53} It was Hitler himself who provided the ideological and administrative apparatus by which the occupation would proceed: the Untermensch view of eastern ethnicities, economic exploitation, commissar decree, extermination policy, and the Nazi penchant for administrative anarchy that created mini-Hitlers throughout the east all “working towards the Fuhrer.”\textsuperscript{54} The east would be a proving ground for Nazism just as it was for the bringers of Kultur a generation earlier.

National Socialism, as an ideology, came of age during the inter-war years. With the legacy of Ober Ost and the chaos of the east fresh in their minds, German scholars set out to examine the East in greater detail than ever before. Ostforschung, or research on the East, examined the history and potential future of German colonization in the area.\textsuperscript{55} These scholars concluded that the Slavs “merely existed in an environment that they could not master,” whereas Germans, being more developed, shaped their environments.\textsuperscript{56} It was this transformation, the ordering of emptiness, that denoted true proprietorship, not the mere inhabitation practiced by the Slavs. This provided a justification for the clearing of people from the lands they “merely existed” in, since they did not, by the new German definition, possess any right to that land. While Ostforschung was initially an independent scholastic movement, by 1940, the Nazis were running entire Ostforschung research institutes, including a compound in Cracow.\textsuperscript{57} One of Nazism’s most infamous thinkers, Alfred Rosenberg, even managed to furnish his own Ostforschung institute, capping a long and dubious career as National Socialism’s purported “expert” on the East.

At an initial glance, Alfred Rosenberg, born in the Baltic in 1893, educated in Riga and Moscow, famous for his eastern orientation and later as the Reich minister for the Eastern Occupied Territories, seemed a central figure in this study. Much has been made of his supposedly alternative method of German rule in the conquered east—cooperation with the native populations. This is an overstatement of history. Rosenberg firmly believed that all culture in the east was created by elements of Germanic race.\textsuperscript{58} To Rosenberg, Ukrainians, possessing a history of rule by Nordic princes during the late medieval period, were an exception to the view of Slavs as subhuman. For Ukraine, and Ukraine alone, he advocated a more conciliatory approach by occupying forces. This was not a popular idea as it ran contrary to much of the overall ideology behind Lebensraum—the elimination of Slavs as a sizable ethnic group and their total

\textsuperscript{53} Megargee, 7.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 31.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 253-257.
\textsuperscript{58} Liulevicious, 258.
disenfranchisement. He advocated for the use of non-Russian peoples in the struggle against Moscow, but wholeheartedly supported the very policies that alienated these potential allies from his cause.59

Rosenberg had long-since fallen out of favor with Hitler, and his position as Reich Minister in the East was largely a ceremonial one with less actual authority than most bureaucrats.60 Rosenberg possessed, like many of his contemporaries, a “pathological wish to annihilate genuine Russians and... was by no means more humanitarian than Hitler.61 He envisaged German civilization as being under assault from the East, which was the realm of the Jewish-Marxist hordes, a “damned destructive fanaticism from the East.”62 Rosenberg’s prime importance, when analyzing the impact of the Great War on Nazi thought regarding the east, is as an example of someone who saw the failure of the Easterners to accept Germanization during the First World War as proof of the East’s hopeless backwardness and racial inferiority.63

This was not the only lesson the Nazis took from the failed experiment of Ober Ost. They appear to have copied the very administrative form of oppression pioneered by Ludendorff, the military/civil hybrid. The SS, under Heinrich Himmler, would be the new overlords of the East, with frequent help from the Wehrmacht. However, similarities in administrative form would not belie a similarity in function, as there was to be no “Germanization” under Himmler’s watch. In Himmler’s own words: “We are not bringing these people civilization.”64 Veterans and scholars of Ober Ost had lamented that the Germans biggest problem was “the addiction to being schoolmasters... of foreign peoples.”65 Hitler himself warned of “letting loose the German Schoolmaster on the Eastern territories.66 In chorus with Hitler’s wishes, Himmler instructed the SS leaders that children in the occupied territory need only learn to read enough to sign their names, count up to 25, and read traffic signs to prevent accidents.67 In the eyes of their new overlords, the people of the east had proved to be incapable of life alongside Germans. Their continued existence as a culture, or even as a people, constituted a threat.

The experience in Ober Ost had solidified the East as an unclean space and the people who inhabited it disease-ridden in the German mind. National Socialist health policy placed heavy emphasis on cleaning the body of the Volk.68 In order to preserve the health of the German Volk, races associated with disease, such as the Slavs, were to be separated or even eradicated. The Nazis felt the Slavs “were not destined to lead a cleanly life.”69 The inhabitants of the occupied east would die in squalor, as they had always done. This callous attitude towards the value of human life regarding the Slavs goes a long way to explaining the millions of Soviet civilian casualties during the war. Occupying Germans ordered the harshest possible means to establish their dominance, planned the deliberate starvation of millions and the forced labor of millions

59 Dallin, 667.
60 Ibid., 666.
61 Ibid., 667.
63 Ibid., 88.
64 Burleigh, 8.
65 Liulevicious, 249.
66 Ibid., 271.
67 Ibid.
69 Liulevicious, 271.
more. If Germans were inherently better off without the Slavs in existence, then there was no impetus at all to keep them alive. Nazi ideology already stripped them of any cultural worth or role in self-governance. Hitler fundamentally believed the Slavs bereft of “any organizational capability and thus also any state-forming and state-maintaining power.” Unlike in Ober Ost, natives were to have no part as officials of any meaningful position. This left them as expendable pieces or outright obstacles to the clearing of the land that was to provide Lebensraum for the thousand-year Reich. It would scarcely last four.

The Nazi ambition dwarfed that of Ober Ost, yet somewhat poetically, the failure was as total and catastrophic as the ambition. Just as Ludendorff’s troops had done before, Hitler’s soldiers managed to convince the occupied peoples that their previous form of governance was preferable to German rule. Considering this meant that German rule was worse than Stalin’s oppression, this was quite the accomplishment. The Soviet people rose up against their German conquerors, and between the partisans and the resurgent Red Army, exacted a terrible revenge on their former conquerors. The supposedly inferior Easterners wrecked nightmarish havoc on the German Army and in the territories they occupied in the German homeland.

In conclusion, National Socialism was conditioned by the ideas of the East generated in Ober Ost. While the totality of the Nazi project in the East was undreamt of by the administrators of Ober Ost, it goes without saying that in veterans and the German people affected by the occupation experience, the Nazis found a population willing to hear their “venomous twist” on the experience. There is much more work to be done on a project like this, depths of resources yet to be plumbed and sources yet to be revealed. However, this project asserts that the occupation of Russian lands during the First World War had a direct effect on the mind-frame of the German soldiers and ideologues responsible for the atrocities committed on Soviet lands during the Second World War. The entire concept of Lebensraum and its eventual implementation is rooted in the German experience of the Eastern Front of the First World War, and with the scarcity of writing regarding the topic it is possible that the link goes even deeper than is presently understood. The clear shift in the psyche of the German people, especially its military leadership, is only beginning to be understood. More attention, resources, and research is warranted in this sphere. We must ensure that the tragedies of the Second World War endure as testaments to the fallacy of racial hierarchy and the dangers of misreading the past.

WORKS USED


70 Megargee, 151.
72 Dallin, 664.
73 Liulevicious, 272.
74 “The line of continuity between the military utopia (Ober Ost) and Nazi plans can be traced in the way in which Ober Ost’s practices and assumptions were radicalized and then put into action in renewed war in the East.” (Ibid).


**PRIMARY SOURCES**


Politics and art often go hand in hand. This is certainly true of the art that arose out of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) and the ensuing government sponsored mural program (1920-1940). Even though there are several prominent artists whose work is displayed across Mexico’s finest buildings, José Clemente Orozco (1883-1949) is arguably one of the most famous and influential. In fact throughout his artistic career, Orozco’s work always seems to have been in the thick of politics, and yet he believed that an artist should not have political ideals. In his autobiography Orozco claimed that, “artists have no political convictions and have never had any of any kind. Those who have convictions are not artists.” However, in his most extensive work at the Hospicio Cabañas, an orphanage in Guadalajara, Mexico, from 1938 to 1939, Orozco contradicts this belief and powerfully depicts the pessimistic cycle of human-self destruction and violence throughout Mexico’s history at the hands of society’s leaders, taking particular issue with the role of Spanish conquerors and the authority of the church. Out of the many mural pieces in this building, Portrait of Cortés, The Franciscan and Man of Fire, seem to emphasize this contradiction. Orozco’s criticisms of historical and contemporary figures and ideas display his political theories about corruption and bloodshed at the hands of the existing governments. Moreover, his decision to promote the contemporary political agenda, of reasserting the revolutionary idea of a newly developed Mexican national identity, with the Hospicio Cabañas pieces, emphasizes his political opinion. Yet, the overall message of the Hospicio Cabañas murals is not to reveal which society or culture was right or wrong, but rather to demonstrate that brutalities existed in them all. For that reason, his depictions of the pessimistic side of one culture, act as a means of balancing out the violence of another, with the result being an end to the seemingly inevitable cycle of human self-destruction.

**The Mexican Revolution and the Subsequent Mexican Mural Renaissance**

The Mexican Revolution occurred due to a number of issues primarily associated with the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz (1830-1915). His thirty-five year rule (1876-1911) is marked by massive discrepancies between the rich and the poor, immense foreign trade and investment, as well as rigged elections. In fact, it was his government’s control over the election of 1910, compounded with the general public’s unease and the rise of three subsequent reform groups that brought about the revolution. According to Carlos Fuentes, a Mexican writer and literary historian, the Mexican Revolution was not just one revolution, but actually three that happened at virtually the same time. The first of the Revolutions was led by Emiliano Zapata (1879-1919) and Pancho Villa (1978-1923) with an agrarian reform agenda. The second fought for the “institutionalization of civil liberties” and was led by an alliance of liberals and intellectuals from differing classes, but Venustiano Carranza (1859-1920) is the name most associated with the movement. The third revolution was led by Francisco Madero (1873-1913) and argued that revamping the
social order was not necessary, rather only key political and legal practices needed to change. Prior to Díaz’s re-election, Madero published a book entitled *The Presidential Succession in 1910* (1908), which stated that there should no longer be presidential re-elections, and he furthered his anti-Díaz attitude by attempting to run against Díaz in the 1910 election. Due to Madero’s popularity and the threat of his candidacy, Díaz had him thrown into prison during the election, thus exacerbating public awareness and anger over the controlled elections. With his writing and the publicity of his time in prison, Madero gained a large following of mostly middle class literate people and thus used this new found fame and power “...and called upon the Mexican people to rise in arms on November 20th, 1910.” This forced Díaz to resign on May 25, 1911, which was followed by a consequential battle for power. The combination of the two brought about the violent ten-year civil war, known today as the military phase of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920). After the death of Madero in 1913, the Maderistas joined forces with the Carrancistas to fight against the Villastas and Zapatistas after 1915. Thus even though Madero sparked the revolution, the forces of the various insurgent groups and their ideals seem to have fueled the fire of the Mexican revolution.

During this period more than a million Mexicans lost their lives and although their deaths should not be disregarded, the violent revolution allowed for Mexico to form its national identity outside of the imperial and often restrictive sphere of European influence. The need for a unified Mexican identity transpired out of the diverse opinions surrounding the purpose behind the revolution and art, especially murals, easily portrayed the symbols and icons, which created and encompassed this identity to the masses. This new nationalism can readily be seen in the art of the post-revolutionary period (1920-1940), particularly the many massive murals painted during this time. According to Alfred Neumeyer in his article entitled *The Arts and Social Reconstruction*, the function of art is “…to create objects animated by form, to record and to interpret the inner and outer reality of our kind, and, in doing so, to establish universal symbols for men’s understanding of themselves and each other.” In other words, the artist’s responsibility is to create works that draw from the issues surrounding them, in this case the Mexican Revolution, and find common elements that allow society to see itself as a unified whole. It is this concept that arguably leads to the explosion and popularity of mural paintings that began in 1921.

The mural painting frenzy began under the presidency of Alverdo Obregón (1920-1924), who doubled the amount of money for education and created the government position, Secretary of State for

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6 Ibid, 59-60.
8 Rochfort, 12-13.
9 Knight, 30.
10 Ibid.
11 Rochfort, 13-14, and Craven, 59.
12 Ibid., 60.
15 One of the main elements that the Mexican people grasped and identified with was the previously excluded indigenous roots of their culture. In fact, many of the mural paintings, especially Diego Rivera’s works, depict this newfound national aspect of Mexican culture.
The Chico Historian

Public Education, for which he selected José Vasconcelos. Art historian Desmond Rochfort states that Vasconcelos was “...one of the major intellectuals of Mexico’s revolutionary cultural renaissance, [and he] became one of its key inspirational figures.” In his post, Vasconcelos commissioned mural paintings on some of Mexico’s finest buildings as a means of promoting education for the illiterate masses. According to art historian Dr. Antonio Rodriguez, it is thought that 90% of the population was illiterate under the Díaz regime. Thus, Vasconcelos and Obregón wanted to resolve this problem and did so with a belief in art as a method of education which stemmed from an idea that murals, ...are essentially ‘visual aids’ designed to teach, or to remind, a largely illiterate populace of the nature of their own origins and past history (as seen, or slanted, by the artists or their patrons, not necessarily as it was) as well as of the ideals which were meant to inspire the people during the continuing rigours of their march towards some form of ultimate redemption.

The murals allowed society to revisit or discover their shared cultural past and thus seemingly unite under one nation. In fact after 1920, the concept of promoting a cohesive Mexican identity became a means for the new government to assemble and unify their politically and socially divided country. Moreover, the mural movement offered a means of connecting these differing factions. The mural artists, such as Orozco, Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros and many more, conveyed Mexico’s origins and history and thus “...provided the visual vocabulary and narratives of nation in monumental and publicly accessible images that encoded the history, experiences, traditions, and culture of peasants, workers, Indians, and artisans...” Therefore, due to their art being displayed publicly and their function as an educational tool, the muralists actively contributed to the emergence of a more cohesive Mexican nation.

The artists that were inspired to paint these murals were usually young and unknown and were seemingly granted complete artistic freedom with their murals as well as compensation for all necessary materials. Artists such as Orozco, Rivera and Siqueiros, have become synonymous with the mural movement that this project became, known today as the Mexican Mural Renaissance (1920-1940). However, the government’s allowance of this stylistic freedom upset some of the public enough to vandalize prominent murals and these incidents, coupled with the rise of strongman Plutarco Elías Calles (1877-1945) to president in 1924, prompted Vasconcelos to resign from his post, thus causing most of the artists to be discharged from their positions as well. Furthermore, those that retained their positions were ousted under the presidency of Calles from 1924 to 1928 when he enacted anti-revolutionary policies by ending agrarian land reform and suppressing labor movements, two key desires of the revolution. Similarly, the following

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18 Rochfort, Mexican Muralists, 20-21.
19 Ibid.
21 Rodriguez, 156.
22 Ibid.
23 Vaughan, 2-3.
25 Edwards, 171.
27 Edwards, 172.

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presidents, Emilio Portes Gil (1928-1930), Pascual Ortiz Rubio (1930-1932), and Abelardo L. Rodríguez (1932-1934) failed to live up the revolution’s agenda. It would not be until 1934, with President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) that the government would begin to revert back to the ideals of the revolution, including the promotion of nationalism.\textsuperscript{29} In spite of these setbacks, however, the mural movement did not end, but in fact grew and matured.

\textbf{Orozco’s Education and Participation in the Revolution}

In order to thoroughly understand why and how the movement developed and became such an important and inspiring aspect of Mexico’s history, one has to have a glimpse of the lives of those artists who enabled the movement to become so influential. As one of the three artists primarily associated with the mural renaissance, Orozco, with his artistic background, as well as the many roles he played throughout the course of the revolution, provides an excellent example. Orozco’s education and participation in the Mexican Revolution allowed him to develop into one of the most influential mural painters from the post-revolutionary period. His art education developed at the government funded Academy of San Carlos, which he attended between 1906 and 1912.\textsuperscript{30} He flourished under his tutor and mentor, Gerardo Murillo, better known as Dr. Atl (1875-1964)\textsuperscript{31}, and received a broad art education, with a European focus, due to the curriculums that circulated during this time period. For instance, Rochfort asserts that Orozco was introduced to symbolism through the works of Julio Ruelas and to modern European art through the art journal Revista Moderna (Modern Magazine).\textsuperscript{32} Likewise, when Orozco entered the Academy, the teaching style of sub-director\textsuperscript{33} Antonio Fabrés (1854-1936), advocated freedom over subject matter, but nevertheless restricted style to “photographic realism.”\textsuperscript{34} According to Robert H. Patterson, it was this freedom that allowed for students to turn to Mexican folk and the indigenous genre as a valid subject matter.\textsuperscript{35} Although Fabrés had become disinterested in teaching by the time Orozco entered the school\textsuperscript{36}, his influence would later have an impact on Orozco’s work. After Fabrés left in 1909, the school director, Rivas Mercado implemented the Pillet system, “A method of abstraction developed in France for the instruction of grade-school children...[and] was totally unsuited for an academy of advanced study.”\textsuperscript{37} According to Mexican artist Jean Charlot, the dissatisfaction with this foreign art style created unease within the Academy. These feelings were further agitated when President Díaz announced that Spanish art would be displayed at the festivities for the Centennial year marking Mexican independence from Spain.\textsuperscript{38} In other words, Díaz overlooked the many willing Mexican artists to provide art for this affair and instead opted to display the art of the country that controlled and dominated Mexico for approximately three hundred years.

\textsuperscript{31} Charlot, Jean. “Orozco and Siqueiros at the Academy of San Carlos,” \textit{College Art Journal} (Summer, 1951), 356
\textsuperscript{32} Rochfort, \textit{Mexican Muralists}, 25.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 355.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 379.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 380.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{38} Charlot, 356.
Although many Mexicans were already against Díaz and supported Madero’s politics and ideals, at this time Orozco was seemingly anti-Madero. According to Orozco, “Artists have no political convictions...,” yet he worked as a political cartoonist during the civil war period of the revolution. Between 1911 and 1912, he was a cartoonist for a Carrancista newspaper, El hijo del Ahuizote (The Son of Ahuizote), and in this capacity created cartoons that disagreed with Madero’s rule and the arms of the revolution. Following this endeavor, Orozco went to the town of Orizaba in 1914 to work with Dr. Atl on founding the Constitutionalist army newspaper La Vanguardia (The Vanguard). This publication was, “…meant to bolster the morale of the [Carrancista] troops in the field, [and was] illustrated mostly by Orozco.” According to Rodriguez, “sometimes his cartoons were anti-clerical, and others anti-imperialist, but they were always defending the revolution and the people.” Thus, even though Orozco denied that artists and politics are often interconnected, his actions during the revolution and his art greatly challenge this belief.

It was in Orizaba that Orozco witnessed the negative and troubling effects of the revolution, observing, as he remembers in his autobiography:

> Trains back from the battlefield unloaded their cargoes in the station of Orizaba: the wounded, the tired, exhausted, mutilated soldiers, sweating... in the world of politics it was the same, war without quarter, struggle for power and wealth, factions and subfactions were past counting, the thirst for vengeance insatiable... Farce, drama, barbarity... A parade of stretchers with the wounded in bloody rags, and all at once the savage pealing of the bells and a thunder of rifle fire.

