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COVER BY TAYLOR YINGSHI

COVER ART

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Artist Statement: This cover is meant to reflect Asia's chaos, warmth, and ebullience. The streets packed with cars, the confluence of traditional and modern architecture — for me, these are defining characteristics of this expansive and nebulous continent. As for the butterflies, they symbolize new beginnings and migration, a metaphor for both the widespread Asian diaspora and the birth of the CJA itself.

Taylor Yingshi, the artist, can be found on Instagram @yingshiart or at tayloryingshi.com.

MASTHEAD

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

APRIL 29, 2022

Columbia University, New York, NY

Dear all,

It is an honor to present our inaugural issue of the *Columbia Journal of Asia* (CJA), an initiative that has been nearly one year in the making. Volume I, Issue 1 of CJA features eighteen creative and scholarly pieces by undergraduates and recent graduates from across the United States, Europe, and Asia, presented in three sections: creative works, which include art, poetry, and translations; notes, which are brief academic essays; and articles, which are long-form research papers. These works, spanning the arts, history, political science, and literature, illuminate a plurality of Asian and diasporic narratives—of imperial domination and paths to decolonization, of assimilation and integration amidst diasporas, and of wartime and anticolonial resistance, mediated through the lens of gender. In so doing, they invite an inclusive view of Asia itself, that brings together highly-specialized research and experiences with a sense of Asia and diaspora transcending postcolonial nation-states and Cold War regional divides.

CJA is the first—and thus far, the only—undergraduate publication at Columbia to focus on Asia and the Asian diaspora. Certainly, we have come a long way since last summer, when the two of us first imagined a journal that would center Asian histories and narratives, urgently needed on a campus such as ours where these narratives are too frequently sidelined in favor of a limited canon and an exclusive view of history. We did not, however, want this journal to become a silo: a means of marginalizing Asia and separating it from 'the West,' which remained at the center while Asia was relegated to the periphery. Instead, what we have sought to foster here is an inclusive space, one that is defined not by absence—by the lack of Asian narratives in Western academic and artistic circles—but by the integral role they have played in broader global and transnational contexts, of decolonization, of globalization, of immigration and migration, among other important themes that are addressed by our authors.

This issue reflects the combined efforts of an inspiring team of undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and Columbia community members whom Suan and I are honored to have worked alongside. We would firstly like to thank our Managing Editor, Jacqueline Yu, and our Director of Peer Review, Karuna Vikram, both of whom have been with us and have believed in this journal since we were a six-person team last fall. They have been tremendous, and this issue would not have been possible without them. We are also so grateful for our amazing editorial board of Columbia and Barnard undergraduates, including our articles editors, creative editors, production editors, and outreach team; and to our graduate peer reviewers from Columbia

University, Harvard University, Yale University, New York University, and other peer institutions, who put in such hard work this past semester to provide edits on all notes and articles.

Finally, we would like to give a very special thank you to Michelle Wilson, our Digital Publishing Librarian who led our partnership with Columbia Libraries, and to the members of our faculty advisory board, whose scholarship, insights, and support were truly invaluable to us—Professors Manan Ahmed, Isabel Alonso, Neferti X.M. Tadiar, Manijeh Moradian, Jungwon Kim, and Timsal Masud.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy reading this inaugural issue of CJA, and are excited for what the future holds in store for our journal's growing community.

Mrinalini Sisodia Wadhwa CC'24 *&* Suan Lee CC'24
Co-Founders and Editors-in-Chief*, Columbia Journal of Asia*

THE NIGHT SHE WENT DANCING OR, A REIMAGINATION OF SATYAJIT RAY'S *PRATIDWANDI* (1970)

YUXIN CHEN
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She didn't need to turn around to know what was outside of her room. Even at night, the house felt like a furnace in July. She kept the door ajar, but the stuffiness in her room clung around her body with malicious intent, refusing to make an exit. As she lay in bed and faced the cracks in the white-plastered wall, she could picture her mother in that terrible white dress, still standing in the hallway, not unlike a piece of plaster on the wall that had begun to peel off.

"They've brought disrepute to my daughter," she heard her mother's voice, "really, it is better to die than to live like this…"

So Siddhartha was back, she thought nonchalantly. All had become part of the routine. Open the door—tread across the floor scattered with fractured tension (careful, unless you want your feet slit)—walk past your mother who started droning as if on cue—retire to your fortress of magazine pages and too thin a quilt—wait for the droning to start again when your brother returned from his never-successful job hunt. Nightly she danced the dance.

She danced the dance nightly since mid-February. The dance studio was in an office building on the outskirts of Calcutta, a third-floor unit once used for storage by a pharmaceutical company. She had to squeeze past the deserted cardboard boxes in the stairway every time she climbed up. The room was too cramped, with a musty smell and an odd layer of grease on the mirror. She loved it there.

Fatima, a girlfriend from college, told her about the place when she was one week into working for Ananta Sanyal. "You need to go out more, Sutapa," she said. "Try to have a little fun once in a while," she said. "Dance can take your mind off of things," she said, "it will do you good."

In the dingy restaurant that served subpar Chinese food, she looked across the table at Fatima. Fatima had some thick volumes of textbooks poking out of her canvas bag and some ink stains on her knuckles. They must be from that statistics lecture.

She looked at Fatima and thought, *this could have been me. I could have been you. I would have done so much better if I were you. You could have been me, if your father too passed away, if you too had an elder brother in medical school, if your mother too deemed his education a priority, and yours a redundancy.*

She promised Fatima that she would check out that dance place on the next day.

That was winter, which felt like decades ago. Now she found herself in front of the dance room mirror, an hour after she got off work, five bus stops away from Mr. Sanyal's office, the third time this week, the tenth time this month. She stared at her reflection, slightly distorted by the layer of grease.

Then the music started. She swayed to the music, and the floorboard creaked.

The floorboard creaked as Siddhartha stepped into her room. He never knocked, not tonight or any night.

"I went to your boss's house today," he announced to the back of her head, "I told him that you will not work anymore because you've been feeling the strain. I said that every day you return after nine and you might have a breakdown anytime. He said that he had nothing to say about it if you really felt that way. He also said that you are a smart, hard-working girl."

She couldn't help but laugh. His sentences swung back and forth between truth and lie, a tick paired with a tock, a lighter piece on top of a darker one as per the suggestions in her fashion catalog. Yes, Siddhartha did go to her boss's house today—Sanyal phoned home earlier in the afternoon and asked if she had indeed been struggling, with a tone of concern tinted by condescension. No, she would not stop working—she refused to surrender the thing that had been forced into her hands. Yes, she did return after nine every night, but it was the only thing that kept her from a breakdown. No, Sanyal wouldn't be fine with her quitting—who else would listen to his pathetic rant about his pathetic wife? Yes, Sanyal did compliment her every now and then, but not before he called her "doll" and rest his hand on her shoulder, sometimes her thigh.

On the page of the fashion catalog that she was reading just then, they said, *wear a lighter piece on top of your dark-colored staple clothes to create a layered look*. They said, *if styled wisely, the clothes that we recommend can conceal the not-so-slim parts of your body*.

She let her giggles die down and turned around. As she looked straight into her brother's eyes, she knew all too well the parts of the story that he had left out, the bad figure underneath all the layering. She knew where to press.

"How did your interview go?" she asked.

Promptly, a sheen of sweat materialized on Siddhartha's forehead. He fidgeted in the chair and edged away from the bedside lamp. At that moment, she couldn't help but think of the French windows in Mr. Sanyal's house. Sunlight would pour straight through the grand expanse of glass, and even the smallest thing could be seen. She wondered how Siddhartha must have looked in that well-lit room, on the beige sofa, an unemployed elder brother asking the boss to sack his sister, the only breadwinner in the household.

"Do you think I'm joking with you?" Siddhartha seemed properly angry now. "His wife came to our house tonight and said so many things… Does that mean nothing to you? Nothing at all? I swear, I swear that if that Sanyal dares behave badly

with you I will give him a thrashing myself… Are you not able to believe it? Sutapa, do you not believe it?"

"Sutapa, do you not believe it? Do you believe me now?" Siddhartha was dragging Badal by the collar, "Mom warned you against it. I warned you to stop seeing him. I warned him to stay away from you, I did. You two left me no choice."

Sutapa stood at the door of Badal's place and looked at the scene in front of her. Both men were covered in bruises. She was certain that Badal had a dislocated jaw. Her brother's heavy breathing and Badal's pitiful wheezes punctured the silence in the hallway time and again like a bad stapler. She was supposed to be on a date in exactly twenty minutes and she had put on her earrings and satin dress. A spring breeze blew through the hallway and she felt cold around her shoulders.

She first met Badal when he moved into a neighboring house on her street. Every time she left for work in the mornings, Badal would sit on the windowsill and whistle to her, his two long legs dangling in the air. It took her a whole month to finally overcome her nerves, look up, and meet his eyes. He gave her a beaming smile in return.

Letters started coming in shortly afterward. From the childlike writing, she learned that Badal was of the same age as she. He didn't go to college—his family couldn't afford it. His father was an electrician, and Badal learned a trick or two from him. Right now, he worked as a temp, fixing radios and bathroom lights in the downtown area.

She made sure to let Badal know that she had a broken radio herself the next day she walked past his window. Badal paid her house a visit the day after.

It was a warm Saturday afternoon in March. Her mother was taking a nap. Siddhartha was at his friends'. Sneakily, Sutapa invited Badal into her room and showed him the radio in question.

After some tinkering, the radio sizzled back to life. "I adjusted the antenna, it should be good as new," Badal whispered, then grinned, his white teeth showing.

An Elvis Presley song was playing. Badal wasn't leaving, and Sutapa didn't ask him to. They sat side by side on the bed, one tapping his feet, the other humming under her breath.

As the song drew to a close, Badal stood up, somewhat reluctantly. "I will see you tomorrow, Sutapa," he said. And she nodded with a smile.

When the whole family gathered around the table that evening, her mother grabbed the ladle, halted for a few seconds, and dropped it back into the big bowl with a loud noise.

"You brought someone home today, didn't you, Sutapa? I saw him leaving. It was that good-for-nothing vagabond from down the street… I don't see how you would fall for it, Sutapa. He knew nothing except for teasing girls. It was such a disgrace to our family name…"

Sutapa wondered exactly what was left in their family name. When Father was still alive, when the tea business wasn't yet bankrupt, they did have a sizable income and general respect attached to their family name. Now Father was buried under a tombstone, their tea estates were put into liquidation, and her own salary was the only thing that kept them from being thrown out of the house by the landlord. Their family name was a radio with a splintered antenna, and her mother was still holding it desperately in the air, trying to catch a signal.

She did not let her mother's words deter her and started going out with Badal shortly after. Her mother threw her disapproving glances when she returned. Siddhartha sometimes tailed them when they were out. She paid them no mind.

Five joyful weekends later, Sutapa found herself at Badal's door, looking at the two men in front of her. Badal's house was dimly lit. When the door was thrown open, it was as if a streak of limelight shined through. She saw two unhappy sitters for an unhappy portrait, stuck in the confines of the doorframe, ready to be captured by a mechanical eye.

The following week, she learned that Badal was captured by police for running an unlicensed business and engaging in "rowdyism." She knew too well who tipped the police. She wanted to scream, but she kept her mouth shut.

Tonight too she wanted to scream but she kept her mouth shut. Siddhartha was still fuming, still waiting for her to give some sort of response to his accusations.

Sutapa got up from her bed, walked past her brother, and stood in front of the mirror. Her bedroom mirror was smaller than that of the dance room, but it was much cleaner, without any dust or grease stuck on the surface. Through the mirror, she felt that she, too, could see the smallest things. She saw the backside of Siddhartha's head. A lock of his hair was not smoothed and poking outwards. All of a sudden, the whole conversation that she was having, the whole memory that she was recalling, the whole house where she was living, felt absurd to her.

"Brother, how will it be if I get into modeling?" she asked.

That seemed to throw Siddhartha out of kilter. "Modeling?" he seemed genuinely confused.

"It's a good profession. It pays well. These days quite a lot of people are doing it."

"Suppose they ask you to wear some ridiculous outfit?"

Aren't we all wearing some ridiculous outfit? She thought, *aren't we all trying to be something that we are not? You with your out-of-practice ingratiation in the job market. Mother with her out-of-style insistence on her "aristocratic background." Me with my out-of-town dance classes that kept me until 9 o'clock, where I'm most at myself, where I can almost, almost convince myself that it was okay even if I cannot be someone else.*

"What's wrong with that? I have a bad figure anyway."

Siddhartha stood up. His confusion visibly slipped to frustration. Sutapa caught his arm just as he was about to burst out of the room. "Calm down, brother. Follow me to the terrace," she said, "I want to show you something."

A single light bulb hung above the terrace. In the open air, the stuffiness was no more. The sweat on her skin had all but evaporated, leaving behind a hint of coolness on her collarbone. Sutapa stepped into the patch of light on the cement ground with bare feet and imagined that she was on the hardwood floor, surrounded by mirrors. For the second time that night, she threw herself into the dance moves.

"I'm learning dancing," she announced.

"When?" Siddhartha asked.

"In the evening, after office."

Siddhartha went quiet again.

As Sutapa twirled in the darkness, the nighttime cityscape and Siddartha's face alternated before her eyes, Siddhartha with his knitted brows and pursed lips, the city with its tens of thousands of windows, each an emotionless eye.

After a long stretch of silence, Siddhartha opened his mouth. "You've changed."

At that very moment, Sutapa thought of so many things. She wanted to say so many things. *Do you remember, brother*, she thought, *how we used to spend the Puja holidays in Deoghar? We were so little then. I was six and you were seven. We went to chase a bird on the first day we arrived. Do you still remember? Some birds were making the most beautiful sounds. We hadn't heard anything like it. I grabbed you by the arm and we clambered through the woods on the little hill. It was then that I had a bad fall. The slope was slippery after the rain, and I tripped. When I got myself back onto my feet, my dress was all messed up and I was covered in mud and leaves. Can you picture that? Do you remember what I did? I screamed. I threw a terrible, terrible tantrum. A flock of birds was startled and took flight from the canopies. Gone was the chance of finding that mystery bird.*

Do you remember what you did back then, Siddhartha? I bet you do not. You lay on the muddy ground right beside me, you rolled around, you laughed and you squeaked. I understood that it was your way of telling me that it was alright. It was alright to take a fall. It was alright to come out of it all dirty and unseemly. It was alright to scream, to vent, to hurl your fury like a rock.

In the many years that followed, more than once I wanted to scream as I did back then. But I am no longer six. I wear a sari instead of a frock. What I've gathered is that I've already passed the stage where it was permissible to scream when I felt like it. In the end, I am the one in the glasshouse, I am the one in the limelight, I am the one in front of ten thousand windows, ten thousand emotionless eyes. And when I scream, people would point at me. They would talk.

And instead of joining me in my wordless fury, brother, you would just purse your lips and frown at me as I scrambled in the mud. What was it that sealed your mouth and bound your limbs? Was it guilt? Was it pity? Was it your superiority intermingled with inferiority? Was it fear of acknowledging that I, too, can take everything from you, if I so choose?

"Everyone changes," in the end she simply said, "you've changed too."

21:37

YIMO CHONG
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Artist Statement

I saw her at 21:37 one spring night of 2020, near a high-end mall affiliated with the most expensive hotel in Shenzhen. Though the mall was closed, some lights remained on, illuminating the white, feminine, and elegant gypsum ladies in the display case, modelling for an American luxury brand I couldn't remember. Next to the mannequins, *she* walked by, dragging a full trashcan, not once stopping to admire or wonder at them. As her footsteps passed me and faded into the empty hallway, I stood thinking of economic growth models, white feminism, progress, civilization, "survival of the fittest," and other neoliberal miracles I learned at school—perhaps *she* didn't work as hard as the figures—yet none gave me an explanation to the question that we avoid raising in this country and around the world: is this woman the intended consequence of, a worthy sacrifice for, or a careless mistake made by economic liberalization? As affluent and educated writers of loquacious opinion pieces raise the false hope that economic, social, and political inequality will be eliminated by growth, either acknowledging that efficiency will inevitably cause inequality, or hoping the disadvantaged will be satisfied with increasing material entertainment, this woman, next to the inanimate, idealized ladies, labors in silence, unacknowledged and uninvited to the debate.

This work is the second in my series called "Progress," which contains snapshots of my personal life, offering a glimpse that gives context and complexity to the well-acclaimed liberalization of the Chinese economy. The first painting features a food delivery worker on the road at five in the morning the day after the beginning of the Spring Festival. In a time when another delivery worker injured at work can find no employer legally responsible for reimbursement, I was moved to make the piece and the series in contemplation of the supposed economic and social empowerment the neoliberal economic model brings to the people of China, especially the ones whose lived experiences are unheard of by proponents of the model.

Media: Oil painting on canvas
Size: 50cm (width) x 60 cm (height)

A COLLECTION OF POEMS: IDENTITY VERSUS FAMILY

KASHIF YAMIN CHOWDHURY
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Guilty Strings

written a year after having left Islam as my father leads the pre-iftar dua during Ramadhan, asking Allah to make me religious again.

bellies raw and throats dry
they're chanting spells at the table again.

my head swims,
they offer me up
I go,
'fill him with holy things'
'pure things'
'your things';
my father orgasms,
and everyone moans
God's name.

The Bunny Butcher

written in my university accommodation where over the phone, my mother asks about the 'halal' foods I've been eating.

slithering hand down my throat,
you slide into me.

'what
can I help you with today?',
I say,
smiling,
greens red
with rot.

The Kaguya Ritual

written after Ramadhan, ever an intense period, where I decide to craft another persona to cope with my religious, traditional parents. Took inspiration from Isao Takahata's 'The Tale of Princess Kaguya', particularly the final scenes.

I'm sending you to the moon,
away from this heart;
away from
these puppeteered parts.

and though we never wished
to be so unfree,
we'd always be un
happy,
as long as you were with me.

and so now I break
all
our bonds,
mind and body free,
the moon my witness

and thus:
I cease to be.

PAPER SNOWFLAKES

JUNG HALIM
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Now kids, drop your work on my desk, and don't forget to do your homework! Class dismissed!"

He stares at his hands, brown covered in a mess of white paper. He stares at the table, on which is a white mangled mess of stripes and curves of paper. When viewed a certain way, it somewhat looks like a bunch of snowflakes.

The other kids are going out of the room, out of school, out back into wherever they came from. He hears the teacher muttering complaints under her breath, "…have to speak English, *ang puta…"* He doesn't quite understand, but he knows that it isn't anything good.

He is just about to sneak past the teacher's desk to throw the mess away, but the teacher catches him.

"Is something the matter?" She looks at the clock.

"I don't think they're any good."

"They're fine. We'll just hang them up with the others and it'll look just like a winter wonderland."

The boy does not believe that for one moment. Why would he? They don't look anything like the pictures he's seen.

"Do I really have to submit them?"

"Yes, you really do."

He puts them on the table.

Palm trees pass by the tinted windows while the cars crawl above aged concrete. He tries to count the trees, one by one, but he gives up after twenty. Jaywalkers, buses, jeepneys, motorcycles and tricycles. There are a few other kids sitting in front, talking about school, friends, homework—things that matter, if only for now.

The car radio tunes into the same song for the fifth time in a row.

———

Someone starts to sing next door, a song he doesn't and will not understand.

Naalala ko pa…"

Home is a place of familiarity, thoughts with food and peace, of a room with a bed, a bookshelf filled with books never touched, an untidy table with paper just strewn around, and a floor that's the same state.

Mom calls, the only other voice in the house.

"Dinner's ready, come downstairs!"

"So, what did you do in school?"

"…At Ika y sasabihan…"

"Anything interesting happen?"

He stares at his bowl.

"Not really, we just made more paper snowflakes."

"Paper snowflakes again? I know exams are over, but can't they make you kids do anything more productive?"

The bowl has rice, only rice, clean and white. No sign of any red, yellow, or green. Just white.

"Do you even remember snow? We should really go visit your grandma in Korea again someday. We aren't going to live in the Philippines forever anyways, and weren't you too young to remember when you were last there? I keep telling your dad we should visit, but oh, he's too busy…"

"…ang pag-ibig ko y magbabago…"

He thinks about class, about his ruined snowflake. He wonders about how it would feel to touch a snowflake. How cold would it be? He has held an ice cube in his hands before, but only for a few seconds. It's too cold.

"I know there's been a lot of changes, and I haven't had much time for you lately, but your father is also never home, and I swear to God if I even know what he is doing…"

"…*ban ko na yo ba ba na ya…"*

He'd like to dive into a pile of snow, if it does exist, and just wade through it all, surrounded by a bunch of cold cotton, a place of comfort, ease, safety. Why would he want to climb out of the bowl—he knows the walls are too slippery, sliding down back into the white…

"…He better come home early today, or else I don't even know what I'll do…"

"…*ang baaa aa a aa a a aa…"*

White all around, spinning, spinning, he sees a man walking—a man so familiar and yet he cannot recall. He calls out and nothing happens. What did he expect? Nothing ever happens and he's going to stay with this nothing forever, and ever, and ever and ever…

"Are you listening?"

"…ang buhay ko."

He sees her sigh.

———

"…No one really listens to me. Then again, I didn't listen to my teacher when I was her age so…"

He always feels as if there are too many people in school, so many bodies in one small space, kids of all ages in their own ballet around each other. The boy wades through the crowd somehow, reaches the classroom, and tries to nap a little before class.

Soo-won and Seok-Jun arrive slightly late as they always do, but the teacher is too distracted by her phone call for anyone to really care.

He thinks it's a small classroom even if he has nothing to compare it with. There are a few chairs, tables, and the usual green blackboard. They've attempted to decorate the room for the holidays, with the Christmas lights and paper snowflakes. They all sit, passing the time, separated into their own sides: the ones who live nearby, the ones who live far, far away.

"Alright class, now open your books to page eighty-seven, we are going to be talking about erosion today…"

Some of the kids on his side whisper about how it would be winter in Korea, when they would go back and visit their real home. Their home. His home.

"So, what are you going to do when you go back?"

"I'm not sure, probably just stay in all day. It's probably going to be really cold outside, and I'd rather be wrapped in a blanket."

"Yeah, I heard it's already snowing hard back there."

Carlos, from the other side, leans in.

"So, what's snow like anyways? It looks like powdered ice."

"Oh, uh, yeah, it's really soft and squishy, and it's really sweet."

"Yeah, that's why there are people who just open their mouths and look up when it snows."

Carlos raises his eyebrows.

"Oh, stop bullshitting me."

"Who said that?"

Everyone becomes quiet.

"What is wrong with just staying? You didn't have any problems when we decided we'd live here, and now you want to fucking leave?"

"Don't swear in front of our son!"

"Look, let's just think about this after the trip. We haven't seen your mother in a while, maybe you just miss her a lot."

Mom stares at Dad, but ends up just sighing.

It is Friday, the only day of the week they eat Korean food. It is the one compromise Mom made when she gave in to learning how to cook Adobo and Sinigang.

Dad turns to the boy.

"So, how was school?"

"It was ok."

"Did you do your homework?"

"I always do it after dinner."

"Why don't we go to the basketball court?"

"Maybe not today."

"Jesus, have you seen the temperature today?"

"Yes."

"How's your Korean then?"

"It's bad."

The man sighs.

He looks at the boy directly in the eyes and says, "So, would you like to visit Korea?"

The boy looks at his father for the first time in his life. He sees a man with black hair, brown eyes, and a bit of red on his white shirt. He is short, does not have a lot of facial hair, and has brown skin. He looks tired, as if he had been trying to reach far into something, taking a long journey into uncertain lands.

———

Fold the paper in half diagonally, then fold it in half again. Have it folded in thirds, folding each third upwards towards the middle. Cut off the excess at the top, and make sure to cut at an angle. The angle you cut it at will depend on how sharp you want the edges of the snowflake to be, the higher the sharper.

Now, this is where imagination comes in. Cut away parts of the paper, first at the sides, maybe some bits at the top and bottom. Cut out triangles, squares, arcs or spirals. Whatever you cut out now will determine the way the snowflake will look when it is folded out. Cut out all the unimportant things, all the important things. Throw them out like ash falling from the sky.

———

"So, we have the final batch of snowflakes. We're going to put them up tomorrow just before the Christmas party, so be sure to come early! Class dismissed!"

The boy stares at his hands, holding a few paper snowflakes. They are not the best, nor are they even presentable, but they are still his own.

"Are you going to submit those?" The teacher comes by, worn out, but more at ease.

Everyone has already left, going all the way home. A few of the Korean kids are waiting impatiently for him, knowing that he is going to be late again.

"I think they're finished. They don't really look like actual snowflakes, but I've never seen any so…"

"Look, I haven't seen snow either, it doesn't really matter."

"But it does, I need to know what it looks like. What if it doesn't look like this? I don't want to make something fake."

The teacher looks at the boy. She thinks for what seemed like an hour, then sits down on the desk in front of him.

"It doesn't matter if it isn't accurate or not. There is no such thing as a fake snowflake, if it is a snowflake, it is a snowflake." She looks at the floor. "Look, you tried your best – that's what matters. Now get out before I make you cut some more."

He gets out of the classroom. He gets out of school. He is tired of getting out. All that is left is to go home.

———

He gets outside the airport. White speckles fall from the sky.

"Shit, I forgot how cold winter was." Dad spit onto the snow.

"Language!"

Someday the white will become beige, pale, and ivory. He will someday get used to snow, then hate snow, then eventually ignore it altogether.

But for now, the snow is still white.

TRAN DAN: SELECTED POETRY TRANSLATIONS

MAI HOANG
B.A. Candidate
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Translator's Note

After Trần Dần criticized the poetry collection of Tố Hữu, a politician—calling his magnum opus a manual collection of propaganda and leadership—Tố Hữu assembled 150 poets and party intellectuals to criticize the poet, declaring Trần Dần and likeminded writers guilty of petty bourgeoisie. In February 1956, Trần Dần was purged from the party and sent to the infamous Hanoi Prison. Though he was released after an attempted suicide, Trần Dần was suspended from the Union of Arts and Literature for the next thirty years. In other words, for most of the poet's life, his works never saw the light of day. In August 2018, I was sitting in a cafe in Saigon sipping coffee when a novel caught my eyes: *Crossroads and Lampposts* it read—after a few lines I was mesmerized. I had seldom seen Vietnamese used in such a creative thought-provoking and frankly rule-breaking way. I searched up the author's name and incredulously realized that instead of an emerging avant-garde writer, I was looking at the wikipedia entry for a 20th century radical who produced the draft fifty years before it was published. What followed was an obsessive pursuit of the elusive author's only poetry collection that led me from bookstore to bookstore across town without success. I afterwards realized that I could not find any copies because it had gone out of print long ago. Though the state had officially given Trần Dần pardon, their relationship with his poetry is still a precarious one. Fortunately, I was able to contact an Australian expatriate in Hanoi, the translator of *Crossroads and Lampposts* who had an electronic copy of the poetry collection that he shared with me.

I cry for the untraveled horizons
And cry for those who travel without horizons

I BEG all of you
let me be mute

I have been wrecked by individualism
on the brink of sorrow brink of solitude.
Brink of mist-covered lamp-posts
stars brooding in a corner of sky.

I docked right into the wrong port
no wonder my green boat lost blood

as long as there are thieves among us
we'll still lock our doors each night

I STILL TROD IN THE AFTERNOON — BLACK TEETH

DO NOT BUY MODESTIES - ABOVE THE BELT

RAINDROPS NEED NO TRANSLATION

I prosecute the blind suns
on tar-black crowds.

the more I die the more - immortal
EW?

even death won't bring me peace?

which part HURTS you?
I hurt where <<I haul from>>
LITERATURE

no one? anxious civilization — silently distributes
worries to light up light's quarters.
In the silences of tar-black alleys

Don't use mosquito repellent. Dead belladonna.
Democracy is fucked. All those good pickles ruined.

I am an exile on the desert of blank pages.

I don't acknowledge any poetic form
devoid of human sorrow - and rebellion.

WRITING FROM THE CENTER OF DESPAIR

this deadly business: living
who has ever returned from the living?

THE QUESTIONING OF THE SOUL

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"Many millions are literarily primitive folk who are treading the same paths that their ancestors trod centuries ago, and who not only have no desire for learning themselves, but in many cases regard with suspicion the introduction of schools in their communities." — DeWitt Mackenzie, *India's Problem can be Solved (1943)*

—

My *Dādā*[1] is the smartest person I know. He knows about everything I ever ask, and I ask a lot of questions. He always tells me a story before I sleep—sometimes he teaches me about *Rawalpindi*[2], sometimes about the stars in the sky, sometimes about the different animals in the forest, and sometimes even about farming. I like the story of Mohan Ji a lot.

Respect and honor. Those were the two traits *Dādā* always pointed out about Mohan Ji. Mohan Ji was a farmer and *Dādā*'s *chacha*[3]. *Dādā* explained that he not only worked hard as a farmer, but also found happiness while doing so. He tended his land with full connection to the Divine, blissfully working without fear of failure. *Dādā* explained that it was the honor and respect that Mohan Ji had for the practice of farming that allowed him to be in *Chardikala*[4].

I see that many people get dejected when the sun is out too long or the rain is not calm, but when I grow older, I hope to be different, like Mohan Ji. I hope *Dādā* is always there to teach me, I wish everyone had a *Dādā* to tell them stories like I do.

—

"Working in bliss". Working. Bliss. Something about those two words while writing the section above made me want to take a moment to separate them.

As a human I want to be in bliss; however, as I try to meditate on the experience of bliss, I usually find only short, temporary, and elusive moments.

[1] Grandfather
[2] City in Punjab
[3] Uncle
[4] Unwavering Optimism

I find bliss while walking through the trees up the path to my room. I find bliss drinking chai. I find bliss Facetiming my bubbly five-year-old cousin. But bliss through interim daily actions is different from bliss of the mind. Being in a state of bliss is hard.

In my value system, a consistent focused remembrance of the ever-expansive and all-encompassing Oneness brings bliss. The Oneness that is perfectly permeating and all-pervading, here, there, everywhere. I have felt this remembrance, this connection. Yet, it is hard. It is not difficult to achieve momentarily, but it is hard to maintain.

But work can't be blissful, right? Work is work. Work is production. Work serves to stimulate the economy and bring me sustenance as a citizen of the world. However, does sustenance truly come from my actions or the quality of my mind? I have never in my "formal" education been taught about the importance of bliss when working. Yet, it is the experience of bliss that keeps me grounded in life. It is when I'm connected to Oneness that no task seems too tall.

—

Every week *Dādā* assesses my physical strength with an arm wrestle. I never win, and according to him, the main reason I lose is that I am not drinking enough of the hot milk *Mamma*[5] gives me. *Mamma* says milk makes your bones stronger. I don't understand how.

Maybe the whiteness of the milk is what makes you strong. I've seen some bones of animals around, and they always look so lifeless and easy to crack. I wonder if I poured milk on them, if they would then be hard and strong. Does the whiteness of milk give strength to something that's already dead? Maybe not, since bones themselves are white.

I really want to be strong. I want to be ready to always stand up for others against injustices no matter the obstacle. As *Dādā* explains: Strength of the physical body must be grounded with strength of the mind. Contemplate through the lens of a saint. Embrace the spirit of a warrior.

—

As I write this, I am sitting in my childhood home for what may be the very last time. I came home from college this weekend to help my family move to our new house, and specifically, to help my dad and sisters dismantle my bed and other furniture and move it to our garage.

[5] Mother

Usually, empty spaces feel numbing. But everything about the blank walls, the open space, the eerie quietness feels like home, feels like comfort. Even in the emptiness, this space feels so full. People say home is where your family is. Maybe that is true. I'm starting to feel like home is more so where your memories are, where your imagination takes control.

I remember playing with my sister's Polly Pocket dolls in the TV room, I remember running down the stairs prompting my mom to always yell at me to slow down, I remember the countless home-cooked meals, I remember spending hours and hours playing basketball in my front driveway. I think it's curious that in these moments of reflection I only remember happiness.

All thanks to you, my beloved Guru.

—

I can't wait until I get to play *Chaupar*[6]. It's my favorite game. I love that no matter how you start the game, you can always still win. Even when everything seems to be going right, something can go wrong. You never know how much your opponent may advance, and truly you have no control over it.

Every time I feel like I am gaining momentum, my piece is captured by the opponent, and I must start again. I tend to get frustrated. *Dādā* tells me victory comes to not only those who have patience, but also those who realize it is never permanent.

Whenever I win, I am so thrilled that all my efforts paid off, but I almost immediately feel a desire to be victorious again. It's almost as if winning once is never enough, I want to win again.

Unfortunately for me, if I win, *Dādā* doesn't let me play anymore. He says you must learn to be content with both the wins and losses in life: appreciate the good for when you have it, as that helps you appreciate the bad that is also always approaching.

—

The Being of a Bird

Some move together. Some move alone.
Some flap, some flutter, some glide.

[6] A historic Indian board game

flying low to the ground, soaring high to the sky.
creeping, ambling, waddling.

How do they know
without being told?
Who lives in each flutter
each creep, each waddle?
Who does this doing?

At dawn they chirp, they whisper, they play.
They listen to one another.
Melodic presence.
They sing. They praise.

Flight is freedom.
Fear is bondage.
No flight with fear.

Take the leap.
Trust yourself for
you are He and He is you.
Jump into the sky.
Glide, Flutter, Soar.
Fly.

—

In the evening my family unwinds from the day's work. We change to something comfortable and relaxing. We trickle into our shared space to begin *Rehraas Sahib*[7]. We start together, anyone of us leading and the rest following. We sit cross-legged, fold our hands, smile, and begin. Breathing, praying, meditating. We focus our consciousness on Oneness. At the end, *Dādā* sometimes will speak upon the Guru's teachings.

Each day we pick a different stanza to discuss. Today, *Dādā* focuses on the words of Guru Arjan Dev Ji[8] within *Rehraas* written to be recited in *Raag Goojaree*—a raag that is historically focused on the value of time and the value of the present moment.

[7] Evening prayer for Sikhs
[8] The fifth Sikh Guru.

Dādā explains that the Guru questions: O mind, why and what are you so afraid of? When each person is sustained by Oneness. Just look at the flamingo.

Dādā turns to me and asks, "Have you paid close attention to one before?"

I shake my head no and start to think about flamingos. I love watching them walk, their long legs make it seem like they stand through the water, never sinking. Their necks are curled. Their beaks point down as if they yearn to embrace humility or perhaps, they face down as a sign of respect. Oh, and the pink is so beautiful.

Dādā continues, the Guru explains that the flamingos fly hundreds of miles, leaving their young behind. The Guru questions: Who feeds those young flamingos, who teaches them to now feed themselves? What force enables them to move through the world?

Dādā looks directly at me and says, "You don't ever have to be afraid; even if you are all alone, He is here, there, everywhere. For the Divine is in you, *Putar*[9]."

—

This life is both heaven and hell. It is delightful, yet it is cruel. We feel joy, yet we feel anguish. We have meaningful relationships, yet we experience betrayal. In this life, we are easily tricked by the illusion of materiality.

Dādā reminds me that our house is not even our home. He says, "Even as we abide and work within the reality that we are placed, we must not forget its inherent fallacies. Think of waves:

From the water rise the waves and from the waves, the water rises. But both are referred to with different names. Doesn't the wave exist in the water, and the water exists in the wave?

We are not even a wave, but just a drop. A drop in that ever-expansive ocean. But as a drop, we are as a part of that One as the One is a part of us."

So where should we go to live? I ask. He laughs, gently touches my cheeks, and smiles.

"Putar, don't worry, home is everywhere. We still have individual responsibilities in this material world. We have a family to be a part of, and people to help and care for. While we can choose to perhaps remove ourselves from worldly obligations

[9] Loving name for son

completely, that wouldn't necessarily be kind to those around us. Instead, how can we train our mind so meticulously so as to live without forgetting the home of our heart?"

—

Whenever *Dādā* shares his wisdom, I always search for an answer, a truth, a goal for myself to be a better human. What I fail to understand is that the process of "making sense" is actually a chain on my ability to think. I try to conceive truth through frameworks only valid within one conception of reality. A reality that does not allow for any other truths to exist. A reality where the protagonists are Certainty and Validity.

What wisdom is is an emotional response—a heartful understanding, feeling, being. Wisdom is something that is affect-based. In that, every individual is affected differently. When *Dādā* shares, I feel him. I feel his joy. I feel his compassion. I feel his frustration. I feel his anger. But that feeling might not even be what he intended to share.

With that is a need to realize that what is more important is not truth, but the truth that works for you and to encourage you to continue along your path.

—

I get worried easily. It begins while I sleep, continues as I wake up, as I get dressed, as I walk out, as I talk to others. Worries consume me.

My *Papa*[10] never really seems fazed. He lives his life content and at his own pace. He doesn't bother his brain with what he calls "just life". He smiles, he gets up, he moves on.

He laughs and shares with me the words of the Guru.

"rē mūrē tū hōshai ras lapatāiō."
(Rey) o (moorrey) fool (too) you are (lapttaaio = clinging) engrossed in (hochhai = trivial) transitory (ras-i) pleasures.

He says, working hard towards a goal is important. In fact, it can be rewarding. But remember, these goals, these forms of potential fulfillment, exist only within a conceived conception of our world.

This is hard for me to understand, especially when I feel dictated by worldly demands.

[10] Father

I feel such joy, such excitement, such pride in my individual journey.
But to understand why this *ras* falls short, why this *ras* is only a trick: I experience the *ras* of the mind.

The pleasure of living within this world of duality with a non-dual spirit.
To be fortunate enough to have a chance to go back Home.
To be the Ocean.
To be with One. To be One.

—

I love Chaah. She's my favorite person in our *pind*[11]. She is kind, loving, and fierce. What amazes me about her is that she is not only incredibly smart, but also humble. In school, she always knows what to say and how to say it.

I don't know why Chaah likes me, but she's been my friend for as long as I can remember. These days, school doesn't excite me as much as it once did. I find that I get more out of my time when I spend it with *Dādā*, running around, or playing my *Dilruba*[12]. Chaah is the only one who seems to get that.

I don't like having to compete in class. *Dādā* says knowledge is only a figment of someone's imagination. But I know my teacher and *Dādā* wouldn't agree. Knowledge is what my teacher says and that is that.

Chaah recognizes that we all don't learn in the same way: knowledge is free-flowing. If we listen to what our heart desires, we will without a doubt learn. We will not only absorb what is around us, but also learn more about ourselves. To pursue knowledge is useless when knowledge must actually choose you. The knowledge from within has to find you for you to even have a chance to find it.

Without any hesitation, Chaah sticks up for me in school and says, "Himat Singh, if anyone says anything to you, you let me know, I got your back." Chaah is a master at *Gatka*[13], so I wouldn't mess with her.

—

To be a Warrior of God.

[11] Village
[12] Classical Instrument invented by Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth Sikh Guru
[13] Sikh Martial Art

I entered a restaurant with my friends last weekend. As usual, when I enter, I do my glance. I look around to make sure no one is looking at me a second too long. Once I feel safe enough, I enter.

When I first came to this country, where I seem to be a man who is out of place, I decided if I was to be anything I would be myself. If I embrace myself for my own beauty others will look past their own prejudices and see that too.

It set out to be more of a challenge than I expected.

I walk a path where I make a commitment to be ready to jump and protect no matter the consequence. I abide by a code of conduct that mandates me to give myself up for the protection of others without even a thought of fear.

My uniform makes me stand out. This ease of identification should place comfort, safety, and security at the hearts of those around me. My identity should serve as a tool of love, compassion, and peace.

Instead, sometimes I tend to find myself lost. This strange world has no clue. I tell myself I am okay with it, and sometimes I truly am. I don't blame the people around me, I just can feel disheartened. I cross paths with people and wish they knew just a little, a little about me, a little about my Gurus. They seem like they have the time to know a little about everything, yet somehow my experience as a human is lost within their conceptions of "general" knowledge.

In the restaurant as I walk towards the bathroom, a tall, heavy-built gentleman approaches me quickly. My immediate reaction is, "Oh now what." But as the man rushes over he says, "Hey, you are a Sikh right?"

As I start to utter a form of an affirmation, he interrupts me and says, "Can I give you a hug?"

He shares about how a Sikh family who owned the gas station next to his house in Rhinebeck fed him every day and took care of him through a tough time. He says, "Now every time I see a Warrior of God, I have to say hello."

I smile, hug him back, and thank my Guru. For I see my Guru within this gentleman and with that my purpose seems clear once again. I think to myself...

I am in service to all.

I am above no one.
I am nothing.
I am a vibration.
I am a light.
I am an energy.
I am a *Sant*.
I am a *Sapai*.[14]

And with my head bowed, and my hands folded together. I silently mutter to myself.

I am a Warrior of God.

—

[14] Sant Sapai can be translated to Saint Soldier (a phrase coined by the sixth Sikh Guru, Guru Hargobind Ji)

ANALYZING BARRIERS IN EXPANDING MULTILINGUAL INDIAN SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

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Scientific experts such as David Eagleman and Neil deGrasse Tyson have become household names due to their ability to translate complex research concepts into everyday language. This transmission of knowledge from science professionals to non-experts is formally known as "science communication," and it can take place through audio, visual, literary, and other forms of content sharing. While the principle of breaking down complex topics into easily understandable tidbits has existed for many thousands of years, the impact and reach of science communication as we know it today have especially become important in the most recent decades.[1] Within the United States, science communicators are most likely to be individuals with an advanced degree (e.g. Master's, MD, Ph.D.) in one of the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields who are affiliated with universities, research centers, and other academic institutions.

As English has been adopted as the primary language of higher education—and the United States is a driving force of Westernized science curriculum—the expansion of science communication within North America and beyond has primarily been conducted in English as well. However, in many South American, Asian, and African countries, English is only one of many widely spoken languages, and STEM professionals often learn English as their second language. English's use in international communication has fostered the impact of science outreach, but it has also furthered sociocultural disparities locally. This is especially visible in India, where English maintains linguistic domination even though there are over a dozen national languages. Analyzing barriers in expanding multilingual science communication within India allows us to understand how we can outline future recommendations to empower the general public through promoting wider science accessibility.

Since the middle of the twentieth-century, English has been designated as the "international language of science."[2] The rationale was that English could promote global dissemination of scientific knowledge—a common tongue that was promoted for the sake of unity and that proved more efficient than translation itself. However, in the following decades, English has often been used in an opposing, detrimental

[1] "Introduction to Science Communication," Newcastle University Library, accessed February 7, 2022, https://libguides.ncl.ac.uk/sciencecommunication.
[2] Christine Tardy, "The Role of English in Scientific Communication: Lingua Franca or Tyrannosaurus Rex?," *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 3, no. 3 (July 2004): 247-269, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2003.10.001.

manner, with some scholars painting the analogy of English as a Tyrannosaurus rex that powerfully "gobbles up" and dominates other languages with burgeoning academic potential.[3]

In India, the use of English stemmed from colonization. During the British crown's rule from 1858 to 1947, native residents were forced to learn English to align themselves with colonial standards of being "civilized." The British rulers' view was that "the new policy of English and Western education would eliminate darkness and liberate the Indians from the age-old enslavement of their tyrannical traditions."[4] William Bentinck, the former Governor-General of India, set into motion an education resolution that "all the funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone," and the ripple effects of this time period can be seen in the current system as well.[5]

When a nationwide census was conducted in 2001, the government announced that thirty Indian languages each had more than one million speakers. Additionally, there were 122 languages that each claimed at least 10,000 speakers. From this observation stems a well-known saying that the linguistic landscape of India is such that "the language spoken [...] changes every few kilometers, just like the taste of the water."[6] With this linguistic richness in mind, Indian scholars recommend that instead of naming any one particular language as the national language, "it makes more sense to invest in the development of other regional languages and thus preserve India's multiculturalism through multilingualism."[7] English has been informally named India's language for science, but less than twelve percent of the country's citizens are able to speak and write the language.[8] There is a fine line between the use of English for easy utility and the use of English to diminish the cultural significance of regional languages. This disparity is what inspired Indian scientist Kollegala Sharma to create an entirely Kannada language podcast, as approximately seventy percent of Kannada speakers cannot understand science content in English.[9] Thus, English cannot be the only agent of science communication for empowering a large majority of the population at the local level.

There are many challenges in expanding Indian science communication by translating English-based science into vernacular languages. Concerns include time

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[3] Ibid.
[4] Syed A. Rahim, "Language as Power Apparatus: Observations on English and Cultural Policy," *World Englishes* 5, no. 2-3 (July 1986): 231-239, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.1986.tb00729.x.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Hari Narayan, "India, a Land of Many Tongues," *The Hindu*, August 7, 2017, https://www.thehindu.com/thread/arts-culture-society/india-a-land-of-many-tongues/article19445187.ece.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Harini Barath, "Indian Initiatives Aim to Break Science's Language Barrier," *Nature News*, June 10, 2019, https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-01815-1.
[9] Janani Hariharan, "The Languages of Science (Las Lenguas De La Ciencia)," STEM and Culture Chronicle, December 17, 2020, https://medium.com/stem-and-culture-chronicle/the-languages-of-science-d5ca7cc832c9.

constraints, linguistic feasibility, and apprehension surrounding stigma, among others. Indian scientists are often frustrated with the lack of general resources and support from national and local governments, and since the majority of STEM professionals have limited time available outside of research duties, they deprioritize multilingual science communication. If public officials who lack an expert background try to represent the face of the science community (as seen during the current pandemic), information transmission becomes insufficient: "communicating with laypeople is no trivial task and requires motivation, time, and communication skills."[10] Expecting scientists to go above and beyond without adequate support is incredibly unfair and shifts the burden without actually having any true impact.

Scientists are also apprehensive because of the possibility of making errors while translating resources or science articles into languages other than English. Most English-speaking Indian scientists are also native speakers of at least one regional language, but that does not guarantee that they will be able to convey their scientific expertise in their native language. Discussion of topics such as HIV/AIDS transmission and mental health is already surrounded by stigma, and scientists are often hesitant about whether their presentation skills will convey the same level of empathy and openness that they could easily share when speaking in English. Using a slightly different term in place of another while translating could seem like a small error, but if it takes place in an emotionally sensitive discussion, it could unintentionally misinform and even hurt community members.

Additionally, scientists need to create accommodations for their STEM expertise in their native languages by adopting or fashioning new terminology. For example, modern science terms such as "metabolism" do not have direct translations to regional languages, but Abhishek Chari, a science communicator and native speaker of the South Indian language Tamil, utilized the word's Greek etymology (*metaballein* meaning "to change") to present "valarchithai" in Tamil (combining *valar* meaning "to grow" and *chithai* meaning "to disperse") as an equivalent term. Although the term "valarchithai" itself is not scientific, it becomes scientific through the manner that Chari utilizes it. Chari shared that the "agglutinative (putting multiple words together) nature of the Tamil language came to [his] rescue," illustrating regional languages' "fluid and adaptable" nature even if the lexicon can be scientifically archaic.[11] While time-consuming, taking the initiative to assimilate English jargon into these languages enables more timely information dissemination. Recently, for instance, COVID-19 informational flyers with a mix of English terms translated into Telugu phrases were distributed by healthcare workers. In the midst of the public health crisis, the

[10] Hans Peter Peters, Sharon Dunwoody, Joachim Allgaier, Yin-Yueh Lo, and Domonique Brossard, "Public Communication of Science 2.0," *EMBO Reports* 15, no. 7 (June 2014): 749-753, https://doi.org/10.15252/embr.201438979.
[11] Harini Barath, "Indian Initiatives…".

translation allowed non-English-speaking elderly citizens to understand crucial hygienic practices.

Furthermore, science communicators can struggle to balance direct translation and cultural context. If a scientist's mother tongue is a South Indian language but they grew up in one of the northern Indian states, they may not understand certain cultural references the same way someone who was born and raised in southern India may know. This can lead to a loss of underlying cultural content while communicating with native speakers. For example, there is an important alternative medical system known as Ayurveda that is especially popular among South Indian residents. If a scientist had not been acclimated to a community that practiced Ayurvedic traditions, they may struggle to understand the significance of Ayurvedic home care remedies used by many Indians during the COVID-19 pandemic. Maria Radloff of the National Ayurvedic Medical Association writes that the "true meaning of Ayurveda resides in its native language," and if a scientist is not able to fully grasp the cultural context surrounding Ayurveda's linguistic history, they may have a biased outlook.[12]

While expanding science communication to multilingual communities locally can seem like a daunting task, there are many small-scale action items that are important for motivating broader progress. One example is how science communicators such as Abhishek Chari and Kollegala Sharma are taking advantage of accessible media platforms such as podcasts and Instagram to directly connect with receptive younger demographic groups.[13] Blogs, podcasts, and interview series are increasing in popularity as it is easier to release multiple translated versions of short episodes or adopt captions in different languages through these avenues. These grassroots methods are more convenient than traditional platforms such as television media which require more production resources and financial investments. Furthermore, passionate youth listeners and viewers also play a unique role in science communication efforts as they are able to (1) pressure policymakers about current scientific needs, (2) connect with role models, and (3) amplify awareness by sharing with family, friends, and peers—all through their everyday, native languages.[14]

At the academic level, Indian scientists need to continue advocating for publication journals and conferences to "compile reviews of research [including] speakers of a variety of languages so that important work isn't overlooked."[15] English publication journals set the tone for article citations and international research

[12] Maria Radloff, "Sanskrit: The Language of Ayurveda," *National Ayurvedic Medical Association*, September 19, 2019, https://www.ayurvedanama.org/articles/2019/9/19/sanskrit-the-language-of-ayurveda.
[13] Melissa C. Márquez and Ana Maria Porras, "Science Communication in Multiple Languages Is Critical to Its Effectiveness," *Frontiers in Communication* 5, no. 22 (May 2020), https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2020.00031.
[14] "Introduction to Science Communication."
[15] Ben Panko, "English Is the Language of Science. That Isn't Always a Good Thing," *Smithsonian.com*, January 2, 2017, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/english-language-science-can-cause-problems-180961623/.

collaboration, emphasizing multilingualism at the heart of science dissemination can trickle down to local efforts as well.

Last but not least, Indian graduate-level institutions must concretely embed language courses into their curricula. Within the United States, for instance, medical schools have adopted language courses so that training physicians will be able to communicate with Spanish and Mandarin-speaking patients within predominantly minority communities, yet this has not translated into traditional science graduate pathways. Gaining scientific expertise through a second language should be promoted among Indian students to allow more fluid communication later in their future careers.

Overall, the special sociocultural context within India needs to be taken into account when understanding how to expand inclusive community engagement. The methods of empowering members of the general public are different from region to region, yet there are many underlying issues in common. It is important to note, however, that while promoting multilingual science communication begins at the ground level with individual scientists' efforts, the detailed barriers can only be overcome through the support of academic institutions, community members, and government officials. Multilingual science approaches will not only be able to strengthen Indian citizens' belief in science but also set the tone for global science communication efforts.

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COVER GIRLS: SOUTH ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S VULNERABILITY TO BODY DISSATISFACTION, ARISING FROM CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN WESTERN APPEARANCE-BASED MEDIA

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Background and Motive

Access and exposure to media are faster and easier than ever, with leaps in technology that increasingly import media and its psychological impacts into niches of everyday life. In parallel, there's been increasing research into the negative impact of visual appearance-based media on self-objectification amongst female viewers. Studies find that exposure to *appearance-based media* (e.g., adverts, television, cinema, and magazines) featuring women in scarce clothing[1] or suggestive positions[2] primes women to feel self-conscious, access the appearance-based aspects of their self-image,[3] and at least partially believe their value to arise from their bodies.[4] Individual factors can make a woman more vulnerable to body dissatisfaction following exposure to appearance-based media. Inman et al.[5] found that these factors include (1) increased exposure to social comparison, (2) believing one's value to come from appearance, and (3) suffering from generally low body esteem. These three preconditions prime female participants to feel threatened and predict an even bigger drop in self-esteem following exposure to media images of thin female models.

Interestingly, these three factors are common amongst South Asian American women, who often experience social comparison,[6] appearance-based teasing and

[1] Jennifer Stevens Aubrey et al., "A Picture Is Worth Twenty Words (about the Self): Testing the Priming Influence of Visual Sexual Objectification on Women's Self-Objectification," *Communication Research Reports* 26, no. 4 (2009): pp. 271-284, https://doi.org/10.1080/08824090903293551.
[2] R. M. Calogero, S. Tantleff-Dunn, and J. K. Thompson, "Objectification Theory: An Introduction.," *Self-Objectification in Women: Causes, Consequences, and Counteractions.*, 2011, pp. 3-21, https://doi.org/10.1037/12304-001.
[3] Jennifer Stevens Aubrey et al., "A Picture Is Worth…".
[4] K.Y. Kawamura, "Body Image among Asian Americans," *Encyclopedia of Body Image and Human Appearance*, 2012, pp. 95-102, https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-12-384925-0.00039-0.
[5] Mary Inman, Anna Snyder, and Kelvin Peprah, "Religious-Body Affirmations Protect Body Esteem for Women Who Base Self-Worth on Appearance or Others' Approval," *Mental Health, Religion & Culture* 19, no. 1 (February 2016): pp. 98-111, https://doi.org/10.1080/13674676.2015.1124634.
[6] K.Y. Kawamura, "Body Image…".

commentary,[7] and objectification.[8] These findings suggest that South Asian Americans constitute a subgroup of women with high vulnerability to low esteem and body dissatisfaction following exposure to appearance-based media. For this paper, the term "South Asian" is used to refer to the culture and peoples associated with countries in the Indian Subcontinent (e.g., Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka). While this group is heterogeneous,[9] it still bears shared cultural norms arising from a collective past as shared territory under the same governance.[10]

Mumford et al. (1991) found that traditional (i.e., culture-conforming in attire and practice) South Asian girls living in white-majority UK neighborhoods had higher rates of maladaptive eating attitudes than non-traditional South Asian British peers, but similar rates compared to peers living in Pakistan.[11] This finding suggests that Pakistani (South Asian) culture had a greater negative impact on the participants' body esteem than did British culture from a white-majority neighborhood. Therefore, cultural aspects of South Asian identity and lifestyle may predispose women to low body esteem even outside of their exposure to appearance-based media. The intersection between consequences of South Asian cultural practices and exposure to Western media may compound to put South Asian American women at heightened vulnerability compared to their white peers.

Throughout this paper, I will be looking at cultural aspects and experiences that make American appearance-based media an example of a Western cultural phenomenon with a greater negative impact on the psychological state of South Asian American women than on their white American peers. The consequences of this heightened effect include low body esteem, self-objectification, and maladaptive eating habits.[12] In general, while Asian Americans make up the fastest-growing ethnic group

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[7] Matthew Hodes, Cheryl Jones, and Hugh Davies, "Cross-Cultural Differences in Maternal Evaluation of Children's Body Shapes," *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 19, no. 3 (1996): pp. 257-263, https://doi.org/10.1002/(sici)1098-108x(199604)19:3<257::aid-eat4>3.0.co;2-l.

[8] Henrike Donner, "One's Own Marriage': Love Marriages in a Calcutta Neighbourhood," *South Asia Research* 22, no. 1 (2002): pp. 79-94, https://doi.org/10.1177/026272800202200104.

[9] M. A Kennedy et al., "Asian Body Image Satisfaction: Ethnic and Gender Differences across Chinese, Indo-Asian, and European-Descent Students," *Eating Disorders* 12, no. 4 (2004): pp. 321-336, https://doi.org/10.1080/10640260490521415.

[10] Maninder Sangar and Julia Howe, "How Discourses of Sharam (Shame) and Mental Health Influence the Help-Seeking Behaviours of British Born Girls of South Asian Heritage," *Educational Psychology in Practice* 37, no. 4 (2021): pp. 343-361, https://doi.org/10.1080/02667363.2021.1951676.

[11] David Mumford, Andrew Whitehouse, and Margaret Platts, "Sociocultural Correlates of Eating Disorders among Asian Schoolgirls in Bradford," *British Journal of Psychiatry* 158, no. 2 (1991): 222-28. doi: 10.1192/bjp.158.2.222.

[12] Eileen L. Zurbriggen et al., "Report of the APA Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls," American Psychological Association (American Psychological Association, 2007), https://www.apa.org/pi/women /programs/girls/report; Jennifer Stevens Aubrey et al., "A Picture Is Worth…"; Amy Slater and Marika Tiggemann, "Media Exposure, Extracurricular Activities, and Appearance-Related Comments as Predictors of Female Adolescents' Self-Objectification," *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (2014): pp. 375-389, https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684314554606; Leah Boepple and J. Kevin Thompson, "A Content Analytic Study of Appearance Standards for Women of Color in Magazines.," *Psychology of Popular Media Culture* 7, no. 3 (2018): pp. 264-273, https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000136.

in America,[13] they are still vastly overlooked in psychological research,[14] especially in research about women's psychological health and body esteem, which tends to emphasize or use majority-white participants.[15] By investigating how the objectifying effect of appearance-based media on women (and the subsequent psychological consequences that follow as a result) varies across races, I will demonstrate the need for increased research into the body esteem and psychological health of South Asian women. This is crucial because South Asian women tend to display below-average help-seeking behavior and need more support than their white peers. [16]

Media and Women's Body Esteem

To understand the psychological damage that appearance-based media can inflict on women, one needs to understand Objectification Theory, defined by Calogero et al. as the viewing of women's bodies as objects that exist for others, to be controlled, defined, and used by others for their own needs. [17] Objectification is induced and proliferated by stimuli like interpersonal encounters and visual media. By definition, objectification considers women as instruments for the gain of others—often for the pleasure and service of men. Over time, repeated experiences of being objectified can socialize women to see their value stored in appearance or in the function they serve to others, which lowers self-esteem.

American women often repeatedly experience objectification through real-life, appearance-based media. Using a qualitative study of print media in America, Stankiewicz & Rosselli found that on average, around 52% of advertisements featuring women portray them as sexual objects. [18] This statistic rises to 76% when only considering advertisements in men's magazines. Aubrey et al. found that after looking at real magazine pictures of models in provocative clothing, women had more appearance-based comments, but fewer positive comments to make about themselves. [19] The magazines had an objectifying effect on participants and socialized them to internalize outsiders' perspectives of themselves as objects, i.e., it encouraged participants to *self-objectify.*[20] Repeated experiences of objectification socialize females

[13] Abby Budiman and Neil G. Ruiz, "Key facts about Asian origin groups in the U.S.," Pew Research Center, Pew Research Center, April 29, 2021, https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/04/29/key-facts-about-asian-origin-groups-in-the-u-s/.
[14] K.Y. Kawamura, "Body Image…".
[15] Kayoko Yokoyama, "The Double Binds of Our Bodies," *Women & Therapy* 30, no. 3-4 (2007): pp. 177-192, https://doi.org/10.1300/j015v30n03_13.
[16] Sangar and Howe, "How Discourses…".
[17] Calogero, Tantleff-Dunn, and Thompson, "Objectification Theory...".
[18] Julie M. Stankiewicz and Francine Rosselli, "Women as Sex Objects and Victims in Print Advertisements," *Sex Roles* 58, no. 7-8 (2008): pp. 579-589, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-007-9359-1.
[19] Jennifer Stevens Aubrey et al., "A Picture Is Worth…".
[20] Amy Slater and Marika Tiggemann, "Media Exposure, Extracurricular Activities, and Appearance-Related Comments as Predictors of Female Adolescents' Self-Objectification," *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (2014): pp. 375-389, https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684314554606.

over time to value women based on appearance and usefulness to others.[21] Therefore, women who repeatedly self-objectify may come to see their bodies as *"objects of others' desires,"* instead of modes for their expression and autonomy. [22]

Continuing their in-depth study of objectification in women, Calogero et al. argue that the wider consequences of pronounced objectification are twofold. [23] Firstly, it fragments the subject's identity into a collection of traits subject to evaluation— a divide-and-conquer tactic that makes the subject increasingly vulnerable to psychological distress and anticipative of external evaluation. Secondly, it underemphasizes the subject's intentions, ambitions, and concerns, while putting greater emphasis on the desires and opinions of others. This indirectly frames the subject as an instrument beholden to the whims of *others* and lowers self-esteem. Thus, objectification is a powerful tool for sociocultural control over women's actions, ambitions, and intentions. Psychological consequences of this lack of control include maladaptive eating attitudes, poor self-image, and appearance-anxiety.[24]

The effect of appearance-based media on women's body esteem and self-image is subject to variation in an individual's personality and environment. In particular, a 2016 observational study found that two groups of women are most negatively influenced by appearance-based media: (1) those who already show body dissatisfaction before exposure, and (2) those who measure their value based on appearance and others' approval.[25] Through cultural practices and experiences, South Asian women regularly experience appearance-based commentary, are subject to social comparison, and are more vulnerable to appearance-based media. In this paper, we will take a closer look at South Asian American experiences and practices that heighten psychological vulnerability to appearance-based media, including (1) social comparison, (2) cultural conflict with western beauty ideals, and (3) prevalent objectification of South Asian women. Through this examination, I will argue that South Asian American women are at an above-average risk of low esteem and self-objectification, which has negative consequences for psychological health.

Asian Women in American Media

Appearance-based media also differs in the representation of women from different racial groups; Asian American women are under-represented or represented with different stereotypes than peers from other races are. Boepple & Thompson analyzed the visual representation (i.e., photographs) of women in popular, American, women's fashion magazines. [26] They found that amongst women presented, only 0.2% were dark-skinned Asians (judged to all be South Asian)— far below the population of

[21] Amy Slater and Marika Tiggemann, "Media Exposure…".
[22] Zurbriggen et al., "Report of the APA…", 2.
[23] Calogero, Tantleff-Dunn, and Thompson, "Objectification Theory...".
[24] Amy Slater and Marika Tiggemann, "Media Exposure…".
[25] Inman, Snyder, and Peprah, "Religious-Body Affirmations…".
[26] Boepple and Thompson, "A Content Analytic Study…".

South Asians in America. A total of 2.4% of women photographed overall were Asian, though a whopping 85% of them were light-skinned, 100% had facial features smaller than the average for Asians, and 100% had long straight hair. This homogeneity suggests stricter standards for the appearance of Asian women compared to peers from other races. Furthermore, the physical traits that were more frequent were interpreted as more conforming to white beauty standards, such as fair skin, small features, and straight hair. Lastly, most appearances of Asian women were related to advertisements and editorials emphasizing clothing and make-up, which leads Boepple & Thompson to theorize that there's a higher emphasis on the appearance and styling of Asian women, especially compared to white peers.

Furthermore, American television tends to portray women of color infrequently, and as "exotic, passive, or sexual objects."[27] Therefore, appearance-based media bears different messages for and can have different effects on women depending on race. Overall, this limited and skewed representation can exacerbate both racial teasing and internal conflict with western beauty ideals amongst South Asian American women.

South Asian American Practices and Experiences

Social Comparison through Racial Teasing

Women who determine their value through appearance and the approval of others are more vulnerable to low body esteem following exposure to appearance-based media of thin models.[28] Slater and Tiggemann affirm this theory by arguing that self-objectification is largely exacerbated during puberty because it's a time when women are increasingly *"looked at, commented on, and evaluated by others."*[29] In other words, appearance-based commentary and social comparison can increase women's vulnerability to poor self-esteem following exposure to appearance-based media. These conditions can stem from interpersonal interactions that emphasize appearance or objectify women.