This description of pain, despair, death, and retaliation is given by an older Orozco, who had spent the latter part of his life depicting the unpleasant side of human nature in his murals, and thus was portraying his memory of the violence and strife of this earlier context. According to Rodriguez, different artists pulled different elements out of the war; “[Francisco] Goitia saw corpses hanging from trees and turning to carrion,” and “Siqueiros saw the soil soaked with tears. He felt the wounds which man had carried in his breast for many centuries...” and “Orozco saw men marching to the front, driven less by hope than by despair; he saw men digging graves intended for themselves.” Essentially, it was in Orizaba that Orozco gained insight into what he would later paint in his murals, the cycle of human destruction.

**The Hospicio Cabanas Murals**

These violent elements, as well as Orozco’s background as a professional political cartoonist, can be seen throughout the many murals that he painted. In fact, even though Orozco claims that artists do not have political agendas, many of his murals contradict this and actually point to the destructive elements of politics and human nature. Additionally, much of the imagery seen throughout his art provides a glimpse of the effects of government, and thus politics, on humanity. These artistic components culminate in one of Orozco’s
later commissioned works in the Hospicio Cabañas in Guadalajara, Jalisco (1938-1939). The Hospicio Cabañas is an orphanage that was built in the early 1800s by Bishop Cabañas. According to art historian Emily Edwards, at the center of the building, 

...stands a vaulted cruciform chapel with short arms open to front and rear, and long closed arms to the sides. A small dome is placed high over the intersection. The long barrel vaults at the sides are divided each into three arched sections, with corresponding wall panels below and lunettes at extremities.

Although the building design itself is not of the utmost importance, it is significant to imagine the magnitude of the building as Orozco painted virtually every available canvas in the large room. In fact, according to Rodriguez, “Orozco painted as if possessed by a devil who would not let him rest. He painted everything: walls, ceilings, corners, stairs, window frames.” James D. Egleson argues that Orozco’s art seems to be intertwined with the building and that, “the forms are placed, illuminated and given continuity toward one broad end—that is to let the idea come through, so that it may be immediately and unequivocally comprehensible to the beholder.” In other words, the Hospicio Cabañas is a massive compilation of murals, which together portray an intense and emotional opinion of Mexican history. According to Edwards, Orozco painted images of Spain and the Conquest in the ceiling arches, and in the contrasting wall panels he included comparable symbols of both indigenous and contemporary Mexico. By paralleling these distinct historical events in Mexican history, Orozco is attempting to project a sense of balance between the violence committed in each era, while ultimately commenting on the destructive cycles of human nature. However, art historian David Craven suggests that Orozco was able to create “…great art with an overwhelmingly emotional appeal, the density of history in force with Orozco’s work inspires, engages, and distresses, as defiance mingles with defeat, yet without any dogmatic verdict on the course of history.” While the first portion of Craven’s statement is certainly true, he is wrong in declaring that Orozco was not ultimately asserting his own historical opinion into the murals. In fact, it is the incredible amount of emotion and the display of unnerving elements in human history that provide and emphasize his interpretation of Mexico’s past.

Furthermore, Orozco’s technique throughout the Hospicio Cabañas as well as much of his other works, stems in large part from his early career as a political cartoonist. In fact, when discussing his work in El Hijo de Ahuizote, from 1912, Joyce Waddell Bailey states, “Orozco uses the expressionistic elements of distortion, abstraction, exaggeration, and symbolism to communicate his subjective view of the situation rather than trying to describe an objective reality.” These artistic devices, especially symbolism, also appear in the Hospicio Cabañas murals, and similarly help to convey Orozco’s personal opinion on the role that

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46 Rochfort, Mexican Muralists, 116.
47 Edwards, 232.
48 Ibid., 234.
49 Rodriguez, 157.
50 Egleson, James, D., “Jose Clemente Orozco,” Parnassus (November, 1940), 7.
51 Edwards, 234.
52 Craven, 61.
human violence played in Mexico. The use of symbolism emphatically points blame at the governing institutions in place during the time periods, for the brutality of the three historical events. Although, some artist and art historians believe that his style is very much his own, others infer that Orozco's technique stems from his educational background in European art, specifically from the aesthetic styles of El Greco, Francisco Goya, Pablo Picasso, and Austro-German expressionism.  

Due to the fact that the individual Hospicio Cabañas murals work together to create a complete piece, they need to be analyzed in that context and not simply on an individual level. However, for the purposes of this essay, three of the larger murals, Portrait of Cortés, The Franciscan, and Man of Fire, will be examined in depth and in relation to the culmination of the entire work. These three individual frescos symbolize the overarching theme of human destruction and depict elements of who was responsible.

The mural Portrait of Cortés was painted in one of the concave ceiling arches and acts as a clear symbol of the Spanish Conquest. In the mural, Hernán Cortés stands confidently with sword drawn. Below him are two lifeless, disfigured bodies; while above him is a blonde angel-like dark figure, presumably representing Christianity. According to Jeremy Hockett in his analysis of the murals, Cortés’s “…features are strong and proud, his gaze determined, resolved and cold. He seems very aware of his role in history as the leader of an invasion of grave implication, yet he seems completely ignorant of the dark influential presence above.” Orozco used this imagery to show that Cortés and the conquest claimed to act with noble intentions. However, this idea is contrasted with the dismembered bodies lying just below Cortés's sword, graphically depicting the loss of indigenous lives the conquest brought.

Similarly, the color choices in this piece help to emphasize Cortés’s contradiction. Orozco used dark grays, blues and blacks for the majority of the fresco, yet he used two bright colors, red and yellow, to point out key elements. Yellow is used for the angel’s hair, which most likely symbolizes that the angel, and the Christian authority, is of European descent. Red is used in splotches on Cortés’s chest, legs and sword, as well as primarily on the ground around the two bodies, to represent blood. Essentially, this use of color enables Orozco to further depict the confident, noble Cortés figure as dark and cold and purposefully forces the audience to see the violence of the conquest.

Furthermore, Cortés and the angel figure are depicted as being made of metal and held together by nuts and bolts. There are a few interpretations of this portrayal, but the most common seems to be that the metal represents the machine aspect of the conquest. Metal, or rather steel, is one of the advantages that the conquistadors had over the indigenous populations of the Americas. Therefore, it seems likely that Orozco is pointing to this concept as a means of showing one of the ways in which the Spanish were so easily able to

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54 Craven, 46, & Rodriguez, 359.
56 It should be noted that throughout the many sources used as research material for this essay that discuss the Hospicio Cabañas murals, no two authors agree on the names of many of the frescos. Portrait of Cortés was used by Rochfort in 1994, but interestingly enough in 2007 he refers to the same fresco as Dimensions. Similarly, to describe the work Rodriguez uses the name Cortés and Edwards uses the name the Conqueror.
dominate the existing cultures in the New World. This idea is further emphasized by the indifferent expression on Cortés’s face because it suggests that the dismembered bodies at his feet were an inconsequential byproduct of the lack of technology in their primitive societies. Furthermore, another complementary argument suggests that the metal imagery was used to show a culture driven by its discovery of knowledge and technology.\(^5^9\) Thus the depictions in this mural also serve as a means of attributing blame for the conquest. Essentially, simply because he displayed these figures, he is signifying their importance. As was stated, Cortés seems to be aware of the bloody role he will play and unaware of the angel’s, or the church’s, similarly violent role. Hence, if one has a basic understanding of the conquest and the involvement of the Church and the King of Spain, it becomes clear that Orozco is pointing blame for the conquest at the Spanish government.

Likewise, much of this type of imagery also appears in *The Franciscan*; however, the stress is more clearly placed on the element of religion. This fresco is also painted in the ceiling of one of the concave arches and in it one sees a proud Franciscan monk holding a cross which seems to be made of sword blades in his right hand, while with his left he seems to be blessing a kneeling human figure. Above him is the same blonde angel-like figure, except this time the angel is holding a blood splattered cloth, which has “A B C D” written on it. This allusion to the Latin-based alphabet suggests that the Spanish believed they were bringing an advanced culture with them, through language and the Christian faith. It is assumed that the kneeling figure is an indigenous person bowing down to the ominous presence of the conquering and seemingly unforgiving European monk. Hockett states that the contrasting imagery of the sword-blade cross and European culture implies that the indigenous people were not necessarily converted to Christianity due to the doctrine itself, but rather the Spanish force behind it.\(^6^0\) Similar to his use of color in the Cortés fresco, Orozco again used dark colors to depict the clergy figure as almost evil, even if it is unknown to him, and the splashes of the same bright colors: yellow for the angel’s hair and red for blood.

The depiction of the armored angel holding the cloth and the monk’s hand blessing the kneeling individual, “...is symbolic of the Catholic church’s dual role as educator and vanquisher of the spirit.”\(^6^1\) Yet unlike in *Portrait of Cortés*, the Franciscan is not depicted as being metal-like, yet the angel figure is, with the exception of its arms. This angel imagery suggests that the Christian influence is from the European, technology driven society. However, because Orozco did not portray the monk or the angel’s arms as metal, he is communicating that the churches role in Mexico was more personal. This is furthered by the fact that the angel is holding a blood-splattered cloth depicting the European alphabet, symbolically suggesting that religion and culture, not just technology, are to blame for the blood on the Church’s hands.

Similar to Orozco’s interpretation of Cortés, the Franciscan seems unaware of the angel figure above, suggesting that this figure not only represents the Christian faith but is also a symbol of the will of the Christian God.\(^6^2\) In both murals, the angel is seemingly whispering into the ear of the main dark figure. Therefore it is believed that even though their presence is unregistered by Cortés and the monk, the angel,

\(^{59}\) Rochfort, “The Sickle, the Serpent, and the Soil,” 53.

\(^{60}\) Hockett, 17.

\(^{61}\) Ibid., 17-18

\(^{62}\) Rodriguez, 349.
and thus Christianity, is shown to symbolically stand behind the conquest.\(^63\) Once again, this imagery serves to show that Orozco is holding the church responsible for their participation in the violence of the conquest.

In spite of these dark and virtually pessimistic historical depictions of the conquest, Orozco used the sidewalls of the building to display,

...what he saw as the positive effects and benefits of European colonialism. Portraits of El Greco and Cervantes symbolize the introduction of European art and culture. The Portrait of Bishop Ruíz de Cabañas, the founder of the city’s orphanage, evokes the charity and help for the poor that was the legacy of the Franciscan monks. Another Fresco panel explores the transformation of Indian culture into that of colonial and Mestizo culture, expressed in images of architecture.\(^64\)

By illustrating what he believed to be the favorable outcomes of the Spanish conquest, Orozco is furthering his interpretation of the complicated history of Mexico. His focus on the art and overtly positive elements of European culture serves as a means of balancing out the violence of the conquest with the beneficial outcomes. This type of symmetry is further exemplified with Orozco’s decision to only portray the violence of the indigenous culture. In fact, in his portrayal of the Aztec culture he focuses on the brutal elements and paints a picture of human sacrifice, the ritual of flaying skin,\(^65\) and ritual dance.\(^66\) Because the human sacrifices were lead by the leaders of the indigenous communities, Orozco is once again symbolically placing the blame for the violence throughout history on the government, this time an indigenous one.

On the walls across from the indigenous imagery, Orozco’s murals show the rise of despotism, military might, dictators and demagogues, which he presumably saw as the negative, long-term aspects of European culture.\(^67\) This idea can be seen in three particular panels, which seem to summarize this unfavorable side of Mexican culture. All three murals depict faceless, marching block-like figures, forces of the army and workers,\(^68\) or quite possibly any organized group where the collective is placed far above the individual. Whatever the case, the imagery of marching masses slightly resembles that of the fascist Nazi parades and therefore has the same emotional pull:\(^69\) “The ‘masses’ of the Hospicio Cabañas are the blind impersonal herd, ruled by chiefs, dictators and demagogues.”\(^70\) Furthermore, in all three murals there is barbed wire depicted across the bottom, which according to Hockett, “serves to prevent any outside influence from disrupting the state of totalitarianism within, while confining the victims to a life of solitude and subjection.”\(^71\) Finally, although two of the murals just depict the marching masses, one of which seems to be controlled by the presence of a whip, the third fresco portrays the marching masses in front of a large group of indigenous people. Because of the compilation of imagery, these murals serve the purpose of expressing the overall theme of the Hospicio Cabañas, the cycle of human self-destruction at the hands of the leaders. Thus, it seems that Orozco is using these three murals to demonstrate the idea that bloodshed and oppression

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\(^63\) Rochfort, *Mexican Muralists*, 349.

\(^64\) Ibid., 112.

\(^65\) Hockett explains that the Aztec priests would wear the skin of their sacrificial victims until it rotted as a representation of rebirth.

\(^66\) Hockett, 15.

\(^67\) Edwards, 234.

\(^68\) Hockett, 25.

\(^69\) Ibid., 112.

\(^70\) Ibid., 112.

\(^71\) Ibid., 112.
have always been a part of Mexico's history and therefore the contemporary violence will continue to march on, like the faceless figures in the murals, until they are stopped.

This argument is furthered by the Man on Fire mural painted inside the dome. Due to the fact that the dome is the central and the highest element of the building itself it draws the immediate attention of the audience and, with it, the overall message of the building is meant to become clear. The fresco includes four men, three of whose interlocking bodies form a circle around the fourth that is engulfed in flames. The use of color is once again significant. The four figures are painted in dark grays and blues, while the bodily details are painted in black and white. Yet the background of the mural is entirely red to symbolize fire. Unlike the other frescos discussed, where the red is used sparingly and thus draws ones attention, here the reds and the contrasting dark colors work together, with no color allowed to dominate. Art historians have argued that the four men represent the elements of the universe, earth, air, water and fire, which if this analogy is true, reveals the central figure engulfed in flames as fire, while the three figures surrounding him symbolize the other three elements. According to Hockett, the man with the war paint designs on his face, signifying his indigenous roots, is the Man of Earth because the Native American culture is one in which man works together with nature. Furthermore, he maintains that the opposing man, who seemingly has European features, is the Man of Water and that the Man of Air, who is only partially painted, serves the purpose of connecting both earth and water and thus Europe and the New World.

However, this imagery also serves another purpose. The arms of the Man of Earth and the Man of Water are outstretched towards one another, suggesting a desire to unite. If the Man of Fire is representational of the violence found throughout Mexico's history, and thus what is depicted throughout the building, then Orozco's overall message is revealed: the two cultures will one day overcome the violence and unite as one Mexican nation. Therefore, Man of Fire is representing the combining of two very different cultures. Rochfort seems to agree and states,

...the man in flames at Guadalajara represented a utopian ideal that was purposely not part of the collective realization of historical experience. In Orozco's eyes, human purpose had proved too fallible for such symbols to be seen as realizable...Orozco's vision of his country was a penetrating construction: its identity was not singular in its source, but multiplicitous. It consisted of competing and contrasting pulls, in which the duality of Mexico's pre-Columbian and Hispanic experience formed the background.

In other words, when Orozco painted the 1,200 square meters, (approximately 12,917 Sq. Ft.) at the Hospicio Cabañas he painted the human historical experience. But the Man of Fire fresco does more than just illustrate history; it also serves to bring together the differing elements of Mexico's history, depicted throughout the orphanage, to form the contemporary vision of nationhood, or at least to emphasize the need for this cohesive nation.

Due to this unifying factor, Orozco's very pessimistic view of the cycle of Mexico's violent history and

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72 Ibid., 29.
71 Ibid.
74 Ibid., 30.
75 Rochfort, Mexican Muralists, 119.
76 Craven, 49.
human self-destruction serves not to point out that violence is only inevitable, which it seems to be, but that through the chaos and brutality something positive eventually emerges, in this case, a proud mestizo culture. This emphasis on a united Mexican identity was the basis behind the mural movement. Thus, due to the fact that the Hospicio Cabañas murals were painted about fifteen years after the start of the movement, it can be argued that Mexico was still differing in revolutionary ideals and subsequently still needed to be pulled together. It should be pointed out that the Hospicio Cabañas murals were commissioned by the governor of Jalisco, Everardo Topete, during a significant post-revolutionary time period. The latter half of the 1930s, under the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas (1895-1970), was essentially marked by a newfound emphasis on the early revolutionary goals, most importantly nationalism. Therefore, the promotion of the nationalistic political objective in the Hospicio Cabañas murals is further evidence against Orozco’s own claim that an artist’s work should not reflect their politics.

**Conclusion**

On November 20, 1910 a monumental event in Mexico’s history would begin: the Mexican Revolution. After ten years of fighting and bloodshed the Mexican Government developed and promoted a mural painting program as a means of unifying a country which was still politically divided. Although there are many artists whose murals cover the walls of Mexico, one of the most impressive is Orozco. His participation in the revolution and ideas surrounding humanity and Mexican history certainly make for symbolic and awe-inspiring murals. His work in the Hospicio Cabañas between 1938 and 1939, depicts an inevitable cycle of violence and human self-destruction, yet ultimately points to the violent history of Mexico in bringing about a cohesive Mexican culture.

Even though Orozco claimed that artists do not have political agendas, his works, especially the Hospicio Cabañas murals, are in fact immersed in politics. His decision to portray only the violent events in Mexico’s history, as well as to negatively represent central historical figures, illustrates his political beliefs that the fault lies on the leaders of the existing governments. Moreover, the *Man of Fire* mural, with its culminating message of a united Mexico, exemplifies one of the main goals of the post-revolutionary administrations: nationhood. Therefore, Orozco’s declaration that political beliefs do not belong in an artist’s work is vastly contradicted with his own art. As a result of his political convictions, however, Orozco’s art symbolically portrays unifying elements by attempting to balance three violent periods in Mexico’s history against each other, with the final message portraying an end to the hostility and the seemingly inevitable cycle of human self-destruction.

**Bibliography**


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77 Rochfort, “The Sickle, the Serpent, and the Soil,” 52-54.
When Fidel Castro left the Shelburne Hotel on September 19, 1960 and relocated to the Theresa Hotel in Harlem, African Americans were hardly unaware of the international context in which the move occurred. The Cuban delegation arrived in the United States the day prior, and Castro came prepared to not only speak before the fifteenth meeting of the United Nations General Assembly, but to link Jim Crow segregation in the United States to decolonization and broader world events. Castro's decision to move the Cuban delegation to the U.S. hub of black nationalism was largely seen as a ploy to highlight U.S. race relations for an international audience. Several black weeklies were eager to use the stay for similar purposes. The *Pittsburgh Courier* reported, "the news of the Cuban delegation's decision to take quarters in the Hotel Theresa had been beamed via TV and the newspaper all over the nation and the world."1 In the *New York Amsterdam News* James L. Hicks commented that whether or not Castro planned the move “the United States had taken another beating in the propaganda cold war [sic] and the Hell of it is that Castro's Knife is still in the wound . . .” It was clear that blacks were willing and able to use Castro's ploy to their advantage.2

Just as African American's understood Castro's move to Harlem as a watershed moment in world perception of U.S. race relations, they were also aware of the context in which the Cuban Revolution occurred. Furthermore, blacks had a keen understanding of Havana's indictment of racial discrimination in the United States. African American responses to the Cuban Revolution and Fidel Castro's subsequent visit to the United States serve as an excellent case study highlighting blacks growing perception of a connection between white supremacy at home and abroad. Furthermore, black responses illustrate African American awareness and participation in foreign relations. Black weeklies between 1959 and 1960 demonstrated a firm grasp on world affairs. To be sure, no monolithic African American voice represented the thoughts and views of blacks. However, a majority of black clearly backed the Cuban Revolution.

Whether officials in Washington liked it or not black leaders served as unofficial U.S. diplomats. As a tool against white supremacy black media sources and individuals such as Robert F. Williams, LeRoi Jones (later Amiri Baraka), and Malcolm X used the context of the cold war to try and manufacture change domestically. In a highly polarized international environment the actions and writings of these unofficial diplomats placed the realities of U.S. race relations juxtapose official rhetoric promoting freedom and democracy. Sullying the reputation of Washington internationally had proven an effective method in altering domestic practices in the past and the Cuban Revolution provided another opportunity to try U.S. racism in the court of world opinion. Finally, the Cuban Revolution coincided with a rise in black nationalism. Many of the African Americans reporting on, and participating in the Cuba Revolution would be considered integral parts of the black power movement that took full form in the mid-1960s.


The Chico Historian

Over the last two decades historians have provided extensive literature establishing African American participation in U.S. foreign relations in the twentieth century. All illustrate a myriad of ways in which blacks participated in foreign affairs and the way international events affected their outlook at home. Historians have illustrated black involvement in two ways particularly pertinent to this study. First, changes in African American responses to world events following the conclusion of World War II have been documented. Also, the use of cold war rhetoric to attack Jim Crow and segregation has been highlighted. As Brenda Gayle Plummer demonstrates in Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960, World War II “abetted the demise of colonialism and segregation at home and abroad.” Following the conclusion of the war there was international outcry for human rights and self-determination. Although inaccurate, the United States seeming advocacy of anti-colonialism sparked the imagination not only of oppressed peoples in Africa, Asia, and Latin America but black Americans as well.4

The Cold War began immediately following the conclusion of World War II. Having been elevated into a role of world leadership, the ethnically diverse and democratic United States had a unique opportunity to demonstrate its ideals to oppressed peoples abroad. However, U.S. rhetoric regarding freedom and democracy often ran counter to its own practices internationally and domestically. As the cold war intensified the United States largely retreated from its position of decolonization in Africa and Asia. Furthermore, through the auspices of national security, Washington fought the push for racial and economic justice domestically, often labeling those advocating such measures as “subversive.”5

The fact that the “tradition of white supremacy in the United States was embedded in a broader global pattern of white control” over people of color was no secret. However, following World War II it quickly became clear that peoples of color were no longer going to accept oppression at the hands of their white counterparts. Furthermore, the freedom struggle in the United States and the “international civil rights movement of anti-colonialism moved on parallel tracks.” For many African Americans it was clear in 1959 and 1960 that they were part of the international mass of “colored peoples,” and that their country was a part of the international apparatus of white supremacy. In a 1960 issue of The Crisis, an editorial titled “Rising Tide of Color” spoke of colored people in a global context:

Although there is a “rising tide of color against white supremacy,” the colored people are not fighting to destroy civilization. . . . We do not think anyone can deny the fact that the present global turbulence is a precursor of the world wide collapse of white supremacy, but this struggle is only incidentally a revolt of colored people. It is a revolt of the unfree peoples of the world, who are primarily colored, against exploitation and degradation.

The editorial goes on to compare the fight against segregation in the south to protests against discrimination in Asia and Africa.7

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3 Plummer, Rising Wind, p. 6.
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Even though there remained a strong commitment to white supremacy in the United States, use of Cold War rhetoric was an effective tool in fighting discrimination domestically. Prior to his involvement with the Cuban Revolution, Robert F. Williams learned this lesson in the infamous “kissing case” in 1958. After kissing a white girl two African American boys, ages eight and ten, were arrested and sentenced to the Morrison Training School for Negros. The judge informed the boys that if they behaved they might be released before they were twenty-one. Using several different mediums to spread news of the case, Williams was able to secure release of the children after international outrage forced the federal government to intervene. The State Department expressed concern about the damage the publicity would do to U.S. foreign relations. Williams responded that if “the U.S. government is so concerned about its image abroad, them let it crate a society that will stand up under world scrutiny.” It became clear to Williams and other African Americans that within the Cold War context damaging U.S. prestige abroad could effectively create change at home.

Thus, in many ways improving race relations at home was a “Cold War imperative.” When negative aspects of domestic race relations were brought to international attention it became difficult for Washington to execute its Cold War policy. It particularly damaged the ability to charge the Soviet Union with human rights violations and convince colored peoples that the United States took seriously its own rhetoric. For African Americans, black weeklies specifically highlighted how race relations played out in international politics. The Pittsburg Courier, for example, ran an article on 2 May 1960 informing readers of Soviet criticism of the portrayal of African Americans in the United States. In America Illustrated, a magazine sent monthly to the Soviet Union, the United States Information Agency (USIA) included a series of pictures showing black progress since emancipation. According to the Courier a “youth Communist paper came out with a blistering” attack charging the article of not showing blacks “being lynched, Ku Klux Klansmen slingin a noose, or . . . [blacks] being kicked in the face.” In 1959 it was clear to both officials in Washington and African Americans that international opinion mattered. It not only hurt U.S. ability to effectively carry out Cold War policy but it played a “substantial role [in] compelling the nation to disavow the more outrageous aspects of racism.”

The response of African Americans, or the national press for that matter, to the Cuban Revolution never altered official U.S. policy toward Cuba. Following the successful over throw of Fulgencio Batista on 1 January 1959, Fidel Castro assumed power in Cuba. Although weary of his ”messianic sense of mission to aid his people” and desire for socioeconomic restructuring the Eisenhower administration did not hesitate extending recognition to the new Cuban government. However, diplomatic relations with Washington soured when it became clear that Castro was unwilling to remain within the U.S. sphere of influence. As early

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as January 1960 the state department considered ways it could promote internal opposition to Castro and bring in a government favorable to U.S. interests. A year later the United States formally ended diplomatic relations with Cuba.\footnote{Welch, \textit{Responses to Revolution}, pp. 161-163, 166-167, 181.}

Despite the assertion that it immediately took an anti-Castro stance, the American press largely followed a path similar to the administration. Americans were aware of the corruption and brutality of the Batista regime, so when Castro’s guerillas gained control of the island nation U.S. media sources largely approved the revolution. However, between the summer of 1959 and 1960 the opinion of the National media shifted. It became the consensus during this period that Castro had become a tool of Moscow and that the Soviets had penetrated the Caribbean. The sentiment of the \textit{New Republic} is indicative of this shift:

> It is one thing for the U.S. to tolerate, even cooperate with, a military neutralist, Marxist-orientated Castroism which has ties to extremist but indigenous Latin American political movements... But it is quite another matter if the strings that lead from Havana are pulled from Moscow and Peking.

Clearly, this shift resulted from both Washington’s and the national media’s inability to view the revolution from the perspective of oppressed peoples. Instead the revolution was viewed in terms of U.S. interests and values, not the needs and desires of the Cuban people.\footnote{John Young III, “The Negro in Castro’s Cuba,” \textit{Amsterdam News}, 7 February 1959, pp. 1, 11.}

Many black Americans, however, had a different world view regarding the Cuban Revolution. African American—Cuban relations were characterized as a parallel struggle against oppression. In a 7 February 1959 article, \textit{New York Amsterdam News} reporter John Young III insisted that “in the present world struggle between Russia and the United States for the Friendship of Colored Peoples, the mantle of leadership has fallen on the shoulders of the American negro.” To Young this role made blacks “increasingly sensitive to injustices wherever” they may occur. The article also highlighted similarities between the black freedom struggle, the Cuban Revolution, and Castro’s strides toward ending discrimination in Cuba.\footnote{“Fantastic!: Inside Cuba,” \textit{Baltimore Afro-American} [hereafter \textit{Afro-American}], 31 January 1959, pp. 1, 8; “So This is Havana,” \textit{Afro-American}, 7 February 1959, pp. 7, 8.}

Similarly the \textit{Baltimore Afro-American} ran a series of articles favorable to the Cuban Revolution. An Article titled “Fantastic!,” focused largely on Castro’s promises to end discrimination in Cuba. Another article highlighted the level of integration in Cuba highlighting the fact that no “racial barriers are erected at public schools or government-operated universities.” The result, it continued, was that “Cuba has one of the most literate populations in Latin America.”\footnote{Van Gosse, “The African-American Press Greets the Cuban Revolution,” in \textit{Between Race and Empire: African-Americans and Cubans before the Cuban Revolution}, Lisa Brock and Digna Castañeda Fuertes (eds.) (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 266.} The focus of these articles reveals much about the way African Americans saw themselves internationally and domestically. Internationally, many black Americans saw themselves as colored people as well as Americans. Domestically, they largely saw themselves as oppressed peoples. Thus, African American allegiances often operated separate from the nationalism that shaped Washington and the American press’s view of the Cuban Revolution. According to historian Van Gosse, this is why over the last five decades black Americans “have been the only consistent source of U.S. solidarity with the Cuban Revolution.”\footnote{Van Gosse, “The African-American Press Greets the Cuban Revolution,” in \textit{Between Race and Empire: African-Americans and Cubans before the Cuban Revolution}, Lisa Brock and Digna Castañeda Fuertes (eds.) (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 266.}
Other African Americans focused on the militant aspect of the Cuban Revolution. In an article in the *Baltimore Afro-American* Ralph Matthews warned that:

> every white man who cuffs, beats, deprives and abuses even the lowest colored person, simply because he is white and the other is colored, should have seared upon his consciousness the fact that it is possible for the tables to be turned. Castro has proved it in our time.  

Speaking directly to white Americans response to the Cuban Revolution, Robert F. Williams echoed a similar sentiment. In his weekly newsletter *The Crusader* Williams stated that only “the fool can expect to exploit and oppress peoples over an extended period of time without provoking animosity and resistance.” Both Matthews and Williams used the context of the Cuban Revolution to simultaneously endorse racial progression in Cuba as well as warn white Americans about the dangers of oppression.

Williams’ criticism of discrimination in the United States and praise for the Cuban Revolution became even bolder following several visits to Cuba in 1960. In 1959, as official relations with Cuba began to turn south, black and white progressives created a pro-Castro organization called the Fair Play for Cuba Committee (FPCC). The FPCC sponsored two trips for black intellectuals to Cuba in 1960 and functioned as the major avenue for conveying Castro’s message to African Americans. Williams, a member of both trips, consulted with Cuban officials, strolled though the streets of Havana with a pistol on his hip, and was excited regarding the lack of racism he witnessed in Cuba.

Williams drew criticism from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People’s (NAACP) national office, warning him of Cuban ulterior motives and questioning Williams’ backing of the revolution. Williams responded to these criticisms in *The Crusader*, highlighting the fact that he found it strange that he was asked how a ‘Negro’ American tourist would feel in Cuba hearing the constant chant of ‘Cuba Si, Yanqui No!’ No one has bothered to ask how it feels to face ‘White Only’ signs. These signs mean ‘White yes, Colored no!’

> . . . On hearing ‘Cuba Si, Yanqui No!’ and having lived all my life under American oppression, I was emotionally moved to join the liberation chorus. I knew it didn’t apply to me because the white Christians of the ‘free world’ have excluded me from everything yanqui.”

Williams served as an unofficial diplomat representing African Americans in the United States. Having gained an international reputation from his role in exonerating the two boys involved in the “kissing case,” his words put forward a very serious indictment of Washington’s handling of U.S. race relations.

Poet LeRoi Jones was also a member of one of the FPCC arranged trips to Cuba. Shortly after returning from Cuba, Jones published an essay titled “Cuba Libre.” In this essay Jones highlighted the strides Cuban society had made during the year and a half of rule under the revolutionary government. Aside from a positive review of Cuba, Jones accused the ruling class at home of preventing revolution. According to Jones, North Americans had veiled themselves in lies. These lies allowed U.S. citizens to believe that a two party

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20 Joseph, *Waiting ’Til the Midnight Hour*, pp. 28-30; Carlos Moore, *Castro, the Blacks, and Africa* (Los Angeles: University of California, Center for Afro American Studies, 1988), 60.
system actually existed in American politics, to “think about Hiroshima as if someone else had done it,” and to consider the “counter-revolution’ in Guatemala” an “internal’ affair.”

Moreover, Jones identifies the Cuban Revolution as a genuine cultural revolution. Addressing culture in the United States, Jones refers to Americans as “old people already,” and likens the “vitality of our art” to “bright flowers growing up through a rotting corpse.” Regarding the Cubans, however, he states that “the Cubans, and other new peoples (in Asia, Africa, South America) don’t need us, and we had better stay out of their way.” Whether adopting Jones’ view, or John Young III’s view of black Americans as international leaders of colored people, it is clear that blacks were actively using Cuba to challenge U.S. claims of democracy and freedom internationally.

Individuals like Williams and Jones served not only as unofficial diplomats but represented radical aspects of the black freedom struggle. Williams, head of the Monroe, North Carolina chapter of the NAACP, began advocating armed self-defense as a way of obtaining civil right. For Williams, revolutionary Cuba was a transformative experience. He continually highlighted the lack of discrimination in Cuba, while simultaneously resisting NAACP criticism that he was merely being used as a pawn in the feud between Cuba and the United States. Although his official stance was that he preferred to be on the side of right rather than Jim Crow, it is clear that Williams intended to use Cuba just as they used him.

Similar to Williams, the trip to Cuba transformed Jones. Jones admitted that the idea of revolution had been foreign to him prior to his experience in Cuba. Furthermore, as a result of the trip he became an advocate and fund-raiser for Williams. Thus, six years before an agitated Stokely Carmichael coined the phrase “[w]hat we gonna start sayin’ now is Black Power,” individuals like Williams and Jones were laying the foundation of the black power movement from Cuba. The Cuban Revolution undoubtedly helped these individuals determine what they considered the best course of action in carrying out the black freedom struggle. In fact, *Negroes with Guns*, which Williams published from Cuba, was the single most important influence on Huey Newton, founder of the Black Panther Party.

The evidence presented thus far is not to suggest that there was no descent to Castro’s Cuba among African Americans. As we have already seen the NAACP was weary of the revolutionary government of Cuba using black Americans as pawns in international politics. One of the major criticisms came from an unlikely place, occurring out of the sight of the general public. Black Congressman Adam Clayton Powell Jr. had been a proponent of the revolution prior to its success. An integral part of stopping U.S. arms shipments to Cuba before the revolution ultimately succeeded, Powell also advocated aid to Cuba following the over throw of Batista.

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Powell’s support of the revolution prompted Castro to invite Powell to visit Cuba in 1959. Upon his return Powell had grave concerns regarding the state of Cuba. In a conversation with William A. Wieland and Robert A. Stevenson, both members of the Office of Caribbean and Mexican Affairs, Powell concluded that Castro was in the midst of a nervous breakdown and the chaos this caused made the country vulnerable to Communist penetration. Furthermore, he revealed that women and middle class Cubans harbored deep resentment toward Castro. Predicting that the regime would soon fall, Powell admitted that he had “been misled and previously misjudged several aspects of the current Cuban scene.” The memorandum continued, “[o]ne can speculate that [Powell] is about to change horses—among other things.”29 Clearly, the conclusions that Powell and those who visited in the FPCC sponsored trips came to depended largely on what they expected to see.

Differing agendas, or worldviews, shaped how the three African American perspectives (Williams and Jones, the NAACP, and Powell) judged the Cuban Revolution. Clearly, the NAACP and Powell felt that the Cuban Revolution would harm more than help the black freedom struggle. The NAACP, concerned with being associated with Communists, kept the revolution at arms length fearing that red baiters would use an association with the revolution to link group to communism. Powell had a political career to think about. Thus, his visit to Cuba could not help but to be seen, at least partially, through the official lens of Washington.

Other members of the black community, including Williams and Jones, saw the Cuba Revolution in its most idealistic and progressive form. At its best the revolution could be used as an example for the rest of the world, at its bare minimum it presented an opportunity to place the United States before the international court of public opinion. Increasing numbers of African Americans viewed themselves as part of a world wide community of colored people, leading many to support the revolution. Moreover, it is essential to note that although these factions did not necessarily agree to the means in which freedom should be achieved, they all shared the common goal of ending white supremacy. As Williams made clear in Negros with Guns, “I do not want to leave the impression that I am against the NAACP; on the contrary I think it’s an important weapon in the freedom struggle . . .”30 While it is clear that the African American community was not united in its opinion regarding the Cuban Revolution it is clear that in 1959 and 1960 most black viewed it favorably.

Fidel Castro’s visit to the United States in September 1960 provides another excellent opportunity to view African American responses to the Cuban Revolution. In New York to address the United Nations, Castro and the Cuban delegation were originally had arrangements to stay at the Shelburne Hotel. However, on 18 September 1960 Castro appeared at the United Nations to complain about the treatment he and his delegation had received since arriving in New York. After threatening to pitch tents and stay in Central Park the Cubans were offered lodgings at the Commodore Hotel. Castro, however, decided to resettle his group at the Theresa Hotel in Harlem.31

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30 Williams, Negros with Guns, p. 72.
Accounts of how the Cuban delegation arrived in Harlem vary. Teresa Casuso, a member of the
degregation who later defected, claimed that the move had been planned prior to their arrival at the Shelburne.
Other variations have FPCC leaders proposing the move to Harlem after receiving word from Castro that he
had received ill treatment at the Shelburne. What ever the origins of the move Castro’s intentions remain
clear. The *New York Times* almost immediately termed the walkout a “deliberate propaganda stunt.”
The walkout not only embarrassed the United States but was a direct appeal to African Americans.

Castro clearly intended to use his stay in Harlem to play out Cold War politics on a world stage.
Utilizing Harlem, Castro was able to highlight U.S. race relations for a world audience while simultaneously
appealing to Afro-Cubans and black Americans. This strategy became even more evident during Castro’s stay
when officials in Havana coordinated a “Solidarity Week with the Negro Peoples of the United States.”
The festivities in Cuba included mass rallies denouncing the Ku Klux Klan and racism in the United States. In an
attempt to appeal to black Americans Castro even ordered a hotel in Cuba to be renamed a Habana Theresa.

Making clear that race relations were the focal point of his trip to New York, Castro made sure to
highlight his enjoyment of Harlem while simultaneously reinforcing the level of discrimination apparent in
the United States. “My impression of Harlem is that it’s wonderful,” Castro explained. “I think this is a big
lesson to people who practice discrimination.”

Continuing to play racial politics, Castro shunned President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s lavished luncheon thrown for Third World representatives. Instead, Castro chose to
dine with Harlemites, throwing a luncheon for a dozen black employees of the Theresa Hotel, walking arm
and arm with Afro-Cuban military leader Juan Almeida, Castro moved around the neighborhood, charming
residents and to reminding them of racial equality in Cuba.

Castro’s also used his stay in Harlem to hold court to a number of foreign dignitaries. Soviet premier
Nikita Khrushchev, the man who vowed to keep Castro in power with nuclear missiles if necessary, was Chief
among Castro’s guests. Although Khrushchev’s arrival at the Theresa meet a mixed greeting, the meeting
certainly served as a reminder to Washington officials of Castro’s presence in Harlem. Another important
international figure to visit in Castro in Harlem was Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser. A crowd of three
thousand people, including a contingent of an estimated one thousand black Muslim’s greeted Nasser. Castro
concluded his visit to the United States with a five-hour speech before the UN General Assembly. Although
speaking on numerous topics, Castro placed race at the center of his message. Spectators could not help but to
see Castro harkening U.S. race relations, an issue he had just spent the previous ten days highlighting.

The response of Harlem residents and the black press to Castro’s stay was overwhelmingly positive.
Energizing the neighborhood, the residents clearly basked in the glow of global attention. A FPCC newsletter

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Moore, *Castro, the Blacks, and Africa*, p. 79; Plummer, *Rising Wind*, p. 289.
34 Moore, *Castro, the Blacks, and Africa*, p. 79; William Worthy, "20-Story Hotel in Cuba is know Habana Theresa," *Afro-American*, 1
Midnight Hour*, p. 37.
37 Joseph, *Waiting ‘Til the Midnight Hour*, pp. 37-38; Moore, *Castro, the Blacks, and Africa*, p. 81; “Greeting is Mixed for ‘K,’" Castro," *Afro-
reported that “outside the Hotel Theresa, a Harlem crowd that ranged upward in number from several hundred to several thousands . . . keep a round-the-clock watch for occasional glimpses of the famous visitor.”