Appearance-based comments of any kind (even positive) prime women to feel self-conscious and objectified because they frame themselves as an object to be looked at and evaluated.[30] However, negative comments and teasing are more strongly associated with body dissatisfaction, maladaptive eating practices, and psychological distress, amongst adults and adolescents alike.[31]

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[27] K.Y. Kawamura, "Body Image…", 99.
[28] Kathy Wilcox and James D. Laird, "The Impact of Media Images of Super-Slender Women on Women's Self-Esteem: Identification, Social Comparison, and Self-Perception," *Journal of Research in Personality* 34, no. 2 (2000): pp. 278-286, https://doi.org/10.1006/jrpe.1999.2281; Inman, Snyder, and Peprah, "Religious-Body Affirmations…".
[29] Amy Slater and Marika Tiggemann, "Media Exposure…".
[30] Zurbriggen et al., "Report of the APA…"
[31] Amy Slater and Marika Tiggemann, "Media Exposure…", 377.

Compared to other cultures, Asian culture tends to emphasize teasing and appearance-based commentary as a means by which to control and discipline young children. [32] This is one factor that predisposes women to high psychological vulnerability following exposure to appearance-based media. Like other collectivist cultures, Asian culture generally deemphasizes the individual self in an attempt to prioritize overall societal harmony. In a report studying body image amongst Asian Americans, Kawamura explains that Asian culture traditionally views the female body as an extension of the family's outward-facing reputation. As a result, Asian American women are under more pressure (compared to white American women or men in general) to maintain a *"perfect"* appearance that will attract respectable suitors. [33] Moreover, Asian American parents often resort to shame, criticism, and disapproval to pressure their daughters into changing and maintaining a certain physical appearance.

Unlike their white American peers, South Asians in America experience appearance-based comments about physical features that are ethnically distinct from the dominant group (i.e., the white beauty ideal).[34] This phenomenon is called *racial teasing* and results in negative affect and psychological turmoil that increases vulnerability to psychological challenges like self-objectification. Racial teasing makes its subjects increasingly aware of, sensitive about, and perhaps even ashamed of their appearance— framing it as a source of trauma and pain. A 1997 survey amongst college-aged women found that compared to white peers, South Asian Canadian women all wanted lighter skin. Darker women had an even stronger desire to be fairer.[35] Reddy & Crowther argue that these findings highlight the internalization of western beauty standards, which prime self-consciousness and body dissatisfaction amongst women of color contrast this ideal.[36] This body dissatisfaction is exacerbated by the aforementioned infrequent and fair-skewed representation of South Asian women in American magazines.[37] The relationship between internalizing white beauty standards and feeling dissatisfied with ethnically distinct physical traits could explain why racial teasing is correlated with maladaptive eating attitudes (exacerbated by exposure to appearance-based media).

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[32] K.Y. Kawamura, "Body Image…".
[33] Ibid, 96.
[34] Sheethal D. Reddy and Janis H. Crowther, "Teasing, Acculturation, and Cultural Conflict: Psychosocial Correlates of Body Image and Eating Attitudes among South Asian Women.," *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 13, no. 1 (2007): pp. 45-53, https://doi.org/10.1037/1099-9809.13.1.45.
[35] S. Sahay and N. Piran, "Skin-color preferences and body satisfaction among South Asian-Canadian and European-Canadian female university students," J Soc Psychol 137, no. 2 (1997): pp. 161 – 171, https://doi:10.1080/00224549709595427.
[36] Reddy and Crowther, "Teasing, Acculturation…".
[37] Boepple and Thompson, "A Content Analytic Study…".

Cultural Conflict with Western Beauty Standards

Studies disagree on whether or not internalizing a thin-ideal standard produces low body esteem and maladaptive eating habits amongst women. On one hand, many studies *only* look at the effect that the media of *thin* women has on female viewers' body esteem. [38] A controlled experiment by Roberts & Good found that looking at media of heavier women can even increase women's self-esteem, by making them feel thinner and therefore closer to the western ideal. [39] On the other hand, a multivariate analysis of a survey conducted by Reddy and Crowther found that internalizing the thin-ideal beauty standard isn't significantly related to body esteem or eating habits, but that *cultural conflict* with this western ideal *does* correlate with both low body esteem and maladaptive eating. [40] Cultural conflict is the tension between two diverse cultures— in this case, the tension between individualist, American dominant culture, versus the collectivist culture of South Asia. This definition is borrowed from the work of Reddy & Crowther, who find that cultural conflict leads to cognitive dissonance, psychological distress, and negative affect.[41]

We have already discussed how western beauty ideals are unrealistic or elusive for women of color who have distinct, ethnically-defined physical features. This is one source of cultural conflict between the standard of beauty within racially distinct cultures like South Asian culture, versus that of western cultures (propagated in western appearance-based media). Another factor arises in a 1996 field study conducted by Hodes et al., which found that 6 in 19 South Asian mothers were worried about their children's body shape— far more than mothers of other races. [42] Mothers were more openly concerned about the appearance of their daughters than that of their sons. The mothers surveyed had relatively similar distributions of weights and body types within each racial group, suggesting that their differences in evaluation didn't come from differences in their own bodies, but from a difference in their cultural values and practices. Interestingly, South Asian mothers preferred for their children to have a heavier weight and larger frame than did white or black mothers surveyed, suggesting a conflict in body preferences that falls under the larger umbrella of cultural conflict.

Parental preference and attitude have a sizable impact on children's development. Mothers directly influence their children's appearances via feeding practices, health-based interventions (e.g., diets, clinic visits, medication, etc.), and direct communication (including teasing).[43] Therefore, this maternal involvement in

[38] Wilcox and JLaird, "The Impact of Media Images…"; Inman, Snyder, and Peprah, "Religious-Body Affirmations…".
[39] Alan Roberts and Emily Good, "Media Images and Female Body Dissatisfaction: The Moderating Effects of the Five-Factor Traits," *Eating Behaviors* 11, no. 4 (2010): pp. 211-216, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eatbeh.2010.04.002.
[40] Reddy and Crowther, "Teasing, Acculturation…".
[41] Ibid.
[42] Hodes, Jones, and Davies, "Cross-Cultural Differences…".
[43] Ibid.

South Asian children's appearances can prime daughters to self-objectify before they even consume visual media, and contribute to cultural conflict about appearance and beauty standards— i.e., a conflict between whether to prioritize the Western-favoured thin ideal or the larger-body preference held by South Asian parents. Kawamura finds that intergenerational conflict is a common symptom of cultural conflict, which heightens Asian Americans' vulnerability to psychological distress, including body dissatisfaction.[44] This finding affirms Reddy & Crowther's theory that South Asian women suffer body dissatisfaction as a result of cultural conflict and opposing appearance-based pressures from distinct societies.[45] Furthermore, the body dissatisfaction arising from this cultural conflict also increases South Asian American women's vulnerability to negative psychological consequences following exposure to Western appearance-based media.

Objectification of Female Body and Sexuality

South Asian cultures tend to emphasize values of "reputation, dignity, respect, {and} social standing," and even have unique words to sum up such values.[46] One such socially-prescribed way to achieve such values is through the *"policing"* of women's appearances and sexual behaviors, indirectly framing female relatives as *"objects of control."*[47] This social practice normalizes the use of female bodies as instruments for the evaluation and gain of others— i.e. our operative definition of objectification. Therefore, there is a link between South Asian cultural values and low female body esteem (via objectification). This account furthermore suggests that South Asian women tend to base self-worth on appearance and the evaluation of others, which Inman et al. find increases the risk of low esteem following exposure to appearance-based media.[48]

Historically, South Asian cultures have publicly framed women as instruments with which to improve family reputation via favorable marriages.[49] Sociological studies find that traditional South Asian families believe interpersonal relationships between their daughters and men could "damage their reputation" as a family.[50] Therefore, South Asian women deeply embedded in traditional cultural beliefs and practices may be socialized with high awareness of and pressure on their visual presentation, especially to men. In other words, South Asian cultural practices tend to emphasize a woman's value coming from her appearance, and use negative pressures like shame to closely maintain South Asian women's appearances.[51] These factors increase South

[44] K.Y. Kawamura, "Body Image…".
[45] Reddy and Crowther, "Teasing, Acculturation…".
[46] Sangar and Howe, "How Discourses…".
[47] Ibid, 3-9.
[48] Inman, Snyder, and Peprah, "Religious-Body Affirmations…".
[49] Donner, "One's Own Marriage'…".
[50] Ibid, 84.
[51] Sangar and Howe, "How Discourses…".

Asian American women's vulnerability to the negative psychological impact of appearance-based Western media, resulting in high rates of psychological distress, body dissatisfaction, and maladaptive eating.

Consequences to Mental Health

Objectification increases psychological distress by fragmenting women into individual traits and physical features subject to evaluation.[52] In doing so, it reduces the humanity of women and deemphasizes female autonomy and desire. South Asian American women are objectified by a myriad of cultural influences that hinder their body esteem and psychological health. As shown above, South Asian culturally prevalent practices and values include appearance-based commentary, [53] social comparison, and framing female bodies as instruments for family gain.[54] Additionally, living in America involves new challenges to body esteem, including cultural conflict, racial teasing, and unrealistic western beauty standards that are more difficult for South Asian women to aspire to, due to ethnically-distinct physical features that contrast the western ideal.[55] Some of these challenges extend to other American women, too (e.g., internalizing an unrealistic western beauty standard or facing appearance-based pressure from family), but South Asian women are still at higher psychological risk due to below-average help-seeking tendencies.[56]

Sangar & Howe find that South Asian culture uniquely constructs shame as a mechanism through which to protect reputation by discouraging norm-breaking behavior.[57] As a consequence, South Asian women are sexually overpoliced and pressured to not seek mental healthcare or support, which could publicize familial problems. Kawamura explains that Asian cultures tend to value emotional restraint as a means by which to preserve group harmony. [58] Compared to white Americans, South Asian American women have above-average rates of suicide, self-harm, depression, and eating disorders, but still receive a below-average rate of medical treatment.[59] Therefore, it is both challenging and urgent to increase research and resources for low body esteem and mental health amongst South Asian American women.

Conclusion

Western appearance-based media lowers women's low body esteem by propagating unrealistic ideals for female beauty and framing female bodies as entities for evaluation and use by others.[60] South Asian American women in particular suffer

[52] Calogero, Tantleff-Dunn, and Thompson, "Objectification Theory...".
[53] K.Y. Kawamura, "Body Image…".
[54] Donner, "One's Own Marriage'…".
[55] Reddy and Crowther, "Teasing, Acculturation…".
[56] Sangar and Howe, "How Discourses…".
[57] Ibid.
[58] K.Y. Kawamura, "Body Image…".
[59] Sangar and Howe, "How Discourses…"; K.Y. Kawamura, "Body Image…".
[60] Stankiewicz and Rosselli, "Women as Sex Objects…".

from this effect more than their white American peers do, because of pre-existing high rates of body dissatisfaction, which according to Inman et al. increase vulnerability to the negative influence of appearance-based media.[61] This pre-existing low body esteem arises from cultural values and practices (e.g., cultural prevalence of social comparison, appearance-based commentary, familial pressure on appearance) and in part from cultural conflict (e.g., between western and South Asian beauty ideals, or internal conflict stemming from racial teasing). In particular, Fitzsimmons-Craft et al. find that high levels of social comparison and body surveillance can be the difference between whether media just affects women's thoughts, or whether it also affects their behavior and actions.[62] Put another way, familial involvement in and objectification of South Asian daughters' physical appearance can mean that these women suffer both the typical mental symptoms like self-objectification *and* additional, more extreme behavioral symptoms like starving oneself. Furthermore, these repeated experiences of objectification through exposure to appearance-based media or appearance-based commentary may cause South Asian American women to self-objectify more than their white peers by basing their self-worth based on appearance and usefulness to others.

Exposure to appearance-based media that internalizes the western beauty ideal is *only one* example of an experience that challenges the body esteem of South Asian American women more than their white American peers. In general, South Asian women tend to be underrepresented in studies of body image and body esteem, which leaves their vulnerabilities and challenges more undiscovered and undiscussed compared to those of their white peers. It's disputed whether South Asian women tend to experience equal[63] or above-average[64] rates of body dissatisfaction and eating disorders compared to peers from other races. However, at an intersection between South Asian culture and American culture, South Asian American women suffer doubly from appearance-based pressures in both societies. This is especially dangerous given that South Asian women express below-average rates of help-seeking behavior,[65] and are discouraged from expressing mental health concerns, for the sake of preserving harmony in collectivist culture.[66] Increased support from research and mental health resources are needed to help South Asian women break through this barrier of silence and overcome these extreme challenges to body esteem.

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[61] Inman, Snyder, and Peprah, "Religious-Body Affirmations…".
[62] Ellen E. Fitzsimmons-Craft et al., "Examining Social Physique Anxiety and Disordered Eating in College Women. the Roles of Social Comparison and Body Surveillance," *Appetite* 59, no. 3 (2012): pp. 796-805, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2012.08.019.
[63] Boepple and Thompson, "A Content Analytic Study…".
[64] Kennedy et al., "Asian Body Image Satisfaction…"; Reddy and Crowther, "Teasing, Acculturation…".
[65] Sangar and Howe, "How Discourses…".
[66] K.Y. Kawamura, "Body Image…".

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INTERGENERATIONAL SOCIAL MOBILITY IN POST-REFORM CONTEMPORARY CHINA

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Introduction

Social mobility represents the degree to which people can move between the socioeconomic strata across generations. In societies with low social mobility, one's success in life is highly dependent on circumstances of birth and upbringing. [1] Unsurprisingly, countries with low social mobility are also often associated with low life satisfaction, individual well-being, and social cohesion.[2]

The study of social mobility is important since social mobility is an indicator of a fair and just society where all members have an equal chance of moving up the social hierarchy through equality of opportunities. Promoting social mobility can be seen as a way to advance equality and eliminate barriers faced by different groups within the population. This is particularly relevant in today's China in light of its current socio-economic developments, the revival of Communist ideology, and the Xi administration's rally for "common prosperity" and equality as the country's next national agenda.[3]

Post-1978 marketization of China has resulted in a drastic shift in the spatial and social mobility of a large proportion of the population. De-collectivization and the loosening of migrant restrictions liberated the peasants to pursue better opportunities in the city where a large number of state investments were being poured into developing economic hubs.[4] Yet, China is still known to have one of the highest levels of social inequality and wealth disparity, with increasing media attention on its exploitative work culture.[5]

This research paper seeks to understand the issue of inequality in present-day China by describing the state of intergenerational social mobility at a macro level, using survey data collected in 2018. Specifically, this paper aims to answer the questions of how levels of social mobility have changed since the Reform era and what are the

[1] Michael Hout, "A Summary of What We Know about Social Mobility," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 657, no. 1 (January 2015): 27–36, https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716214547174.
[2] "A broken social elevator? How to promote social mobility," COPE Policy Brief, OECD, June 2018, https://www.oecd.org/els/soc/Social-Mobility-2018-PolicyBrief.pdf.
[3] "CPC releases key publication on its mission, contributions," The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, China SCIO, August 26, 2021, http://english.scio.gov.cn/topnews/2021-08/26/content_77715862.htm.
[4] Huimin Du and Wenfei Winnie Wang, "The Making of the 'Migrant Class'," *The SAGE Handbook of Contemporary China* 2 (2018): 985-1002, https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781526436085.n47.
[5] Yanjie Bian et al., "Income Inequality and Class Stratification." *The SAGE Handbook of Contemporary China* 2 (2018): 1022-41. https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781526436085.n49.

predictors of social mobility in the new generation of Chinese. In my study, I find that changes in absolute mobility levels differ significantly among class, meaning that whereas there has been a higher upward occupational mobility into secondary sectors among lower-class farmers, there has been a sharp decrease in downwards mobility among the upper elites. This can be traced back to two factors - the decreasing significance of education as a social leveler and the rise in levels of status inheritance.

Literature Review

Studies of social mobility in China can be broadly categorized into three time periods: Mao Era, post-1978 reform era, and post-reform Era. Since my research focuses on modern-day China, the following literature review will cover works on the reform era and its consequences.

Large-scale, representative census or survey data is often used to analyze societal trends of status attainment.[6] While many of the earlier works were limited to particular cities due to the unavailability of national-scale datasets, more recent studies have been able to utilize nationally representative information to analyze mobility trends.[7]

There is a general consensus that the post-1978 reform era led to an increase in social mobility for the greater Chinese population. Under Mao's status hierarchy and rigid institutional structures, it was difficult for individuals to alter their social status. Chinese rural peasants were obligated to collective farming and the strict *Hukou* system entirely prevented them from gaining urban privileges, such as compulsory education and healthcare.[8] In the cities, state enterprises employed majority of the urban workforce, providing a system of job security known as the "iron rice bowl" for a majority of state employees who enjoyed generous welfare and guaranteed lifetime tenure.[9]

These institutional barriers that bounded residents to their place of birth were disrupted by Deng's market reforms and the rise of labor markets which widened opportunities available for both rural peasants and urbanites. A national agrarian policy implemented in 1980s resulted in reestablishment of the family as the basic unit of

[6] Peter M. Blau and Danching Ruan, "Inequality of Opportunity in Urban China and America," *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility* (1990); Chen Chen and Qin Bo, "The emergence of China's middle class: Social mobility in a rapidly urbanizing economy," *Habitat International* (2014): 528–535, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.habitatint.2014.10.007; Yuan Cheng and Jianzhong Dai, "Intergenerational Mobility in Modern China," *European Sociological Review*, *11*, no. 1 (1995): 17–35, https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.esr.a036347.

[7] C. Zhang, "Unequal Occupational Mobilities Between Rural Migrant and Urban Resident Workers in Urban China," *Frontiers in Sociology* 5, no. 55 (September 4, 2020), https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2020.00055.

[8] Yangjie Bian, "Chinese Social Stratification and Social Mobility," *Annual Review of Sociology* (2002): 91–116, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.28.110601.140823.

[9] Maurice Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping Era: An Inquiry into the Fate of Chinese Socialism, 1978-1997* (Hill and Wang, 1996).

production and dismantled collective farming.[10] This meant that peasant households were given income rights over their land as well as the autonomy to choose whether or not to continue working in agriculture. The influx of peasants into the city, coupled with the decision to decentralize the state industry, created an urban market economy that included nonstate entities and private entrepreneurs. The urban state-sector working class, previously protected by Mao's framework of communism, became more stratified and de-empowered in the reformed economy. [11] China's decentralization also extended to education, where a greater emphasis was placed on local governments, both in rural and urban areas, to improve the quality of education and access.[12]

Existing empirical literature on the effects of reform policies on social mobility largely supports this assertion. Davis conducted occupational histories of over 1,000 individuals from Shanghai and Wuhan between 1986 and 1990 and found that the reform era policies reduced middle-class reproduction in urban China.[13] Similarly, Blau and Ruan found that neither father's education nor occupation affected the child's occupational attainment, implying an opportunity structure in which status inheritance had been eliminated due to the reforms.[14] A more recent work by Chen and Qin argues that rapid urbanization increased social mobility by creating an increase of opportunities for the lower class.[15] The rapid scale of the middle class from 17.4% of the population in 1995 to 54.8% in 2021 is attributed to the diminished institutionalized importance of one's *Hukou* status and parental achievements and the relatively high degree of education among rural migrants.

Despite a large number of seminal works examining social mobility during the Reform Era and the effects of Deng's policies on opening up opportunities in China, there is little empirical evidence about more recent trends. For example, while China's nouveau riche is arguably seen as a product of class mobility, the second generation of rich points to the phenomenon of class reproduction and immobility which has yet to be well-researched.[16] As such, my work seeks to contribute to the thin literature on social mobility in contemporary post-reform era China to understand how more recent structural changes have impacted opportunities for upward or downward social mobility in each group of the population.

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[10] Ibid.
[11] Bian, "Chinese Social Stratification…".
[12] G. Fan, "Changes in Educational Institutions in China: 1978–2020: Analysis of Education Policies and Legal Texts from a National Perspective," *Handbook of Education Policy Studies* (June 3, 2020): 111–129, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-8347-2_6.
[13] Deborah Davis, "'Skidding': Downward Mobility among Children of the Maoist Middle Class," *Modern China* 18, no. 4 (October 1992): 410–37, https://doi.org/10.1177/009770049201800402.
[14] Blau and Ruan, "Inequality of Opportunity…".
[15] Chen and Qin, "The emergence of China's middle class…".
[16] Bian et al., "Income Inequality…".

Methodology

Survey Data

Data employed in this paper was collected from the Wave 7 World Values Survey (WVS) administered in 2018.[17] This dataset has three advantages. Firstly, it is the most recent microdata that is available publicly, allowing this data source to provide new empirical evidence on the state of social mobility of the new generation of reform-era Chinese. Secondly, this dataset contains comprehensive demographic attributes as respondents self-reported their perceived social status, year of birth, the highest level of educational attainment of themselves and their father, as well as their occupation and their father's. Thirdly, this survey sampled all 29 provinces across China to produce a nationally representative sampling of the entire adult population (Table 1). This allows findings from this dataset to be statistically generalizable to the entire Chinese population aged 18 to 70.

To study the post-reform era, respondents from the dataset will be divided into subsets according to their birth cohorts. China's new generation is the social cohort that was born at the early stages of the reform era, in the 1980s and 1990s, with a distinct generational identity from previous generations.[18] While they experienced their formative years during the reform era, they entered working adulthood most recently in the post-reform era today. Thus, the data will be grouped into respondents who were born between 1980 to 2000 and those born before 1980 to examine the demographic and mobility trends of the new generation.

Respondent's Class and Father's Class

Occupation is one of the common proxies for socio-economic status and is used widely as a measure of social mobility. The survey initially coded occupations into 11 broad, randomized categories. For meaningful regression analysis, the data was recoded in accordance with the International Standard Classification of Occupation[19] and Occupational Classification System of the People's Republic of China to rank the occupational groups by level of prestige (Table 2).[20] The key organizing principles of the occupational prestige rankings are not only the level of skill required of the job but

[17] C. Haerpfer et al., "World Values Survey Wave 7 (2017-2020) Cross-National Data-Set [Data set]," *World Values Survey Association*, 2021, https://doi.org/10.14281/18241.13.
[18] C. Li, "Children of the reform and opening-up: China's new generation and new era of development," *J. Chin. Sociol.* 7, 18 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1186/s40711-020-00130-x.
[19] International Labour Office, *International Standard Classification of Occupations: ISCO-08*, Geneva: International Labour Office, 2012, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_172572.pdf.
[20] "我国职业分类管理进入新阶段," Ministry of Human Resource and Social Security of the People's Republic of China, 我国职业分类管理进入新阶段, August 4, 2015, http://www.mohrss.gov.cn/SYrlzyhshbzb/dongtaixinwen/buneiyaowen/201508/t20150804_216945.htm.

also its status in society. For example, skilled labor in the informal sector would often be deemed as inferior to a low-skilled but permanent job in the formal sector.[21]

Additionally, it is important to note that the quality of the WVS data is far from perfect and one of the key limitations is the lack of differential treatment in response options for urban and rural samples. This means that while farm proprietors or managers might have a high level of prestige in the rural areas, it is still classified under the agricultural industry and thus relegated to the lower prestige ranks according to the International Standard Classification rankings.

Respondents were also asked to answer their fathers' occupation when the respondent was 14 years old. This is useful as it would reflect the occupational class of their fathers during their presumably prime years, instead of their current job status which is likely to be skewed towards being retired or unemployed. The same occupational scheme was used to categorize the occupational groups of their fathers.

TABLE 2 ***Recoded Occupational Classification***

Code	Occupation	Example
0	Never had a job	
1	Farm worker	Farm laborer, tractor driver
2	Farm proprietor/manager	
3	Unskilled worker	Laborer, porter, unskilled factory worker, cleaner
4	Semi-skilled worker	Bricklayer, bus driver, cannery worker, carpenter, sheet metal worker, baker
5	Skilled worker	Foreman, motor mechanic, printer, seamstress,
6	Service	Restaurant owner, police officer, waitress, barber, caretaker
7	Sales	Sales manager, shop owner, shop assistant, insurance agent, buyer
8	Clerical	Secretary, clerk, office manager, civil servant, bookkeeper
9	Professional and technical	Doctor, teacher, engineer, artist, accountant, nurse
10	Higher administrative	Banker, executive in big business, high government official, union official

Table 2: Recoded survey data occupational classifications

Findings and Discussion

Absolute mobility considers whether adults tend to have a higher status than their parents did at the same age. It accounts for how many respondents remain in the same class as their fathers and how many experience occupational mobility. Table 3 presents the absolute mobility rates across two cohorts using a cross-tabulation of

[21] V. Iversen, A. Krishna, & K. Sen, "Beyond Poverty Escapes—Social Mobility in Developing Countries: A Review Article," *The World Bank Research Observer* 34, no. 2 (August 2019): 239–273, https://doi.org/10.1093/wbro/lkz003.

respondents and their fathers' occupational attainment as a proxy for socio-economic status.

TABLE 3 ***Intergenerational Occupational Mobility in China, 1948-1979 and 1980-2000 Cohorts***

Panel I: Respondent's birth cohort 1948-1979

	Father's Occupation									
Respondent's Occupation	Farm worker	Farm proprietor /manager	Unskilled worker	Semi-skilled worker	Skilled worker	Service	Sales	Clerical	Professional /technical	Higher administrative
Farm worker	40%	1%	9%	7%	3%	5%	0%	7%	6%	5%
Farm proprietor/manager	0%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	5%	0%
Unskilled worker	8%	7%	17%	6%	5%	3%	0%	4%	6%	0%
Semi-skilled worker	9%	14%	26%	28%	6%	3%	16%	10%	5%	10%
Skilled worker	12%	18%	13%	9%	27%	28%	20%	11%	9%	13%
Service	7%	9%	9%	14%	13%	23%	20%	7%	12%	3%
Sales	12%	12%	9%	15%	17%	8%	24%	13%	12%	13%
Clerical	4%	6%	9%	9%	13%	13%	8%	23%	12%	20%
Professional and technical	6%	2%	9%	10%	11%	13%	8%	21%	30%	28%
Higher administrative	2%	1%	0%	2%	5%	5%	4%	3%	5%	10%
Total *(N=1948)*	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Panel II: Respondent's birth cohort 1980-2000

	Father's Occupation									
Respondent's Occupation	Farm worker	Farm proprietor /manager	Unskilled worker	Semi-skilled worker	Skilled worker	Service	Sales	Clerical	Professional /technical	Higher administrative
Farm worker	8%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%	0%
Farm proprietor/manager	0%	7%	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%
Unskilled worker	2%	5%	11%	2%	2%	3%	0%	3%	0%	0%
Semi-skilled worker	12%	15%	11%	12%	5%	3%	4%	5%	0%	0%
Skilled worker	13%	21%	13%	14%	12%	19%	10%	5%	2%	0%
Service	16%	12%	11%	12%	15%	23%	10%	13%	3%	10%
Sales	23%	25%	17%	24%	22%	16%	31%	15%	9%	25%
Clerical	10%	5%	20%	12%	18%	10%	18%	18%	17%	20%
Professional and technical	14%	10%	13%	20%	22%	23%	18%	33%	66%	40%
Higher administrative	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	10%	2%	5%
Total (N=1088)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 3: Intergenerational occupational mobility in china, 1948-1978 and 1990-2000 cohorts

Occupational Mobility of the Working and Middle Class

From Table 3, we see that occupational persistence in the rural lower classes has decreased between the two cohorts, signaling increased mobility in the rural peasant class. For the earlier generations born between 1948 to 1979 who were generally adults during the reform era, 40% of them who had farm workers as parents ended up as farm workers. This relatively high rate of occupational persistence fell drastically in the new generation born between 1980 and 2000 as only 8% of children born to farm workers stayed in this occupational class. Instead, the majority of children born to farm workers worked in the service staff or sales industry, and 14% of them even attained the status of professional or technical.

Increased upward occupational mobility in the rural working class is unsurprising considering how China's rapid urbanization and an expanding economy created millions of jobs in the commercial and service sectors.[22] Deng's agricultural de-collectivization and loosening of migrant restriction under the reformed *Hukou* system liberated workers from rural regions to pursue opportunities in the city that

[22] Chen and Qin, "The emergence of China's middle class…".

were deemed more profitable.[23] Table 4 also points to the decreasing rural-urban divide impact on occupational attainment, demonstrating how opportunities that were once reserved for urbanities have become increasingly accessible to rural residents.

Nonetheless, it is difficult to conclude that this phenomenon of increased upward mobility into secondary sectors is truly a cause for celebration in terms of equality of opportunities. While the structural changes provided increased access to the burgeoning middle class, the working rural population was subjected to a host of institutional challenges, such as job instability, worker exploitation, and entrapment in the secondary sector.[24] In 2014, the Xi administration attempted to address the issue of urban poverty and migrant discrimination through their commitment to facilitating rural migrants' integration under the National New-type Urbanization Plan. [25] Although the goals of this initiative seemingly complement the pattern of increased upward occupational mobility in the lower classes and suggests some degree of success by the CCP to achieve equality of opportunities, critics have pointed out that such efforts only serve to bolster the Party's ideological interest of enhancing socialist legitimacy while further mediating the country's integration into the capitalist economy.[26] Without further analysis of the micro-level mechanisms of the working class and their pathways for mobility, these findings can, at best, only underscore the pressing need to address the multifaceted complexities of the post-reform era as the new generation of Chinese continue to move into the lower-middle class in large numbers.

Similar to the trend of rural farm workers, unskilled and semi-skilled workers of the new generation experience increased intergenerational mobility compared to their peers from the older cohort. For the 1948 to 1979 cohort, children born to fathers who were either unskilled or semi-skilled workers had the highest chance of ending up in either of those same two occupations (Table 3). This is contrary to findings from the 1980 to 2000 cohort: of all the children born to fathers who were unskilled workers, only 11% remained as unskilled workers. Instead, 17% moved onto the sales sector while 20% attain jobs in the clerical sector. For children born to fathers who worked as semi-skilled workers, 24% end up in Sales, while 20% procured positions in the professional or technical fields. Increased intergenerational occupational mobility of the working and lower-middle-class reinstates existing widely-held beliefs that China's marketization has increased social mobility and reduced institutional structures and rigid status hierarchies.

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[23] Du and Wang, "The Making of…".
[24] Bian et al., "Income Inequality…"; Du and Wang, "The Making of…".
[25] "China unveils landmark urbanization plan," The State Council of the People's Republic of China, Retrieved November 20, 2021, http://english.www.gov.cn/policies/policy_watch/2014/08/23/content_281474983027472.htm.
[26] Yin-wah Chu, "China's new urbanization plan: Progress and structural constraints," *Cities* 103 (August 2020), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2020.102736.

Occupational Mobility of the Upper Class

While there is evidence of a trend of greater mobility among the working class and the lower middle class, this is not the case in the upper echelons of Chinese society. From Table 3, we observe an increase in class reproduction in more prestigious occupations, namely in the professional or technical field as well as in the higher administrative sector. In the 1948 to 1979 cohort, only 30% of children born to fathers working in the professional or technical sector ended up as in the same occupational class. This level of occupational persistence doubled in the following cohort in which 66% of children born to professional or technical workers attained the same occupational status. Findings across the two cohorts at the higher administrative level parallel this pattern of status inheritance. Children born to fathers who held jobs in the higher administrative sector, such as a high government official or an executive in a large business, had a larger chance of ending up in the same occupational class in the post-reform era as compared to the reform era.

The nouveau riche, a class of elites that emerged during the reform era, are symbols of social mobility and opportunities to rise up the social hierarchy in China - as far as the wealthy are concerned. However, the rise of the second generation of the rich, commonly referred to as the *Fuerdai (*富二代*)* in popular discourse, reflects a contradiction of egalitarian ideals and illustrates the growing pattern of class immobility in the upper elites.[27] My contribution lends empirical credence to earlier scholarly works that theorized the birth of China's Weberian system of class closure, in which prestige, power, and wealth have become highly centralized and institutionally protected by the elite class.[28] With this system of closed ranks and high class reproduction, there is a dwindling chance of the lower and middle classes rising into elite positions independently.