Pleased that Castro had upset the mores of Jim Crow, many were excited that Castro had left the Shelburne to stay in Harlem. It was virtually unheard of for whites to stay at a black hotel. Ultimately, Castro not only won over most of the residents in Harlem but was successful in had highlighting racial discrimination through the course of his trip.

The black press reinforced a positive image through the release of numerous articles favorable to Castro and Cuba during his stay in Harlem. When questions arose about the terms of his departure from the Shelburne, the Baltimore Afro-American all but exonerated Castro from blame. Instead, the Afro-American sighted pour behavior on the part of the hotel management as the reason or the Cubans departure. James L. Hicks wrote that anyone “who expects the people of Harlem to denounce Fidel Castro for moving to Harlem . . . has another thought coming.” Hicks continued, “though many Harlemites are far to smart to admit it publically,” Castro’s move to the Theresa Hotel "gave the Negroes of Harlem one of the biggest ‘lifts’ they have had in the cold racial war against the white man.”

In essence, these articles assure readers that despite negative views regarding Castro’s visit to Harlem, residence and African Americans could rejoice in their support of Castro.

William Worthy of the Baltimore Afro-American was particularly active in promoting Castro during his stay in the United States. Reporting from first hand experience, Worthy reinforced what was happening in Cuba and why it should matter to black Americans. In an article titled "Cuba Has Solution to Race Problem," Worthy reminds readers that ending discrimination does not have to be a drawn out process. When speaking about Cuban laws against discrimination in education, housing, and employment Worthy emphasized the fact that Cuban laws addressing the aforementioned have teeth. "The important lesson in the Cuban experience," according to Worthy, "is that great social change need not wait on the patient education of white supremacists.” In another article Worthy again highlights the lack of discrimination in Cuba. Addressing topics ranging from tourism to education, Worthy urges people of color in the United States who want to raise their children or practice a technical profession free from the oppression of Jim Crow to come to Cuba. Again he reiterates that change in discriminatory practices can be changed in a short amount of time.

There were also dissenters to Castro’s stay in Harlem. Not all black journalists had favorable opinions regarding Castro’s visit. Ray Boone pointed to the fact that within a year’s time the premier’s popularity had fallen significantly. “Since his first official visit here,” Boone wrote, Castro had turned Cuba into a “violently anti-American government seemingly moving closer . . . to Communism.”

James Booker, reporter for the New York Amsterdam News, spoke of Castro’s move to Harlem as if it were an inconvenience to Harlemites. Booker even went as far as suggesting that a hotel guest who had been robbed was a victim of the “Castro

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39 Plummer, Rising Wind, p. 289.
arrival," despite the fact that the Cuban delegation was clearly not behind the attack. Furthermore, media sources that appealed to the larger public also weighed in on Castro’s stay. In an article titled “Why are the Wicked so Interesting?,” the New York Times asked readers not to focus on the meeting between Castro and Khrushchev in Harlem. Instead, the article asked readers to focus on the exploits of Secretary General of the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjold.

Generally speaking, at the time of Castro’s stay in Harlem, the American press had largely turned toward a negative view of the Cuban Revolution. For Americans whose views coincided with Washington, Castro had developed a warrant sheet of grievances. Cold War fears served as the primary cause in the shift of public opinion. The Cold War belief in the expansive conspiracy of international communism led many Americans to view the threat of Communist and Soviet expansion into the Caribbean as the ultimate threat to national security. Certainly, Castro jovial meeting with the premier of the Soviet Union did little to put the concerns of most Americans at ease.

The debate over Castro in Harlem was not just waged in the media. On 25 September 1960, outside the Theresa Hotel, there was a clash between supporters and opponents of Castro. Five hundred Baptist clergymen who made a “vehement condemnation of Castro to New York mayor Robert Wagner and state governor Nelson Rockefeller” also voiced Anti-Castro sentiment. Moreover, some civil rights activists reject the symbolism of Castro’s stay in Harlem. As James Farmer pointed out, “this was an era when most civil rights activists sought not to improve conditions in the ghetto but to wipe out the ghetto itself.” Even some black nationalists kept their distance, seeing Castro’s stay in Harlem as to closely linked to the FPCC, which was an interracial organization, perceived as communists, and organized in Greenwich Village, which was socially distant from the Harlem scene.

Adam Clayton Powell Jr. again criticized Castro, although this time publicly. Powell deposed Castro’s use of Harlem as a "battle ground for his own political ends." Powell went on to accuse Castro of ignoring his invitation to visit Harlem on Castro’s visit to the United States in the previous year. Powell lamented, “negro people have enough problems of our own without the additional burden of Dr. Castro’s confusion.” Again, looking through the official lens of Washington, Powell attributed the stress between the United States and Cuba as a result of communist infiltration of the revolutionary government.

Despite the fact that Castro faced opposition regarding his stay in Harlem, it is clear that many African Americans still retained a positive outlook of the Cuban Revolution. Moreover, black Americans utilized the world attention to enter roles as unofficial diplomats to try and create change domestically. Although Robert Williams was among those who visited Castro in Harlem the most publicized meeting was with black nationalist Malcolm X. Like Williams, Malcolm, a member and representative of the Nation of Islam, had participated in international diplomacy prior to his meeting with Castro. Having previously visited Saudi Arabia and the Egyptian Nile Valley, Malcolm was aware of how to effectively appeal to people of color.

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44 James Resign, “Why are the Wicked so Interesting,” NYT, 21 September 1960, p. 36.
45 Welch, Response to Revolution, p. 181.
46 Quoted in Plummer, Rising Wind, p. 291-293; “Picketing Groups Clash in Harlem,” NYT, 26 September 1960, p. 16.
47 "Castro Stay in Harlem Denounced by Powell," NYT, 26 September 1960, p. 16.
Throughout the world. His international politics were a mix of unifying people of African descent and providing a link in identifying with colored peoples of the third world fighting against white supremacy. Thus, Malcolm brushed aside the presence of white Arabs in his international travels and Castro’s complexion in their meeting.48

Besides Castro and Malcolm, two reporters from the black press were present during the meeting between the two. Among other topics they discussed was discrimination. Although Castro warned that he did not want to interfere with the internal policy of a country (obviously a misleading statement considering his actions in Harlem), he assured Malcolm that the revolution worked to secure freedom “for every oppressed person.”49 The symbolism of this meeting is significant. Malcolm X was a nationally and internationally known figure. Moreover, he was a Muslim, a black nationalist, and most importantly a representative of black Americans. The rest of the world witnessed this meeting and viewed Malcolm X as a representative of the United States. Before the end of the meeting Malcolm shared a parable with Castro:

No one knows the master better than his servants. We have been servants ever since we were brought here. We know all his little tricks. Understand? We know what he is going to do before it happens.50

Sharing a common experience of oppression, Malcolm’s nod to militarism was a vindication of Cuba and a precursor to the form that the freedom struggle would take later on in the decade.

Brenda Gayle Plummer argues that Castro’s “ten-day visit to Harlem constitutes a watershed . . . because it marked a departure in customary ways of perceiving, and prosecuting the Cold War.”51 To be sure, this is the first time that the Cold War was prosecuted in this manner in such a magnitude. However, this model is exactly the what African Americans had already been utilizing prior to Castro’s visit. The kissing case, the FPCC arranged trips to Cuba, the largely celebratory response of black weeklies to the Cuban Revolution, and condemnation in those same newspapers, were all examples of black Americans using the cold war context to hurt U.S. prestige abroad. Just as Castro used his visit to Harlem to meet his own political purposes, so too did African Americans.

Although black American responses to the Cuban Revolution between 1959 and 1960 were not monolithic, they also did not mold uniformly to Washington official stance. Blacks were a political body aware of international events with a firm grasp on U.S. foreign affairs. Moreover, this awareness led many blacks to view themselves as almost having a dual citizenship. They were both U.S. citizens and part of a larger international body of colored people fighting to throw off the yoke of white supremacy. Equipped with this world view, a large number of African Americans viewed the Cuban Revolution favorably, and a growing number participated in it in one form or another.

Moreover, the Cuban Revolution played a vital role in shaping the future of the black freedom struggle. As Peniel E. Joseph illustrates, “Malcolm X . . ., the political activism of Robert Williams, and the

49 Fidel Castro and Ernesto Che Guevara, To Speak the Truth: Why Washington’s ‘Cold War’ against Cuba Doesn’t End (New York: Pathfinder, 1992), 204; Mealy, Fidel & Malcolm X, pp. 41-42.
50 Mealy, Fidel & Malcolm X, p. 44; Joseph, Waiting ’Til the Midnight Hour, p. 36.
51 Plummer, Rising Wind, p. 288.
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Cuban revolution helped create a new generation of black nationalists.” This new generation “studied local organization, the politics of armed self-defense, and global upheavals with equal fervor.” As part of the global fight against racism the lessons of the Cuban Revolution helped define how this new generation of activist would approach the role of black Americans at home and in the world.52

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52 Joseph, Waiting ’Til the Midnight Hour, p. 38; Borstelmann, The Cold War and the Color Line, p. 134.
The Anti-Imperialist League

Kevin Dewey

In April 1898, the United States declared war on the decaying Spanish empire. Ostensibly, the United States fought to liberate languishing freedom fighters in Cuba and to punish Spanish atrocities on the Caribbean island. Lauded as a move toward the establishment of the United States as a world power, the Spanish-American War mobilized the American people with an intoxicating sense of patriotism and manliness. But many influential political leaders, intellectuals, and statesmen saw the U.S. adventure into imperialism as an abandonment of a traditional, non-interventionist foreign policy.

Formed in June 1898, in New England, the Anti-Imperialist League put a public face to those against American overseas expansionism. The League possessed a particularly erudite membership. Three-fourths of members had a college degree and half had graduate training, many in Europe. Diversity within the League was both a great asset and an immense liability. Anti-imperialist views developed from many perspectives, including religion, conservatism, idealism, racism, and labor. This array of ideas provided a certain degree of intellectual firepower, but also created intense internal conflict. Many anti-imperialists did not wish to join the League or merely wished to remain as token members. Ultimately, the League would fail; its members hailed from an outdated era in American political history, squabbled internally due to divergent opinions, and held the United States to an unachievable standard that ignored the concrete benefits that a colonial policy could provide.

The election of 1900 in particular proved that public opinion was on the side of the imperialists. The League itself faltered in the middle of the first decade of the twentieth century and endured an inglorious, largely unnoticed demise.

The Spanish-American War was short, relatively bloodless and a massive success militarily for the United States. Jingoist fever overwhelmed the populace as scores of men enlisted to fight in Cuba. Even those who did not favor the war thought that they must support it or lose face politically. Samuel Gompers, the leader of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), feared “neglect of domestic problems because of the emphasis placed on foreign adventure.” But in the end, he concluded that, at least for the time being, labor had to support the war or risk alienating its base. Though the war’s initial goal was to remove the Spanish from Cuba and install an independent Cuban government, shortly after its onset Commodore George Dewey's fleet arrived in Manila harbor and destroyed the Spanish navy at anchor. The surrender of the island to U.S. forces would prove the simplest aspect of the Philippine venture. The outbreak of the Philippine insurrection in February 1899 raised questions about complete American occupation of that country.

From the onset of American imperial rule of the Philippines, many political leaders saw overseas involvement as departing from longstanding foreign policy beliefs. George Washington, in his Farewell Address to the nation, urged Americans to avoid international entanglements and to promote morality abroad through example.

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3 Ibid., 431.
He urged the observance of “good faith and justice towards all nations” to “cultivate peace and harmony with all.” He further stated “The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is . . . to have with them as little political connection as possible.” American participation in a war for the purpose of territorial aggrandizement ran contrary to his advice. This idealism informed a great majority of participants in the anti-imperialism movement. Notions of American exceptionalism, that the United States would never pursue an aggressive, colonially aggrandizing foreign policy, which ran contrary to European policies, was a central component of anti-imperialist thought. Senator George F. Hoar, a Republican from Massachusetts, in a speech on the U.S. Senate floor, expressed his views against imperialism when he avowed that not only was imperialism “immoral and wicked” but “expressly denied in the Declaration of Independence.”

Hoar is a peculiar character in the debate over U.S. imperialism. Seemingly hopelessly conflicted between his conservative views regarding imperialism and support for the Republican Party which advocated expansionism, Hoar struggled to balance these two positions. As historian Richard Welch states, “Hoar was as early and sincere an opponent of imperialism as any Mugwump member of the Anti-Imperialist League, but he was determined to seek salvation through the instrumentality of the Republican Party.” His Republican partisanship dated from the inception of the party in 1854. His beliefs on U.S. foreign policy were widely shared with the initial founders and leaders of the Anti-Imperialist League. Historian Berkeley Tompkins posits that the leadership of the League “essentially wanted . . . to preserve the political ideals and foreign policy precepts which were the product of the United States of the late eighteenth century.”

Men like Erving Winslow, Grover Cleveland, and many others had their roots in New England from long-established puritan families. They developed their political views from a foundation that had its roots in the eighteenth century. Their political, economic, and moral values all stemmed from Puritan understandings of the world. Thus, they strongly supported retaining the serene U.S. status as an aloof republic amid the chaos of balance-of-power politics and colonial empire building.

Conservative anti-imperialists fought against any increase in the size of the government. They feared that acquiring overseas colonies and the wars, governments, and maintenance they demanded would lead to increasing government expenditure, presidential domination, and a lack of focus on domestic issues. James H. Blount blithely quotes the common saying at the time that the Philippines cost “$20,000,000 for a $200,000,000 insurrection.” He further added that it would be “utterly impossible[.] to figure out with any degree of certainty” the cost of the Philippine insurrection. Certainly Blount viewed the cost of retaining the islands as exorbitant and needless. Like many men of his era and standing, Blount believed the price of overseas possessions exceeded their worth.

Strong leadership that President William McKinley displayed came under similar criticism. McKinley had made

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7 Tompkins, “The Old Guard,” p. 375.
8 Ibid., 376.
many of the early decisions in American-Philippine relations without seeking or securing consent of Congress. His successor, Theodore Roosevelt enthusiastically continued and greatly extended this practice. Unsurprisingly, leading senators chafed at the expansion of presidential authority. Senator Hoar in an impromptu speech to Congress railed with “caustic and fearless” language that the president should merely “communicate his opinions” to Congress rather than attempt to influence its decisions.\textsuperscript{10} This came as a response to frequent senatorial visits to the White House so that leading legislators could discuss policy with the president and receive direction. Believing the president subject to the will of Congress, particularly on questions of foreign policy, Hoar chastised his commander-in-chief. Similarly, Erving Winslow feared the president might attain “new extra constitutional powers which ignore the only authorized method of obtaining new powers by way of amendments to the constitution . . ., the only safeguard to the constitution.”\textsuperscript{11}

Hoar and Winslow feared that a powerful executive could undermine the U.S. Constitution, stripping Congress of power and ultimately ending the Republic with tyrannical rule. In addition, domestic reformers railed against what they saw as government neglect of much needed reform in favor of colonial acquisition. Samuel Gompers stated at the time that “the attempt to divert the thought and interest of the American people from wrongs that need attention at home, by occupying them with foreign complications of any kind, is criminal folly.”\textsuperscript{12} Anti-imperialists viewed the Philippines as an endless cost that prevented them from achieving many of their political goals at home while greatly increasing the authority of the president.

Anti-imperialist fears of bloated government and loss of traditional republican rule surfaced after the war with Spain and heightened during the ratification process of the Treaty of Paris. The accord stipulated that the United States would receive the islands of Puerto Rico and Guam, as well as the archipelago of the Philippines for $20 million. It was this acquisition of overseas islands that sparked the anti-imperialist cause into a full-blown movement. However, though many anti-imperialists had mixed feelings about the war, the majority supported it.

William Jennings Bryan in a speech in Lincoln, Nebraska in December 1898 declared that “we rejoice in the marvelous victory won by Dewey in Manila Bay; we should give to him a sacred place in history and crown his memory with blessings.”\textsuperscript{13} The administration had sold the public on the endeavor; resisting the war constituted political suicide. And foolishly denying the legitimate patriotism of those fighting in the Philippines would achieve similar results. Bryan hoped that Dewey, and by extension the United States, could be seen by the Filipinos “not as the subjugator of an alien race, but as the redeemer of an oppressed people.”\textsuperscript{14} Bryan exhibited much of the optimism and idealism of anti-imperialists in hoping that the United States would reject conventional foreign policy and once again act independently to further liberty and republicanism through its own example.

The newspaper battle between William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer prior to the initiation of hostilities between Spain and the United States facilitated an overwhelming hawkish national sentiment and helped precipitate the war. Marcus M. Wilkerson writes that Hearst and Pulitzer obtained “far-reaching” influence which

\textsuperscript{10} Quoted in \textit{The New York Times}. 22 January 1903.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid. 19 October 1906.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
“made it possible for all parts of the country to get partisan accounts of the Cuban insurrection.” These partisan accounts led to increased hostility toward the Spanish since papers like the New York Journal, Hearst’s flagship, sensationalized Spanish atrocities in suppressing revolt in Cuba at the end of the century. The yellow journalists, as they were called, goaded the public into a sense of outrage that erupted into a patriotic frenzy after the U.S.S. Maine’s destruction in Havana harbor. Certainly, many anti-imperialists possessed bitterness toward Hearst and Pulitzer, but many more focused their attention toward Hearst because he championed imperialism and maintained a position of leadership within the Republican Party.

In response to criticism from the New York Evening Journal, Samuel Gompers penned a response to Hearst indicting the paper and its editor on their “erroneous” commitment to “the policy now generally known as that of imperialism or expansion.” Following a caustic surge of rhetorical questions, he castigated the paper for its desire to endeavor “upon a venture so uncertain and fraught with such danger to our liberty, our progress, and our civilization.” But, it was the policy of imperialism that angered Gompers, not the war itself which had “added to th[e] respect [of the United States] because nations realize our power.” Gompers fingered Hearst as a prime culprit in the nation’s slide toward an imperialistic foreign policy.

Similarly, Erving Winslow wrote his article against the increasing powers of the president to imbed fear in many Americans of Hearst becoming president. Mildly complimenting the “impulsive sincerity and courage” of then-president Roosevelt as the reason why he acted unilaterally, he greatly feared that same control in the hands of Hearst since at the time many believed Hearst would succeed Roosevelt. Ex-President Grover Cleveland tersely and indignantly rebuked a request from Hearst for a statement regarding the U.S.S Maine disaster. He declares, “I decline to allow my sorrow for those who died on the Maine to be perverted to an advertising scheme for the New York Journal.” Fears of a dominant executive who could compel expansionism weighed heavily in the minds of many anti-imperialists.

Debate on the Treaty of Paris raged in the press, whether yellow or not. For anti-imperialists, it was of immense importance for the U.S. Senate to reject its ratification. John Sherman, ex-secretary of the Anti-Imperialist League, summarized the position of the organization:

My hope is that the Senate of the United States will reject the treaty and leave the people of the islands free from the shackles of Spain and the distant domination of the United States. I sympathize with [Emiliano] Aguinaldo in his ambition to found a republic in the China Sea near the equator, and hope he may become the Washington of a new nation absolutely free from European and American influence.

Sherman espoused the principal arguments against expansion with which most anti-imperialists agreed. A desire to maintain an American exceptionalism permeated the entirety of anti-imperialism argumentation and rhetoric. Not all anti-imperialists, however, agreed that the Senate should reject the treaty. Some fought for its ratification for anti-expansionist reasons. The issue was the first to organize the inchoate movement as well as deeply divide it.

16 Ibid., p. 1-10.
17 Kaufman, Samuel Gompers Papers, pp. 62, 61, 63.
20 Quoted in The New York Times. 8 December 1898.
William Jennings Bryan fought persuade the Senate to ratify the treaty and actively influenced his colleagues to do so. Bryan saw the treaty as an excellent chance not only to give the Philippines its independence as a fledgling republic, but also to protect it from outside influence. Bryan pushed for a Filipino “protectorate which will guard them from outside interference” while still preserving the “American tradition, American history, and American interests.”21 His views, though highly influential, were not particularly popular among other prominent anti-imperialists. Blount sarcastically remarked that if the United States maintained a presence in the Philippines, it should hold them like the colonial possessions of England. In a thinly veiled swipe at the hypocrisy of the imperialist administration in Washington, Blount advised that European-style colonization “was the only thoroughly honest thing to have done.” But he left no doubt as to his true intentions when he stated that “we ought to have no colonies at all.”22 Certainly, Blount, like many other anti-imperialists and the League itself, argued against imperialism from an idealistic stance that condemned any departure from long-standing principles of U.S. foreign policy. But racism, labor and religion played a prominent role as well in anti-imperialist formulations.

Racism toward potential newly acquired natives was endemic during the debate over imperialism. It did not apply to just Filipinos, but extended to other ethnic groups that had come into contact with Americans because of the war. Nearly every important politician and statesmen uttered some sort of polemical pejorative phrase denouncing Filipinos or Cubans. Few members were as “immun[e] to racism” as Moorfield Storey, a more religious and tolerantly liberal member of the League. He argued that, in the word of historian Richard E. Welch Jr., “all races were equal in the eyes of God and all peoples possessed the right of nation self-determination.” Storey's views put placed him at odds with many of the other anti-imperialists who deemed him too “racially egalitarian and too uncompromising.”23

Many saw U.S. involvement in Cuba and the Philippines as potentially ending white supremacy at home. According to Erving Winslow, “if the United States ever annexes Cuba the negroes and half-breeds there . . ., will sigh for the old days of Spanish rule.” Moreover, Cuban annexation would incite a “race war in the South with conditions worse than Russian” since the “Cuban negro is not docile and is often anarchistic. Try Southern methods on him and he will stir up his fellow-blacks in the South.”24 As to the Filipinos, Samuel Gompers ridiculed them as “inhabitants of a semi-barbaric population almost primitive in their habits and customs, as unlike the people of the United States in thought, sentiment, education, morals, hopes, aspirations or governmental forms as night is to day.”25 Racial differences provided the basis for many anti-imperialists to keep the new possessions as far away from American institutions as possible. However, they also provided another forum for internal disputes.

Racist thought and theories placed the anti-imperialists in the awkward position of defending a group of people that many of them judged inferior. Nonetheless, they contended that the Filipinos should have self-government. Responding to a frequent imperialist critique that the Filipinos existed as a disparate agglomeration of tribes that had very few unifying characteristics, Blount emphatically dissented, insisting “the Philippine people are

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22 Blount, American Occupation, p. 127.
absolutely one people, as to race, color, and previous condition.” Moreover, brutal U.S. suppression of the insurrection “welded [the Filipinos] into absolute oneness as a people by their original struggle for independence against us.”26 Blount argued this point in response to the McKinley and Roosevelt administrations’ attempt at justifying Philippine domination through hard-handed enlightenment. The argument held that Americans knew what was right for the Filipinos better than they did themselves; it was the burden of white men to “uplift” the savages.

The growth of the National Geographic magazine facilitated this stance since the public viewed exotic images of primitive peoples who were seemingly unfit for self-government. “The fact that, in the wake of the US takeover,” as Julie A Tuason “American military forces mounted a three-year-long campaign to quash an armed resistance movement by Filipino nationalism gives lie to the placid picture” that imperialists had tried to paint.27 Anti-imperialists could disagree among themselves about the civility of the Filipinos, but they agreed that the United States should not meddle in their affairs. Whether they thought Filipinos were merely savages living in thatched huts, completely unable to grasp abstract concepts such as republicanism, or they hoped that the Filipinos could become their allies and partners in a fledgling Asian United States, racist notions played a prominent role in the formation of anti-imperialist thought.

One man who unequivocally doubted the ability for Filipinos to form any sort of coherent state was Samuel Gompers. But, instead of advocating for American tutelage and domination of the archipelago, he strongly argued against its annexation. As the AFL’s leader, the British-born statesmen had the interests of working people foremost in his mind. He questioned he benefits for labor of escalating immigration in a speech given to the Chicago Jubilee when he asked “if the Philippines are annexed, what is to prevent the Chinese, the Negritos and the Malays coming to our country?”28 Since the United States had no laws which apply only to colonies, like Great Britain, they would become a part of the United States and would be able to fully enjoy the rights under the U.S. Constitution.29 Of course, this influx never happened and the full rights of the Filipino people as American citizens were never entirely realized. But, Gompers worried that even the mere existence of a cheap Filipino labor supply across the globe could hurt U.S. workers.

Gompers argued that the exploitation of Filipinos, once it had been savagely put into place by force, could potentially reach wage earners in the United States and take away the rights labor had won. Not only were laborers in the United States at risk of losing hard-won gains, but Filipino laborers would suffer under imperialism. He accused the “Jingo” press for hiding atrocious labor conditions in the islands and chafed at U.S. refusals to raise wages by small amounts. If American workers toiled under terribly bad conditions, how could it be expected that it would improve in the Philippines? Gompers believed that annexation of the Philippines would lead to a slippery slope. The already difficult labor situation in the United States would only exacerbate further the influx of cheap goods and labor from distant colonies. More importantly, Gompers fretted imperialism would doom the labor movement that had struggled over the prior few decades to secure victories for its constituents and truly enmesh

26 Blount, American Occupation, p. ix.
28 Kaufman, Samuel Gompers Papers, p. 28.
29 Ibid., p. 33.
itself in political discourse. He could not see any wisdom in U.S. dominion of a small archipelago filled with people that he thought inferior and unassailable.  

Much of Gomper's concerns stemmed from the initial argument imperialists set forth concerning the immense commercial opportunity of the Philippines. Initially, many imperialist statesmen, such as Dean C. Worcester, William Randolph Hearst, and William H. Taft, lauded the geographical location of the Philippines, as well as their innate natural resources. The U.S. economy of the early 1890s had experienced extreme over-saturation of excess goods that caused prices to plummet, leading to the Panic of 1893 and depression that followed. The Philippines could be the answer to these problems due to its close proximity to emerging markets in China and Japan. Also, imperialists hoped to attain new sources of raw materials and to exploit a nascent workforce. These early pronouncements of commercial opportunity elicited outrage from many anti-imperialists and their public outcry placed the imperialists on the defensive. Stunning oratory of Bryan and others against the outright economic exploitation of the island chain forced imperialists to fall back toward less earnestly interested justifications that could achieve the same goals. The rhetoric of Bryan, lofty and deeply religious, cut into the ideas that lay behind imperialism. He held the United States to an ideal that the current administration was ignoring and he feared would soon disappear.

Bryan saw imperialism as proof of “covetousness” and “greed.” With his oft-noted fiery speaking style, Bryan declared “the Christian religion rests upon the doctrine of vicarious suffering; the colonial policy rests upon the doctrine of vicarious enjoyment.” Christianity and morality simply could not coexist with arbitrary profiteering in the tropics. Bryan represented just one of many religious leaders who thought that imperialism and Christianity incompatible. Many of the initial founders of the Anti-Imperialist League were formally trained as clergy and ministers. Men like Henry Coldman Potter and Leonard Woolsey Bacon, Episcopalian and Congregationalist respectively, disagreed with the notion that imperialism could expand Christianity and “condemned [it] as immoral.” The inherent exploitative character of colonization offset the benefits of proselytizing. Indeed, imperialism greatly hurt the status of Christianity in the archipelago. According to Winslow, “the protestant churches” in the Philippines were “almost empty” and their purchase of friar lands linked them to the corruption and persecution that had made the Spanish Church infamous.

Filipinos never fully embraced the idea of American Protestant clergy replacing Catholics. The link between church and state kindled distrust in the hearts and minds of Filipinos so accustomed to ecclesiastical oppression. Winslow speculated that “by disavowing any political affiliations [the Church] can undoubtedly win back the support of the patriotic Filipinos.” Religiously-minded anti-imperialists viewed the Philippines as a prime opportunity to prove to the world that Americans were morally superior and their ways differed from Europeans.'

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32 Bryan, Bryan on Imperialism, p. 15.
34 Tompkins, “The Old Guard,” p. 368.
36 Ibid.
Bryan summed it nicely:

    To defend forcible annexation on the ground that we are carrying out a religious duty is worse than absurd. The Bible teaches us that it is more blessed to give than to receive, while the colonial policy is based upon the doctrine that it is more blessed to take than to leave.37

To Bryan and others, imperialism simply was inconsistent their heavily religious moral codes.

The most important moment for the anti-imperialists was the vote for ratification of the Treaty of Paris. If approved the treaty would give the United States possession of the remnants of Spain's decrepit empire. Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines would become American territories, displaying to the world the new imperial greatness of the United States. In the fight to defeat the treaty, a rift developed in the anti-imperialist movement that foreshadowed the organization’s demise. Bryan, one of the earliest and most vocal opponents of expansion, spoke in favor of ratifying the treaty. At the time, men like Senator Hoar, who had organized the rejection faction, certainly believed that Bryan had acted hypocritically. Many charged that Bryan “was inspired by selfish and partisan motives.”38

In fact, Bryan had not joined the Anti-Imperialist League. Although, he had publicly denounced imperialism, his actions directly contradicted this position. In the words of historian Richard E. Welch Jr., “Bryan must share responsibility for the confirmation of the treaty; not for what he did but for what he failed to do.”39 Bryan desired approval of the treaty, not for imperialist reasons, but because he thought it would facilitate Philippine independence. For him, the “ratification of the treaty, instead of committing the United States to a colonial policy, really clear[ed] the way for the recognition of a Philippine Republic.”40 If Bryan had stated his views more clearly prior to the roll call vote, he probably would not have lost the support of men like Senator Hoar and other prominent anti-imperialists who claimed he was acting in “bad faith, sacrificing principle for political advantage in his desire for an issue for the 1900 campaign.”41

Bryan's opponents believed he wanted to capitalize on political decisions that he hoped voters would ultimately find disagreeable. He admitted as much in a speech at a Democratic banquet in St. Paul, Minnesota, where he asked this question:

    Until the people express themselves we can only guess at their views, but is it not safer to suppose that they will adhere to the ideas and policies of a century than to assume that they will go back to the creed of kings and to the gospel of force?42

Criticism directed at Bryan centered on the fact that the United States should not possess colonial property for any reason, whether for the purpose of Philippine independence or not. The confusion, bickering, and division within anti-imperialists helped to confound the effort toward rejecting the treaty. The Senate approved the treaty 57 to 27, only two votes greater than the two-thirds majority required.43 For all their high rhetoric and emphasis on traditional

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38 Welch, *Hoar*, p. 244.
39 Ibid.
43 6 February 1899, *Congressional Record*, 55th Congress, 3rd
U.S. greatness and foreign policy principles, the anti-imperialists had fallen short in their first true battle. However, the margin of victory was razor-thin. A resolution Senator Augustus Bacon submitted requiring eventual Philippine independence failed when Vice-President Garret A. Hobart cast the tying vote against it.  

Following its defeat, the anti-imperialists movement gained momentum with its “incessant activity.” New Anti-Imperialist League branches opened headquarters in various cities, greatly growing membership. More importantly, a centralized League, founded in Chicago in October 1899, “supplanted the local bodies.” Bryan disrupted the anti-imperialists in more than one way. His candidacy for president in the 1900 election deeply divided the Anti-Imperialist League over the issues of free coinage. Disagreement within the League concerning whether it should support Bryan as the presidential candidate in the election demonstrated the diversity and differences of interest that plagued the League. The League now had a much stronger, national character with which it could circulate literature and pamphlets to stop U.S. expansion and remove its presence from the Philippines.

Unleashing of the Philippine Insurrection in February 1899, two days prior to the signing of the Treaty of Paris, rekindled the League's desire to abstain from expansionism. Though many of the arguments anti-imperialists set forth and the Anti-Imperialist League sought to focus on popular issues and sentiments of the day, they often received considerable criticism for their stance against the U.S. presence in the Philippines. Placed in the awkward position of vocally chiding their own nation during two consecutive wars, anti-imperialists quickly found themselves deemed unpatriotic and treasonous. Like all anti-war movements, the Anti-Imperialist League had to tread a fine line when criticizing the government and military during wartime. Imperialists, claiming and boasting ardent patriotism, could easily label anti-imperialist actions as anti-American. To defend themselves League members had to collate a complicated, informed answer that harked back to older ideals or dense religious sentiments. The ease of argumentation for imperialists greatly aided them in the political discourse that raged on during the early years of the Philippine occupation.

One major event that caused considerable controversy concerned Edward Atkinson, a highly independent and antagonistic man who created discomfort for the Anti-Imperialist League’s leadership. His views were often radical, but his merits as a pamphleteer garnered him the support and financial backing of “Andrew Carnegie and others,” who often “helped defray the expenses of distribution.” The scandal occurred when Atkinson mailed copies of three of his articles to seven officials in the Philippines, including Admiral Dewey, Jacob Schurman, Dean C. Worcester, Generals Elwell Otis, Henry Lawton, and Marcus Miller and John S. Bass of Harper's Weekly. The pamphlet's “declared aim,” Fred Harvey Harrington writes, “was to show the injustice of the army's assignment and its certain failure.” Atkinson hoped that exposing the brutalities of war in the Philippines, would prevent soldiers from enlisting. The U.S. government acted quickly and “ordered the San Francisco Post-Master to remove all Atkinson's pamphlets from the Manila mails.” Expansionists called Atkinson a traitor for hurting the war cause,

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45 Ibid.
46 Welch, Responses to Imperialism, p. 50.
47 Ibid.
but government censorship and the invasion of Atkinson's property rights spurred the Anti-Imperialist League to condemn publicly the government’s actions as “arbitrary and illegal.” Moreover, it declared these actions “would hardly be attempted by any government of Europe except, perhaps, that of Russia.” The League called for “all good citizens to protest [this act] as a serious blow to republican institutions, which are now so gravely threatened by imperial policies at home and abroad.”

In a personal letter to the Secretary of War, Atkinson cheekily appealed that “a list of regiments is desired, and if there are printed lists of officers available they would serve me a very useful purpose.” According to historian Harrington, the end result was that “the administration suffered, and the anti-imperialists profited.” However, to distance the League from imperialists' cries of treason, Winslow “issue[d] a public letter disclaiming on behalf of the League any responsibility for Atkinson's decisions.” Though the rift between Atkinson and Winslow would never fully heal, Atkinson gained special prominence in the anti-imperialist movement, which gained tremendously from his actions.

The election of 1900 would prove the last great test of the anti-imperialist movement and the organizational prowess of the Anti-Imperialist League. Also, it would reveal the profound and eventually harmful diversity of opinion within the organization. Most members emphatically wished to see the defeat of President McKinley. With the exception of staunch Republicans, notably Hoar, there was near unity of opinion against the president's ticket. However, in nearly every other regard there was substantial difference in outlook. One primary topic that had been dividing the nation before the advent of imperialistic policy was silver coinage. The most prominent officers of the League, those men from aristocratic New England pedigrees, strongly favored maintaining the gold standard. Men like Bryan, and generally smaller farmers in the West, favored silver. Since Bryan was the most likely candidate for president on the Democratic ticket, friction inevitably resulted.

Historian Berkeley Tompkins draws the link between silver and expansionism:

It must, indeed, have struck [the Anti-Imperialist League's officers] as an ironical and exceedingly distressing twist of fate that the man who accused those who held their economic views of being about to crucify “mankind upon a cross of gold” should have been selected by the Democratic Party.

During a meeting in the summer of 1900, members of the League advanced multiple options for the League's role in the election. These included ignoring the office of president and focusing on congressional seats, nominating an anti-imperialist candidate, and supporting Bryan. These different proposals emanated from various political factions that existed within the party system. Both major parties had fractured internally and various factions perpetuated inter-party conflict.

Divisions within the Democratic Party helped to prevent a coherent message on imperialism. The Anti-Imperialist League and the Democratic Party never formed an alliance and imperialism only achieved national

50 Ibid, 6 May 1899.
51 Ibid., 26 June 1900.
53 Welch, Responses to Imperialism, p. 51.
54 Ibid., pp. 65-74.
56 Welch, Responses to Imperialism, pp. 58-70.
attention in 1900. In many ways, the election of 1900 was “a confrontation without a climax.”但它 misleading. Party platforms espoused conflicting messages on imperialism with Republicans strongly in favor and Democrats against. However, the Democratic Party adopted a three-part plan that provided first for the stabilization of Philippine government, then independence and finally U.S. protection. This was certainly a far cry from the unabashed refusal to annex any territory to the United States which most strident anti-imperialists advocated. Unsurprisingly, it agreed most closely with the views Bryan, the Democratic nominee advanced. The Democratic Party worried about a close relationship with the Anti-Imperialist League due to a fear that the League was in “too close an alignment . . . [to those] who had been charged with treasonous deeds.”

With the eventual loss of the election of 1900 to the Republicans, the Democratic Party eschewed any possible partnership with the League. Without strong party backing, the League languished politically isolated, as its members became marginalized. Foreign policy issues certainly did not ensure victory for the Republicans singlehandedly, but McKinley’s victory proved that the people favored imperialism.

After 1900, the Anti-Imperialist League fell out of favor. It persisted; but it did so with significantly less power than before and a rapidly declining membership. The issue was simply no longer of great public concern. Many hypotheses have been put forth to explain the failure of the League and the anti-imperialist movement as a whole. Richard E. Welch postulates that “the major weakness of the League was its lack of political power.” The League could present excellent arguments through the “eloquence of its pamphleteers,” but in the end failed to gain traction in national politics. Furthermore, “the League suffered too from the heterogeneity of its membership.” There were simply too many viewpoints and opinions to establish an organized movement. E. Berkeley Tompkins believed that the anti-imperialists failed because the great majority of the League’s leadership harked from a bygone generation of men. Though venerated, influential, and extraordinarily well-educated, these men represented a political assumptions that no longer fit the age in which they lived.

It is no surprise that many of the most ardent imperialists still possessed much of their youth and vigor. Certainly, all of the above contributed to the demise of anti-imperialism. Younger generations saw no future in an anti-imperialist mindset; it contradicted a sense of adventure or the possibilities of personal gain. The League pushed for ideas that largely disappeared with the death of its members. In less than two decades the League would cease to exist entirely. It simply no longer fit its time, nor could it gain a foothold politically.

The Spanish-American War ushered in an era of active imperialism that propagated the American government. It was distant from the established tradition of a nation that was destined to expand only as far as its continent would allow. The war itself ended quickly and easily, but the peace dragged militarily with the Filipino insurrection and politically with the fight over imperialism. The Anti-Imperialist League, which had formed for the sole purpose of preventing American expansion, suffered defeat in the end. It failed because its leaders represented an epoch in U.S. history that was rapidly fading and its enormous diversity prevented its ability to actively participate in politics.