More strikingly, this flip side continues to challenge the notion that market liberalization unanimously decentralizes and liberates the masses. Rather, while the new generation of the reform era has benefited from the rapid improvement of living conditions, they currently face unprecedented levels of social barriers that restrict them from attaining equal opportunities in the capital market. By assessing the reform through the lens of class, it becomes clearer that these structural economic changes had been shaped by the ruling elite's efforts to preserve their power and create an exit strategy through the transformation of power into capital and occupational ranks.[29]

Predictors of Social Mobility

Besides studying the absolute mobility across the two cohorts through the use of occupation as a proxy for socio-economic attainment, regression analysis conducted

[27] Bian et al., "Income Inequality…".
[28] Guo-Xun Su, "Revisiting Max Weber in the Context of China," *Society* 27, no. 5 (2007): 1 – 25.
[29] Y. Wu, "The Strange Case of China," *Boundary 2* 46, no. 2 (2019): 139–162, https://doi.org/10.1215/01903659-7497076.

between respondent's occupational attainment and several predictors presents several key insights into the shifting mechanisms that shape status attainment in the new generation. As seen from Table 4, the predictors tested included individual attributes such as respondent's educational level, gender, location of residence (urban or rural), as well as inherited factors like father's occupation and father's educational level.

TABLE 4 ***Results for Multivariate Linear Regression Model***

	1948-1979 Cohort *(n=1948)*	1980-2000 Cohort *(n=1088)*
(Constant)	0.162	1.89*
Respondent's Educational Level	1.159*	0.949*
Gender *[ref=male]*		
Female	0.129	0.615*
Location *[ref=rural]*		
Urban	1.249*	0.484*
Father's Occupation	0.108*	0.129*
Father's Educational Level	0.029	-0.07
Adjusted R-Square	0.425	0.333
F-test	171*	67*

Dependent variable: Respondent's Occupation
*p<0.001 = results were significant

Table 4: Results for Multivariate Linear Regression Model

In both cohorts, the coefficient scores of respondent's educational level are statistically significant, meaning that higher educational attainment continues to play a influential role in securing better occupations. However, the decrease from 1.159 to 0.949 highlights how the impact of educational attainment has diminished over the two cohorts. This means that while an individual's achievements in educational attainment continue to be associated with a more prestigious job, other inherited or individual factors have had a larger effect in more recent times. The statistical decrease lends support to the observations of academics who postulate that China parallels developments of a Weberian system of closed ranks in which prestigious occupations have been institutionally gatekept by the elite. Whereas earlier research conducted in the reform era focused largely on the ability of education to create an opportunity structure in which status inheritance had been eliminated, findings from this paper suggest that the relationship between an individual's educational attainment and their occupational success has overall witnessed a decrease. While the promotion of compulsory education and the expansion of tertiary education in the post-reform era may have allowed more individuals of humble backgrounds to attain a higher education, they are now less likely to obtain a more prestigious job because of it. Education as a social leveler and pathway for upward social mobility is no longer as

relevant for this new generation, cementing the assertion that the post-reform era is witnessing an unprecedented state of class immobility.

A prescribed factor that has increased in influence on the respondent's status attainment is the father's occupation. While earlier parts of the paper looked at the proportion of respondents that had a higher occupational attainment than their fathers or that maintained the same occupational level, Table 4 presents the overall impacts that a father's occupation has on a child's occupation. It shows that the coefficient between father's occupation and child's occupation has increased from 0.108 to 0.129 from the earlier cohort to the new cohort, representing the growing significance of inherited factors in status attainment. This corroborates the finding that the level of social mobility in China has decreased as inherited factors, such as the family to which one was born to, now accounts for a larger part in determining one's success in life.

Conclusion

Overall, the level of social immobility in China has increased since the implementation of market reforms in the late 1970s. Although this practice of status inheritance is not unique to the new generation of post-reform era Chinese, its social significance is amplified as it stands in stark contrast with present-day party slogans of "common prosperity" to build an equitable society. Empirically, my contribution points out that the absolute levels of social mobility vary significantly along the boundaries of class. That is, the lower agricultural classes experienced an increased ability to move upward into secondary professions, while the upper occupational classes witnessed a sharp decrease in downward mobility. In general, the weakening of intergenerational mobility can be attributed to two mechanisms. Firstly, education as a social leveler has decreased in significance, elucidating how individual performance factors have lower returns to professional attainment for the new generation today. Secondly, an individual's inherited social factors, such as their father's social status, have a greater impact on one's occupational attainment.

While my paper investigates social mobility trends in the post-reform era on a macro-scale, further research on the present microlevel mechanisms that influence social mobility is needed to establish the specific pathways that enable the new generation to move up or down the social ladder. Further research would also benefit from adopting a class-specific level of analysis to update and nuance earlier works that studied mobility during the reform era.

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INDIA'S MUSLIMS: THE "OTHER" WITHIN?

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Introduction

In this paper, I explore how the Colonial period shaped the modern discourse on the Muslim community in India. First, I shall point to the role played by the Colonial state in interpreting Indian society. Then, I will point to the fallacies in the official British narratives on the Indian Muslim community by highlighting the intricacies of Islamic history in the subcontinent. Thereafter, I will touch upon the relation between British colonial narratives and statements issued by the two earliest RSS chiefs, figures who were crucial to the formation of the Hindu Right in India. Besides pointing to discursive resemblances, I will also show how British colonial interventions in India engendered the episteme central to the RSS chiefs' claims about Indian Muslims. Finally, I have to admit to a major pitfall of this work. In exploring premodern Islam in India, I largely rely on Richard Eaton's work on Muslim conversions in India. At the same time, by pointing to enduring misconceptions about Muslims in India that his work deals with, I will highlight the need for a reaffirmation of Eaton's argument.

The British Understanding of Indian Muslims

The most basic intervention made by the colonial state in Indian society was a demarcation of identity. The colonial analysis of Indian society was based on an understanding that it contained discrete categories of social groups, unable to relate to each other. The task of colonial administrators, ethnographers, and historians was to articulate these categories and to help the state administer and interact with the subject population at large. In this, the most common and broadest structural unit to categorize Indian society was that of religion. For instance, the 1881 Census understood the Indian society as comprising Muslims, Aryans, and a third broad category including Aborigines and those of mixed aborigine-Aryan descent. Importantly, this was an unprecedented attempt at providing an aggregate, homogenous view of over fifty million Indian Muslims.[1]

Another significant vestige of the colonial period is the interpretation of the Indian past in which the ancient period is synonymous with the Hindu period, the medieval with the Islamic, and the modern with the British. First proposed by James Mill in *The History of British India* (1817), this periodization is based on the

[1] David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978), 14.

understanding that the coming of Islam created a rupture in the history of India, i.e., it was culturally discontinuous with its ancient past.[2]

Besides this interpretation of Islamic history and the Muslim masses of the subcontinent, some important British administrators and politicians also perceived this subject population as a martial race, antagonistic to colonial rule in India. This was representative of the general fear in the colonial administration about Muslim disloyalty, noticeable in the wake of the revolt of 1857. William Hunter, a leading figure of the Indian Civil Service, fervently expressed the anxiety in his book, *The Indian Musalmans* (1871). The book itself was written at the viceroy's request to help formulate the British policy towards Muslims. In the text, Hunter discusses an obligation among the "whole Muhammadan community" to rebel against the crown, an obligation to which the lower classes are most responsive. Further, he affirms the foreignness of Indian Muslims, who are part of the "Muhammadan world", united from Constantinople to China, at odds with Hindus who are "the real natives of the country." Around the time of *The Indian Musalmans'* publication, Lord Salisbury took a similar stance in London, when he referred to the political ambitions of Indian Muslims to spread Islamic rule, with their design on places as far as Cairo and Constantinople.[3]

Intricacies of the Subcontinent's History

In these few instances of the British colonial discourse, we encounter certain assumptions about the Indian Muslim community that have lived on in post-colonial India. First, there is the apprehension of Indian Muslims as a separate collectivity. Secondly, they are conceived as belonging to a foreign civilization. Finally, related to this is the presupposition of their allegiance to the *ummah*, a transnational community of believers, which undermines their loyalty to a modern, non-Islamic state. As much as these assumptions seem obvious today, especially in a pre-modern context, they hold little ground. On the question of Muslim allegiance to the *ummah*, a glimpse at the Mughal paradigm presents a different picture. The Mughal power structure was based on a kinship-based hierarchy, with the Mughal dynasty based in North India at its apex. All members of the state's ruling class, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, had to swear the allegiance of their lineage to that of the emperor. This allegiance to the sovereign took precedence over any other loyalties, including allegiance to a pan-Islamic institute like the Caliphate. For the officials of the imperial court, mostly Muslims from Central Asia and Iran, this meant that their allegiance was bound to their sovereign, more than to their indigenous societies.[4]

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[2] Romila Thapar, *Early India: From the Origins to AD 300* (California: University of California Press, 2004), 5.
[3] David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978), 9.
[4] Ibid at 24.

However, beyond the Muslim elites of the Mughal state were the Muslim masses of pre-modern India, who had a fairly limited affinity with the *ummah*. This was a result of the manner through which large-scale conversions occurred in Western Punjab and Eastern Bengal, by far the most extensive Islamic conversions in the subcontinent. In Punjab, mass conversions took place among itinerant *Jat* groups, through their exposure to Sufi shrines in the region from the thirteenth century onwards. In East Bengal, a similar process of mass conversions began in the sixteenth century.[5]

Owing to the local context, centered around local shrines and saints, and due to the gradual process spanning centuries, the two aforementioned paradigms of Islamization exemplify what Richard Eaton calls "the accretion aspect of conversion." Here, the social behavior of the converts was shaped in a regional setting, in conjunction with their already-existing customs. Furthermore, characteristic of the accretion process, there didn't exist among the newly converted communities an urge to discard their erstwhile religious customs. In Punjab, the accretion aspect is demonstrated by the naming pattern of a Punjabi Jat group, the Sials. In the early fifteenth century, ten percent of the recorded Sial males had Muslim names. This number rose to fifty-six percent by the mid-seventeenth century, then seventy-five percent a century later. Finally, by the early nineteenth century, all the recorded males of the community had Muslim names. In the case of Bengal, the accretion aspect can be discerned through the ways in which local Muslim poets referred to the sole God of the Quran. In the sixteenth century, the poet, Sayyid Sultan, referred to himself as *Iswara* and identified the prophet as his avatar. As late as the eighteenth century, terms such as *Prabhu*, *Niranjan,* and *Kartar*, among others, were being used by Bengali Muslim poets to denote God.[6]

The accretion aspect of conversion destabilizes the Colonial narratives on the Indian Muslim community that I touched upon earlier. Firstly, Islam cannot be considered foreign to India; the religion was not imported to the country all of a sudden. For many communities of the subcontinent, conversion implied gradual incorporation of Islam into their cultural life, without removal of their existing religious practices. In this sense, the advent of Islam in India was continuous with the country's pre-Islamic past. Moreover, as the Muslim communities evolved in a regional paradigm, their social behavior had more in common with the non-Muslim neighbors in their vicinity than with the Muslims in some far-off corner of the world, or for that matter, of the subcontinent. In essence, the faith of Muslims in Punjab would have been rooted in Multan or Pakpattan rather than in Cairo or Constantinople. This unsettles the conception of Indian Muslims as a discrete social group as well as the

[5] Richard Eaton, "Approaches to the Study of Conversion to Islam in India." In *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*. Edited by Richard. C. Martin (New York: One Word Press, 1987), 120.
[6] Ibid at 114

apprehension of their heightened allegiance and alignment with a global community of believers.

Yet, around the time of the first census in India, there was indeed a growing consciousness among Indian Muslims regarding their solidarity with the *ummah*. An important source of this shift in consciousness was the emergence of Islamic reform movements in the country.[7] More than anything else, it was due to the improved transportation systems of the nineteenth century that strengthened the contacts of the Indian Muslim masses with Mecca, that these movements became widespread.[8] Hereon, returnees from Hajj, with a heightened awareness of the universal truth of Islam that could be at odds with how the religion was expressed in the pilgrim's native village or town, could initiate Islamic reform movements. The participants of these movements strove to set a standard of correct religious belief and practice for their followers for a return to a perceived "true Islam." In this, they usually eschewed customary practices and rather, encouraged a fulfillment of the obligations of Islam based on the written records of the Quran and the Hadith.

This development facilitated the further integration of Indian Muslims with the wider *ummah*. Under the influence of reformist movements, Indian Muslims could now acquire an awareness of being part of a world religion. They could relate to Muslims from diverse geographical backgrounds through the resonance of their religious universals. At the same time, this awareness came at the cost of parochial customs, which would be discarded if considered incongruous with Islamic universals. Hence, this process crystallized the cultural distinctiveness of Indian Muslim communities within their respective regional vicinities. An early-twentieth-century ballad on Haji Shariat Allah (d. 1840), the founder of an Islamic reform movement in Bengal, demonstrates this transformation. The author lauds the figure for abolishing the worship of shrines and trampling down all *shirk* and *bidat*, so that "the sun of Islam rose high in the sky."[9] Here, we see abstinence from local shrine-based worship and a larger iconoclastic streak, which was not present among the Bengali poets that I discussed earlier. There is also a firmer assertion of belongingness to a universal faith that exists independently of local, popular customs. This assertion of religious identity distinguishes the reform from the accretion aspect of conversion.

Yet, there is no reason to believe that the penetration of reform movements was absolute among the Indian masses. Eaton points to Muslim communities in India that remained unaffected even by the strong reform currents of the nineteenth century. An example is the Meo community of Rajasthan, whose marriage and inheritance customs are non-Islamic, akin to their Hindu neighbors, while their rituals related to

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[7] Barbara Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982), 8.
[8] Richard Eaton, "Approaches to the Study of Conversion to Islam in India." In *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*. Edited by Richard. C. Martin (New York: One Word Press, 1987), 121.
[9] Richard Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760* (California: University of California Press, 1996), 282.

life cycles, like burying the dead, are Islamic.[10] Similar trends can be seen among the Muslims of Punjab and Bengal. According to nineteenth-century district gazetteers, Mohammed Mujeeb could point to the spiritual dependence of Punjabi Muslims on miracles and magic, "to a degree incompatible with genuine belief in any omnipotent God." Likewise, the 1901 census of India reported Bengali Muslims joining in Durga puja and using Hindu astrologers in their daily lives. In certain aspects of social identity then, these Muslims were still indistinct from their non-Muslim neighbors.[11]

Legacy of the Colonial Period

This reality of Muslim existence in India clearly undermines a simplistic colonial construction of Indian society, whereby all Muslims of the subcontinent are pitted against the other religious groups. Certainly, during the colonial period, there was an emerging consciousness among many Indian Muslims of their religious identity spurred by reformist movements, but the influence of such movements cannot be considered all-pervasive. Moreover, the idea that affinity to the Islamic world deems Indian Muslims (or for that matter Muslims anywhere else) hostile to a non-Islamic modern state is highly problematic. Ayesha Jalal, in her analysis of Maulana Azad's politics, demonstrates the limitations of such notion. Azad frequently made recourse to Islamic conceptions, such as that of Jihad, in his career. Moreover, his anti-colonial thought was driven by a sense of pan-Islamic solidarity in the face of colonial oppression. Thus, his pan-Islamism was in no way contradictory to his Indian nationalism.[12]

Rather, it can be argued that colonial administrators were affected by their own assumptions about the age-old struggle between Islam and Christendom while making claims about the divided loyalties of Indian Muslims, which would urge them to rebel. This colonial viewpoint may have contributed heavily to the modern Indian suspicion about Muslim loyalty to India, especially prevalent in the Hindu Right. Gowalkwer, the second chief of the RSS, vehemently raised this suspicion. In reference to non-Hindus, he once noted, "They have developed a feeling of identification with the enemies of the land. They look to some foreign lands as their holy places. They call themselves Sheikhs or Syeds." Likewise, in *We, or Our Nationhood Defined*, he wrote, "the foreign races in Hindustan must lose their separate existence to merge in the Hindu race." In a similar vein, his predecessor, Hegdewar, called Muslims *yavana* (foreign snakes).[13] These RSS chiefs resemble the likes of Lord Salisbury and Hunter

[10] Richard Eaton, "Approaches to the Study of Conversion to Islam in India." In *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*. Edited by Richard. C. Martin (New York: One Word Press, 1987), 112.
[11] Ibid at 121.
[12] Ayesha Jalal, "Striking a Just Balance: Maulana Azad as a Theorist of Trans-national Jihad." *Modern Intellectual History* 4, no. 1 (2007): 97.
[13] Ali Khan Mahmudabad. *Poetry of Belonging: Muslim Imaginings of India 1850-1950* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2020), 15.

in their anxiety about the Indian Muslims' affiliation with the *ummah*. More importantly, their attacks on the Muslim community are possible because of the colonial discourse on Indian society, whereby Islam and Hinduism represent two different civilizations, with the prior conceived as a foreign import, a proposition that was not supported by the realities of the subcontinent.

Conclusion

I have attempted to show how the colonial period shaped the modern discourse on the Indian Muslim community. I first investigated the colonial state's interpretation of Indian society, which partook in a vision of Indian Muslims as a homogenous community. I also examined narratives on the Muslim community espoused by influential figures of the colonial state. These narratives were in fact based on the colonial framework of interpreting Indian society. Then, I delved into some caveats of Islamic history in the subcontinent, which undermine the veracity of these narratives. Finally, I briefly highlighted the role of these colonial constructs in influencing the discourse of the Hindu Right in India.

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WHAT FACTORS FACILITATED THE DEMOCRATIZATION IN TAIWAN?

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Introduction

The current regime on the island of Taiwan, formally known as the Republic of China (ROC), is increasingly becoming acknowledged for its recent flourishing in democratic development and its accepting stance on progressive liberal values. For instance, as of the 17th of May 2019, after the proposed bill was approved by the Legislative Yuan (the 'parliament'), same-sex marriage was legalized in Taiwan,[1] and thus made the island the first place in Asia where this is approved by the ruling regime.[2] Furthermore, over the years, various indexes have illustrated the ROC's democratic achievements comparatively with its neighboring countries. For example, in 2018, the Freedom House ranked Taiwan second among the East and Southeast Asian states, with only Japan leading in front.[3] Two years later, in 2020, the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index awarded Taiwan as 'the winner of the year' with it leaping up in the ranking from its 31st place in 2019 to ranking 11th in 2020, scoring 8.94 on a scale from 1 – 10. In doing so, Taiwan went from the "flawed democracy" category to become a "full democracy" according to this index, even surpassing Switzerland, which was ranked behind at 12th place in 2020. Currently, Taiwan is only competing for the top spot among the several leading western European democracies along with Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.[4] However, it is worth noting that all the other 13 highest ranking democracies, in this index, decreased in a couple of points mainly due to freedom restrictions caused by COVID-19 regulations and measures.[5] On the other hand, Taiwan, as an island, arguably managed to put less strain on personal freedoms in connection to fight COVID-19 possibly due to it being detached from continental Asia, as well as its early alarming of

[1] Amber Wang, "#LoveWon: Taiwan legalizes same-sex marriage in landmark first for Asia," *Hong Kong Free Press,* Hong Kong News, May 17, 2019, https://hongkongfp.com/2019/05/17/breaking-taiwan-legalises-sex-marriage-landmark-first-asia/.; Kharis Templeman, "After Hegemony: State Capacity, the Quality of Democracy and the Legacies of the Party-State in Democratic Taiwan," In *Stateness and Democracy in East Asia,* ed. Aurel Croissant and Olli Hellmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 75, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108862783.004.
[2] Isabella Stenger, "In a first for Asia, Taiwan legalized same-sex marriage–with caveats," *QUARTZ*, Quartz Media, Inc., May 17, 2019, https://qz.com/1621783/taiwan-becomes-first-country-in-asia-to-legalize-same-sex-marriage/.
[3] Templeman, "After Hegemony…," 71.
[4] The Economist Intelligence Unit, "Democracy Index 2020: In sickness and in health?" Economist Intelligence, The Economist Intelligence Unit Limited, 2021, 9–11, https://www.eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2020/.
[5] Ibid at 10, 16.

the pandemic,[6] and thus managed, along with various other improvements, to increase substantially in points.

Now, as the title suggests, one could ask: what make Taiwan's democratization so particularly compelling to explore? Arguably, the island's history shows an interesting development on how it transitioned from a one-party hegemonic authoritarian regime to a full multi-party democracy. The reports showcasing Taiwan's continuing rapid democratic growth and acceptance of liberal values comparatively to other nations, alongside its competing among those estimated to have the highest democratic quality, makes it a good candidate for analyzing factors that may lead to facilitate democratic transitions. Thus, I chose to aim the scope towards Taiwan and seek to discuss; *what factors facilitated the democratization in Taiwan*? Nevertheless, it is worth noting that other factors and key figures, that may have had significant importance, concomitantly as those presented in this essay for facilitating Taiwan's democratization, may not be discussed due to the restraints on the amount of content that is possible to fit from the vast timeframe of this longitudinal study.

The approach of this paper will be referring to earlier study material on democratization theory, specifically Huber, Rueschemeyer, and Stephens' *The Impact of Economic Development on Democracy*, and utilize their theory comparatively along with the data provided by the several peer-reviewed contributions and other sources which have specifically aimed at explaining Taiwan's democratization process. The following sections will therefore include: I) a presentation of Huber, Rueschemeyer, and Stephens' theoretical framework presented in their article, and why it is applicable when analyzing a state's democratization processes, II) the precursor of a modern Taiwanese state: modernization under Japan's colonialization, Chinese civil war and the one-party oppressive rule established under the Kuomintang, III) the socioeconomic development; economic and industrial policy developments' tie to Taiwan's transition to democracy by comparing it with South Korea, IV) a growth of a literary public in Taiwan and how public communication impacted the regime's allowance for an opposition party to be founded, and V) the extent of which historical geopolitical factors have had an impact on Taiwan's transformation to a democracy.

Theoretical Framework

When analyzing and discussing which variables have facilitated democratic flourishing, such as the ties to economic development, it can be helpful to look at other 'hidden' variables which might have had a decisive effect on the outcome of regime type. Of course, one could argue that economic improvement is correlated with democratization by referring to numbers provided by indexes, which may show higher democratic scores in states with bigger and more robust economies per capita. After all, it is largely accepted that economic development causes the population size of

[6] Louise Watt, "What Taiwan Told the WHO About Coronavirus," *TIME,* TIME USA, LLC., May 19, 2020, https://time.com/5826025/taiwan-who-trump-coronavirus-covid19/.

middle-class citizens to grow, who, among other things, are more likely to utilize its expansive numbers to compete for political influence with the compact elite who have "exercised a monopoly of power" over them, thus ultimately leading to democratization.[7] However, it gives little guidance to explain why some stronger economies appear to be less democratic than others. For instance, how come the economic powerhouse of Singapore has an estimated gross domestic product per capita that is double than that of Taiwan's estimation (66,263 USD for Singapore vs. 33,401 USD for Taiwan),[8] yet remains as a "flawed democracy", by having worse results in "I Electoral process and pluralism, II Functioning of government, III Political participation, IV Political culture, and V Civil liberties" according to the Economist Intelligence Unit's research, ultimately granting Singapore a score of 6.03 (ranged from 0 – worst, to 10 – best), while Taiwan, on the other hand, scored 8.94 in 2020?[9] How can this lack of democratic function in stronger economies be explained? Clarifications to this issue can arguably be discovered by checking factors which facilitate specific behavior and political engagement from citizens, as well as whether capital is concentrated or not. These issues are raised and discussed in the article *The Impact of Economic Development on Democracy*, written by Huber, Rueschemeyer and Stephens. The authors here argue that there are 'cross-sectional' correlations which might heavily influence a regime's democratic status. They claim that the issue of not detecting factors which have been decisive for the regime outcome can be countered by "a strategy for analytic induction based on comparative historical research."[10] What the authors attempt to convey here is a theoretical framework which is a case to case-based analysis where each countries' individual history and past research are taken into consideration. By doing so, one may thereafter implement successive historical developments in the analysis. With each case opens the availability to modify the hypothesis utilized in the previous research. Ultimately, they argue that one can consistently stick to this theoretical framework due to its capabilities to be progressively adjusted to fit the needs of the topic being studied. Among the findings presented in their paper is that increasing free market capitalism in a state will in fact lead towards democracy. This is due to the instinctive consequence of free markets' impact to shift the balance of power through the strengthening of the middle- and lower-class citizens, relatively to the upper-class and the influential elite. Thus, as

[7] Francis Fukuyama, *Political Order and Political Decay* (London: Profile Books, 2014), 399; He Tian, "Towards a Theory of Transformation of the Developmental State: Political Elites, Social Actors and State Policy Constraints in South Korea and Taiwan," *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, no. 21 (2019): 48, https://doi.org/10.1017/s1468109919000197.

[8] "Report for Selected Countries and Subjects: October 2021," World Economic Outlook Database, International Monetary Fund, October 2021, https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2021/October.

[9] The Economist Intelligence Unit, "Democracy Index 2020: In sickness and in health?" Economist Intelligence, The Economist Intelligence Unit Limited, 2021, 8, 31, https://www.eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2020/.

[10] Evelyne Huber, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and John D. Stephens, "The Impact of Economic Development on Democracy," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 7, no. 3 (1993): 71.

aforementioned, it is noteworthy to analyze whether capital is concentrated or spread. However, Huber, Rueschemeyer and Stephens' paramount argument is that the order of causality is explained as follows: the economic improvements that capitalist societies experience will set in motion a broad development – such as urbanization, education, transportation, communication – consequently causing increased deliberation among fellow class citizens and alliance forming between different levels of classes. Therefore, the authors neglect the oversimplified causal explanation that capitalism leads to democratization. Their case study, as well as past studies on democratization in Europe, reveals that democratizing processes have largely been caused by upper-class citizens' will to form an alliance with the rising bourgeoise's demand for political influence on the condition that this would also lead to protecting the elites' interests.[11] The following paragraphs will illustrate that a similar causality-chain occurred and led to the democratization process in Taiwan.

The Precursor of a Modern Taiwanese State

The island of Taiwan has long been inhabited but ruled by regimes stationed elsewhere than on the island itself. However, it is desirable to set a clear limit of what is necessary for the longitudinal study in an effort to avoid the inclusion of any other than that which has relevance or significant causality to Taiwan's democratization. Today, the island has an indigenous population of about half a million, which only make up for about $1/50^{th}$ of the total population.[12] Most of the migration to the island occurred over the past two centuries however, mainly from China, and have had a strong causal connection with historical events that shaped Taiwan's future. Therefore, this essay will only go as far back as 1895. This was the time shortly after the Chinese Qing Dynasty refused to hand over Taiwan to the Imperial Japanese following the Treaty of Shimonoseki, which ultimately led to the conquering of Taiwan by the Japanese,[13] thus emerged the era of Japanese colonial rule over Taiwan, which lasted until the end of the second world war. Throughout this time, the island underwent rapid changes as the Japanese, among other things, implemented technological improvements such as telephone service, the building of railroad systems, economic aid to develop new schools and strengthening the existing educational service, i.e., generally boosting urban infrastructure development with the construction of various facilities, increasingly modernizing the island towards post-industrial revolution standards. This would lay the foundation for a strong middle-class to later emerge.[14] Although this seem like positive chains of events, it is noteworthy to point out that numerous research has shown that Japan's colonial rule over Taiwan more resembled one that sought to gain economic prosperity for Japan itself rather than increasing

[11] Huber, Rueschemeyer, and Stephens, "The Impact of…," 71–72.
[12] Jason Pan Adawai, "Indigenous world 2020: Taiwan," *International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs,* May 11, 2020, https://www.iwgia.org/en/taiwan/3609-iw-2020-taiwan.html.
[13] Marius Jansen, Japan and China: From War to Peace, 1894 – 1972 (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1975).
[14] Templeman, "After Hegemony…," 78; Tian, "Towards a Theory…," 47.

welfare for their colony. Additionally, Japan put in motion policies to assimilate the people of the island through various means such as through its restrictive education system, all to validify the holy status of the Japanese Emperor, which was something irreconcilable with the already existing culture and Confucian beliefs among the people with Chinese roots, i.e., the majority, residing in Taiwan.[15] Nonetheless, notably from 1898, the Japanese' presence in Taiwan did lead to modernization as structural changes were made of the colonial rule over Taiwan. More specifically, Gotō Shimpei, chief of civil administration at that time, was assigned jurisdiction over domestic affairs in Taiwan. This authority had previously been concentrated in Tokyo, but this reform enabled the governing general considerable latitude in planning and policymaking. In short, among the economic improvements and general development was an expansion of the harbor in Keelung, connecting it with railways reaching both Taipei to the west, and Kaohsiung in the south, expeditious road constructions, developing telegraph facilities, establishing newspaper agencies and telephone services, as well as the opening of a hydropower plant meant to power the Keelung Port and administrative buildings in Taipei. These developments, by facilitating rapid technological infrastructure and economic modernization, made sense for Japan at that time with its policy goals to turn Taiwan into a supplier of agricultural goods.[16]

After the end of the second world war, which terminated Japanese imperialism, Taiwan was promised to be handed back to China. Up until that time, China had undergone a civil- and a world war which had changed regimes and shaken the stability of the state. However, the current *de jure* state was the ROC, ruled by the nationalist political party, the Kuomintang (KMT), led by Chiang Kai-shek. Nevertheless, the ROC would ultimately lose its territory on mainland China to the rapid uprising of the Chinese communist party, leading to KMT's retreat to Taiwan in 1949, parallel to the establishment of the new People's Republic of China (PRC) under the communist leader, Mao Zedong, on mainland China.[17] These two polities, the ROC, and the PRC, have remained as the *de facto* ruling bodies over the separate locations, however both have claimed the right to rule over the same area they deem as Chinese territory, thus having heavy territorial disputes until this day.[18] However, prior to KMT's retreat, the island was already under their rule, as the island was handed over by the Japanese in 1945 to the ROC. Chiang Kai-shek's rule was strictly authoritarian, fallen within the

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[15] Komagome Takeshi and J. A. Mangan, "Japanese colonial education in Taiwan 1895-1922: precepts and practices of control," *HISTORY OF EDUCATION* 26, no. 3 (1997): 308, 314-315. https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760970260304; Shiaw-Chian Fong, "Hegemony and Identity in the Colonial Experience of Taiwan, 1895-1945," *TAIWAN UNDER JAPANESE COLONIAL RULE, 1895–1945*, ed. Liao Ping-Hui and David Der-Wei Wang (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 168.

[16] Murray A. Rubinstein, *TAIWAN – A New History – Expanded Edition* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2006), 209.

[17] Templeman, "After Hegemony…," 78-79; Michael Dillon, *China: A Modern History* (Second Edition) (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010), 268–284.

[18] Hung Mao Tien and Yun-han Chu, "Building Democracy in Taiwan," *The China Quarterly* 148 (1996): 1170. http://doi.org/10.1017/S030574100005058X.

category of Martial Law, and thus began a legacy of oppression of the people residing in Taiwan, especially the aboriginals who were stripped from the rights to real estate, including farmlands.[19] This oppression, as well as corruption within the leadership of the KMT, led to riots occurring all over the island as early as 1947, leading to a multitude of casualties ranging between 6,000 and 13,000 that year, as well as 20,000 to 30,000 killed or imprisoned the following months.[20] Templeman, as well as other scholars he refers to, argue that these events fueled the democratic transition in the 1990s.[21] As this inequality was increasingly deliberated in the coming years, the *Tangwai* (also known as '*Dangwai*') *movement* was born,[22] which eventually led to the formation of the political party, *the Democratic Progressive Party* (DPP), in 1986. The foundation of the movement and the DPP were seeking to form a new type of governance in Taiwan which would be based on democratic values and equal civil liberties.[23]

Socioeconomic Development

KMT's presence in Taiwan, as mentioned above, did not only begin by an oppression of liberties for the inhabitants, but the regime also monopolized a magnitude of businesses on the island, and policy-agencies under control by the state would administer the economic development. Besides the land reform which eliminated indigenous businesses due to the perceived threat that they could develop to pressurize the regime's legitimacy, the regime also implemented severe restraints to businesses in general. More specifically, in the 1950s, the KMT shaped a policy that would intercept domestic private capital concentration (DPCC), i.e., to prevent any private firms to gain a high enough degree of financial resources to get anywhere near to obtain a monopoly within an industry, which, without prevention, could have been utilized by firms as an immense influential bargaining strength to steer state politics. Instead, the KMT sought to promote a high number of state-owned enterprises (SOE) in an attempt to restrict the expansion of the private sector.[24] These early policies within political economy mirrored KMT's viewpoint since their rule on mainland China; although hostile towards communism, they neither sought to establish a pure capitalistic system. Instead, they aimed for a state with full control over the industrial market, including a protectionist approach towards market interventions from international trade, i.e., a Leninist inspired model – aimed to establish state

[19] Templeman, "After Hegemony…," 75; He Tian, "Towards a Theory…," 52.
[20] Templeman, "After Hegemony…," 78–79; Shirley A. Kan, "Democratic Reforms in Taiwan: Issues for Congress," *Democratic Reforms in Taiwan: Issue for Congress*, Congressional Research Service, May 26, 2010, 4, https://web.archive.org/web/20160303234655/https:/www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R41263.pdf.
[21] Templeman, "After Hegemony…," 78–79.
[22] Tian, "Towards a Theory…," 58.
[23] Anson Au, "Networks, Politics, and the Literary Public Sphere: The Foundation of Modern Democracy in Taiwan (1970s–1990s)," *SAGE Open*, (April 2020), 7, https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020927414.
[24] Tian, "Towards a Theory…," 49, 52-53.

monopoly.[25] However, Chiang Kai-shek would later realize that this approach relying on SOE was not sufficient to grow the economy, thus economic liberalization and foreign investments would ultimately be encouraged in 1958, although still retaining the constraints for DPCC to occur,[26] which turned out successful with its following economic boom, commonly referred to as the "Taiwan Miracle."[27]

But what does this policy have to do with the democratization in Taiwan? Further in Tian's article, '*Towards a theory of the transformation of the developmental state: political elites, social actors and state policy constraints in South Korea and Taiwan'*, he points out how the rich industrial families in South Korea, known as the *chaebols*, had immense impacts on the state's economic policy processes. This had a simple explanation: because the current military regime of South Korea specifically invited the chaebols to participate at the Economic Planning Board (EPB), established in the 1970s. The South Korean regime deemed this as a necessity to stimulate the much-needed economic growth as a means to maintain the survival of the regime, thus informally granting the chaebols' roles to function as technocrats. This led to a concentration of both economic capacities, as well as labor and industrial interests in South Korea, i.e., a promotion of DPCC.[28] In Taiwan, however, as argued by Lee mentioned above, the SOE was unable to promote enough growth by itself. Building upon the KMT's encouragement for market liberalization and foreign investments in 1958, the policy solution, which was set in motion in the 1970s in response to the need to generate further economic development, would support small- and medium enterprises (SME).[29] However, their low capability to influence the state politics, due to the prevention of DPCC to emerge, led to a decentralization among the business elite's interests. In response to this issue, the KMT would invite many of the SME to participate in a 'joint project' with an aim to emerge an industrial sector within high-tech production, which would, in addition to its long-term success, lead to some increase in KMT's political support from these enterprises.[30] Nevertheless, due to Taiwan's extensive amount of similarly sized businesses, many were able to resist bribery by the KMT.[31] Additionally, a magnitude of the SME owners in the 1970s were increasingly Taiwanese born citizens, not mainland Chinese, and thusly began questioning KMT's policies concerning national identity. This stimulated a discourse which would eventually become a precursing factor for mobilizing these business elites together with the underlying classes to arrange democratic mobilization, consequently

[25] Templeman, "After Hegemony…," 81; Hung Mao Tien and Yun-han Chu, "Building Democracy…," 1143.
[26] James Lee, "AMERICAN DIPLOMACY AND EXPORT-ORIENTED INDUSTRIALIZATION ON TAIWAN," *Journal of East Asian Studies* 20, no. 3 (2020): 464–465, http://doi.org/10.1017/jea.2020.9.
[27] Au, "Networks, Politics, and the Literary Public Sphere…," 4.
[28] Tian, "Towards a Theory…," 52–54.
[29] Lee, "AMERICAN DIPLOMACY…".
[30] Tian, "Towards a Theory…," 54–55.
[31] Templeman, "After Hegemony…," 83.

forming the Tangwai movement in the mid-1970s, and ultimately the founding of the political opposition party, the DPP in 1986. Contrastingly, in South Korea, the promotion of DPCC had created a greater working class as well as a smaller, but more powerful elite than that of Taiwan.[32] The South Korean working class initiated a will to transform the regime into a democracy as early as 1979, but without a strong presence from the middle class who could persuade the elite 'technocrats' to join the cause.[33] The regime responded in violent repression of protestors by utilizing military force.[34] According to Tian, democratic transition only took a step further once the middle class' mobilization occurred which would prompt the ruling elites to initiate a change of their legitimacy formula towards the regime. This would occur in the mid-1980s in South Korea, where two elites from the chaebols signified an opposition to the martial law regime, mobilizing the middle class and ultimately led to further support from ruling elites to steer South Korea towards a democratic transition, which was finally reached in 1987.[35]

A Growth of a Taiwanese Literary Public

As a possible reaction to the founding of the DPP in 1986, one may ask; what constituted the KMT to allow an opposing political party to emerge? A response to this question can be found by diving into Au's article, *Networks, Politics, and the Literary Public Sphere: The Foundation of Modern Democracy in Taiwan (1970s-1990s)*, where he examines how a rise in the literary public sphere generated a rational-critical thought. Au explains the conditions of rational-critical thought to be a "generalization of knowledge and exposure to dissonant perspectives,"[36] which would then lead to create the often-mentioned term *intelligentsia* among the citizens of Taiwan, ultimately facilitating civil society to grow towards deliberative democracy. In this article, Au utilizes the framework for explaining the structural transformation of the public sphere, presented in Jürgen Habermas' earlier research contributions, which focus on the rise of rational-critical thought and how it led to facilitate transitions to deliberative democracies in England, France and Germany during the 18th and 19th-centuries.[37] Habermas elaborates that it was no coincidence that the public sphere, which generated the more commonly used term *public opinion*, would occur in the late 18th century. In short, he explains that at this time of history, the division of the feudal estates, i.e., the church, monarchs, and nobility, split into a polarized formation which would form a chain reaction to divide the public authorities and the actors occupying themselves within production and trading, e.g., corporations and organizations, who would form a 'bourgeois sphere' which would lay the foundation of public opinion

[32] Tian, "Towards a Theory…," 54, 58.
[33] Ibid at 57.
[34] Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: a Modern History* (New York: Norton, 2005), 381.
[35] Tian, "Towards a Theory…," 58.
[36] Au, "Networks, Politics, and the Literary Public Sphere…," 1.
[37] Ibid.

forming within the public sphere. He continues by arguing that this heavily impacted democratic transition in both France and England.[38] Au argues that the same occurred in Taiwan once its civil society generated a rational-critical thought and the elite reached intelligentsia, which ultimately led to the birth of the aforementioned Tangwai movement.

The emergence of Taiwan's literary public sphere would begin its notable impact on the civil society during the 1970s and 1980s,[39] parallel to the increasing shift surrounding discussions about national identity by the younger Taiwanese population, both enterprise owners and citizens in general.[40] Taiwanese literature would increasingly communicate discontent with the continuation of Chiang Kai-shek's policies, especially after his death in 1975, as well as the political aim for the ROC to reclaim the Chinese mainland. This would cause a disturbance for KMT's foreign policy goal to recuperate the divided Chinese nation. Relatedly, in response to increased questioning regarding identity, which conveyed a distinct Taiwanese identity that was not to be mistaken as Chinese, gave rise to what became known as *Taiwanization*. Aside from partaking in the formation of a new discourse of national identity connected to the Tangwai movement, the Taiwanese media would gradually increase to express criticism in their newspaper-prints and radio broadcastings, including criticizing the regime's rule. In addition to Kai-shek's death, two particularly discomfiting events would heavily influence the media's discussions: Taiwan's expulsion at the United Nations in 1971 when the ROC lost its permanent seat at the Security Council, which would consequently be appointed *to* the PRC of mainland China instead, and further gradually lead the ROC to lose recognition as an independent state by members of the United Nations, as well as the United States' threat to cut relations with the ROC during 1978 to 1979. This ultimately did not happen though. However, these humiliating events, as well as the passing of the former president Chiang Kai-shek, would generate a favorable moment for the opposition to deliberate the need for Taiwan's independence to the public. *Formosa Magazine* is one actor within the Taiwanese media which heavily criticized the regime's policies, martial law, definition of national identity, and the inequalities and discriminatory handling of the indigenous population of the island. This led to an event remembered as the *Kaohsiung incident* in 1979, where as many as 50 journalists from Formosa Magazine was arrested and imprisoned, in connection to a protest by the opposition in the southern city, Kaohsiung, without first being put on trial. However ephemeral due to pressure from the U.S.,[41] this would further fuel the growth of the movement against KMT's *resinicization*, i.e., to merge the ROC and the PRC to become one Chinese state.[42]

[38] Jürgen Habermas, Sara Lennox and Frank Lennox, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964)," *New German Critique*, no. 3 (1974): 51, 53-54. https://doi.org/10.2307/487737.
[39] Au, "Networks, Politics, and the Literary Public Sphere…," 1, 4–5.
[40] Tian, "Towards a Theory…," 54.
[41] Kan, "Democratic Reforms in Taiwan…," 4.
[42] Au, "Networks, Politics, and the Literary Public Sphere…," 4-6.

Finally, if the civil unrest would continue this path, the current regime could face chaotic consequences. Therefore, as a response to this paragraph's question, this continuously developing situation by the opposition movement, caused by the increase of citizens achieving rational-critical thought, gave the KMT no other rational solution than to allow the opposition to organize politically with the founding the DPP in 1986, finally realizing the Taiwanese transition to become a deliberative democracy.[43] Furthermore, the president, Lee Teng-hui, who would be the last president to be appointed by political officials, but also the first directly elected by the public in 1996[44] – and later be commonly remembered as 'the father of Taiwan's democracy',[45] agreed with the opposition movement and DPP's demands to start eradicating the KMT's oppressive policies and martial law in 1988.[46] Additionally, Lee Teng-hui would develop an increased compassion towards the pro-independence movement which led to some KMT officials questioning his loyalty to the party.[47] This would ultimately steer to yet another political party to be founded in 1995, the *New Party*, which mainly derived from former KMT officials who opposed formal Taiwanese independence.[48]

Geopolitical Factors

Another factor which one could argue has contributed Taiwan to transition from an autocracy to a democracy is its geopolitics, specifically its foreign relations. The previous paragraphs' discussions have given a brief overview among the crucial geopolitical factors for Taiwan, such as its relations with mainland China, the US, and the United Nations, which arguably influenced Taiwan's transition into a democracy. As for now, the discussion has not directly focused on this variable, but instead on how foreign relations have impacted another, such as media discourse and the economy policy as discussed in the previous paragraphs, and then how these facilitated democratic transition. But how has the regime reacted to its foreign relations exclusively regarding its democratic transition? This is a tricky question. For instance, due to the common heritage, culture, and language as people from mainland China, public cross-strait relations increased, as one would naturally expect, once Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT liberalized the private market and encouraged foreign investments and international trade.[49] However, politically, the territorial disputes between the two

[43] Tian, "Towards a Theory…," 58.
[44] Kan, "Democratic Reforms in Taiwan…".
[45] Lily Kuo, "Lee Teng-hui, Taiwan's 'father of democracy', dies aged 97," *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media Limited, July 30, 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/30/lee-teng-hui-taiwan-father-of-democracy-first-president-dies-aged-97.
[46] Au, "Networks, Politics, and the Literary Public Sphere…," 7.
[47] Tien and Chu, "Building Democracy…," 1145-1146.
[48] Ibid at 1159-1160.
[49] Tian, "Towards a Theory…," 55.

de facto states still held both to take security measures for possible military interventions.[50]

A key point in time for Taiwan's geopolitics was in 1950 in connection to the outbreak of the Korean War. During this time, the U.S. would alter their foreign policy approach towards Chiang Kai-shek as close partnership with Taiwan, as well as Japan,[51] would aid in US' mobilization logistically during the war, thus leaving room for the ROC to deal with its domestic affairs.[52] Additionally, US' policy approach towards Taiwan was to formalize an alliance against a possible threat from military interventions with the communist mainland under the PRC, which led the U.S.' and the ROC's creation of the Military Assistance Agreement, and the Mutual Defense Treaty, lasting for a duration since 1954 until 1979.[53] Although being closely tied to the U.S. since the 1950s, one could argue that the Americans would have had a large impact on Taiwan's democratic transition. However, Kan argues that the U.S.' presence in Taiwan during the 1950s to the late 1970s did not pressurize the Taiwanese regime to abandon martial law for the benefit for a transition into a democracy, as there is no clear evidence which suggests just that. On the contrary, U.S.' representatives stationed in Taiwan during the 1950s would express that the justice system seemed fair.[54] However, even though Taiwan and U.S.' relations were reassured with the Taiwan Relations Act (1979), after the U.S. dismissed proposal to cut relations with Taiwan the year prior, the fact that this discussion occurred as well as the ROC's losing its seat at the United Nations Security Council in 1971, could have sent some signals to the regime which increased its discussions on how to maintain outside support to preserve its legitimacy. Therefore, Tien and Chu, suggests that the motivation for the regime to allow the transition to democracy could have come from within, i.e., that Taiwan's democratic transition was allowed in response to the foreign threat to lose its sovereignty. However, the allowance for the democratic transition could just have been to reassure the survival of the KMT as well. Nonetheless, they argue that democracy in Taiwan today is a necessary ingredient for the island's security as they stated:

> These recent developments suggest that the extent to which Taiwan can consolidate its new democracy and preclude the dire possibility of becoming another Hong Kong depends on, among other things, the willingness of the international community to safeguard the right of self-rule and furtherance of democracy. In this sense, democratization has created an acute security dilemma for Taiwan. … democracy

[50] Tien and Chu, "Building Democracy…," 1170; Kan, "Democratic Reforms in Taiwan…," 3; "Taiwan Relations Act (Public Law 96-8, 22 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.)," American Institute in Taiwan, January 1, 1979, https://www.ait.org.tw/our-relationship/policy-history/key-u-s-foreign-policy-documents-region/taiwan-relations-act/.
[51] Kan, "Democratic Reforms in Taiwan…," 3.
[52] Templeman, "After Hegemony…," 78-79.
[53] Kan, "Democratic Reforms in Taiwan…," 3.
[54] Ibid at 3.

> now becomes an essential ingredient of Taiwan's national security [as] it helps enhance its international legitimacy, nullifying Beijing's peaceful reunification campaign, and discredit the PRC's sovereign claim over the island.[55]

As such, it seems that if Taiwan's democratization did get facilitated by its foreign relations, it seemed to have been just partly so in contrast to the chain reactions following its socioeconomic development from free market capitalism. In other words, Tien and Chu suggest that facilitating democratic transition due to foreign relations would have been done to regain international recognition in the world, although, after being cast out of the United Nations, not recognized by the majority of the international community as an independent sovereign state. Furthermore, He argues similarly regarding the democratic transition in South Korea. He rejects the arguments stating that South Korea's democratization could be of geopolitical pressures from, e.g., the U.S., and other external factors such as the hosting of the Olympics in 1988 by pointing towards China, where similar 'pressures' occurred, but did not lead to democratization.[56]

Conclusion

Taiwan's democratic transition has, as seen throughout this essay, been facilitated by multiple factors. Following the framework of Huber, Rueschemeyer and Stephens, one can safely argue that Taiwan's democracy is neither a result of the variable of economic progress – as seen with the comparison with Singapore, or U.S.' allegiance, exclusively. The previous research contributions concerning Taiwan's regime evolution, economic development and media deliberations illustrate a combination of factors that have facilitated its transition. Japanese imperialism boosted the Taiwan's development in various areas, most notably in technology, communication, and transportation, and as Templeman's and He's findings suggests, facilitated a strong middle class to emerge in the following years, i.e., confirming Huber, Rueschemeyer and Stephens' framework. Interestingly for the case of Taiwan though, the KMT's economic policy to prevent DPCC, i.e., to prevent the private market to be steered by a small and powerful elite of actors, as with the chaebols in South Korea, prevented a big gap of common interest between the elites and the citizens of lower classes. Although both regimes ruled under martial law, South Korea's first democratic movements were without allegiance from other classes of citizens, and thus had a 'less soft' transition as the one of Taiwan. An interesting ingredient to the ease of alliance forming between different economic classes of citizens in Taiwan was the raise in questions concerning national identity, which especially gained motion in the 1970s. This is arguably an even more distinct trait of Taiwan's democratization than the DPCC prevention and SME promotion in

[55] Tien and Chu, "Building Democracy…," 117.
[56] Tian, "Towards a Theory…," 56.

economic policy, as the relationship between the ROC and PRC, with its vast political and territorial disputes, and the KMT's initial political aim for Sinicization, is an identical one, and therefore hard to 'recreate' in a comparison with other case studies. However, one factor which is uncomplicated to compare with other cases is the rise of rational-critical thought as discussed by Habermas' research contribution concerning its connection to democratization in England and France. The rise of communication is more simply facilitated through the expansion of the media, such as through mass-printed newspapers and magazines, as well as through radio broadcastings, and as such, is a result of general development. Therefore, the paramount argument by Huber, Reuschemeyer and Stephens that the order of causality from capitalist societies to the emergence of democracy starts with economic improvements and broad development in general can in Taiwan's case be approved as a theoretical explanation. In Taiwan's case, technological development was observed with early Japanese imperialism, which then incidentally, through greater transportation and communication networks, facilitated increased deliberation among citizens who sought political influence mainly as a result of oppression such as the inequality of aboriginals, martial law, and corruption in Taiwan. This ultimately mobilized citizens of different classes, leading to the Tangwai movement and finally the DPP and the transition from a one-party hegemonic autocracy to a multi-party deliberative democracy.

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"HIGH THE MOUTAIN, LONG THE RIVER": CHINESE LANDSCAPE PAINTING AND ITS AFTERLIFE IN THE SHORT ANIMATION FILM *FEELING FROM MOUNTAIN AND WATER* (1988)

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Introduction

The Spring and Autumn Annals of Mr. Lü (*Lüshi Chunqiu* 呂氏春秋), a Chinese encyclopedic text from the Qin dynasty, recorded a story between the musician Boya and his friend Ziqi. Boya was a master of *guqin*, a seven-string traditional Chinese instrument. Whenever Boya tried to translate the mountains into his music, his friend could comprehend their formidable height from the tunes. Whenever he thought of the flowing water as he played, his friend, too, recognized the torrential momentum.[1] The names Boya and Ziqi thus became metaphors for the resonance between two noble souls.

More than two millennia after the Qin-dynasty anecdote, a modern-day animation reenacted the theme of transcendental human connections, along with the elements of towering mountains, flowing rivers, and the sonorous timbre of the *guqin* strings. Produced in 1988 by the Shanghai Animation Film Studio, the nineteen-minute short film is called *Shanshui qing* 山水情, known in English as *Feeling from Mountain and Water*. The story centers on an elderly *guqin* player who falls ill during a journey and gets rescued by a young girl. The girl brings him to her hut and tends to him. To show his gratitude, the old man takes the girl in as his protégé and teaches her music lessons. When he has to leave after his recovery, the girl plays a beautiful *guqin* tune that evokes the memory amidst mountains and rivers that the two have shared.

Since its release, *Feeling from Mountain and Water* has received acclaim for presenting the traditional landscape paintings in motion and for making the landscape come alive. Not only is the story set in a world of landscape with misty peaks and cascading streams, but the film also draws much of its formal attributes from the traditional ink-wash landscape art. Although the long history of the Chinese ink wash landscape has been the subject of many studies, little has been said about the transference of its aesthetic effect to a cinematic format. In this paper, I seek to identify the stylistic roots of *Feeling from Mountain and Water* in the lineage of Chinese landscape art. I will examine how the film medium made explicit what had been implicit in a static landscape painting, both through its technical innovation and limits.

[1] Lü Buwei, "呂氏春秋" [The Spring and Autumn Annals of Mr. Lü], Chinese Text Project, accessed December 20, 2021, https://ctext.org/lv-shi-chun-qiu/zhs.

Additionally, I wish to shed light on the specific sociopolitical climate in which the film was produced and responded to.

Revival or Return? Finding Artistic Roots

The stylistic ties between *Feeling from Mountain and Water* and traditional landscape paintings have become the film's defining characteristic. However, the specific strand of landscape paintings by which the film is influenced remains underexamined. As early as the scene in which the girl returns home by boat (Fig. 1), *Feeling from Mountain and Water* has aligned itself with the visual style of sparse composition and loose brushstrokes. Most of the elements in the shot gravitate to the left half, leaving an unadorned expanse on the right. Hasty, freehand strokes set up the structure of the hut as well as the bamboo grove. The rest of the scenic subjects—from the riverbank, the distant mountain range, to the rock formation in the leftmost foreground—are formed by watery ink wash, instead of being carefully modeled into cragged, tactile surfaces.

Fig. 1. Still from *Feeling from Mountain and Water* (03:27). Directed by Te Wei 特偉. Shanghai Animation Film Studio, 1988.

Following the footsteps of the girl, the shot zooms in to the entrance of the hut (Fig. 2). Here, the free-flowing nature of the ink wash has been emphasized. On the thatched roof, patches of ink seep across the original contours of the house, smudging the windows and the door. One can even see the creases on the paper as the diluted ink soaks through its fiber. The hut itself threatens to come apart at any moment, as the lines are haphazard and the perspective appears slightly awkward. It is almost as if the scene is drenched in carefree dizziness.

Fig. 2. Still from *Feeling from Mountain and Water* (03:51). Directed by Te Wei 特偉. Shanghai Animation Film Studio, 1988.

The visual traits of this sequence bring to mind the works of the early Qing painter Shitao 石濤 (1642–1707). Shitao was born amidst the turbulent transition from the Ming to the Qing dynasty, the latter of which led by Manchu conquerors. A descendant of the family of Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (1368–1399), the first emperor of Ming, Shitao had to spend his early years in Buddhist monasteries to evade Manchu persecution. Growing up, he had been a tireless traveler and prolific painter. His artistic career was defined by his rebellious spirit—he signed his paintings with over thirty different names.[2] When his contemporaries were consumed by the doctrine of "imitating the ancients," Shitao revolted against such homogeneity and championed the return to selfhood.[3] In his *Huayu lu* 畫語錄, an essay on the theory of painting, Shitao reminded his readers that there exists a self—the creative expression unique to the artist—besides the ancient models, and that "[one] cannot stick the whiskers of the ancients on [one's] face."[4] His art, therefore, is fueled by radical individualism, sometimes presenting itself as a disconcerting oscillation "from the posed and meticulous to the crude and brutal."[5]

Of these two ends on Shitao's stylistic spectrum, the film's style is closer to the latter. The general setting of the waterside cottage scene echoes Shitao's smaller, more

[2] "Shitao or Shih-T'ao; original name: Zhu Ruoji (Chu Juo-ji); monk's names: Yuan-ji (Yuan-chi), Daoji (Tao-chi)," *Benezit Dictionary of Artists*, last modified November 11, 2021, https://doi.org/10.1093/benz/9780199773787.article.B00046718.
[3] Lin Yu-tang, *The Chinese Theory of Art: Translations from the Masters of Chinese Art* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1967), 137.
[4] Lin, *The Chinese Theory of Art*, 143.
[5] "Shitao or Shih-T'ao," *Benezit Dictionary of Artists*.

casual works, notably Leaf B in his *Landscapes* album 尋僊山水圖冊 (ca. 1690s; Fig. 3). In the album leaf, the composition is sparse. Some dashes of light blue color constitute the faraway mountains, seemingly shrouded by clouds and mist. Amidst the rocky terrain, the small courtyard is sketched with very simple lines and a disregard of perspective. The leftmost shack appears to rest on a tilted ground plane different from the rest of the architecture. The blueness of its curtains overflows, smeared onto its white façade.

Fig. 3. *Landscapes* (leaf b). By Shitao (1642–1707), ink and color on paper. 8 1/4 × 12 3/8 in. (21 × 31.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Such visual affinity with the cottage scene is further strengthened by the leaf's inscription. In a semi-cursive script, Shitao inscribed 知音者誰, literally translated as, "who really understands my music?"[6] Though the leaf does not feature any figure, one might readily conjure up the image of Shitao sitting in his waterside retreat Dadi Tang 大滌堂[7] and playing music to a like-minded audience, which is not unlike the old master in *Feeling from Mountain and Water* who is strumming his *guqin* when the young girl returns. Moreover, the inscription makes reference to the story of Boya and Ziqi. The word 知音者, or "the one who understands my music," finds its etymological roots in the Qin-dynasty legend.[8] In this case, while the film is linked stylistically to the

[6] "Landscapes ca. 1690s," The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed December 17, 2021, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/49179.
[7] Ling Lizhong, "石濤何時始用"大滌子"之號" [When Did Shitao Start Using the Title "Dadizi"?], Macau Museum of Art, accessed December 20, 2021, https://www.mam.gov.mo/MAM_WS/ShowFile.ashx?p=mam2013/pdf_theses/635592521071675.pdf.
[8] Lü, "The Spring and Autumn Annals of Mr. Lü."

works of Shitao, both Shitao and the filmmakers look back to a story from the more distant past, in which profound human connections were built on the *guqin* music.

That *Feeling from Mountain and Water* draws inspiration from Shitao's paintings is more than a subjective assumption; the connection is sustained by recorded artistic lineage. A late bloomer on the art scene, Hangzhou-based artist Zhuo Hejun 卓鹤君 (1943–) did not get admitted to the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts until he was thirty-six years old; six years after his graduation, he was in charge of the background design in the production of *Feeling from Mountain and Water*. During his time at the Academy, he studied under Lu Yanshao 陸儼少 (1909–1993), one of the few surviving traditional-style landscape painters in the 1980s.[9] Among the artists that inspired Lu Yanshao, Shitao had been the most prominent. In 1962, Lu produced a hundred-leaf landscape album, one of the major projects of his career, and it was said to be "clearly influenced by Shitao."[10] Moreover, Lu spoke highly of Shitao's innovation that broke the early-Qing artistic stagnancy, and he advised the young artists to feel free to study Shitao's style, as long as they do not engage in mindless imitation.[11] This suggestion itself resonates well with Shitao's insistence on an artist's individuality.

Thus, if Shitao can be likened to a pebble that agitated the still pond water of the late seventeenth-century art scene, *Feeling from Mountain and Water* is on the outermost ring of ripples. When producing the film, the artists did not willfully retrieve Shitao's aesthetic among a cabinet of obsolete antiques and summoned it back to life. On the contrary, the artistic lineage is an unbroken—though not easily detectable—continuum, even when the medium shifted from papers and textiles to layers of celluloid and rolls of film.

From the Paper to the Silver Screen

Adapting Chinese ink wash painting to animation was no small feat. In a 2007 documentary, *The Lost Magic of the Shanghai Art Studios*, Wan Laiming 萬籟鳴 (1900–1997), one of the Wan Brothers who pioneered the Chinese animation industry, stated that the animators needed to focus on the essentials, without wasting time on the details. Since the traditional animation was filmed image by image, he noted that "if you add a single button to a jacket, you have to add it to 100,000 or 200,000 drawings." In this regard, the "too refined paintings in ancient China" would be unfit for animation adaptation.[12] Therefore, the visual adjacency to Shitao-like simplicity not only results from the design artist's training; it is also a technical necessity.

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[9] Chen Weihe. "Lu Yanshao [Lu Yen-shao; ming Di; zi Wanruo]," *Grove Art Online*, published January 30, 2002, https://doi.org/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T097498.

[10] Julia Frances Andrews, *Painters and Politics in the People's Republic of China, 1949-1979* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 302, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb.09169.

[11] Lu Yanshao, "山水画刍议" [On Landscape Paintings], *Chinese Artists in Painting and Calligraphy*, no.1 (2016): 46.

[12] *The Lost Magic of the Shanghai Art Studios*, directed by Marie-Claire Quiquemelle (Filmakers Library, 2007), 00:13:30, https://video.alexanderstreet.com/watch/the-lost-magic-of-the-shanghai-art-studios.

A visual clue to more technical details of the film's production is the difference in brushwork texture and ink wash effect between figural and landscape scenes. As the story progresses, the setting opens up from an intimate cottage scene to the wider world, as if following the footsteps of a gradually recovering old musician. The growing prominence of the background—from the modest interior of the hut, the willow-lined embankment, to the lofty peaks and precipitous cliff–seems also to mirror the young girl's improving *guqin* skills that ultimately reach a new height. However, a visual discrepancy emerges in this final stage.

At around 14:13 of the film, the frame moves upwards from the bottom of a cliff, showing the girl on top (Fig. 4). Here, the brushstrokes that constitute the craggy terrain remain watery, but one can still sense the friction between the brush and the expanse of paper. The darker wash on the top of the cliff transitions naturally to the lighter tone farther down—one might even be able to discern the exact point where the brush pushes against the paper and the ink begins to soak through. Though minuscule, the strokes that sketch out the girl's figure share the overall roughness of the landscape.

Fig. 4. Still from *Feeling from Mountain and Water* (14:13). Directed by Te Wei 特偉. Shanghai Animation Film Studio, 1988.

Immediately after the extreme long shot, the close-up of the girl appears to have a different texture (Fig. 5). The lines are fairly clean, and each stroke glides across the white background without breaking or halting in the middle. The gradation of ink wash seems awry. In the girl's hair, where darker strokes overlap with a patch of lighter ink wash, the dark ink does not contaminate the lighter shade and the lighter wash does not muddle the smooth strokes (Fig. 6). It is almost as if the different layers of ink are insulated from each other, an effect not seen in traditional ink-wash paintings.

Fig. 5. Still from *Feeling from Mountain and Water* (14:20). Directed by Te Wei 特偉. Shanghai Animation Film Studio, 1988.

Fig. 6. Detail of Fig. 5.

Granted, the discrepancies mentioned are subtle, but the respective technical processes of the two shots are drastically different. In the production of *Feeling from Mountain and Water*, animators worked with both paper-based design drafts and cel, transparent celluloid sheets used in traditional animation. For the still landscapes, together with a handful of figural scenes in which the characters are static and less prominent, the animators directly photographed the hand-drawn design drafts done on *xuan* paper. As for the scenes with significant movement, such as the close-up of the girl playing *guqin* on a cliff, animators had to go through a process called *bimo fenjie* 筆墨分解, or the dissection of brushwork. Since celluloid cannot absorb ink, to recreate the subtle gradations of blackness, animators needed to dissect the original drafts into isolated strokes and different shades of ink wash, then redraw each onto a separate layer of cel.[13]

[13] Fu Guangchao, "解密水墨动画《山水情》" [Decoding Ink-wash Animation *Feeling from Mountain and Water*], *Bilibili Animation Column*, October 25, 2020, https://www.bilibili.com/read/cv8089095.