57 Ibid., p. 63
58 Ibid., p. 70
59 Ibid., pp. 56-57.
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During the reign of the Third Reich, Adolf Hitler made plans for a German future founded on the principles of victory, superiority, and a master race. He aimed to transform Germany into a state in which culture was the only “end to which power should aspire” and where the construction of Nazi cultural monuments, and art would change the face of Germany from one of despair and isolation, to one of pride and confidence.1 Yet beneath this Nazi façade of racial supermen and cultural glory, another ideology developed whose obsession with death, ruin, and martyrdom helped bring Hitler’s Germany to its apex, and then to its ultimate climactic end. Inspired by the works of Richard Wagner and the aestheticism and tragedy within German Romanticism, Hitler crafted a hunger for sacrifice, a belief in destruction as a means of construction, and a hero worship whose exploitation within his fascist aesthetic politics brought about the creation of a Nazi Totenkult.2 The manipulation of this Totenkult within Hitler’s civil religion ultimately culminated in an ideological national suicide and a party of self-immolation inside Hitler’s bunker at the end of World War II.3

The roots of this Totenkult can be traced to early interpretations of German Romanticism, and the Volkish thought as it developed out of the nineteenth century, which as historian George Mosse argues “showed a distinct tendency toward the irrational and emotional.”4 With rationalism waning, the growth of an anti-Enlightenment polemic within German Romanticism assisted in the development of a dramatic vision of life, love, and death within the work of many German romantics.5 Artists like Friedrich von Hardenberg, also known as Novalis, and writers Friedrich Schlegel, Zacharias Werner, and Thomas Mann found allure in romantic death or suicide, as did philosophers like Nietzsche and Freud.6

In his most famous German poem, Hymnen an Die Nacht, or Hymn of the Night, Novalis epitomizes German Romanticism’s love affair with glorified death and the beauty of the night.7

Oh engulf me, my love,
Violently
That I may fall into eternal slumber
And love,
I feel death’s
Rejuvenating flood,
My blood transformed
Into balsam and ether—
By day I live
Full of faith and courage
And die at night
In holy ardor.8

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1 Frederic Spotts, Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics (New York: The Overlook Press, 2003), xii.
2 Totenkult when translated means “Death Cult.”
3 Christian Goeschel, Suicide in Nazi Germany (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1.
6 Ibid.
8 Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, The Emergence of Romanticism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 43. The Hymn in the Night was published during Novalis’s lifetime, right before he died in 1801, but this translation is from the 1965 publication.
This violent fascination and apparent longing for death, represents a key element in German Romantic thinking. Professor of German, Nicholas Saul argues that if “we take Hardenberg [together with Friedrich Schlegel] as the representative thinker of the movement, we find a man who emphatically asserts of Romanticisation that... ‘Death is the romanticizing principle of our life.’” And as it represented a break from the previous century’s philosophical rationalism, the sensual and violent “romanticisation” presented a new understanding of life and death. It appealed to emotional and artistic human impulses which the “fine distinctions and restrictions of the intellectual systems and rational ideologies of the eighteenth century” failed to restrain. This new emotional art however, did not end with Novalis.

Other prolific figures of German Romanticism, such as Friedrich Schlegel, Thomas Mann, and Zacharias Werner gave accounts of romantic death. In Mann’s *Death in Venice*, the aging Gustav von Aschenbach becomes infatuated with Tadzio, a young boy from an aristocratic polish family vacationing in Venice. Aschenbach struggles with his desires for the boy, often seen as a symbolic struggle between what Nietzsche considered the battle between Dionysian and Apollonian impulses. Following him throughout a city being swept over by cholera, Aschenbach eventually succumbs to his infatuation and only finds real release from the tortures of his love through death. Similarly, in Mann’s novella *Tristan*, Gabriele Klötjerahn falls in love with the aestheticist poet Detlef Spinell in a sanitarium while Gabriele’s merchant husband is away. Both have an aestheticist affinity and attempt to escape the reality of their circumstances through their passion for each other and art. But the love they share, as Nicholas Saul characterizes it, “is a vacuously spiritualised [sic.] form of love incapable of survival and inexorably associated with morbid acquiescence in dissolution” and ultimately romanticized death. Similarly, Friedrich Schlegel wrote of a heroine who sacrifices life for death in his novel *Lucinde*, where the operatic suicide of a prostitute named Lucinde encapsulates the German Romantic paradigm of uniting love, life, and death. This idea would also be key to the poetry of Zacharias Werner. Prior to his conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1810, Werner modulated the kind of self-sacrifice seen in Schlegel and Hardenberg’s work, into “a ritualized self-slaughter...presented in its

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9 Ibid., 44.
full, grisly and garish, anti-classical plasticity.”

Nicholas Saul argues that Werner’s writings “push the Romantic will to confront death to the level of systematic obsession,” and is best visualized in Werner’s *Wanda, Königin der Sarmaten (Wanda, Queen of the Sarmatians)* in which Wanda cannot love the man she desires because he is an enemy of the Sarmatians, and therefore chooses a self-induced death in “an erotically charged Liebestod.”

All of these German Romantic artists established a large foundation from which a cultural and artistic dilettante like Hitler could draw inspiration. The appeal of German Romanticism as interpreted by a man like Hitler became more attractive in the twentieth century when “sections of the educated middle class increasingly doubted that the cultural and intellectual paradigms which had dominated the second half of the nineteenth century were capable of dealing with the social and existential effects of modernity.” Professor Margarete Kohlenbach argues that it is this skepticism in regards to “traditional religion, bourgeois morality, philosophical materialism, scientific world views and the beliefs of progress and evolution” which contributed to the cultural reorientation of many in German society to twentieth century Romanticism, or neo-Romanticism.

And although National Socialism and the reorientation of neo-Romanticism was not fully congruent, many saw Hitler, political conservatism, and the National Socialist party as the heirs to the Romantic tradition in Germany.

This tradition also depended on the dramatic works of Richard Wagner, one of the most influential artists on Hitler and the German *Totenkult*. His seminal operas *Der Ring des Nibelungen* and *Tristan und Isolde* highlight a dark and violent love affair with death and glorified ruin. Wagner’s *Der Ring des Nibelungen (The Ring of Nibelung)* is actually a cycle of four operas: *Das Rheingold, Die Walküre, Siegfried,* and *Die Götterdämmerung.* The last means “Twilight of the Gods” and was said to be Hitler’s favorite opera of all time.

In it, the hero Siegfried and his lover Brunhilde die heroes’ deaths in an apocalyptic vision of the end of the world. Before she is consumed by flames, Brunhilde cries out, “Laughing let us be destroyed; laughing let us perish...let night descend, the night of annihilation...laughing death...laughing death.”

In the second act of *Die Walküre*, Brunhilde’s father, the god Woton cries, “I want only one thing yet, the end, the end...” Yet the appeal to glorified death did not end with *Der Ring*. In Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde* the final aria is called “Liebestod,” which means “Death love.” In this aria, Isolde dies experiencing a death “as to drown, unconscious, the greatest bliss.” In death, her love for Tristan is finally consummated, expanding on earlier German Romantic notions of death as an erotic act of passion.

Even Nietzsche in his youth believed Wagnerian opera had a broader and more dramatic purpose. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche argued that Ancient Greece represented the highest form of culture, and that
the “perfect expression of this culture” was dramatic tragedy. According to Nietzsche, Greek tragedy is an outcome from the “struggle between two forces” of Apollo and Dionysos. Apollo represents an “ethic of moderation and self control, and Dionysos represents “transgression of limits, the dissolution of boundaries” and ultimately the “destruction of the individual.” Nietzsche believed that the synthesis of both Apollo and Dionysos in the art of tragedy, “in which the musical, Dionysiac element” is dominant, acts as a “complex defense against the pessimism and despair which is the natural existential lot of humans.” Therefore, a bearable existence can only be obtained through tragedy and is required in overcoming the futility of our own existence because it “ consoles us and seduces us to continue to live.” And since it is impossible to know the true nature of Greek tragedy as experienced by Ancient Greeks, the closest comparison in the modern world for Nietzsche existed in the tragic music-dramas of Richard Wagner. For Nietzsche at the time The Birth of Tragedy was first published, idealized Wagnerism was the construction of a “new tragic culture that had the capacity to “remedy the ills of ‘modern’ society.”

Wagner operas appealed emotionally to many people in German society, especially to the German elite. Even before the rise of Hitler, the attention lavished on Wagnerian opera and Bayreuth, the home of Wagner’s Festspielhaus, was enormous. In 1918, Walter Rathenau, a Foreign Minister for the Weimar Republic discussing how far Wagner had “eaten his way into the national consciousness” wrote, “It is scarcely possible to exaggerate how deeply the last generation was spellbound by the influence of Richard Wagner, not so decisively by his music as by the gestures of his characters, by his ideas...” This kind of influence was also due in large part to what Frederic Spotts argues was an embroiled involvement of both Wagner's operas and his Festival in what swiftly became an ideological battle for the soul of Germany. This battle followed a severe reaction by German conservatives against “the entire social and ideological course of the recently founded Reich, with industrialization, urbanization, and Jewish assimilation.” The conservatives, including the small minority associated with National Socialism, began using the dichotomies of tradition versus modernity and art versus science, as the greatest issues involved in the “contest for the soul of Germany.”

The conservative forces seeking to combat the established cultural structure, developed their neo-Romantic nationalism around the belief that only a certain type of German culture, one that respected tradition, combated moral decline, promoted spiritual renewal, and regeneration of antique German concepts, could save the Teutonic race from total destruction. And this Kulturkritik developed “almost overnight into an ideological rampage that translated Wagnerian opera into a national cultural religion with Bayreuth as its supreme place of worship.”

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25 Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, x.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid., xi.
30 Ibid., x.
31 Ibid.
33 Ibid., 130-131.
34 Ibid., 131.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
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This cultural religion, like that of German Romanticism, linked death with glory, hope, and ultimately love and became a fundamental element to understanding the appeal of both Wagner and the neo-Romantic nationalism of Hitler’s National Socialism. George Orwell once said, “Whereas Socialism, and even capitalism in a more grudging way, have said to people, ‘I offer you a good time’, Hitler has said to them ‘I offer you struggle, danger and death’, and as a result a whole nation flings itself at his feet.”37 In essence, death, an important element in both Romanticism and Wagner’s work, was a “central part of the ethos of the Third Reich.”38

However, Hitler did not rely on Wagner and a legacy of German Romanticism alone to construct his Totenkult; another fundamental element became known as the cult of dead heroes. The hero worship and “The Cult of the Fallen Soldier,” represent the clearest and possibly the most affecting examples of the paradoxical nature of Hitler’s dream for Germany. Following World War I, most Germans had a clear understanding of sacrifice as realized through the blood of their young soldiers. This is especially true for the “Myth of Langemark,” an important battle for the ethnohistory and death iconography of World War I.39 At Langemark, Belgium on 26th of October 1914, hundreds of young German soldiers marched into no man’s land to their death. As the myth goes, the boys marched all the while singing “Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles, über Alles in der Welt,” the opening verse of The Song of Germany or Das Deutschlandlied.40 Thousands of young men were slaughtered, but the myths surrounding their death became an essential part of death cult ideology. A soldier named Emil Alfeld present that night, had written a letter to his family beforehand in which he wrote:

We are Germans; we fight for our people and shed our blood and hope that the survivors are worthy of our sacrifice. For me this is a struggle for an idea, the Fata Morgana of a pure, loyal, honorable Germany. And if we go to our deaths with this hope in our hearts, perhaps it is better than to have the victory...41

The attitude expressed by this German soldier speaks to the glorified ideal felt by many Germans that “death in battle not only guaranteed eternal life for the martyr but also acted as a resurgent life force for the Fatherland.”42 The last line in his letter, “perhaps it is better than to have the victory” also shows the notion that sometimes the sacrifice is more important than the actual victory itself.

A similar theme runs through the cult of Albert Schlageter, another integral piece of the death cult mythos. Aside from the young soldiers of World War I, Schlageter represents one of the most important martyrs in German death cult iconography. In 1923, after bombing a railway bridge, Schlageter was executed on the outer border of Dusseldorf by French forces. Throughout Germany many were outraged at the execution and saw it as nothing more than a disproportionate act of retaliation. Immediately his myth began to grow and a monument was erected in his memory at the site of his execution.43 This myth of Schlageter

37 Spotts, Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics, 115.
38 Ibid.
41 Baird, To Die For Germany, pg. 3. A “fata Morgana” is a mirage or illusion.
42 Ibid., 2.
43 Ibid., 13-14, and 22.
became a favorite hero worship story of the Third Reich. In 1934, at a Hitler Youth Rally at the Schlageter Memorial, Baldur von Shirach addressed Hitler’s young disciples and said:

As you look at this grand monument, remember that today the cross of Schlageter towers not only over us, but it casts its shadow over all of Germany and this symbol of strength, of spirit, of dedication and sacrifice received its heroic incarnation in Schlageter. He went to his death answering the call to duty. Here on this spot the dark earth drank his red blood and he was struck down with that cry on his lips which is our call to destiny today: ‘Oh, you my Germany!’

Jay W. Baird argues Schlageter had become an immortal in the pantheon of death cult heroes. And as is shown by Shirach’s speech, the cult of dead heroes endured well beyond the Weimar and into the consciousness of many Germans under National Socialism.

This cult of dead heroes, alongside the manipulation of Wagner and German Romanticism became integral to the vision of Germany’s Führer. However, vision is useless without a means of communicating it to the masses, and for Hitler the greatest source for communication came in the form of aesthetics. From architecture, and poetry, to the symbolism of Nazi rallies, death, blood, drama, and ruin found a new wave of energy never before seen in Germany. Perhaps the most unusual of these aesthetic forays was the death cult’s influence on Albert Speer’s theory of ruin value. Speer, Hitler’s favorite architect, designed some of the Third Reich’s most colossal monuments, including the Reich Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg and the model for the Great Hall in Berlin. His monumental architecture was specifically built according to his theory of ruin value. The theory argued that the architecture of the Third Reich should be constructed so the process of natural decay, even after hundreds or thousands of years later, would allow the monument to “communicate the heroic inspirations of the Third Reich” in much the same way the ruins of antiquity do in Greece and Rome.

In Speer’s memoir, he discussed his creation of a drawing of how the Zeppelin Field in Nuremberg would look “after generations of neglect, overgrown with ivy, its columns fallen...but the outlines still clearly recognizable.” This theory of ruin value is directly connected to Hitler’s personal love of the romantic ruins of Ancient Rome and Greece. Like the Parthenon or the Coliseum, Germany’s dominion over the world as visualized by Hitler, could be appreciated long after his Third Reich had disappeared, through the decayed monuments of his empire.

Beyond the subtleties of Speer’s ruin value, a far more obvious Totenkult aesthetic is visible in Hitler’s plan for the construction of miles upon miles of mausoleums along the borders of Germany’s newly expanded empire. Following the Nazis supposed victory against the Allied powers, colossal citadels for the dead, or Totenburgen, envisaged by Hitler “were to glorify war, honour its dead heroes” and at the same time, “symbolize the impregnable power of the German race” as the massive stone structures would stretch “from the Atlantic to the Urals...” Hitler also reconstructed the Königsplatz tombs for martyrs of the Beer Hall Putsch of 1923. What had once been a neo-classical memorial in Munich constructed at the behest of King
Ludwig in the mid-nineteenth century became a mecca where Germans could celebrate their dead martyrs. Ultimately however, the Totenkult under Hitler advanced well beyond architectural schemes.

A literary tradition also developed in the Third Reich which fostered the worship of dead heroes, along with a glorification of self-sacrifice for the Fatherland. This is made clear in the poetry of writer Gerhard Schumann. Schumann, a fêted poet during the Third Reich, wrote poems in which German blood and sacrifice coincided with Christian symbolism. In 1934, Schumann wrote a sonnet entitled The Purity of the Reich in which he appealed to the memory of fallen heroes for a rebirth of German values:

Now there arises a band of the determined,...
By night they dream of the blood that was shed, ...
And of the Führer, who carries the burden of fate,
And of the fields, which cry out for our men,
And of the river, flowing by on our borders,
And of the brother, who forgives us our guilt.

Nothing is kept secret from them.
Their stern words are heavy as forged steel.
Their steps echo the call for ultimate judgment.
In their souls they bear the Grail.
Vassals of the Führer, keepers and avengers alike.
Within them burns and with them grows the Reich.

In 1936 Schumann wrote:

Poetry is the lifeblood of a Volk because the soul also hungers and thirsts and cannot be left barren.

Poetry elevates the everyday into grand images transmitted to history and eternity. And beyond that today the creative arts have become important weapons in the ideological struggle for the peoples of the world. The Führer has shown us the path to take.

And indeed it was true, the creative arts and the use of aesthetics became a formidable weapon with which Hitler mesmerized much of the nation. His utilization of the Totenkult and its symbolism captivated his audiences and thrilled them with spectacle.

Possibly his most effective tactic, his use of blood, both symbolically and literally, became the fundamental element in the death cult imagery of the Third Reich. The blood imagery of the Totenkult is best symbolized in the rituals and aesthetics of the Nazi party rallies held in Nuremberg. In one example, an evening rally began with the Nibelung March from Wagner's Der Ring des Nibelung. Wagner's music played while the blood-red standards and flags were presented to the Führer. Following the basic standards came what Frederick Spotts considers, “the party's most holy relic, the Blutfahne, or blood flag, the swastika banner that had been carried in the 1923 putsch. On this flag the blood of the ‘martyrs’ shot down on that occasion had allegedly been spilled, and almost every year in commemoration of the putsch, Hitler marched the Blutfahne through the streets. In 1936, he marched behind the flag dressed in his own putsch attire and to “heighten the effects of these annual dramas he decorated the streets with vivid splashes of blood red and

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51 Ibid.
52 Baird, To Die for Germany, 136.
53 Ibid., 137.
54 Spotts, Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics, 64.
Stygian black."55 This ritual evolved into a "cult of the ‘martyrs of the movement’ which had its own anthem...and its own relics, in particular the blood flag."56 During these elaborate cult ceremonies, the language of Hitler’s speeches also immersed itself in the blood of sacrifice. The words, ‘‘martyr’, ‘resurrection’, ‘sacrifice’, ‘holy place of pilgrimage’, ‘hero’, ‘death’...all added up to a simple message: sacrifice of oneself to the party and its Führer as a sacred duty, if necessary with the shedding of blood..."57 This sacrificial blood ideology became increasingly more radicalized through the course of Hitler’s reign.