The girl's hair, for instance, is broken down into at least three layers—the contours, the lighter patch of ink, and the dark strokes that emphasize her thickest locks of hair (Fig. 6). These three layers are then stacked together. The awkwardness in the ink gradation, therefore, was due to the restraints of this technical process, since ink on different cels cannot interact. This process needed to be repeated hundreds of times, each time with slight variations, such as a dip of the girl's chin or a tilt of her head. When all of the assembled plates were photographed and edited together, the figure appeared to be in motion, moving her head to the rhythm of the music.

Ultimately, the animators' goal was to recreate the tactile engagement between the fibers of brush and paper, to simulate the unrefined and even slightly uncontrolled quality of ink, on the uncooperative surface of the cel. Herein lies the paradox: the visual traits of paper-based ink-wash paintings, like the movement of the brush or the flow of the ink, bring viewers' attention to the ink-and-paper medium itself; however, animators must divert the viewers' attention from the actual medium, to make them feel as if they have encountered an animated world on a scroll of paper, instead of some sheets of cel.

The ink wash effect in a traditional landscape painting is both designed and spontaneous, depending on both the artist's command of the brush and the patterns of ink's free dilation. Due to the smooth, water-repellant nature of celluloid, the film could not perfectly reproduce the latter. From a different perspective, such imperfections could remind the viewers of what they might have taken for granted when looking at a landscape painting, namely, the spontaneous effects that operate beyond the artist's hand.

Aside from the photographs on the design drafts on paper and the animation sequence made with celluloid sheets, *Feeling from Mountain and Water* features a third component, an ingenious design that conceals, in a literal sense, the artist's hand. In the imaginary realm evoked by the girl's music, mountains grow out of the pristine white background and flocks of dark clouds materialize before a rainstorm (Fig. 7). The ink is flowing and expanding right before the viewers' eyes. These two sequences were in fact filmed when the artist was in action. A pane of glass was propped up and the paper was spread out on one side. While the artist splashed the ink onto paper, a camera set captured the whole process on the other side of the glass pane, so that the traces of ink are visible to the viewers without them seeing the artist's hand.[14] The slight trembles of the frame as the shot pans leftward were probably caused by the limited equipment that the Studio's photographers worked with. When compared with a contemporaneous animation, *The Little Mermaid* (1989) produced by the Walt Disney studio, *Feeling from Mountain and Water* had only a fraction of Disney's money and manpower. Disney set up an entire satellite animation facility in Lake Buena Vista,

[14] Ibid.

Florida, so that it could provide ink and paint support to *The Little Mermaid*.[15] The Shanghai Animation Film Studio, however, had to cope with a skeleton staff, the termination of state funding, and, consequently, the lack of proper filming equipment. Someone must have crouched under the slope of the glass with a hand-held camera and edged toward their left to keep up with the artist's action.

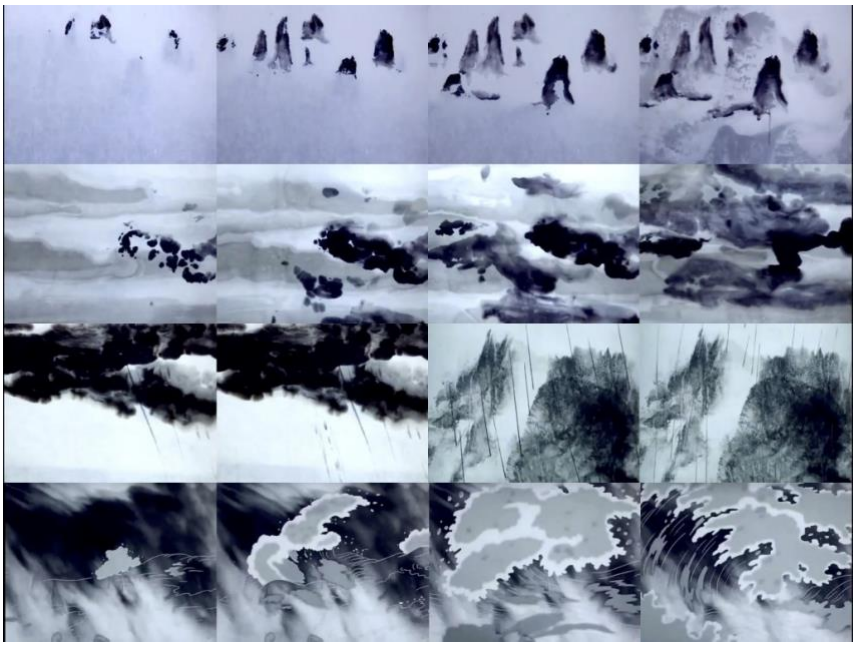

Fig. 7. Stills from *Feeling from Mountain and Water*. Directed by Te Wei 特偉. Shanghai Animation Film Studio, 1988.

Though only a few seconds long, these two sequences manage to exploit the potential of the film medium, a time-based art form. In the case of *Feeling from Mountain and Water*, its cinematic format allows it to bring to the foreground what has been implicit in the still landscape paintings. When encountering traditional landscape paintings, viewers could only see the finished effect, whether the traces of the brush's movement or the specific gradations within patches of ink. The live process of the painting's creation—how the brush was wielded and how the ink flowed—remained invisible to those unfamiliar with the practice of ink painting, until it was filmed by the innovative production team of *Feeling from Mountain and Water*. If previous experience with artistic practices used to be the prerequisite for appreciating the otherwise invisible subtleties, the film effectively eliminates such prerequisites, promising everyone the full experience.

Feeling from Mountain and Water revealing a previously unseen process finds resonance in the well-known scholarship by German philosopher Walter Benjamin. In his seminal essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility,"

[15] Roger Moore, "After the Magic," *The Orlando Sentinel*, June 20, 2004, https://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/os-xpm-2004-06-20-0406180524-story.html.

Benjamin discusses how the film revealed the "hidden details in familiar objects."[16] He wrote, "we are familiar with the movement of picking up a cigarette lighter or a spoon, but know almost nothing of what really goes on between hand and metal," while the film camera can make such "optical unconscious" accessible.[17] Granted, the animation is outside the purview of the Benjamin essay, but this specific section still rings true in the context of *Feeling from Mountain and Water*. Just as people cannot see "what really goes on" between the hand and the spoon without the assistance of a film camera, so too viewers in front of a finished painting cannot see "what really goes on" between the ink and the paper, until the animators shed light on the process with their work.

Moreover, following Benjamin's argument, when a traditional landscape painting is adapted into animation, it can accommodate simultaneous viewing and provide "an object of simultaneous collective reception."[18] Even if the viewers do not own a landscape handscroll for private enjoyment, they nevertheless can immerse themselves in the world of landscape, watching the film together with friends and family. From the mid-fifteenth century onward, a great number of literati painters and audiences had participated in the production and circulation of landscape paintings, thereby distancing the genre from those without much knowledge of the literati culture.[19] *Feeling from Mountain and Water* opens up the category of landscape to a new audience, much wider than the genre's former patrons and connoisseurs. Those without the financial means or social connections to access the original landscape paintings can nevertheless appreciate their beauty on screen at an affordable price. To some extent, Benjamin's goal for films to carry inherent revolutionary potential can be applied to the 1988 ink-wash animation as well.

Resounding Echoes in the Political Realm

It is tempting to label *Feeling from Mountain and Water* as politically democratizing, an art production for the masses. However, the relationship between this 1988 film—along with the Chinese landscape paintings in general—and the political climate of twentieth-century China is more complicated than that. Tracing the Shanghai Animation Film Studio's development since its founding years, one would find that the attitude of China's central leadership to the Studio's production has undergone many changes. As early as the establishment of the Studio, the groundwork for this film's aesthetic had already been laid. However, sandwiched between the Cultural Revolution and the Market Reforms, the film could not have happened any earlier, nor could it happen any later. In this section, I intend to make visible these

[16] Walter Benjamin, *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, 3: 1935–1938* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 117.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Benjamin, *Selected Writings*, 116.
[19] Shih Shou-chien, *山鳴谷應：中國山水畫和觀眾的歷史* [Mountains Resounded, Valleys Echoed: A History of Landscape Paintings and Their Audience] (Taipei: Rock Publishing International, 2017), 342.

invisible undercurrents and situate the film in its historical context alongside the artistic one.

When the Shanghai Animation Film Studio was founded in 1957, there had been an ongoing debate about the status of traditional Chinese ink paintings. Before the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, communist revolutionaries looked to the Soviet Union as their model and adopted a Marxist, Russian-oriented approach to ideological, literary, and artistic matters.[20] They sought to emphatically distinguish themselves from the feudal remnants. Traditional, aristocratic, and individualistic, ink wash paintings represented everything that the communists opposed. Thus, there remained little surprise that during the 1930s and the 1940s, traditional-style paintings—among which landscape was a prominent genre—fell out of favor.[21]

As the communists seized power and established their regime in 1949, however, they were obligated to adopt a different approach. Instead of downright rejecting the "feudal remnants," they needed to resituate themselves as the rightful successors to the Chinese tradition, to reinsert themselves in the narrative of Chinese history, a narrative in which traditional art, including landscape art, played a significant role. Thus, in the 1949–1957 period, the main debate in the art world was "whether traditional painting should be preserved, reformed, or simply eradicated" in the new society.[22] In fact, soon after liberation, many Shanghai-based traditional-style artists were retrained as book illustrators so as to appeal to the masses. Lu Yanshao, who would become the teacher of *Feeling*'s background artist, was one of them.[23] The tides turned during the Hundred Flowers Campaign. Initiated in 1956 by the party central, the Campaign encouraged the country's intellectuals to "let a hundred flowers bloom"—to freely express their opinions and exert their creativity.[24] During this period, traditional-style artists expressed their disagreement with the low status of Chinese ink paintings in the art academies' curricula.[25] Their criticism was well-received, and traditional paintings were deemed "the heritage of [China's] excellent tradition" as opposed to Westernized art.[26]

It was at this historical juncture, under the auspices of the Hundred Flowers Campaign, that the Shanghai Animation Film Studio was founded.[27] With the official

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[20] Li Chu-tsing and Thomas Lawton, "The New Chinese Landscape," *Art Journal*, vol. 27, no. (Winter 1967–1968): 143, https://www.jstor.org/stable/775109.
[21] Julia Frances Andrews, "Traditional Painting in New China: Guohua and the Anti-Rightist Campaign," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 49, no. 3 (August 1990): 558, https://doi.org/10.2307/2057771.
[22] Andrews, "Traditional Painting in New China," 559.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid at 567.
[25] Ibid at 562.
[26] Ibid at 566.
[27] Alex Dubok de Wit, "Te Wei, founding father of Chinese animation," *British Film Institute*, published August 3, 2017, https://www2.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/features/te-wei-founding-father-chinese-animation.

rhetoric of celebrating the national essence, the Studio oriented itself toward the traditional art forms of China. Te Wei 特偉 (1915–2010), the mastermind behind *Feeling from Mountain and Water* and the director of Studio since 1957, published a passionate article in *People's Daily* three years into his directorship. According to him, the mission of the Studio was to "create animations that belonged to the nation," to "nationalize the genre of animation." He went on by saying: "When we ponder how to make animation—a foreign art form—with a more distinct national style, we naturally think of ink paintings, the traditional pictorial art of our country." Having just finished an animation based on the animal paintings of Qi Baishi 齊白石 (1864–1957), Te Wei was ambitious. He wished to adapt more genres of Chinese paintings to animation, from portraiture, flower-and-bird, to landscape.[28] Thus, the seed of *Feeling from Mountain and Water*, a marriage between ink landscapes and cinematic arts, was already sowed in the 1960s, and it was sowed with a strong sense of nationalism at its core.

Despite the nationalistic and patriotic fervor in its founding years, the Studio suffered a heavy blow during the Cultural Revolution between 1966 and 1976.[29] When interviewed by French sinologist Marie-Claire Quiquemelle, Te Wei lamented the fate of the Studio. All but two of their productions were banned because most of their works did not place enough attention on class struggle.[30] The new projects were all shelved. Many core members of the Studio underwent political persecution, including Te Wei himself. In retrospect, even if the Studio's production was allowed to proceed, *Feeling from Mountain and Water* would no doubt have been criticized. There was no motif of class struggle involved in the friendship between the old master and his protégé. The story seems to take place in a utopia, spatially and temporally indefinite, without any concerns about politics. It would have been emphatically incongruent with a period defined by the animosity towards bourgeois culture and the divide between the oppressors and the oppressed. Indeed, the screenplay of *Feeling from Mountain and Water* was written in 1980, four years after the end of the Cultural Revolution.

In the early 1960s, the ink aesthetic of *Feeling from Mountain and Water* would have been seen as a symbol of nationalism as opposed to Western art. However, between 1966 and 1976, it would have been seen as the symbol of bourgeois culture as opposed to the oppressed working class. The "Ten Lost Years" would not have welcomed such a production. Yet as Chinese history moved into a new chapter, the fate of *Feeling from Mountain and Water* was not without peril. Under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, China entered the market reform era, a period in which China transformed from a socialist economy to a capitalist market economy. The subsequent

[28] Te Wei, "创作民族的美术电影" [Creating Art Films of the Nation], *People's Daily*, August 31, 1960, https://rmrb.online/read-htm-tid-252359.html.
[29] Sean Macdonald, *Animation in China: History, Aesthetics, Media* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 147.
[30] *The Lost Magic of the Shanghai Art Studios*, 00:25:15.

upsurge of materialist and utilitarian worldview differed much from the lofty, transcendent sentiments in *Feeling from Mountain and Water*.

Beyond the ideological divergence, the new economic climate caused concrete damage to the prospects of ink-wash animation as a whole. Wang Genfa 王根發, one of the film directors at the Shanghai Animation Film Studio, remembered how the influx of Japanese anime dominated the Chinese market. According to him, in about 1984, the Japanese companies offered their anime series to Chinese TV channels without charge whereas the channels had to purchase the rights to play the Studio's animated films. Driven by an interest-oriented mindset, all the TV channels began exclusively showing anime series from Japan.[31] As the production of an ink-wash animation was expensive and time-consuming, it quickly lost its edge.

Feeling from Mountain and Water was released when traditional Chinese animation was drawing its last breaths.[32] The "foreign invasion" could be detected even in the utopian world of timeless landscapes. Early on in the film, after his physical health has gotten better, the old man stands on the top of a hill and gazes into the skies. Several eagles are seen circling in the sky. At exactly 08:32, an eagle dives down and skims across the frame (Fig. 8). If one looks closely at the fleeting image, one would recognize that the eagle's eyes appear almost cartoonish, not unlike that of the Disney characters or the big, round eyes in Japanese anime. Indeed, traditional Chinese landscape paintings do not usually feature an extreme close-up of a bird. Without any pictorial precedents to fall back on, designers had, whether consciously or not, resorted to non-Chinese models. Though this close-up could easily be overlooked, it reflected the challenges that the Studio was finding harder and harder to handle.

Fig. 8. Still from *Feeling from Mountain and Water* (08:32). Directed by Te Wei 特偉. Shanghai Animation Film Studio, 1988.

[31] *The Lost Magic of the Shanghai Art Studios*, 00:38:10.
[32] Macdonald, *Animation in China*, 168.

The minute improvisations were not enough to salvage ink-wash animation. *Feeling from Mountain and Water* was the last of its kind, often described as the swansong of Shanghai Animation Studio. Taking the context into consideration, the film gains an extra layer of meaning. The story between the old man and his protégé essentially concerns how "one generation pass[ed] down an artistic tradition to the next."[33] Thus, the entire film could be read as a metaphor, representing the dream of an older generation of animators that their skills and techniques could be carried on. Under this interpretation, *Feeling from Mountain and Water* is even more melancholic: while the young girl bids her teacher farewell in the film, viewers bid their farewell to a bygone generation and a discontinued craft.

Conclusion

Feeling from Mountain and Water is fraught with tensions and contradictions. It is a lively, moving continuation of the Shitao-style landscape paintings; it is also a relic, a witness to the extinction of ink-wash animation techniques. Inside its story is an idyllic utopia, far removed from the scheme of money or politics. Yet outside of the fictional realm, the film needs to negotiate with the aftermath of political turmoil and the challenges in a new economic climate. It is both in motion and at a standstill, both timeless and acutely time-specific.

Tracing back to the film's thematic origination, the Qin-dynasty story of Boya and Ziqi itself is not simply a fairytale of spiritual human connection. In *Lüshi Chunqiu*, it is used as a metaphor for a model relationship between the ruler and his subject. The author Lü Buwei 呂不韋 argued that, just as a good musician deserves a good audience, so too a virtuous subject deserves to be treated with respect in order to inspire his loyalty.[34] At the end of the day, the music that Boya played meant more than the landscapes. Likewise, the significance of *Feeling from Mountain and Water* extends beyond its achievement of making landscapes come alive. In the film, animators' clever design allowed the fleeting moment of ink running across the expanse of paper to be forever preserved. Similarly, the film itself is a capsule of a now-lost historical juncture, where the *xuan* paper met the celluloid, where the embers of Maoist national spirit met the onslaught of the global market.

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[33] Macdonald, *Animation in China*, 169.
[34] Lü, "The Spring and Autumn Annals of Mr. Lü."

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INDIGENEITY, RESISTANCE, AND IMAGINATION: PALESTINIAN LIBERATION AS DECOLONIAL PRAXIS

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Introduction

The Zionist movement that led to the colonization of Palestinian lands cannot be delinked from modernity, racism, capitalism, patriarchy and most importantly, colonialism.[1] These oppressive structures operate together and are central to the enterprise of settler colonialism in Palestine and elsewhere, which requires the creation of the "Indigenous" category and their dispossession, alienation and genocide from their own lands. As Fayez Sayegh has argued, Zionist settler colonialism is "incompatible with the continued existence of the 'native population.'"[2] This cannot be possible without a narrative shift of belongingness, ownership, and displacement — all of which are functions of power. Decolonization, in this context, is not a simple removal of the coloniser but a restructuring of the world that ruptures the co-constitutive forms of oppression that are central to Palestinian colonization and opens up the space to imagine the world anew.

In this paper, we do not give a historical overview of Palestinian colonization but analyse Palestinian response to this with reference to the two critical terms: "resistance" and "liberation". We suggest that, in the context of Palestine, liberation is a form of decolonial praxis which gives us a sense of a world ordered on a different socio-political axis, derives on indigenous knowledge, and aspires to push against elements of patriarchy, capitalism and racism. In this manner, it is premised upon the resistance of such global forms of oppression and has remained in consistent dialogue with international resistance movements. In short, we aim to study Palestinian resistance with reference to other forms of oppression and in their liberation, imaginations of other forms of being.

The first part of the paper investigates how Palestinian resistance is also resistance to other forms of oppression. It embeds resistance in the framework of Sumud and argues how quotidian acts work to destabilise Zionist settler-colonialism. The second half analyses how liberation from these is closely linked to an alternative imagination of the world. In doing so, we offer an analysis of resistance and liberation from objects of oppression through the idea of "returning" to dispossessed lands and

[1] Chandni Desai and Linda Tabar, "Decolonization is a global project: From Palestine to the Americas," Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society 6, no. 1 (2017): vii, https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/28899.
[2] Fayez A. Sayegh, *Zionist Colonialism in Palestine* (Beirut: Research Center, Palestine Liberation Organization, 1965), 5.

investigate how Palestinians use indigenous ways to offer a truly "decolonial" vision of the world.

Forms of Oppression

It has often been argued that the goal of Palestinian liberation is not simply to "replace the colonial state and racial economy," but in deriving from indigenous land, memory and body, is to reconstitute their relationship to the political and hence, re-envision the organisation of society.[3] To be able to understand this vision, we must first understand how settler colonialism is linked to capitalism, patriarchy, racism, and other forms of oppression.

Glen Coulthard draws on Karl Marx's ideas of primitive accumulation to argue that colonial dispossession of Indigenous people from their lands was central to the reproduction of the capitalist relations of productions.[4] While his argument is centred around North America, we can see the same processes play out in Palestine through the works of Johanna Fernandez. For Fernandez, the expropriation of Indigenous land for capitalist needs is central to the "emergence of industrial capitalism" and settler-colonialism in both Palestine and the United States.[5] She marks a difference in the exploitation of labour in both countries — while the American capitalist project relied on the labour of "racially oppressed groups," the Palestinians received the same treatment as Native Americans who were alienated from the economy.[6] Alongside this, Chandni Desai demonstrates how the "capitalist demand for labor in the development of settler-capitalist economies intersects with the logic of elimination" and in that sense, capitalism is embedded in processes of violence, slavery, imperialism and genocide.[7] Racial capitalism, then, profits from reinforcing racist ideologies and patriarchal formations that are foundational to settler-colonialism in Palestine.[8] These accounts present to us how racial capitalism and settler colonialism are co-constitutive projects.

Simultaneously, gendered narratives have also been central to the colonization of Palestine. David Lloyd has argued how Israel's propaganda campaign of "feminist-washing" has treated the Israeli state as an agent of emancipation for Arab women because of the "incompatibility of Arab and Muslim societies with women's

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[3] Desai and Tabar, "Decolonization is a global project," xi.
[4] Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 7.
[5] Johanna Fernandez, "Structures of settler colonial domination in Israel and in the United States," Decolonization: Indigeneity, *Education & Society* 6, no. 1, (2017): 32, https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/28901.
[6] Fernandez, "Structures of settler colonial domination," 32.
[7] Chandni Desai, "Disrupting Settler-Colonial Capitalism: Indigenous Intifadas and Resurgent Solidarity from Turtle Island to Palestine," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 50, no. 2, (2021): 52, https://doi.org/10.1080/0377919X.2021.1909376.
[8] Brenna Bhandar and Rafeef Ziadah, "Acts and Omissions: Framing Settler Colonialism in Palestine Studies", Jadaliyya, 14 January 2016, https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/32857/Acts-and-Omissions-Framing-Settler-Colonialism-in-Palestine-Studies.

emancipation."[9] This is accompanied by an active assault on Palestinian life and its capacity to reproduce, which unevenly targets women both in Occupied Palestine and in the West Bank and Gaza.[10] In doing so, this 'necropolitical state' attacks all Palestinians. Yet, in the demolition of the private sphere, denial of medical treatment to pregnant women, and reducing populations in East Jerusalem, Israel unequally attacks women.[11] Consequently, it is women's capacity to reproduce—both biologically and socio-culturally—which is a source of deep distress to the Zionist project premised upon the erasure of Palestinian populations that makes them a more significant target of their policies.

A final aspect of oppression that we would like to explore pertains to racism and apartheid. In a recent report by Amnesty International, they write that "Israel has established and maintained an institutionalized regime of oppression and domination of the Palestinian population for the benefit of Jewish Israelis—a system of apartheid."[12] Amnesty International suggests that in its segregation of Palestinians, Israel treats them as an "inferior non-Jewish racial group."[13] In using eugenics, Zionists also demanded racial purity and the unification of the Jewish race for the "service of Jewish nationalism."[14] Eugenics has been central to the claim of Zionists in Palestine from the very beginning, as is clear from the works of Arthur Ruppin, one of the founding fathers of Zionism. He writes that the most important work in Palestinian colonization is of "the selection of the human material", which "in terms of upbringing, occupation and character, come close to the goals we are striving for."[15] Ruppin adds that to develop what is "Jewish in us in Palestine", it would be preferable if "only 'racial Jews' came to Palestine," thereby creating racial boundaries of admission to the newly-founded country.[16] Creating a selective policy to "safeguard the racial fitness" of Jews in Palestine, alongside the use of terms such as "human material" shows the clear eugenicist bend of Zionists.[17] This corroborates Sayegh's account of how racism is "congenital, essential, and permanent" to Zionist settler colonialism and relies on their sense of "racial exclusiveness, and racial supremacy."[18]

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[9] David Lloyd, "It is our belief that Palestine is a feminist issue....", feminists@law 4, no. 1 (2014): 4, https://doi.org/10.22024/UniKent/03/fal.107.
[10] Lloyd, "It is our belief that Palestine is a feminist issue....," 10.
[11] Lloyd, "It is our belief that Palestine is a feminist issue….," 12-13.
[12] Amnesty International, "Israel's apartheid against Palestinians: Cruel system of domination and crime against humanity," February 1, 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde15/5141/2022/en/.
[13] Amnesty International, "Israel's apartheid against Palestinians: Cruel system of domination and crime against humanity," February 1, 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde15/5141/2022/en/.
[14] Ronit Lentin, *Traces of Racial Exception: Racializing Israeli Settler Colonialism*, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 93.
[15] Arthur Ruppin, "Die Auslese des Menschenmaterials für Palästina," Der Jude: eine Monatsschrift 3 (1918): 373-374, https://sammlungen.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/cm/periodical/titleinfo/3103702.
[16] Ruppin, "Die Auslese des Menschenmaterials für Palästina," 381.
[17] Lentin, Traces of Racial Exception, 93.
[18] Sayegh, *Zionist Settler Colonialism in Palestine,* 21; Lentin, *Traces of Racial Exception,* 77.

Keeping with the fact that Israeli settler-colonialism is premised on a combination of these tools of racism, patriarchy, and capitalism, it becomes easier to fathom resistance to these forms of intersecting oppressions as a key aspect of Palestinian liberation. The Palestinian response, among other things, has depended on Sumud, an idea that can be translated to "steadfastness"[19]. In the next section, we analyse how liberation aims to resist these forms of oppression that are manifest not just in Palestine, but across the world.

Resistance

Having demonstrated the multifaceted forms of oppression faced by Palestinians, we now turn to their resistance to colonialism, Zionism, apartheid, racism and capitalism. We understand resistance to these forms of oppression as synonymous with 'decolonization' as they are closely linked with colonialism and that the colonial fashioning of the world depends on these co-constitutive projects. These processes have been seen as acting together not just in Palestine but also in the Americas, Africa, and Asia, spanning the entire colonised world. As a result, to decolonise means to rupture all these interoperating systems that create the hierarchical world that we occupy today.

Palestinians' resistance is premised upon the idea of Sumud, which represents a "resilient resistance," and is a tactic to resist Israeli colonization which "relies upon adaptation to the difficulties of life under occupation, staying in the territories despite hardship, and asserting Palestinian culture and identity in response to Zionist claims which posit Israelis as the sole legitimate inhabitants of the land"[20]. It has also been suggested that Sumud demonstrates resistance "against the politics of erasure exercised by Israel."[21] In short, while Sumud is about active resistance, even small acts of defiance, such as staying on their lands, standing up to soldiers and the agency of everyday acts that ruptures the relationship of occupiers and the occupied represent a form of Sumud.[22]

Such quotidian resistance is significantly linked with solidarity. Toine van Teeffelen notes how following attacks by the Israeli army, Palestinians used Facebook to offer accommodations to people who dared not go out in the evenings out of the fear of being stoned.[23] Many fictitious stories also recount these solidarities that are created in the daily. In a story titled "The Box," a Muslim neighbour helps her

[19] Alexandra Rijke and Toine van Teeffelen, "To Exist Is To Resist: Sumud, Heroism, and the Everyday", *Jerusalem Quarterly,* 59, (2014): 86, https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/165375/en%20.

[20] Caitlin Ryan, "Everyday Resilience as Resistance: Palestinian Women Practicing Sumud", *International Political Sociology,* 9, (2015): 299, https://academic.oup.com/ips/article-abstract/9/4/299/1792573.

[21] Rijke and Teeffelen, "To Exist Is To Resist", 91.

[22] Rijke and Teeffelen, "To Exist Is To Resist", 92.

[23] Toine van Teeffelen, "Ancient time, ordinary time, disrupted time," Palestine-Family, 19 December 2018, https://palestine-family.net/ancient-time-ordinary-time-disrupted-time/.

Christian friend by gifting her a box of gold bracelets. The story ends with the remark — "No wall could separate them."[24] Such works both demonstrate how Zionist colonialism targets *all* Palestinians (although it unjustly targets Arab Muslims) and the centrality of solidarity to understanding the different forms of oppression and resisting them.

Quotidian resistance is most significantly seen in Iqrit, a village that was destroyed during the Nakba. Over the last decade, they have tried to rebuild their village by making shelters and settlements in the area. As one resident notes, "until we moved in, the only way back to our village was in a coffin."[25] Tiina Järvi refers to this as the "performative implementation of the right to return", which converts "return" from an abstract principle to a lived reality.[26] By organising summer camps and religious festivals, they aim to not only reclaim their space, but also teach their future generations about the village and its past.[27] In doing so, they transfer their claim of belongingness from the "inanimate presence of remains" to the active presence of corporeal bodies[28]. Their return to the village has relied on a continued "connection" to it, which the Israeli authorities have tried to rupture through constant demolitions out of the fear that it will present a precedent for other refugees.[29] However, in making such claims to the land, Palestinians have nurtured a particular relationship with the land that is based on "their inclusion to the process of world-building."[30]

Return here makes claims on territory using memory, using that as a tool to destabilise Zionist space-making, central to which is the removal and erasure of not just physical spaces but also knowledge about them. Reclamation of space is based on memory, memory is based on lived experiences and at the core of these lived experiences is the Nakba. In doing so, opposition to the coloniser is registered through the persistent existence of knowledge that they had deemed erased, that is, despite "official" erasure, knowledge of spaces exists in the memories and bodies of Palestinians — a key aspect of Sumud. Not only does this persistence itself represent a form of resistance, but it also justifies the ethnic cleansing of people who hold on to this knowledge. In short, the existence and promotion of memories about "Israeli" territory as once belonging to the colonised through oral traditions, folklore and stories becomes the basis through which resistance can be materialised. In destabilising the colonial nexus of knowledge and space production and taking the agency of producing

[24] Arab Educational Institute, "Fifty youth stories from Bethlehem and Ramallah," Palestine-Family, 25 October 2013, https://palestine-family.net/fifty-youth-stories-from-bethlehem-and-ramallah/.
[25] Jonathan Cook, "The return to Iqrit," Al Jazeera, 9 June 2013, https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2013/6/9/the-return-to-iqrit.
[26] Tiina Järvi, "Demonstrating the desired future: performative dimensions of internally displaced Palestinians' return activities," Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography 103, no. 4, (2021): 386, 391, https://doi.org/10.1080/04353684.2021.1876524.
[27] Cook, "The Return to Iqrit," Al Jazeera.
[28] Järvi, "Demonstrating the desired future", 391.
[29] Yara Hawari, "Radical Futures: When Palestinians Imagine," Al Shabaka, 24 March 2020, https://al-shabaka.org/commentaries/radical-futures-when-palestinians-imagine/.
[30] Järvi, "Demonstrating the desired future", 392.

knowledge, memories, at the most fundamental level, become a tool of decolonization. Further, by making livelihoods that are not based on any racial exploitation, Palestinians also oppose the enterprise of racial capitalism that is at the core of settler-colonialism.

The premise of settler colonialism is to disrupt livelihoods, lifestyles and create 'things' of the colonised, robbing them of their agency and nurturing a world that is far from 'normal'; it is closely embroiled in the creation of a new, oppressive regime. Carrying out quotidian tasks in such a climate becomes an act of resistance. It is the fruit of the "collective production" of the Palestinians whose lands and livelihoods have been despoiled[31]. While resistance comes in many shapes and forms, and much has been written about Palestinian resistance, we emphasise resistance through the quotidian. It is a world that criminalises life, where living becomes resistance. As Tabar and Desai put it, "it is for this reason that Palestinian embodied practices, living ties to place and presence on the land are such powerful forms of resistance. They invoke the anxieties of the settler colonizers and destabilize their mythologies and claims to land"[32]. Consequently, it is the non-material, imagined, memory-inspired narratives that become such strong forms of resistance.

International Resistance

To shift our attention to other movements of resistance that Palestine interacts with, we can focus on anti-colonial struggles in North America. Given how the settler-colonial project in the USA has remained a historical precedent for Israel, our understanding of oppression in Palestine must be informed by that against Native Americans. Mahmood Mamdani explains how the state of Palestinians today is very similar to that of Indigenous peoples in the United States. He argues that not only are Indigenous peoples concentrated in territories precluded from development, but also, despite belonging to the land, excluded from the political community and made "aliens at home"[33]. Further, as Johanna Fernandez has argued, they have similar origin histories. Fernandez writes: "both are colonial-settler apartheid states, justifying their projects through the racialized dehumanization of the Indigenous people they displaced from their lands"[34]. As noted earlier, industrial capitalism in both these countries would not have materialised without the land grabs and exploitation of indigenous labour that accompanied settler-colonialism. [35] Taking the case of Indigenous peoples in the Americas, it is very clear that any form of settler-colonialism would be impossible without the exploitation and appropriation of the 'native's' land and labor, and on close analysis, we see this play out in Palestine as well. Therefore,

[31] Rijke and Teeffelen, "To Exist Is To Resist", 92.
[32] Desai and Tabar, "Decolonization is a global project", xii.
[33] Mamdani, *Neither Settler nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities,* (Harvard University Press, 2020), 28.
[34] Fernandez, "Structures of settler colonial domination in Israel and in the Unites States," 31.
[35] Fernandez, "Structures of settler colonial domination in Israel and in the United States," 32.

the *fact* of this interoperation teaches us of their close ties and represents forms of oppression that existed in the structural and institutional, not the personal and individual.[36]

In that respect, it is natural that there has been consistent dialogue between Indigenous peoples in North America and Palestinians for at least a few decades.[37] This dialogue began during the prime of the American Indian Movement, when "Native activists, like their Black Panther peers, looked to global liberation struggles for inspiration and solidarity, proffering both to anti-colonial movements in return."[38] Similarly, poetry has also acted as a mode of struggle through which native American and Palestinian poets have not only tried to affect "social change through resistance" but have also interacted with one another.[39]

This interoperating relationship between anti-colonial struggles of these spatially divided, yet experientially united movements is central to the concept of 'Inter/nationalism.' Steven Salaita explains that this conjoins anti-colonial struggles across the world and demands "commitment to mutual liberation" across national borders.[40] Although talk of such mutual liberation may seem hyperbolic, he points out that the same power structures maintain the people's dispossession.[41] Decolonial narratives and struggles aim to disorient these self-same global structures that co-constitute their people's oppression. This is not to suggest that their struggles or experiences are in any way similar, but that the same logics underscore them. To be able to entirely understand and hence dismantle one, we must do the same for the other.

Liberation

In this context, liberation is understood as emancipation from all these oppressive structures and an imagination for something new. This imagination itself must depend on newer ways of thinking, which derive from indigenous approaches and combine memory, land, and body. Imagination, as Arjun Appadurai puts it, "can become the fuel for action," implying the radical rethinking of the world that can flow from renewed imaginations of being.[42]

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[36] Ramón A. Gutiérrez, "Internal Colonialism: An American Theory of Race", *Du Bois Review*, 1, No. 2, (2004): 282, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1742058X04042043.
[37] Steven Salaita, "Zionism and Native American Studies", Abolition Journal, June 6, 2017, https://abolitionjournal.org/zionism-native-american-studies-steven-salaita/.
[38] Salaita, "Zionism and Native American Studies".
[39] Saddik M. Gohar, "The Intersections between Native American and Anti-Colonial Palestinian Poetry", *Global Journal of Current Research,* 6, No. 3, (2018): 91, http://www.crdeepjournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Vol-6-3-3-GJCR.pdf**.**
[40] Steven Salaita, *Inter/ Nationalism: Decolonizing Native America and Palestine*, (University of Minnesota Press, 2016), ix.
[41] Salaita, *Inter/ Nationalism*, xv.
[42] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, (University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 7.

Indigeneity offers an indispensable frame through which the dual processes of emancipation and new imaginations can be developed. As a framework, it draws upon the lived experiences of Palestinians and connects them to a single experience of settler colonialism (while being aware of the divergences of experience).[43] By placing alternative forms of knowledge which do not align with the Eurocentric understandings of the social, political, economic, or historical, it also offers a radical reconceptualization of the world.

This process permits Palestinians to imagine a world that speaks to the problems that came with their colonization, and in that sense, pushed them to an "Indigenous" status. It must be understood that the "indigenous" comes into existence with the arrival of a settler that pushes them to the margins of society and makes them aliens in their own land. Subsequently, this status is not a pre-given but is constructed in the process of their colonization and in fact, is central to it. The transformation, then, of the political reality of Palestinians arises with decolonization.[44]

Within this frame of reference, liberation is a manifestation of indigeneity and imagination, and connects the Palestinian struggle to the larger struggle against oppression. It brings together the issues arising out of their experiences of Zionist colonialism and thinks of them with reference to other resistance movements. It ruptures the isolation and alienation that their colonisers try to force them into and crafts global solidarities. These are solidarities of common experiences, common resistance and, often, common imaginations. Such imaginations are bound together not by similar structural features of what the future will entail, but by the placement of indigenous ideas and principles that draw from their lived experiences and cultures at the center of the imagination. As a result, indigeneity, liberation, and imagination become co-constitutive parts of the decolonial project.

Counter-mapping emerges as a prominent tool which combines these strands of decolonial thought and converts them to practise. It aims to rethink existing geographies based on lived experiences and memories.[45] Given how maps are crucial to the colonization of territories, decolonising maps places Zionist expansionist claims at peril by destabilising their claims to territory. Combined with this is the centrality of the right to return for Palestinians who were evicted from their homes in 1948. To be able to think of liberation then is to be able to think of returning and what it entails. Multiple projects have taken to responding to these concerns.

One such project is "Counter-Mapping Return" which is a Participatory Action Research (PAR) mapping project that aims to examine the spatial implications

[43] Ahmad Amara and Yara Hawari, "Using Indigeneity in the Struggle for Palestinian Liberation", Al Shabaka, 8 August 2019, https://al-shabaka.org/commentaries/using-indigeneity-in-the-struggle-for-palestinian-liberation/.
[44] Ahmad Amara and Yara Hawari, "Using Indigeneity in the Struggle for Palestinian Liberation".
[45] Zena Agha, "Maps, Technology, and Decolonial Spatial Practices in Palestine," Al Shabaka, 14 January 2020, https://al-shabaka.org/briefs/maps-technology-and-decolonial-spatial-practices-in-palestine/.

for planning the return of Palestinian refugees.[46] As the name suggests, PAR requires the active participation of key stakeholders, including Israeli Jews, Palestinians, and members of Zochrot, an organisation that seeks to transition advance discussions on Palestinian refugees' right to return from "principle to practice."[47] According to Counter-Mapping Return, return can also be denied due to an inability to practically imagine it, a fact that has propelled them to study return with reference to Miska, a village that was destroyed and ethnically cleansed of Palestinians. Researchers associated with this project place memory at the core of reimagining spaces, especially those that have been rendered physically inaccessible to generations following the *Nakba*. They use environmental biographies—a method through which objects and memories are used to relate to a common space—to construct solidarities and an "affective community" among Miskawees.[48]

However, this holds the risk of reifying colonial representations of space, private ownership and Israel's exclusionary schemes. This contradiction opens up a "dialectical space" in which decolonization functions through the "dialectic tensions between colonizing and resistance" and works as a "reflective mirror to protest [the] existing order."[49] Liberation through imagining 'return' using memory and indigenous epistemologies thus acts as a key way of thinking the decolonial. Oppression here is not simply a system imposed upon people, but determines the very frames that they use, think about, and reject. The rejection of colonial frames that emerges upon reflecting on them significantly shows us the dynamism embedded in decolonial thinking.

To bring together the assertion made in this section, we notice how counter-mapping combines the frames of indigeneity and oppression to re-envision the world. While it is embedded in returning to dispossessed lands, it also nudges Palestinians to not reify the self-same territorial boundaries of exclusion imposed by the colonisers. Thinking about the limitations of these frames and reconstituting them opens spaces for critical inquiry and alternative geographies that are sensitive to the exclusionary politics of maps. As Einat Manoff recounts from their work with Counter-Mapping Return, via a dialectical relationship with colonialist spaces, Palestinians were able to "think beyond the readily available set of colonialist codes and toward a complex set of ideas of inclusion and distributive justice, and worked creatively towards resolution."[50] Consequently, the notion of liberation, through its close interactions with indigeneity and oppression offers reimaginations of space, temporality and social

[46] Puleng Segalo, Einat Manoff and Michelle Fine, "Working With Embroideries and Counter-Maps: Engaging Memory and Imagination Within Decolonizing Frameworks," Journal of Social and Political Psychology, 3, no. 1, (2015): 351, doi:10.5964/jspp.v3i1.145.
[47] Zochrot, "Return," Accessed: 16 April 2022, https://www.zochrot.org/sections/view/19/en?Return_Vision.
[48] Segalo, Manoff and Fine, "Working with Embroideries and Counter-Maps," 351-352.
[49] Segalo, Manoff and Fine, "Working with Embroideries and Counter-Maps," 356.
[50] Segalo, Manoff and Fine, "Working with Embroideries and Counter-Maps," 358.

relations that centres but also opposes their colonial experience, hence representing decolonial praxis.

Decolonization functions through the critical reflections on these interoperating forms of oppression and employs lived experiences as a means to rupture them. In that sense, it is embedded in the processes of rethinking and reconstituting a world that has been built on regimes of oppression. Its universality does not draw from *what* it reimagines, but *how* it does so. While the critique and the manner of critique of the oppressive order — given its international preponderance — may be universalizable, the structures of a decolonial world are hyperlocal and in that sense, are not. Nonetheless, they do go a long way in showing us the extent to which our imagination can be stretched to imagine a new world.

Conclusion

Frantz Fanon explains decolonization as a "program of complete disorder."[51] This requires a violent wrenching of dispossessed lands by indigenous peoples from the colonisers. Subsequently, much like colonization, decolonization becomes a violent process. Decolonial violence is not just the violence of armed conflict but is more so the violence of rupturing colonial hierarchies and disordering the colonial world and its associated forms of control and oppression. It is a fundamental restructuring of the world based on indigenous ways of thinking and knowing.

Palestinian liberation does precisely this. It resists global oppressive structures that have seen their manifestation elsewhere but are central to Palestinian colonization. It does this not by imagining a return to the status quo (a serious failure of many decolonising countries) but by rethinking the world and its underlying features as a whole. Since there is a recognition that these oppressive systems are co-constitutive, an understanding that nothing short of emancipation from all accounts for 'liberation' persists. It structures our understanding differently, nudging us to inquire about the presence of these oppressive systems everywhere—be it in the struggle of Kashmiris or the native and Black populations in North America. It also emphasises the intersectional approach to resistance that we then require to liberate. As stated earlier, liberation here refers to liberation from all modes of oppression, alienation, and displacement. Naturally, 'resistance' and 'liberation' are deeply complex terms with variegated meanings for all. Our focus in this paper has been on connections to the land embodied in the question of return. Given the practical precedence that returning to dispossessed lands has in all discourses on 'liberation,' we focus on its relationship to decolonization.

It is in recognising this that Palestinian liberation constitutes a form of decolonization. This is a decolonization aware of the interoperation of these structures, of the suffocating result of their use on people, one that places intersectionality at its core and is receptive to the fundamentally different yet common

[51] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth,* (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 36.

experiences that all face under Occupation. It embodies a vision of the world grounded in an alternative reality for which memory is as important as the material, the body is as important as the land, and the lived experiences as important as official knowledge. It is this vision of decolonization that is central to their reordering of the world and constitutes a vision that is truly global in its scope. It is this vision that we must reckon with as we envision a new world.

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AUDIBLE EMPIRE: SOUNDSCAPES, "SONIC MARKERS" AND CREATION OF EASTERN IDENTITY IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE AT HOME AND ABROAD, 1830 - 1900

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Due to its heavy use of guttural sounds, the German language is seen as an 'angry' sounding language—an understanding most definitely influenced by popular culture that responded to the "aggressive" German in World War I and World War II. This principle of associating specific sonic characteristics to a group of people as cultivated within popular culture and imagination can be equally found in nineteenth century imperial Britain's society. There are expectations people generate over expected senses of particular regions. This is an active process whereby there is a creation of certain soundscapes based on ethnic distinctions. This process, as this thesis will demonstrate, was markedly prevalent in the nineteenth century as people began to 'imagine' a global world outside of their local region more prevalently with the onset of a truly global empire. The 'imagination' of the Eastern soundscape is a key theme of this thesis. The British Metropole utilized imagination loosely based upon experiences of the East to generate expected soundscapes and "sonic markers" which aided the Victorian construction of racial and cultural identities. These "sonic markers" were derived from imagined soundscapes, where "soundscapes" denote the general sounds one would expect to hear in a specific geographical region. The conception of generally "Eastern" soundscapes relayed back to the metropole meant expected sounds were constructed, from which the "sonic markers" found in Victorian theatres could then be derived. Through these processes, an Eastern identity was created, and its vast size and multiple identities and complexities were reduced and simplified to easily identifiable sounds and expected identities found in, for example, name constructions, accents, and musical signaling.

To successfully demonstrate the effectiveness of the constructions of identity and recognizable sounds, this thesis will explore the topic through three sections: *Sounds of the East*, *The Victorian Stage,* and *Changing Soundscapes and Identity* to answer the question: *how are soundscapes and constructed sonic markers manipulated to form racial and cultural identities at home and abroad*? The first section will explore the first stage of the process through which the sounds of the East were transported back to Britain and provided the material – the Eastern soundscape– upon which the Victorian melodrama could then generate identities and sound expectations. The section provides context for the following section which analyses specifically in detail *The Mandarin's Daughter*, *Lalla Rookh*, and *Mr. Buckstone's Voyage around the Globe*. Rana

Kabbani demonstrates the necessity for this context by arguing, "Europeans . . . depended on each other's testimony to sustain their communal image of the Orient."[1] Therefore, as Jonathan Sterne states, the "history of sound must move beyond recovering experience to interrogating the conditions under which that experience became possible in the first place."[2] This thesis is required to extend its scope to include this necessary aspect. The second section will explore how the "factual" presentations of the Eastern soundscape, as found in the travelogues and ethnographies, are translated and presented to the Victorian audience. The final section focuses on how soundscapes and sonic markers can be further manipulated to alter and establish indigenous identities , thus demonstrating some of the wider ramifications of cultural imperialism with missionaries working to alter the soundscape of these indigenous communities through the importation of western harmonies and language and altering the soundscape. This process meant the "native" would be raised from their heathenism and become civilized.

This thesis will demonstrate the importance of exploring soundscapes in the study of imperialism, popular imperial culture, and nineteenth-century racism to better understand the process identity construction during this period. Exploring oriental themes on the Victorian stage is not new in scholarship. However, studies usually place precedence on analyzing visual elements—the stage, backdrops, and costumes to name three examples—rather than sound.[3] This focus on the visual is useful and an essay based on sound analysis cannot afford to dismiss these important audience cues and stage world-building and slip into "audism (ethnocentrism of those who hear)," especially given the prevalent position afforded to the visual.[4] While it is firmly established now, as demonstrated by the adage of "seeing is believing," during the nineteenth century, there was a process of transitioning away from an auditory-based society to that of sight with, for instance, reading taking far greater precedence over the previous verbal communication.[5] However, as also pointed out by Sterne, between 1750 and 1925, sound became an object and a domain of thought and practice.[6] This thesis also goes someway to answer a question posed by John M. Mackenzie: "How successful were popular cultural vehicles in conveying an imperial world view to the British public?"[7] Using sound offers an alternative approach to answering this important question, and therefore will demonstrate that Victorian melodramas and

[1] Rana Kabbani, *Europe's Myths of Orient,* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 39.
[2] Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 28.
[3] Mark M. Smith, *Sensing the Past: Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting, and Touching in History,* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2007), 41.
[4] Sterne, *Audible Past*, 28.
[5] Ibid at 3.
[6] Ibid.
[7] John M., MacKenzie, *Imperialism and Popular Culture,* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 10.

literature were effective tools for transporting Western conceptions of the East back home and enabling the construction of racial and cultural identities.

This thesis has drawn on a wide variety of primary material. The selection of specific sources was partially due to what was accessible, but it was also purposeful. As Mark M. Smith identifies, work on "sounds," listening, or similar topics, often relies too much on music scores in analyzing sound.[8] It is for this reason, that this dissertation aims to demonstrate some of the alternative sources that offer valuable insights into the construction of native soundscapes and sounds, as well as sonic markers of racial identity. Musical analysis, therefore, plays a very limited role in this thesis. It should be noted as well that this thesis has the period limitation of 1830-1900 as this is the start of the Victorian period and, at the turn of the century, the theater stage became more about English patriotism than presentations of the exotic.

Importance of Sound as an Analytical Tool

This thesis aims to respond to and enhance previous explorations of Victorian culture through an analysis of sounds. Victorian theater is already extensively studied, typically with a focus on visual performance elements. One example is Ray Johnson's article, in which he states that "the narrative in popular theatre was carried along by pictorial devices enhanced with music and special effects," thus placing sound as a purely secondary feature.[9] The privileging of the visual over the sonic means, however, that one of the major senses is dismissed. Sound was a vital aspect of the theatrical experience, a sentiment that has been espoused by William Rough, who highlights that audiences were highly encouraged to join in with the singing and other musical aspects.[10] Michael Pisani argues that the music worked at a "subconscious level to make audiences more susceptible to extraordinary situations" occurring on the stage.[11] Especially in the melodrama, music was composed specifically for each play and worked to underline "mood, atmosphere, convey time and place, suggest status, ethnicity or class" through musical gesturing.[12] At this point, Mary Jean Corbett raises the question "where does performance-as-identity-construction leave off and performance-as-theatrical-work begin?"[13] How far can an analysis of theatrical performances and resulting depictions of soundscapes be taken from the stage and analyzed in the context of wider society and imperial actions? David Mayer states that

[8] Smith, *Sensing the* Past, 42.
[9] Ray Johnson, 'Tricks, Traps and Transformations– Illusions in Victorian Spectacular Theatre,' *Early Popular Visual Culture* 5, no.2 (2007): 151-165, doi:10.1080/17460650701433673.
[10] William Rough, 'Sickert's Mirror: Reflecting Duality, Identity and Performance C1890', *The British Art Journal* 10, no. 3 (2009): 142.
[11] Michael Pisani, 'Music for the Theatre: Style and Function in Incidental Music', in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre*, ed. Kerry Powell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 71.
[12] Ibid at 71.
[13] Mary J. Corbett, 'Performing Identities: Actresses and Autobiography,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre*, ed. Kerry Powell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 109.

melodramas often responded directly to immediate social circumstances.[14] By confronting social issues, identity being one of these, the stage is a platform upon which these conflicts are dramatized and provided some form of an answer. Therefore, the stage is directly linked with the real world with the identities constructed on stage both responding to and informing the off-stage construction of identities. An example of this can be located in the debates over Zwarte Pete in the Netherlands. The fictional companion to St. Nicklaus in the Netherlands is under challenge as groups such as the Liberal Left arguing he instills racist tropes and represents "ritualized degradation," wherein children come to associate his being black with being mischievous and "bad" alongside directly influencing Dutch memory of Western imperialism.[15] Fictional characters have real consequences as people who have little knowledge or experience of the "real" world, upon constant exposure to these characters and sonic signaling, come to expect these characteristics from the real-world counterparts to the stereotyped, in this case, the "native" character found on stage. As the melodrama is built upon stock characters and polarization between good and evil, it becomes an effective vessel for creating racialized identities that have real-world consequences.

Therefore, the audible aspect of theatres does require more attention in scholarly analysis. Nevertheless, as Pisani highlights, there does not yet exist a comprehensive study on nineteenth-century theatrical music.[16] This, however, is not necessarily due to a lack of interest, but as Pisani goes on to discuss, rather a matter of a lack of material. Pisani explains that apart from Henry Bishop "no single collection of any theatre composer survives," a fact which presents a considerable obstacle to a comprehensive study of Victorian theatrical soundscapes.[17] This is perhaps one explanation for why there is such a dominant focus on the visual versus the sonic aspects of theatre productions. While this is a prominent issue, this thesis works towards demonstrating, in part, that relying on music to explore sonic transcriptions of the East eliminates a vast array of sources that could be used to generate an understanding of the theatrical sonic world. Analyzing only musical portrayals of the East also often lacks a connection to the consequences of these auditory constructions. For instance, Michael Saffle discusses remarks of Europeans towards oriental soundscapes, specifically their response to hearing Chinese music, but fails to expand this and discuss the explicit consequences these accounts have on the construction of Chinese, or, more generally, Eastern identity.[18] By utilizing sound studies, one can read texts in new ways to extrapolate recordings of sounds by what Murray F. Schafer terms

[14] David Mayer, 'Encountering Melodrama,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre*, ed. Kerry Powell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 146.
[15] Gloria Wekker, *White Innocence– Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 140, 164.
[16] Pisani, 'Music for Theatre,' 70.
[17] Ibid at 79.
[18] Michael Saffle, 'Eastern Fantasies on Western Stages: Chinese-Themed Operettas and Musical Comedies in Turn-of-the-Last-Century London and New York,' in *China and the West*, ed. Michael Saffle and Hon-Lun Yang (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 107.

as "earwitnesses" accounts, and thereby start constructing some of the process of constructing identities through the Victorian auditory experience of the East.[19] Examining the acoustical field requires a focus on "events *heard* not objects *seen*."[20] Schafer also demonstrates in his book that the sense of hearing cannot be closed off at will, with the ear's only protection being "an elaborate psychological mechanism for filtering out undesirable sounds" and focusing on desirable sounds.[21] This idea demonstrates the importance of recognizing and giving space for an analysis of soundscapes since sound, by definition, is anthropocentric.[22] Furthermore, Sterne argues that sounds, hearing, and listening are "foundational to modern modes of knowledge, culture, and social organization," especially in the nineteenth century when sound increasingly "mediated and help inform ideas about class, identity and nationalism."[23] This indicates once again how an exploration of soundscapes and sound provides good insight into the nineteenth-century conception of the East which built racialized identities.

Due to the difficulty in locating music manuscripts and the difficulty in relating musical analysis to its consequences, and since many scholars are pushing for a move away from purely musical analysis when discussing sound, this thesis will only remark on compositions in a limited capacity. Instead, it will highlight the creation of the Eastern soundscape, not only through music but also through the speech and names of characters, whereby their identity is forged sonically through sonic markers. Sonic markers are the perceived expectations of sound associated with and created for specific racialized identities utilized by British Imperial society to assert their narrative of dominance.

Sounds of the Orient: Depictions of the Oriental Soundscape in Literature

To fully understand and comprehend the translation of Eastern soundscapes for the Victorian play there needs to be an analysis of how the soundscapes were created by "earwitnesses." This section will analyze four texts: *The Englishman in China;* Julius Berncastle's *A Voyage to China;* Maria Nugent's*, A Journal from the year 1811 to 1815, including a voyage to, and residence in India; and* Henry Sirr's *China and the Chinese.*

India

India, which was not only the crown jewel in the British Empire but also a mid-point for journeys further East, was one of the first and most impressionable experiences for British travelers and explorers. As such, accounts of people's first arrival and stay are rife with interesting comments about unusual and new sounds

[19] Murray R. Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World,* (Rochester: Destiny Books, 1994), 17.
[20] Ibid at 16.
[21] Ibid at 21.
[22] Ibid at 11.
[23] Ibid at 2; Smith, *Sensing the Past*, 48.

amongst descriptions of the visual impressions. One such account is Maria Nugent's journal published in 1839. On Nugent's arrival in Calcutta, she notes being greeted with "a kind of extempore song, to a monotonous tune."[24] While on initial reading this description could elude consideration, its analysis becomes significant when it is placed in a socio-historic context. Nugent characterizes the Indians as a "mild innocent race" who have a "listless manner" and are "without any energy of character." [25] Furthermore, by portraying the Indian song as "extempore" and "monotonous," Nugent indicates that the music was simple and thus in keeping with the natives' perceived heathenism and lack of civilization due to lacking well-developed fine arts. The strangeness of the Indian soundscape is further established with Nugent's recounting of a religious festival, during which "nothing is heard but their odd tom-tom music."[26] Two things are significant in this comment. Firstly, it suggests that the Indian soundscape, dominated by rhythmic drumming, is reduced to being recognized as noise due to its alien or "odd" sound profile. Secondly, the tom-tom is not an Indian drum but rather originates from China and Sri Lanka, and thus goes some way to demonstrate the process by which the West reduced Eastern soundscapes and musical cultures into one larger "other" soundscape and culture.[27] This is significant for the subsequent plays written and composed which contain elements of the East, as it provides a simple device through which to signify the East. The process of reducing specific cultural groups to being recognizable through a set motif, rhythm or instrument works similarly to how the banjo is used to mark and easily distinguish the presence of a minstrel performance.[28]

The construction of an alien soundscape, especially concerning "native" festivals, is further elaborated on in Berncastle's *A Voyage to China*. His time in India serves as an important formative period during which Berncastle is exposed first-hand to alien soundscapes. Berncastle describes a "Hooli holiday" whereby he depicts a scene of chaos and uncivilized behavior, before continuing to state that the magistrates were attempting to "limit the nuisance of celebration to certain areas."[29] The scene is concluded with the detailing of Berncastle's "rescue" when Sepoys "escorted [him] as far as the city gates, arriving there just in time to avoid a procession of barbarous music."[30] By identifying the celebrations as a nuisance, it becomes clear that the Indian

[24] Maria Nugent, *A Journal from the Year 1811 Till the Year 1815, Including a Voyage to, and Residence in, India, with a Tour to the North-Western Parts of the British Possessions in that Country, Under the Bengal Governmen*t., vol. 1, (London: 1839), 79, British Library.
[25] Ibid at 69.
[26] Ibid at 99-100.
[27] MasterClass Staff Editors, *"Guide to Tom-Tom Drums: 4 Types of Tom-Toms," Master Class,* Last updated November 8, 2020, https://www.masterclass.com/articles/guide-to-tom-tom-drums.
[28] Laura Korobkin,'Avoiding "Aunt Tomasina": Charles Dickens Responds to Harriet Beecher Stowe's Black American Reader, Mary Webb,' *Elh* 82, no.1 (2015): 119-122, doi: 10.1353/elh.2015.0007.
[29] Julius Berncastle, *A Voyage to China*, vol. 1, (London: William Shoberl, 1850), 118-119, British Library.
[30] Berncastle, *A Voyage to China*, vol. 1, 120.

soundscape, especially during festivals is noisy– noise being sounds considered undesirable and unwanted. Much how Bryan Edwards states, the "Negroe makes noise not music", the same sentiment was placed on all deemed to be heathen.[31] It thus becomes clear to the Victorian reader that the East is an alien other, and reflective of the uncivilized status that natives had been assigned. The distinct separation of West and East, civilized and uncivilized, is furthered by Berncastle when he recounts a visit to Dungaree Green where the "native town" begins and the western-controlled center of Bombay ends. In the native area, it is "densely crowded" with "coppersmiths hammering away with all their might" and "bullock-hackeries driving along amidst fearful yells."[32] The description details once again a scene of auditory and visual chaos. One could also suggest that by highlighting the coppersmith hammering, Berncastle is drawing a contrast between the industrial and mechanized sounds to be found in English city soundscapes, and the more "backward" and pre-industrial soundscape of India. This would serve to highlight the perception of India being a static ancient civilization. To the middle-class readers of this book, the chaotic and noisy scenes depicted are easily recognizable as undesirable and symptomatic of a lower standard of living given during the period the middle class was undergoing an exodus from the dirty, busy, and noisy industrial city centers of Britain. The strict separation and distinction drawn between where Europeans live and where the "native" area begins is underlined both spatially and sonically and thus aids the creation of the "other" which lives in opposition to the European. By positing the soundscape as another example of the "other," it becomes clear that sound and descriptions by these Western "earwitnessess" are important contributions to the creation of Eastern identity.

China

The Chinese, much like the Indians, were recognized as a once-great ancient civilization that was in a period of stagnation. Henry Sirr states that "the Chinese have a great dislike to innovation or change in their laws, customs, or costumes", to underline this point.[33] One of the contributing factors to China's "backwardness" was that, "during and after the meal, eructations are heard around, to a disgusting extent," which were elaborated as being "unmusical sounds."[34] The sounds within the formal setting of dining are recognized as wholly uncivilized and barbaric. They would be treated as rude and bad-mannered and thus serves to sonically identify the Chinese as barbarians. The European felt equally alienated sonically through the experience of "pidgin English," or as described in *The Englishman in China*, "mongrel English."[35] This "gibberish" is placed in contrast to "proper" English speech in a notated dialogue:

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[31] Catherine Hall*, Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867,* (London: Polity, 2002), 103.
[32] Berncastle, *A Voyage to China*, vol.1, 140-141.
[33] Henry Sirr, *China and the Chinese*, vol. 1, (London: Wm. S. Orr, 1849), 317.
[34] Ibid at 159.
[35] Anon., *The Englishman in China,* (London: Saunders, Otley, 1860), 42, *British Library.*

"Ho! Soyer, thou heathen, what hast thou for dinner? / Just now have got soup, fiss, cully, and lice, and one piece fowlo, one piecee labbit."[36] The notation places the two speech styles in opposition to each other, demonstrating the difference between the Englishman and the "other," as well as providing a distinctive "sonic marker" through which to identify a Chinese person. With just a few having "acquired a tolerable facility of speaking English", the speech is identified with the lower intelligence assigned to the Chinese.[37] Furthermore, *The Englishman in China* provides a formula through which to recreate the style, stating that all that is needed is the addition of an "ee" —"*walkee, talkee, showee, singee*."[38] These accents are reproduced in plays such as *The Mandarin's Daughter!* to sonically designate characters and thus assign a specific and recognizable identity.

Lastly, the English recognized that China possessed some "useful [fine] arts" since China was an ancient civilization, which consequently raised them "above the untutored savage" and brought them close to being civilized."[39] However, it was still beneath Western equivalents. Sirr states it is the "most inharmonious and unmusical sounds" with the accompaniment being "abominable."[40] This sentiment is echoed in *The Englishman in China*, which states, "Whatever it may be to them, it is only a complication of noisy and unpleasant sound to us."[41] The lack of harmonious musical soundscapes is identified as being among the reasons for a lack of civilization and is thus combined with all other aspects of the books to help build an Eastern soundscape that is alien, noisy, and barbaric. The description is also useful for contemporaries looking to construct an Eastern sound for the stage as it outlines key features of the "quintessential" Eastern sound: unharmonious, "twanging," and heavily rhythmic.[42] The idea of an opposing Eastern soundscape is underlined by a description offered in *The Englishman in China*. The author recounts hearing "that sound H****a's *piece de resistance*, 'The Carnival of Venice", causing the author to return the "ship a happier man."[43] The happiness, and perhaps relief, in hearing a familiar sound amidst the alien sounds, demonstrates that the western ear rejected the Eastern soundscape and musical sonic qualities.

The principal element that emerges from these various depictions is their coherence in portraying the East as uncivilized, backward and alien to Western sensibilities. The numerous differences and idiosyncrasies of each Eastern culture are erased to enable the creation of the "other" which is far easier to construct and identify. Additionally, by confining all Eastern people into an Eastern soundscape, it

[36] Ibid at 43, 76.
[37] Ibid at 67.
[38] Ibid at 42.
[39] Berncastle, *A Voyage to China*, vol.2, 150.
[40] Sirr, *China and the Chinese*, p. 160.
[41] Anon., *The Englishman in China*, 162.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid at 16.

becomes possible to translate them into characters on the stage that are easily identifiable to the Western audience.