By the end of World War II, a mythology steeped in heroic death and the radical dogma of National Socialism reached its zenith through the final acts of suicide by Hitler and his followers in the Berlin bunker. On the 28th of April 1945, Josef Goebbels’ wife Magda wrote a letter to her eldest son while inside Hitler’s bunker. In the letter she wrote, “The world that will come after the Führer and National Socialism will not be worth living in, and therefore I have taken my children away...We have now only one aim: loyalty unto death to the Führer.”58 When Magda wrote that she had taken her children “away,” she actually referred to their murder by the forced ingestion of cyanide capsules. Not long after, Magda and her husband committed suicide following in the steps of Hitler and his wife Eva Braun. This kind of suicide and murder goes far beyond what French sociologist Emile Durkheim calls “emotional or social problems,” which is a possible explanation for the epidemic of other suicides that ravaged Germany at the end of the war.59 The fact that Magda Goebbels proudly described the martyring of both her children and herself, speaks to the psychology of the Nazi death cult and the belief in heroic sacrifice for both the Führer and Germany. Joseph Goebbels also clung to the Totenkult rhetoric when he said “his death would set a heroic precedent for a new Germany which would ‘survive this war, but only if it has precedents at hand on which it can lean itself.’”60 Hitler himself called on the ideology of sacrificial death in his political testament written just before his suicide on the 30th of April 1945 when he wrote:

May it become, at some future time, part of the code of honour of the German officer...that the surrender of a district or of a town is impossible, and that the leaders here, above all, must march ahead as shining examples, faithfully fulfilling their duty unto death.61 Whether this kind of rhetoric represented true belief or the mere ideological propaganda meant for posterity will never fully be known. Committing suicide remains one of the “‘most private and impenetrable of human acts,” making the analysis of such measures difficult to ascertain.62 However, through the suicides of Eva Braun, and Joseph and Magda Goebbels, a connection can be drawn to the dangerous undercurrent of death, ruin, and sacrifice which had been so masterfully constructed by their Führer. This undercurrent, developed and nurtured by Hitler and his multitudes of henchmen, managed to create possibly the greatest act of the Totenkult, the ideological “suicide of the nation.”63 In The Holocaust and the German Elite: Genocide

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55 Ibid., 103.
56 Ibid., 105.
57 Ibid., 106.
58 Goeschel, Suicide in Nazi Germany, 163.
59 Ibid., 1.
60 Ibid., 152.
61 Ibid., 155.
62 Ibid., 1 Goeschel is quoting the historian Richard Cobb from his 1978 Death in Paris: The Records of the Basse-Geôle de la Seine.
and National Suicide in Germany, 1871-1945, Rainer C. Baum argues that under the Third Reich, Hitler and his followers propelled Germany into a national suicide. With institutionalized chaos under the Führer, Hitler and his regime acted out what sociologist Robert Bellah argued was the distinctive mark of modernity, the realization that “the human condition itself has become a revisable entity” and that mankind can indeed define itself out of existence. Through this willful act, those with power in the Third Reich “rather than continuing to define the human species as one that strives for comprehensive meaning,” decided instead to redefine the human condition into a state of irrational death as they moved their nation further into destruction. This is elucidated in Peter Cohen's fascinating documentary The Architecture of Doom, in which he argues that "Hitler saw doom as art’s highest expression, the drama was a reality...its completion was his final and decisive scenographic mission."

This idea of Hitler the artist and Hitler the dictator is key to understanding Hitler’s Totenkult, because the man who dreamed of creating a new German culture fostered by racial superiority and Teutonic pride, also promoted hero-worship, romantic death, operatic suicide, and artful destruction. This was achieved through his unique form of aesthetic politics. When looking back on historians’ treatment of Hitler, George Mosse argues it was his use of aesthetics to paradoxically promote both creation and destruction, which has been most over-looked when attempting to understand the appeal of such a dictator. George Mosse wrote “We failed to see...that the fascist aesthetic itself reflected the needs and hopes of contemporary society, that what we brushed aside as the so-called superstructure was in reality the means through which most people grasped the fascist message, transforming politics into a civil religion.” This civil religion although not accepted by all, made it possible for a fanatical dilettante turned dictator to fashion himself into Germany's Rienzi. In Wagner's great hero, Hitler “sought to create social order and restore the empire. But in the end he brought destruction upon his world and was consumed in the fiery ruins” of his own making.

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64 Ibid., 292.
65 Ibid.
68 Spotts, Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics, pg. 401.
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Macedonian Pharaohs: Greeks and Egyptians in Ptolemaic Egypt

Michael Butcher

Twenty-three centuries ago, Alexander the Great crossed from Europe into Asia at the head of a large coalition of Hellenic and Macedonian forces. Acting as captain-general of all Greece, excepting Sparta, by 331 B.C.E. he had made himself master of a territory stretching from Greece to the Indus River. Several years later Alexander died, and the pressures of ruling this vast kingdom fell upon his friends and generals. Although at first the many satraps and generals were congenial and worked with one another to keep the kingdom united, it was not to last. Relations turned sour, and after several battles, culminating in the battle of Ipsos in Phrygia, in 301 B.C.E. the kingdom was officially partitioned into four parts.

The rich and fertile land of Egypt, along with its neighboring territories, came into the possession of Ptolemy I Soter, who gave his name to the dynasty that would rule Egypt for the next three hundred years. The Ptolemaic dynasty would not end until the death of Ptolemy XV Philopator Philometor Caesar in 30 B.C.E. Having been proclaimed first satrap, then king of Egypt, Ptolemy I Soter found himself in an unusual position. He and the many settlers who came to occupy the country ruled peoples far removed from their own Greco-Macedonian stock. The history, culture and traditions of the Egyptians were alien to them. Their position was precarious as well as alien, for while the settlers were the ruling class of the country, the Egyptians vastly outnumbered them.

How were they to keep the Egyptian populace from revolting? As we shall see, Egypt held a unique position among the former Persian provinces in that it was, quite simply, a powder keg ready to explode. Whoever ruled Egypt was required to go to extreme lengths to show themselves as legitimate Pharaohs, or they risked outright rebellion. Military might alone had not proven effective under the Assyrians and Persians. Because of this, the Macedonians who followed Ptolemy I Soter into Egypt were able to control and appease the Egyptians through not only the strong militaristic traditions of Alexander the Great, however, but furthermore through a combination of syncretism with the native religion, a highly centralized government which gave rights to subjects regardless of descent, and a gradual assimilation into Egyptian culture. In this paper, I will demonstrate this tripartite phenomenon through two case studies, the first emphasizing Ptolemaic hegemony over the Egyptians as shown by the ancient writers and Ptolemaic propaganda, the second presenting a view of the settlers interacting and integrating with the Egyptians on a local, more personal level, using papyrological sources.

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1 Plutarch, Plutarch’s Lives Demetrius and Antony Pyrrhus and Gaius Marius, ed. E.H. Warmington, trans. Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914), 82. In Hellenistic times rulers were known by epithets rather than by numbers. For ease of reading they will be referred to by both in this paper.

2 Alexander the Great and the many diadochoi that followed were of Macedonian descent and were not considered to be true “Greeks” or Hellenes by the Greek world. Even so, Alexander had for a long time been a lover of Greek culture (philhellenes). By the time of Ptolemy I Soter to be a Macedonian meant to be Hellenistic, or Greek-like, and so the term Greco-Macedonian will be used here.

3 Peoples, whether Macedonian or Egyptian, will be referred to not by their race but by their descent, as they were in Ptolemaic Egypt.
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The rise of Hellenistic power did not involve Macedonians and Greeks replacing autonomous Egyptians. The Nile and its surrounding lands had been under the rule of foreign powers for centuries. During the Third Intermediate Period, Egypt ceased to be governed by Egyptians and was supplanted at first by Libyans and Nubians, then by the Assyrians in the seventh century B.C.E. A brief period of independence followed before Egypt was again brought under the sway of an Asiatic power, this time the Persians under Cambyses. Ruling Egypt from a far away land, the Persians instituted the country as a satrapy. This proved to be a highly successful long-term policy that Alexander adopted. Unlike the Assyrians before them, the Persians showed greater concern for Egyptian religion and many great kings depicted themselves as Pharaohs rather than foreign despots. There were also a number who did not, and as a result the Egyptians successfully revolted and survived four separate invasions by the Persians. A thirty-seven year period of independence followed until they were finally recaptured in 343 B.C.E.

Throughout this time, Egypt and Greece were connected through bonds of commerce and friendship. Greek poleis and trading villages had been founded throughout the Nile delta, such as Naukratis, which had been granted the full rights of a polis by King Amasis (570-526), and Rakatis. A great many Greek mercenaries had also fought for the Egyptians against the Persians on separate occasions. The Delian League had supported a failed Egyptian revolt, sending aid in men and money in their campaigns against the Persians. What we learn from this is that Greece had long held influence in Egypt, and gained ever more preeminence as the years continued. Three centuries of successful Hellenistic rule can be seen as the culmination of this friendship and cooperation.

The Language of Hegemony

From the outset Ptolemy I Soter attempted to reconcile the two peoples through religion. There is no doubt that the Greeks who came into Egypt also brought with them their own priests. These men would sacrifice to Zeus and Dionysus, while the Egyptians would sacrifice to Amon and Isis. It is important to note here that there was not a large discrepancy in their religions: similar deities from different lands were often thought of as being one and the same. The Greek god Zeus and the Egyptian god Amon, for example, shared similar traits and were worshipped in Egypt as the composite god Zeus-Amon.

In addition to respecting local traditions and importing the Greek gods and goddesses, Ptolemy I Soter went one step further and fabricated a god of his own who was to be the patron god of his dynasty. In his *Moralia*, written in the second century C.E., the Greek writer Plutarch reported that Ptolemy had a dream in which he saw a statue of a god residing in the Greek city of Sinope. After stealing this statue, Ptolemy had it brought back to Egypt, where both a Greek priest and an Egyptian priest identified it as the god Serapis. This new god Serapis combined the name and qualities of two previous Egyptian gods, Apis and Osiris, along with the Greek god of the Underworld, Hades. Having combined these deities, Serapis was said to have been a god of the underworld (such as Hades and Osiris) and of healing and fertility. This new god was depicted as wholly Hellenic, with a Greek robe, beard and full head of hair. Despite the fact that Serapis was Hellenic as

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5 Ibid., 4.
6 Ibid., 3.
well as a fabrication, he became prevalent throughout Egypt and a temple was built in his honor in the chief Egyptian city of Memphis.

The local priesthood would have represented the closest approximation to the “nobility” in ancient Egypt, and one that had at its disposal a large amount of land and capital. In 118 B.C.E. the priesthood owned six percent of the land in the village of Kerkeosiris, the third largest amount after royal and kleurethic land.\(^8\) This influence grew in the middle and later years of the Ptolemaic dynasty, as they became ever more generous towards the priesthoods in their bids for legitimacy. Having recognized the potential power struggle that could arise if they were ever at odds with the priesthood, Ptolemy I Soter began the policy of satiating them. The restoration of temples, the building of new sanctuaries as well as financial favors became commonplace. We see from the Rosetta Stone in 196 B.C.E. that Ptolemy V Epiphanes not only maintained the contributions of previous generations, but generously increased them:

...and, being beneficently disposed towards the gods, [King Ptolemy] has dedicated to the temples revenues in both silver and grain, and has undertaken many expenses for the sake of bringing Egypt into a state of prosperity and establishing the temples.\(^9\)

In Egypt there existed an ancient tradition what required that the Pharaoh marry his sister. The Ptolemies revived this custom, beginning with Ptolemy II Philadelphos, who married his sister Arsinoe II sometime after 279. It is worth noting that this was Philadelphos’s second marriage and his successor was born of his previous marriage.\(^10\) Ptolemy IV Philopater became the first Ptolemy to marry his full sister, Arsinoe III, and produce an heir from the union. This practice was more a practical solution to a pre-existing Egyptian law than a religious act, as it law dictated that the crown passed down not by the males of the family but by the females. This meant that in order to become Pharaoh, the heir apparent would need to marry the matriarchal inheritor – in most cases his own sister. By marrying their sisters, the Ptolemies also furthered their intention of depicting themselves as Egyptian gods.

What we can infer from this is that as the dynasty slowly lost hegemony and influence in the eastern Mediterranean, and as Egyptian revolts increased in frequency and severity, the Ptolemies’ response was to Egyptianize in a bid for legitimacy, such as an increase in sibling marriage or greater financial favors for the priesthoods. This did not amount to a full rejection of Hellenistic culture. Rather, this policy was simply grafted on top of existing Hellenistic elements, producing a hybrid that, much like their patron god Serapis, was neither wholly Hellenic nor Egyptian.

The Hellenistic custom of nicknaming rulers with epithets such as Megas (“the Great”) or Epiphanes (“the Illustrious”, or “god manifest”) carried in Ptolemaic Egypt an additional significance in the Ptolemies’ self-representations as Pharaohs. In the case of Ptolemy I, his epithet of Soter, or Savior, emphasized the Pharaoh’s role as protector and guardian of his subjects. Ptolemy III had the epithet of Euergetes, or Benefactor, which stressed his role as patron of the priesthood after conducting a full-scale raid against the

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10 Holbl, 46.
Seleukids and returning with Egyptian temple belongings that had been lost to the Persians. The aforementioned Ptolemy Philadelphos’s name had a special significance. By marrying his sister, the two were known as Theoi Adelphoi, or Sibling Gods. Although the union was taboo among the Greeks, it was reminiscent of Zeus and Hera, while for the Egyptians it recalled the union of Osiris and Isis.

From the beginning, the Ptolemies depicted themselves as Egyptian Pharaohs in temple carvings. A clear example of this is seen in the highly decorated temple of Philae, where throughout the dynasty, beginning with Ptolemy II Philadelphos, the Ptolemies carved themselves into the walls and erected statues of themselves. Rather than taking an Egyptian god and showing it as Hellenistic, as in the case of Serapis, the Ptolemies took their own reliefs and made them Egyptian. As a result a traveler looking at the various carvings in Philae would not be able to differentiate the Ptolemies from the older Egyptian Pharaohs. This is seen at Dendera too, where the famous queen Kleopatra had the likeness of her and her son carved upon the stone. Just as in Philae they are garbed not in Greek dress, but in an Egyptian manner and are shown giving offerings to Egyptian gods.

These depictions showed themselves both through carvings as well as through literature. When giving proclamations or decrees to the general populace, the Ptolemies had adopted the use of a thoroughly Egyptian formula for introducing themselves. Referring to a decree passed by an assembly of Egyptian priests, Ptolemy V Epiphanes is revealed as:

Ptolemy Ever-Living, Beloved of Ptah, in the ninth year...God Manifest (and) Gracious, which he received from his father, (all these priests) having gathered together in the temple at Memphis on this day, spoke...

Ptolemaic control was not limited to the use of religion and iconography, so let us now turn to the use of settlers. I have already mentioned that the first King Ptolemy brought many Greeks along with him when he came into power, with soldiers and mercenaries having high priority. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, soldiers would be needed in order to secure his new kingdom from invasions and other external threats, as they could not yet rely on the Egyptians themselves to supply manpower for the army. Second, foreign soldiers were needed as a second powerbase separate from the Egyptians in case of rebellion.

The largest incentive that the Ptolemies used to lure settlers into Egypt was that of land. During these years Egypt was considered to be the breadbasket of the Mediterranean, drawing most of its income from agriculture. In this sense, being given a grant of land was the equivalent of a generous paycheck. It comes as no surprise when we hear that the Greco-Macedonians developed Egypt as much as they possibly could, clearing and irrigating land for future use, draining swamps and building dams and sluice gates.

Much of this construction was aimed at attracting immigrants – not all of whom were Greek or Macedonian. The Ptolemies attracted an extraordinarily diverse group of peoples. There were Syrians, Judeans and Phoenicians from Coele-Syria and Thracians from Hellas and Northern Macedonia. This influx of peoples was not unique to the Ptolemaic era, but became increasingly characteristic of the dynasty resulting

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from their making Egypt into a new focal point for Hellenistic culture. The most surprising people to have come to Egypt were Celts, largely built, fair skinned and blue eyed.\textsuperscript{15} This was possible due to a mass invasion of Greece that many Celtic tribes had undertaken which ended in them settling in central Anatolia, with their chief city of Ankara. From there the Celts were able to come to Alexandria and enroll in the army.\textsuperscript{16}

These men who came into Egypt were given large tracts of land (\textit{kleroi}) in return for military service. Many mercenaries found this too good an opportunity to pass up, and these incentives provided for more than enough men to produce large, well-trained and supplied armies. The Ptolemies used these forces extensively. The clearest examples of this are seen in the military campaigns of Ptolemies III and IV. In 217 B.C.E. Egypt found itself at war with Antiochus the Great of the Seleukid kingdom. A battle was fought, ending in victory for the Ptolemies. We hear from the ancient writer Polybius that prior to the battle Ptolemy IV Philopator was able to field an army of over 75,000 men.\textsuperscript{17}

There is also an instance in which Ptolemy III Euergetes conducted a full-scale raid against the same kingdom, and is said to have reached as far as Baktria. The city of Adulis near Ethiopia on the Red Sea lent its name to a Ptolemaic inscription, written in 246 B.C.E. to commemorate the campaign. Sadly, the original copy is lost and we must rely on a translation from the sixth century monk Cosmas Indicopleustes:

Great King Ptolemy...led a campaign into Asia with infantry and cavalry and fleet and Troglodytic and Ethiopian elephants...Having become master of all the land this side of the Euphrates...crossed the Euphrates river and after subjecting to himself Mesopotamia and Babylonia and Sousiane and Persis and Media and all the rest of the land up to Baktriane and having sought out all the temple belongings...brought them back with the rest of the treasure...to Egypt.\textsuperscript{18}

The Ptolemies had at their disposal a well-disciplined and organized force, capable of defending against powerful neighboring kingdoms as well as safely conducting raids far into enemy territory. We cannot forget, though, that the Ptolemies were more than willing to use this army against their own subjects. From ancient writers such as Polybius, inscriptions and papyri we know that whenever the Egyptians rose up in revolt, the Greeks were able to subdue them. From the Rosetta Stone we hear of Ptolemy IV Philopator attacking the rebellious city of Lykonpolis,

(\textit{and}) in a short time he took the city by storm and destroyed all the impious men in it, just as [\textit{He}r]mes and Horus (\textit{son}) of Isis and Osiris subdued the former rebels in the same regions; and all those who led the rebels in his father's reign and troubled the country and did wrong to the temples...he punished fittingly...\textsuperscript{19}

On a more intimate level we have a letter written in 197 B.C.E. concerning the sale of a slave. From the letter one learns that the slave, an eighteen year old girl, was captured during the “disturbance in the countryside,” i.e. a revolt.\textsuperscript{20} Further on we read that the girl was an Egyptian. Ordinarily the enslavement of Egyptians was outlawed, though it seems that in cases of rebellion it was permissible.

\textsuperscript{15} “A Dancer Hires a Flutist,” in \textit{The Hellenistic Period}, 244.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 5, 79.
\textsuperscript{19} “The Rosetta Stone,” in \textit{The Hellenistic Period}, 269.
\textsuperscript{20} “Enslavement During a Native Revolt,” in \textit{The Hellenistic Period}, 69.
When one takes into consideration the accounts of the ancient authors, one begins to view the Ptolemaic dynasty as a tyrannical, which relied on brute force to keep the Egyptians at bay. This is misleading. Force was certainly used; however it was not the preferred means. Prevention proved a better method. One cannot forget the great extent to which the Ptolemies used religion and iconography to appease their subjects. It is a practically sound policy, as it was far cheaper to portray oneself as a legitimate Pharaoh through erecting temples, supporting the priesthods and even, extraordinarily, marrying one’s sister, than to rely on arms alone.

**The Language of Integration**

We now come to the subject of laws and bureaucracy as it pertains to Ptolemaic Egypt. While the narrative sources cast Hellenes as lording over Egyptians, whose sole duty was maintaining the vast agricultural estates throughout the country; papyrology and archaeology suggest that the reality was more nuanced. Our sources reveal that the right to petition to royal administrators was available to both Greek and Egyptians alike, as was the right to petition directly to the King in some cases. In a papyrus scroll dating from 151 B.C.E. we hear of tax-farmers running extortion rackets and other such activities. Later in the document it is revealed that the extortion was exposed and a petition was written to the bodyguard of the King in order to put a stop to it.

The system of justice and courts was also more amiable to the Egyptians than it appears at first glance. The system of appointing Egyptians to the priesthood also extended into the judicial system, and as we see there were Greek courts as well as Egyptian courts. The highly centralized and organized bureaucracy of the Ptolemaic dynasty is seen from a decree passed by Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II, or Ptolemy Physkon (the fat), in 118 B.C.E. which, among other things, provides specific laws pertaining to the courts. Which court was used was determined not by the descent of those involved, but rather by the documentation. If the argument arose from a party that had written their contract in Greek then Greek courts (dikasterioi) would see to the matter. On the other hand, Egyptian courts (iaokritai) would convene if the contract was written in Egyptian, regardless of whether one of the parties was Greek or not. Along with this, the decree confirms that the Hellenistic rise to power in Egypt was not one of absolute domination. The coexistence of both Greek and Egyptian courts lends support to the view of the Ptolemies as rulers who grafted Greco-Macedonian systems on top of preexisting Egyptian structures, rather than replacing them outright. A clear example of the integrated model is seen in the following case.

In the Autumn of 117 B.C.E., a dispute arose over the possession of a house in Diospolis Magna and it was brought before the dikasteria. The plaintiff, a high-ranking Greek named Hermias, claimed that his family had held ownership of the house for many generations. His representative brought forward what appeared to be a solid affidavit from the former owner. Under other circumstances this may have been enough to gain him the house; the defendants, who were notably all Egyptians, were able to present an even stronger case for their continued ownership and provided evidence that disproved Hermias’ claims. After months of deliberation the Greek court decided in favor of the Egyptians. It is clear from the documentation that the

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court’s decision was based not on the descent of those involved but on the strength of their documentation and arguments. It is uncertain whether this case was the norm or the exception. Our sources, while surprisingly expansive, provide no other court cases between Egyptians and Greeks.

The Ptolemaic policy of adopting many aspects of Egyptian culture extended to the Greek subjects as well. In the beginning of the dynasty there was little incentive for the foreigners to adopt Egyptian ways, as there was a tendency for the immigrants to cluster together either in the chief Hellenistic city of Alexandria or in one of the several new cities and villages that were being constructed in the Greek manner, due in large part to their numerical inferiority. Many klereuchs chose not to stay and work the land themselves. They chose instead to rent the land out to Egyptians and live in the cities as absentee landlords. This is not to say that there were no Greek or Macedonian villagers. As the years passed on, however, they increasingly began to adopt Egyptian culture in a piecemeal manner. This was not done out of a love for their co-inhabitants, but rather out of economic concerns and pragmatism. This is well illustrated by an ancient papyrus, telling us that during the second century B.C.E. there was a Greek man approaching old age.

This Greek, a medical practitioner in an Egyptian specialty, was concerned as to whether or not he would have a means to support himself in his later years. In order to remedy this, the man learned to read and write ancient Egyptian for the sole purpose of teaching his trade to a young group of students. These students would in turn have the responsibility of supporting their teacher through his old age. While we cannot say that this is indicative of the majority of Greeks from this source alone, his practice of Egyptian medicine and learning of the language suggests that they were willing to integrate somewhat into the Egyptian culture, so long as their livelihoods were at stake.

This assimilation into the native culture became more pronounced towards the end of the dynasty. The Roman writer Diodorus, writing in the mid-first century B.C.E., visited the city of Alexandria and gave a first-hand account of how large an influence the Egyptians now held in the capital city. There was an ancient Egyptian custom that any man who killed a cat, whether intentional or not, must be killed immediately and without legal process due to their reverence for the animal. It was at this point that the Greeks had begun to assimilate into the Egyptian culture to such an extent that the inhabitants of Alexandria, which was founded as a Greek city, had adopted this custom, going so far as to kill a high-ranking Roman for the crime of feline assassination.

What conclusions can we draw from these sources? We can concede that Ptolemaic Egypt was unique among the successor kingdoms. No other Hellenistic kingdom assimilated into their oriental subjects’ cultures as to be comparable with the Ptolemies. Ever since first coming under the rule of Assyrians, Libyans and Persians, Egypt was rife with rebellion, both localized and centralized. What is seen here is cause and effect. When a ruler depicted himself as a Pharaoh and carried out his Pharaonic duties Egypt was stable. Other rulers who did not follow this policy were subject to rebellions. Alexander and the Ptolemies were quick to

24 Bingen, 109, 113.
realize this. Their policies of supporting priesthoods and existing Egyptian customs were extensive and successful. It was not until the Egyptians were trained and armed in the Macedonian fashion that they were confident enough to consider revolting.

What we get from these two case studies is a dichotomy. From the ancient writers and inscriptions we are given a view of the Ptolemaic dynasty as one which dominated the Egyptians completely, while from the papyri we are led to believe that there was a greater integration between Greco-Macedonian and Egyptian populations. Both sets of sources are critical, but for the purposes of telling the story of what it meant to be a Macedonian or Egyptian during the Ptolemaic dynasty, the narrative sources are inadequate. Only the papyri can tell the reader with any degree of certainty what life was truly like when the populations mixed.

Bibliography


The Struggle to Create One Out of Many: An analysis of the conditions keeping modern-day Mexico from forming a united national identity.
Natalie Hollett

The idea of nationalism has driven many of the world’s countries into war, revolution, and social reform. The feeling of belonging to an entity, a populous, and an “imagined community” unites entire populations. All nations have established some form of nationalism; whether it is a united consensus or not varies upon the class structure. Being able to claim a nationality is a privilege and it can often prove ephemeral, which many Mexicans can attest to. Modern Mexico has come vast distances from the early days of colonization with Hernán Cortés, yet still remains entrenched in the search for what it means to be Mexican. As nationalism becomes increasingly a top-down elite agenda, the defining barrier for a united Mexico is the vast class difference between the excessive rich and the poorest peasant. Without a stable middle class, uncommon goals, and/or a set of common, truly national goals, Mexico is far from achieving a national identity, despite attempts of the Ministry of Public Education and the National Indigenist Institute to create one out of many.

The Mexican Revolution of 1910 began when labor unrest and an economic downturn plagued the county. Porfirio Díaz, the unpredictable dictator (1876-1911), courted and protected foreign investment over his own people, creating disorder and a feeling of disunity between the government and the common people. Díaz encouraged foreign investors and wanted to model Mexico after the great European countries; he even used white powder to lighten his own complexion, representing shame over all things Mexican. As foreigners began pouring into the county, discontent brewed. Strikes and protests began to erupt; for instance, in Cananea in 1906, Díaz brought in foreign law enforcement—the Arizona Rangers—to force the end of a copper mining strike consisting of his own people.1 Although the dictator’s government may have done away with the strike, they could not stop the spread of ideas and the public began to speak out. Wages were falling and workers were laid off without a safety net. With a population boom and the stock market’s crash in 1907, Mexicans realized that they needed change: the government did little to represent the people’s needs and the needs of the nation. Thus, the revolution exploded into existence.

Almost immediately, the men who took control of the country after Díaz’s resignation in May 1911 began to wrestle with the horrible living and working conditions which the majority of Mexicans dealt with. The corruption of the Roman Catholic Church and the Díaz government were brought to light and thus when the Constitution of 1917 was drafted, a progressive code of law was formed. For instance, the Zapatistas, led by the infamous Emiliano Zapata, represented the peasant need for communal land ownership in the traditional ejido: although they were not invited to the constitutional convention, their concerns were enshrined in Article 27.2 Education, addressed in Article 3, was to become secular while labor, addressed in Article 123, established a labor code and working regulations that were among the most progressive in the

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1 Michael J. Gonzales, The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1940 (Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 67-68. The Mexican miners were receiving a lower pay than the American workers for the same job and working conditions were deplorable. Incidentally the mine was owned by William Cornell Greene, an extremely wealthy American businessman.
2 Gonzales, 87. The original document proclaiming the desires for the Zapatistas was called the “Plan de Ayala” in which they demanded “the return of land and water taken from villages by haciendas.”
world at the time.² Although the Constitution of 1917 sought to unite Mexico with the overall goals the majority of the population needed, history would reveal that the nation had a greater rift than assumed. After a brief period of social reforms in the 1930s, the gap between the rich and the poor only became worse as Mexico moved rapidly into the globalized market, particularly in more recent times.

The government of Mexico attempted to fuse the nation through governmental programs aimed at incorporating the lower ends of the population, primarily the large indigenous populations. The Ministry of Public Education, also known as the SEP, sought to forge state and nationhood through education.⁴ Headed by the Secretary of Education, José Vasconcelos, the program believed that by positioning teachers in the rural and highland regions of Mexico, the program could “tame and direct the students’ natural development,” and lessen the tendency of the Indigenous populations to isolate themselves from developed Mexico.⁵ Although his plan to incorporate the Indians strived to better their lives with methods of modernization, it dismissed the culture and lifestyle that these people had held for centuries.

In order to Mexicanize the Indians, the SEP taught the importance of la raza cósmica or “the cosmic race” of the mestizos: the race of the future and ultimately the best of all worlds as it combined Spanish and African heritage with the importance of the Indians. Normal school graduates from the cities were sent into the rural regions of Mexico as teachers, whom Vasconcelos related to gardeners who interfere “in the natural process to improve plants.”⁶ Called missionaries, the teachers were often rejected by the indigenous populations as a threat to their livelihood and were thought to be no different from the other outsiders who brought corruption and decades of hardship and pain.⁷ Highly anticlerical, the SEP pushed nationalism since a multitude of Mexicans did not even understand the concept of a nation; to form a united nation, the necessity of all citizens to understand each other was plainly obvious. The SEP attempted to reach the indigenous population by not only educating them in scholarly forms, but culturally. Pointing to the awareness of a cultural gap in Mexico, the SEP’s rural schools became locations for cultural reform. In addition to teaching subjects such as Spanish, the schools assisted in agrarian reform, cultural parades and festivals, and sobriety campaigns. These institutions sought to modernize and improve Indians, basically engaging in a form of ethnocide. Despite the seemingly good intention of the program, Vasconcelos believed that “as they become educated, the inferior races will become less prolific” and merge into everyday Mexico and he was certain that achievement was accessible.⁸ However, according to The Ambivalent Revolution, the SEP’s cultural missions did not fully transform the Mexican countryside with their cultural goals; rather, most of the indigenous population was indifferent and chances of “unity became an impossibility in Chiapas” as well as other rural locations.⁹ By plainly attempting to shed Indians of their “Indian-ness,” the division of Mexicans would only

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³ Stephen Lewis, Class Lecture Notes, October 14, 2010.
⁵ Luis A. Marentes, José Vasconcelos and the Writing of the Mexican Revolution (New York, New York: Twayne Publishers, 2000), 112.
⁶ Ibid., 113.
⁷ Lewis, 26. The history of corruption and exploitation of the people of rural and highland Mexico is long. With plantation owners tricking and bribing workers, wages were low if existence and abuses were bountiful. Little would be done about such corruption, leading to the lack of trust given the planters and all outsiders in general by the indigenous populations.
⁸ Marentes, 96.
⁹ Lewis, 98.
be worsened; the Indians would aim to hold onto their culture more adamantly. Although the SEP struggled for decades to modernize and incorporate indigenous populations in Chiapas, differences would persist and deepen, as the state would return later as a reminder of the difference between classes.10

With the struggle to fuse Mexico under the SEP, an apparent overall loss, the National Indigenist Institute, or the INI, was created in 1948 in an attempt to integrate the country’s Indian population instead of urging conformity. Taking over where the SEP left off, the INI built its pilot center in highland Chiapas, opening its doors in San Cristóbal in 1951.11 The INI’s center initially succeeded, perhaps leading the way in lessening the cultural and social division between Mexicans. By building roads, combating the local alcohol monopoly, and introducing western medicine and hygiene programs, the INI left indigenous culture alone for the most part. They used “bilingual, bicultural indigenous promoters” to defend the Indians against the mestizo exploiters and promote INI development programs. Although the INI’s projects were eventually watered down and privatized, the program allowed Indians a way into the moving nation without altering their culture, perhaps bringing them closer into the fold with cultural acceptance in the Mexican identity.

However well these programs may have worked to bring the rural Mexican communities into the national fold, they failed to alleviate the worsening class divisions as Mexico attempted to make the difficult transition to modernity. As the world has been inundated with globalization over the recent decades, success rests on the ability of a country to interact and keep up with the rest of the world economically. This often leads to ignoring the problems that plague the lower classes and instead primarily focusing on economic gain and wealth, centralized in the hands of big business and usually a one-party dictatorship. While the upper class has often disregarded the problems of the impoverished, the lower classes have struggled to make their complaints known. Perhaps the most infamous example occurred on October 2, 1968 when “a new generation of public intellectuals”—students—joined together to question their government’s corruption and sought to reform the divisions between what the Mexican government engaged in and what was right for the majority of the population. They pleaded to democratize Mexico, proclaiming that the revolution was a failure in what it initially sought to accomplish. While the students rallied that day in the plaza at Tlatelolco, soldiers opened fire on them and blocked the exits. The government wanted to showcase the “Mexican Miracle”12 and preserve the image of blue skies and a slow-paced life which had typically defined the country in foreign eyes. As the Olympics were to be held in Mexico that year, the idea that the public was showing unrest would not be tolerated and the only solution was to quell the protests. Final death tolls vary depending on the source: the government claims about forty-eight lives were taken while others, like the English newspaper, The Guardian, place the toll closer to 325.13 After the massacre, “life returned to insulting normality” with few public protests.14

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10 Ibid., 203.
11 Ibid., 210. The INI would later build 90 centers throughout Mexico; if they could succeed in Chiapas, the centers could work anywhere.
12 Gilbert M. Joseph and Timothy J. Henderson (ed.), “The Perils of Modernity” in The Mexico Reader (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2002), 461. The “Mexican Miracle” represents the shift of the Mexican economy from primarily agricultural to industry. The new policies also sought to protect domestic production against foreign competition between 1940 and 1970. However, this “miracle” “had one of the world’s most unequal patterns of income distribution.”
14 Ibid., 565.
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The one-party state had beaten back a challenger, but it was obvious that the nation was discontent with its “representative” government. The problems that keep Mexico still consistently divided are evident throughout the country’s history. Modest attention has been paid to the lower classes by those in power, exacerbating the widening class divisions, especially as the global economy has taken on a bigger role in Mexico. Perhaps the biggest agitator of the problem was the induction of Mexico into NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, on January 1, 1994, which “promised to make Mexico commercially one with its neighbors to the north.” However, in attempting to gain economic equality with the United States and Canada, Mexico has only suffered in the form of devastation. As a result of Mexico’s acceptance into NAFTA, a group of rebellious Mayas from the southern state of Chiapas expressed their discontent with the Mexican government. The established “leader” of the leaderless Zapatista rebellion, Subcomandante Marcos, claimed: “Today, we say enough is enough. We are the inheritors of the true builders of our nation. The disposed, we are millions and we thereby call upon our brothers and sisters to join this struggle as the only path, so that we will not die of hunger due to insatiable ambition of a 70 year dictatorship led by a clique of traitors.” The Zapatistas obviously felt ostracized from the rest of Mexico. Or perhaps, they represent the huge upset in the class divisions. If peasants from Chiapas felt that they had no choice but to declare war against their own government in 1994, perhaps their government was not doing its job and representing all aspects of the nation.

Today, the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer at astounding rates: according to Alexander Dawson in his book First World Dreams: Mexico since 1989, 5.4% of the Mexico’s wealth is in the hands of eleven individuals. Poverty has risen, varying between 43% and 51% in recent years and about 80% of rural families are well below the poverty level. The rich politicians and government officials are acutely aware of the problem but there is little that they can do to solve the problem of the divided Mexico. Superficially, the problem may seem similar to that of the United States: the global giant has a widening economic gap and a disappearing middle class. The United States, however, is luxurious in comparison. The sickening lack in infrastructure and deplorable living conditions common in modern Mexico have forced millions to consider a “comfortable” life as one below the poverty level. Agricultural sectors are falling and industry jobs have been leaving Mexico for alternative nations at astounding rates: since the year 2000, “300,000 jobs in the sector [industry] have been lost, mostly to China.” The poverty levels of the rural poor have been profound as real wages have fallen and labor weakened, especially in the agriculture sector. And the problems are regionalized, creating a further division between Northern, Central, and Southern Mexico. In the recent decade, 40 million Mexicans are reported to be malnourished and in some regions in Mexico, as in

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17 Ibid., 121. As Dawson’s book was first published in 2006, it is likely that given the recent trends in both the Mexican economy and as well as the struggling global economy, the figures have changed. Despite this, it still seems astounding that in a “modern” global economy, a nation would have such a huge discrepancy between classes.
18 Ibid., 126.
19 Ibid., 135.
the southern state Chiapas, the “rates of mortality are three times the national average” while locations like northern Nuevo Leon “resemble those of some European countries”.20

With such varied living and working conditions, it is not surprising that Mexicans question what it means to be Mexican. The definition has become more and more dependent on the region and the class level of the citizen and many believe that the solution for Mexico is dependent on “whether or not the developed half will be able to absorb the underdeveloped” as the gap continues to widen.21 For instance, Subcomandante Marcos describes Mexico as divided into the Penthouse, Middle Mexico, Lower Mexico, and Basement Mexico. Penthouse Mexico lacks the ability to look down the class ladder, considering indigenous Mexicans as dispensable while Lower Mexico—the impoverished population—according to Marcos, “is a millionaire if one sums up its misery and its despair.”22 Basement Mexico, the indigenous population, is the group “that does not count...that is, it does not exist [to the other sections of society].”23 With a mentality like this ingrained in the minds of the elite, it is obvious that there is not a single Mexican identity. If the suffering are simply ignored and not dealt with, what does this say about the attempts in the decades after the 1910 Mexican Revolution to form a national identity? Was it more of an attempt to rally power for the rich and ensure smooth governance and keep the dispossessed abated?

Mexico suffers from a crisis of identity, where the different societal classes cannot coexist. According to Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, the true Mexico, México profundo, is represented by “the Indians, rural mestizos, and a portion of the urban poor,” which make up the majority of the population.24 The elites value a culture more closely resembling Europe and as they have primarily held political, economic, and ideological power, both ends hold different ideals for the future of their nation. Moreover, the very idea of a nation—“an imagined political community”—is thought to be limited, sovereign, and invented.25 If it is invented, for whom is it invented? Throughout the entire world, nations have been constructed on the basis of ethnicity and “have been used to mark or reinforce distinctions between ‘us’ and ‘them’.”26 In Mexico, the difference between “us” and “them” is apparent, and is represented in politics as well as in the huge class variance. Furthermore, if those in control of Mexico define the nation they are attempting to mold, they naturally leave out the lower classes—“them.”

Perhaps the identity of Mexico is a diverse identity and should be kept that way culturally: “The Indians of Mexico are part of our polycultural and multiracial community.”27 Overall, attempts to create a singular idea of what it means to be Mexican have failed. The rich, the poor, and the indigenous populations each attempt to retain what defines “us” and “them” regardless of the goals to create uniformity. The “culture

20 Ibid., 127.
23 Ibid.
of poverty” has become an inescapable lifestyle, one that the upper echelons of society disregard. Perhaps even the current state of violence can be seen as a symptom of a fatally divided nation as the desperately poor are driven to work in the infamous drug cartels. Economically, the gap between the rich and poor continues to grow at astounding rates in the age of globalization, the ultimate reason Mexico is such a divided nation today. The peso falls time and time again while government and police corruption has not only become commonplace, but has been accepted. Enormous mansions of the rich billionaires tower in comparison to places like Cuidad Nezahualcóyotl, the vast slum of about five million inhabitants surrounding Mexico City. The wants and needs of the public vary so much that it seems hard to appease everyone. Although democratic by name, the political system seemingly offers little change in the current situation. The Mexican government has long path to forge to pull the opposing polar ends of Mexican society back together. Overall, the Mexican has been forced to lead a life of struggle, a life of playing catch up. The first world, which Mexico has for so long hoped to be a part of, still looms just out of reach.

Bibliography


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