The Victorian Stage: Translations of Soundscapes and Sonic Markers, and the Creation of Racialized Eastern Identity

As the nineteenth century experienced a "craze" over Eastern themes, the Victorian stage entered an arena in which the previously discussed Eastern soundscapes were utilized as and translated into a performative tool.[44] As Martin Clayton and Bennett Zon argue, the stage worked to render the "East as 'unachievable and unrecognizable' for the consuming gaze of the western spectator," and thus would reflect the alienated experience of those who traveled.[45] The link between composer or playwriter and reflecting travelogues or reports on the East is important given that most, if any, had no first-hand experience of Eastern cultures.[46] This realization raises the question: Could any late nineteenth or early twentieth-century playwriter or composer accurately portray the East?[47] The answer would be a resounding no. However, as will be subsequently explored, this does not necessarily matter; that is, the creation of an Eastern soundscape was more about capturing the essence of an "Eastern" sound through which the vast reaches of the empire could be imported back to the metropole. As Nicholas Cook argues, the purpose was not to imitate but to represent.[48]

Mr. Buckstone's Voyage Around the Globe

Analyzing the play *Mr Buckstone's Voyage around the Globe* (1854) reveals the presentation of an "oriental spectacle" on Victorian stages.[49] The play describes itself as a "Cosmolographical and Visual extravaganza" in which the character Mr Buckstone travels through various scenes, interacting with different regions—Europe, Asia, Africa and America.[50] Before the Asian scene is revealed, music is played. Pisani suggests that within the melodrama genre, music served to underscore dialogue and/or convey mood, atmosphere, time and place, and ethnicity.[51] This implies that, despite

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[44] Claire Mabilat, 'Empire and 'Orient,' in Opera Libretti Set by Sir Henry Bishop and Edward Solomon,' in *Europe, Empire, and Spectacle in Nineteenth-Century British Music*, ed. Rachel Cowgill and Julian Rushton (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2006), 224.
[45] Martin Clayton and Bennett Zon, 'Introduction,' in *Music and Orientalism in the British Empire, 1780s-1940s: Portrayal of the East*, ed. Martin Clayton and Bennett Zon (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 8.
[46] Mabilat, 'Empire and Orient,' 224.
[47] Saffle, 'Eastern Fantasies on Western Stages,' 107.
[48] Nicholas Cook, 'Encountering the Other, Redefining the Self: Hindostannie Airs, Haydn's Folksong Setting and the 'Common Practice' Style,' in *Music and Orientalism in the British Empire, 1780s-1940s: Portrayal of the East*, ed. Martin Clayton and Bennett Zon (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 16.
[49] "Haymarket Theatre," *Illustrated London News*, April 29, 1854. The Illustrated London News Historical Archive, 1842-2003, 393.
[50] J.R Planche, *Mr Buckstone's Voyage Around the Globe,* (London, 1854). First Performance: Theatre Royal Haymarket, 17 April 1854. The Victorian Play Project.
[51] Pisani, 'Music for the Theatre,' 71.

no scores of the music being found or perhaps existing anymore, the scene-setting music worked to carry the mind through events "by a series of significant symbols" as one newspaper review reflected.[52] Drawing from the previous section's exploration of the Western ear's discomfort with the alien tonality and harmonic structures of Eastern music, it can be further inferred that the music mentioned in the play would follow structures highlighted by Saffle. Saffle argues that in creating faux Eastern music, composers frequently used techniques such as diatonic structures, bland harmonies, ragtime (for humorous qualities), chromatism, tom-tom rhythms, and pentatonic melodies.[53] By manipulating Western harmonies, composers were able to introduce a recognizable Eastern soundscape that represented the East without imitating it. This meant that the composers and playwrights had full control over the presentation of the sounds and the meanings assigned to these sounds. Aside from creating a general Eastern atmosphere, the songs sung during the Asian scene work to establish an Eastern identity as well. 'Ching-a-ring' contains the lyrics, "Chong-moon—Chin-gan—Ar-cow—Zan-Ban—Yang-gyn—Ar ling—Wan-sing!" and "Ching-a ring a ring-ching."[54] Given that vernacular language was understood as a badge of colonial identity, the language choice is significant.[55] This is underlined through Penny Summerfield's exploration of a performance by G.H Macdermott of *By Jingo* (1877). Summerfield highlights how reviews linked his "magnificent enunciation and stentorian voice" with the symbolism of British grit.[56] Here, the sonic quality of Macdermott is explicitly highlighted as contributing to his performance of an acceptable English identity, and thus by extension suggests these vaguely Chinese-sounding words have repercussions for the creation of identity also. Firstly, the words, due to their nonsensical nature and being sung by a dwarf and Chinese juggler, present the Chinese as a non-threatening comedic and mild race. The Chinese juggler's comedic quality and "funny" language place them in opposition to the more serious and respectable Englishman who is represented by Mr. Buckstone in the play.[57] By acting like a Harlequin, a character designed to be a miscreant and play the fool, the characterization of the Chinese fits in with other similar themed plays.[58] This creation of identity is important when one takes into consideration the small Chinese population in London was actively trying to gain middle-class respectability primarily

[52] Haymarket Theatre,' 393.
[53] Saffle, 'Eastern Fantasies on Western Stages,' 108.
[54] Planche, *Mr Buckstone's Voyage*, 17-18.
[55] Andrew Porter,'Cultural Imperialism' and Protestant Missionary Enterprise, 1780–1914.' *Null* 25, no. 3 (1997): 370, doi: 10.1080/03086539708583005.
[56] Penny Summerfield, 'Patriotism and Empire: Music-Hall Entertainment, 1870-1914,' in *Imperialism and Popular Culture,* ed. John M. MacKenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 26.
[57] Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'English Traits,'(1856), in 'The Library of America, Emerson: Essays and Lectures', ed. Joel Porte (New York, 1983), *in* Arthur, Riss, 'Racial Essentialism and Family Values in "Uncle Tom's Cabin",' *American Quarterly* 46, no. 4 (1994), 523.
[58] "The Story of Pantomime," Victoria and Albert Musuem, https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/the-story-of-pantomime.

through language.[59] The play thus works partially to undermine the identities the Chinese were attempting to forge for themselves, instead asserting and assigning a racialized identity to them—that of being comedic, nonthreatening and generally in opposition to Western sensibilities. Another noteworthy aspect of the play is the conflation of Arabs and Chinese, as well as a reduction of Asia to a singular empire. Mr. Buckstone addresses "Asia" with the line "I learned a few of Arabic when young; I will address her in the Eastern tongue– Salam Alicum." Asia responds with "What can I do to serve you? Pray speak English. It's well known throughout my empire."[60] The use of Arabic does little but to sonically authenticate the location and this presentation of the East. Given Asia is later represented by a Chinese juggler singing "Ching-a-ring," there is a lack of consistency over what constitutes Asia. The play, therefore, highlights how for the West there exists for the most part only a singular Asian identity that could be applied to all.

The Mandarins Daughter and Lalla Rookh

The Mandarin's Daughter! Being the Simple Story of the Willow-Pattern Plate (1851), written by F. Talford is a play set "somewhere in China" and details a romance story. One of the opening lines is "my name is Chim-pan-zee (though in no way related to the one in Regents park)" and "I belong to the Emp'ror of China . . . . I am conjuror, wizard, magician, black doctor."[61] The second line speaks to the subservient nature of the Eastern people and barbarism due to their belief in non-Western medicine and religious systems. The name Chim-pan-zee is however more interesting for identity construction. The monkey or ape is often invoked as a reference to Africans or Aborigines and thus has strong racial connotations. The monkey or ape operates in part as a description of the "other's" comedic identity alongside their animalistic and barbaric state. Thus, by using such a name, the character and by extension the Chinese are linked through a sonic marker of an exotic-sounding name to all other "races" perceived to exist below and as "inferior" to the European race. The use of names to create an "Eastern" soundscape on the stage and thus sonically identify characters is used throughout the play with characters such as He-Sing, Lo-Spi, and Loom-Hoe. These names correspond usually to the role the character has, with Lo-Spi being a detective and Loom-Hoe a gardener. As one review notes these names and plays on words are "duly appreciated" and work to create a "full and humorous" play.[62] This is no surprise given, as Michael Hays discusses, that indigenous individuals and natives

[59] Sascha Auerbach, 'Margaret Tart, Lao She, and the Opium-Master's Wife: Race and Class among Chinese Commercial Immigrants in London and Australia, 1866—1929', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 55, no. 1(2013): 38.
[60] Planche, *Mr Buckstone*, 16.
[61] F. Talford, *The Mandarin's Daughter! Being the Simple Story of The Willow Pattern Plate,* (London, 1851). First performance: Punch's Playhouse and Strand Theatre, 26 December 1851, 4, The Victorian Plays Project.
[62] "Easter Performances", *Lady's Newspaper and Pictorial Times*, 22 April 1854, 250, Gale Primary Sources.

were often used for comedic roles to confirm distinctions between the European and colonized subjects.[63] Sonic markers are also utilized in the Air, 'The House Jack Built' which contains the lyrics, "These are trees/ That wibbledee, wobbledee, gon in the breeze."[64] This is a clear example of the use of pidgin English in the format prescribed in *The Englishman in China* discussed above. The language firmly establishes the identity of "Chim-pan-zee" as being Chinese. Furthermore, due to the nature of the words, the language goes some way to infantilize the Chinese due to their inability to grasp the English language properly. As argued by Christian Thorau, linguistic differentiation serves a socially distinctive function in the aesthetic realm, meaning that the difference in speech automatically marks the Chinese as part of the "other."[65] Alongside these sonic markers, lines such as "If he don't stop his curst caterwauling and bawling" served to portray the Chinese as "good tempered and cheerful," meek and emotional, lacking morality and untrustworthy.[66] The fact that these identities are contrasted with the ideal Englishman's character is not accidental—as Claire Mabilat suggests, Victorians had a predilection for ascribing traits that were considered reprehensible to the "other" to reinforce one's own superior state.[67]

Lalla Rookh; Or, The Princess, The Peri, and The Troubadour (1857), based on the poem of the same name written by Thomas Moore, while set in India follows some of the same tropes and characterizations as *The Mandarin's Daughter*. One connection is the display of emotion with the Emperor in *Lalla Rookh* ordering his subjects to "weep all of you" leading to the stage direction "all begin blubbering loudly."[68] As with *The Mandarin's Daughter*, this is an audible and explicit demonstration of emotion. Furthermore, by describing them as blubbering, the sonic quality and emotion are designed to demonstrate the Indian subject's meekness and femininity given the English conception of manliness is often associated with having a stiff upper lip. The description of blubbering and the immediate following of the emperor's order aim to represent the Indian character as subservient, meek, and mild, while also displaying the 'natural' despotic quality of oriental authority. A further similarity to *The Mandarin's Daughter* is the use of 'exotic' names such as "Nogo," "Aurung," and "Lalla" to sonically signal the Eastern location of the play and thus create a "display of Eastern magnificence."[69] The play was published and performed in the same year as the Indian mutiny and, given melodramas often reflected matters of daily concern, the connection

[63] Michael Hays, 'Representing Empire– Class, Culture, and the Popular Theatre in the Nineteenth Century,' in *Imperialism and Theatre: Essays on World Theatre, Drama and Performance*, ed. J. Ellen Gainor (London: Routledge, 1995), 138.
[64] Talford, *The Mandarin's Daughter*, 5.
[65] Christian Thorau and Hansjakob Ziemer, 'The Art of Listening and its Histories: An Introduction,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Listening in the nineteenth and 20th Centuries*, ed. Christian Thorau and Hansjakob Ziemer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 3.
[66] Anon., *The Englishman in china*, 68; Berncastle, *Voyage to China*, vol. 2, 154-5.
[67] Mabilat, 'Empire and Orient,' 226.
[68] William, Brough, *Lalla Rookh; Or, The Princess, The Peri, and the Troubadour,* (London, 1857). First Performance: Royal Lyceum Theatre, 24 December 1857, 13, The Victorian Plays Project.
[69] "The Lyceum," *Morning Chronicle (1801),* 25 December 1857, 5, Gale Primary Sources.

must be kept in mind.[70] The Indian mutiny exacerbated the notion of barbarity and uncivilized nature of the natives and thus the presence of a popular minstrel air, 'Hoop de dooden doo,' is significant.[71] By parodying a minstrel song, the play links the Indian subcontinent and the Indian identity directly to that of the African, thereby placing it within the global heathen and barbarian framework. Due to minstrelsy being well known and conjuring specific ideas of racialized identity—for instance, parodied black accent, the banjo, the cherry, and humorous African—its inclusion in the play means the Indian's otherness was firmly established.[72] The presence of similar sonic signaling and characterization across geographical spaces also demonstrates the technique of defamatory synecdoche and placing values and identities as applicable to all heathens, as Jeffrey Cox describes.[73] In turn, this enables the constructed identities of Eastern subjects within the imagination, created through recognizable and expected sonic markers and soundscapes to become racialized and be placed within the racial hierarchy framework.[74]

The fact that reviews take both the aforementioned plays as good representations of the East means that the native characters are transformed from simple stock characters into "authoritative representations of cultural groups and their relations."[75] On the stage, there occurred a transformation of imagined and expected soundscapes and sonic markers into tools of otherization and fantasy that cemented notions of identity. The sonic markers and the consequent identity formations established on the Victorian stages, therefore, had real implications for the identities ascribed to all those designated as part of the Eastern world. This process helped cement established racial hierarchies and helped place the oriental 'other' as inherently inferior to the Englishman.

Changing Soundscapes and Identities: Tonic Sol-fa Movement in the East

This section aims to examine the consequences of using sonic markers and soundscapes to create and establish identities. Music is a medium for expressing identity, and as cultural identities are constructed through memory and fantasy, an analysis of the Tonic Sol-fa movement in the South Pacific will show that the alteration of harmonic structures was used to civilize the "natives."[76] As Derek Scott argues, "the right kind of music, in the right surroundings, was thought to act as 'a civilizing

[70] Mayer, *Encountering Melodrama*, 146.
[71] Mabilat, 'Empire and Orient', 222.
[72] J. S., Bratton, 'English Ethiopians: British Audiences and Black-Face Acts, 1835-1865,' *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 11 (1981): 131, 135, doi: 10.2307/3506263.
[73] Jeffrey Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700,* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 118.
[74] Ramón Grosfoguel, 'Race and Ethnicity Or Racialized Ethnicities? Identities within Global Coloniality,' *Ethnicities* 4 (2004): 323.
[75] Hays, 'Representing Empire,' 138.
[76] Christin Hoene, 'Sounding through Time and Space: Music in Postcolonial South-Asian Literature,' in *Time and Space in Words and Music*, ed. Mario Dunkel, Emily Petermann and Burkhard Sauerwald (Bern: Peter Lang, 2012), 88; Stuart Hall, 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora,' in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 226.

influence to which the lower classes were particularly responsive,'" a principle applicable to the lowest of classes—the native.[77] It must be noted that these missionaries entered the South Pacific with certain expectations about the Eastern soundscape and sonic experience they would encounter. Informed by other reports published in the metropole or stage performances such as minstrel shows — "we in the north hear these songs only as burlesqued by our . . . minstrels" —there was an interconnected and cohesive presentation of sonic markers by which the East could be easily identified.[78] It was these sonic markers and soundscapes which would be challenged by the Tonic Sol-fa movement.

The Tonic Sol-fa method as found in the examples examined below was developed by John Curwen and propagated to achieve social reform and enhance Christian worship.[79] It involved "four-part hymn singing as a means of evangelizing indigenous people" and can be posited as a means of cultural imposition.[80] As the evangelicals aimed to change beliefs, religious practices, and moral standards, the Tonic Sol-fa system was a useful tool, especially upon the missionaries realization that cultural identification "was more complex and painful business than the mere adaptation of dress and lifestyle."[81] William Ellis was among those who recognized the need for another form of cultural and imperial intervention with "little hope . . . of their following to any extent the useful arts, cultivating habits of industry, or realizing the enjoyments of social and domestic life."[82] Ellis continues his analysis of the South Islanders detailing that "their music [lacked harmony and] was distinguished by nothing so much as its discordant, deafening sounds."[83] Combined with the insight that the "native's" history, idolatry, and music operated hand-in-hand, it becomes clear that intervention through the Tonic Sol-fa system would enable the transformation of the "native's" identity.[84]

Upon the introduction of the system in most of the colonies, as reported in a report titled *Sol-fa and the Missionaries* (1875), many missionaries and colonists began to comment on the transformative effect that education had on the indigenous population's character.[85] A report on New Guinea states:

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[77] Derek B. Scott, 'Music and Social Class in Victorian London,' *Urban History* 29, no.1 (2002): 70.
[78] "Songs of the Blacks," *Tonic Sol-Fa Reporter*, Jan.1851-Dec.1888 (1860): 254, ProQuest.
[79] Robin Stevens, 'Tonic Sol-Fa in Asia-Pacific Countries: The Missionary Legacy,' *Asia-Pacific Journal for Arts Education* 5, no.1 (2007): 1.
[80] Ibid at 2.
[81] Peggy Brock, 'New Christians as Evangelists', in *Missions and Empire*,' ed. Norman Etherington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 134; Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries,* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), 166.
[82] William Ellis, *Polynesian Researches, during a Residence of nearly Six Years in the South Sea Islands*, vol. 1, (London: Fisher, Son and Jackson, 1830), 39, https://archive.org/details/polynesianresear11829elli
[83] Ibid at 281.
[84] Ibid.
[85] "Sol-Fa and the Missionaries," *Tonic Sol-Fa Reporter*, Jan.1851-Dec.1888, (1875), 84, ProQuest.

> When you compare the limited range of Papuan singing, or droning, with this bright, intelligent chorus singing you see how much music has already added that is interesting and ennobling the life of these people.[86]

This "ennobling" comes primarily from the move towards choral singing and using western harmonies in contrast to the use of drums for example, which are in "close association with lew dancing and general licentiousness."[87] A further example of the success of introducing choral singing is highlighted by John Williams, stating, "Eighteen months ago they were the wildest people I had ever witnessed: now they had become mild and docile, diligent and kind."[88]

As the South Pacific cultures, as were many of the "native" cultures, were primarily oral-based and often transmitted through their music, by changing their religious affiliation and introducing new hymns, the culture was irrevocably changed.[89] Franz Fanon to this end argues:

> Colonisation [sic] is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it.[90]

The Polynesian traditions and culture were recognized as imbuing the "native" with irreconcilable heathenism, and thus by undermining and altering it was seen that the "native" would become more civilized. By fundamentally shifting the cultural soundscape of the East, the imperial agents were able to alter completely the identity of the "natives." By removing their music as well as their language through the tutelage of English—as discussed by Anna Johnston—the South Pacific became more Western sounding, thus allowing the indigenous populations to rise above their heathenism.[91] It becomes clear that, through the manipulation of sonic markers, the indigenous tribes' cultural identities are adapted and molded to match western ideals. The manipulation of sound entails a process of racialization because racialization is a process through which "groups use cultural . . . criteria to construct a hierarchy of superiority and inferiority among collective social actors." [92] The indigenous population's soundscape and sonic markers were shifted to align with sounds approved by the West, and thereby their cultural and racial identities were altered to become more docile, productive, and kind. This is in contrast to the assigned identity of "heathen," barbarian—due to practices such as cannibalism and infanticide—and lazy identified through indigenous music and sonic markers. Sound had and still has

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[86] Charles W. Abel, 'Music in New Guinea (Papua),' *The Musical Herald*, (1915), 457-8, ProQuest.
[87] Ibid at 457.
[88] John Williams, *A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, vol 1, (London: John Snow, 1837), 16, https://archive.org/details/narrativeofmissi00willuoft/mode/2up.
[89] Ellis, *Polynesian Researchers,* 70, 285-6.
[90] Franz Fanon, 'On National Culture,' in *The Wretched of the Earth* (London, 1963), 170.
[91] Anna Johnston, *Missionary Writing, 1800-1860,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 133.
[92] Grosfoguel, *Race and ethnicity*, 326-7.

consequences for the performance and creation of identity and is a powerful tool for those who wish to manipulate it to generate specific narratives and understandings of the world.

Conclusion

This thesis has two main objectives: 1) to demonstrate the importance of using sound as a tool for analyses; and 2) to lay out how the British empire manipulated soundscapes to create sonic markers found on the stage and how these markers were utilized within the imperial context. Earwitnesses exist in many sources as demonstrated by the range used in this thesis. While often only brief details, the comments nonetheless offer great insight into another element of identity creation and conceptions of otherness. The sources also demonstrate that an analysis of the Eastern soundscape and sonic markers limited to musical analysis, as most of the scholarship which touches on this topic does, results in the exclusion of the vast majority of details on the Victorian conception of an "Eastern" sound. The use of travelogues, reports, and plays, alongside limited musical analysis—this being difficult due to the limited copies which still exist in archives—therefore presents a far more holistic appreciation of the created soundscapes and sonic markers. The use of created soundscapes and "sonic markers," first identified in various literature, is converted and translated into a Western form, which is then performed on stage as part of the greater creation of the exotic and imagined Orient, thus working to entrench racialized identities and stereotypes. The songs and plays are what brought a tangible part of the Empire into the homes of the metropole.[93] These identities are then accepted as fact with the plays taken as being mostly factual representations of the East, as demonstrated by newspaper reviews, which then fed into the greater imperialist mechanisms. By creating and generating these sonic markers and soundscapes on stage, the ideology of orientalism and imperialism—including cultural imperialism—became inescapable, and thus formed a closed loop whereby every aspect of society shaped the other to perpetuate and justify the imperial and colonial attitudes of nineteenth-century Britain. The creation and use of sonic markers whereby racial and cultural identities could be sonically recognized and assigned continue to be an important issue, with a 2013 news report following an airplane crash in the San Francisco Bay providing a good example. In the report, the KTVU station states the names of the pilots to be, "Sum Tim Wong," "Wi Tu Lo", "Ho Lee Fuk" and "Band Ding Ow."[94] Spoof names similar to the ones analyzed in this thesis—Lo-Spi, Chim-Pan-Zi, and so on—they were accepted as fact as they met the expected sound for an Asian name. Names as much as speech quality—for instance, pidgin English—are important aspects that make up

[93] Jeffrey Richards, *Imperialism and Music: Britain, 1876-1953,* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 324.
[94] Katherine Fung, "KTVU Reports Racist Joke as Names of Asiana 214 Pilots," *Huffington Post*, 12 July, 2013, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/asiana-pilots-fake-names-racist_n_3588569.

the sonic markers of the Eastern identity. That the spoof names were designed for comedic effect in the face of the tragedy builds on a tradition established on the Victorian stage.

The processes discussed first, the creation of an Eastern soundscape, then its translation onto the Victorian stage, and finally the recognition of the power that soundscapes have for identity and consequently manipulating the soundscape to create new identities, can be applied to all regions of the world once placed under imperial occupation. There needs to be greater attention given to the manipulation of soundscapes and the link to conceptions of identity as these principles continue to be important parts of life both on stage as well as in the real world concerning migration and refugees. As demonstrated by the KTVU news report and various far-right groups, sonic markers are often the first tool through which difference is assigned to those with a non-Western sounding accent or name. Until this occurrence/fact is fully appreciated and recognized, sonic markers will continue to enable the perpetration of a doctrine of otherization and difference.

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THE BODY OF EMPIRE AND THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF DETERRITORIALIZATION: A STUDY ON YOKOMITSU RIICHI'S *SHANGHAI*

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Introduction

Since its opening in 1843 because of the First Opium War, Shanghai started to be rapidly incorporated into Western capitalism. Western powers divided the city into several concessions early on: the British established their concession in 1845 and the French in 1849, making Shanghai one of the most cosmopolitan cities in Asia. Compared to the Western powers, the Japanese Empire was a latecomer. It was after the Russo-Japanese War when the number of Japanese in Shanghai rose rapidly, as the Japanese companies headed by spinning industry made forays into the city. Japan seized the opportunity to further expand its influence on Shanghai in 1910s, since a large portion of European young adults returned to their homelands to take part in the First World War, and the Russian Empire lost its extraterritoriality due to the Russian Revolution. As of 1915, the largest group of foreigners in Shanghai was Japanese, with the population of approximately 11,000.[1]

Along with the increase in Japanese influence, it is important to note that revolutionary sentiments began to grow in China in 1920s. The Chinese Communist Party was established in 1921 and formed an alliance with Guomindang in 1924, agreeing to eliminate warlord separatism and fight against foreign imperialism. Radical intellectuals organized in these parties were eager to lead public movements, and the public also started to share a yearning for national unification, national independence, and hostility to horrendous living conditions in industrialized cities. Shanghai, as the city that symbolized imperial invasion as well as terrible working conditions, became the site where simmering anti-imperialist sentiments exploded. Numerous strikes took place in Shanghai in the first few months of 1925, and one of them involved a death of a Chinese laborer shot by a Japanese foreman. On May 30th, workers and students went on a demonstration, which was suppressed by the British police that killed twelve Chinese. This May Thirtieth Movement triggered ferocious protests in other major cities including Guangzhou and Hong Kong.[2]

As this shows, Shanghai in 1920s was the site of conflicts among various international forces: the Western powers, the Japanese who were increasingly gaining

[1] Hirofumi Wada, *Gengo toshi shanhai* [Shanghai, the City of Language] (Tokyo: Fujiwara Shoten, 1999), 9-10.
[2] Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China and After* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1999), 20-24.

influence, and the Chinese intellectuals and laborers motivated by revolutionary thoughts. It was under these circumstances when a number of Japanese writers and intellectuals visited Shanghai, where they reflected on their "mental ambivalences and ambiguities between nationalism and internationalism."[3] Among them, here I focus on Yokomitsu Riichi (横光利一, 1898-1947). Inspired by the recommendation of Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, one of the most prominent novelists of the time, Yokomitsu visited Shanghai for approximately one month in April 1928.[4] He was deeply impressed by the uniqueness of the city conjured up by Western imperialism and wrote a novel titled *Shanghai*. Published in book form in 1931, this novel takes place in Shanghai 1925, when the May Thirtieth Movement occurred.

Interestingly, Yokomitsu did not depict Shanghai as a splendid modern city. Rather, he focused on the dark side of Shanghai: laborers and prostitutes from various parts of Eurasian countries, among which were also fallen Russian aristocrats. This shows a stark difference from other Japanese writers who visited the city before: Nagai Kafū who romanticized Shanghai exclaiming that it was "as if wandering around in an international exposition," or Tanizaki Jun'ichirō who recollected historical characters in Chinese classics during his travel.[5]

The spectrum of vagabonds that Yokomitsu portraits is truly wide. The novel features multi-layered conflicts between the East and the West, empires and colonies, capitalists and proletariat, and men and women. Among the wide range of people who carries on their lives in this complex set of conflicts, it is without doubt the Japanese characters that form the core of the novel. To understand the complex relation of these characters and Japanese Empire, it is worth referring to Gilles Deleuze's and Felix Guattari's concepts of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. Territory can be defined as the extent of land that the sovereignty of a nation reaches. This 'sovereignty' represses and controls our flow of desire to move beyond the boundaries, forcing us to remain in the limited territory and to repeatedly carry out certain duties. Deterritorialization is the escape from this structure or system, which is accompanied by reterritorialization. That is, when the flow of such escape is captured, the new land eventually becomes the extension of the territory.[6]

In *Shanghai*, the Japanese characters experience the process of deterritorialization, moving from mainland Japan to Shanghai. However, they are not

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[3] Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 316.

[4] Kenki Ryū, *Mato shanhai: nihon chishikijin no kindai taiken* [Demon Capital Shanghai: The "Modern" Experience of Japanese Intellectuals] (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 2010), 245.

[5] Mareshi Saitō, *Kanbunmyaku to kindai Nihon: mo ̄hitotsu no kotoba no sekai* [Kanbunmyaku: The Literary Sinitic Context and the Birth of Modern Japanese Language and Literature] (Tokyo: Nihon Hoso Shuppan Kyokai, 2007), 150-165; Eunkyoung Jung, "A Study on Memory for Shanghai: Sensation of Colonial Joseon and Imperial Japanese - Focused on Kim Kwangju and Yokomitsu Riichi,"*The Journal of Korean Literary Creative Writing* 17, no.1 (2018): 88.

[6] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, "Year Zero: Faciality," in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 167-191.

freed from the fact that the territory of Japanese Empire is incised in their body and are eventually reterritorialized in different ways. In this essay, I will analyze how each Japanese character goes through the process of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. First, I examine the cases of Miyako, Kōya, and Yamaguchi. As reterritorialized bodies of the Japanese Empire, they try to compete with the Western powers, while showing a sense of superiority to the Chinese people. Next, I focus on Sanki, the problematic protagonist of the novel who endeavors to escape from the power of reterritorialization by refusing to seek financial profit and pursuing morality. Then follows the case of Osugi who is located outside of the sphere of influence of reterritorialization. Depicting the operation of two confrontational powers in this diverse set of characters, Yokomitsu shows how the loyal territories of the empire are jeopardized in the vortex of a revolution, and the pursuit of deterritorialization is frustrated. I argue that this novel reveals the power of reterritorialization exerted by the empire, which prohibits the characters from living as individuals not as territories.

The Japanese in Shanghai: Deterritorialization and Reterritorialization

The Japanese characters in the novel flowed into Shanghai through various routes. They commonly experience deterritorialization from Japan as they left their own country to live in an international colonial city. At first sight, it seems that they have obtained freedom from the yoke of Japan. Yet it is still the power of Japanese Empire that manipulates their body and emotion. Although living in a cosmopolitan city, the thoughts and actions of these characters are constantly dominated by the fact that they are Japanese, or that they live with 'the Japanese body'.

Miyako, a dancer who works at a dance hall called Sarasen, entertains numerous white elite customers with her Japanese body. Her customers include a Frenchman working at the French radio telegraph station, a German businessman from Allgemeine Gesellschaft, and other white elite men at major international corporations such as Mercantile Marine and General Electric. What drives her to attract them by dancing is strongly connected with the ambition of the Japanese Empire to territorialize Shanghai. She tells Kōya, a Japanese man who competes with white men at Sarasen to win her heart, that "foreigners are guests" and "gentlemen like you ought to conspire with me and try to plunder as much money as possible from them."[7] This implies that Miyako thinks herself as a part of the Japanese Empire. In this sense, her greatest weapon, the Japanese body, is not merely the body of a Japanese who left Japan. It is the body that represents the ambition of imperial aggrandizement, or the body that functions as a 'territory' of the Japanese Empire.

When Kōya proposes to Miyako to go to Singapore with him, she answers, "There is no place more precious to me than this city. If I leave here, I would be just like a fish without scales. If there is no other option, I am always determined to die.

[7] Yokomitsu Riichi, *Shanghai* (Tokyo: Shomotsu Tenbosha, 1935), 84.

But I am still fond of this city."[8] Miyako feels that she is strongly tethered to Shanghai, and it is obvious that the power that binds her to this city comes from the Japanese Empire. In this context, her fondness for Shanghai is not her personal preference; it shows that she is regarding herself as the spearhead of Japanese imperialism. Miyako becomes a reterritorialized body, playing a role of extending the territory of the Japanese Empire.

Kōya demonstrates another example of reterritorialization. He shows a sense of inferiority to the West and a sense of superiority to China, as if he cannot separate himself from the international position of the Japanese Empire. A salaryman working at a Japanese lumber company in Singapore, Kōya comes to Shanghai to ask Miyako for marriage, but tastes the bitterness of defeat in the competition with her white lovers.

> He went to Miyako's dance hall for ten days, but her eyes were always saying, "The Japanese should come later." […] Kōya was staring at the back of Miyako. He thought that the legs of robust foreigners were attracting her feet. But why is it that the Japanese must be disparaged as such? Bemoaning the shortness of his legs, Kōya walked to the park gate. But it was too much of a bother for him to ponder over the reason why only the Chinese could not enter the park.[9]

Although specific names of places are not shown in this novel, the park in the above quotation is presumably the Public Garden, located in Huangpu Riverside of Shanghai International Settlement. There was a sign at the park's gate put up by the secretary of the international settlement council room which banned the entrance of Chinese, and such prohibition was still active when Yokomitsu wrote this novel.[10] It is worth noting that contemplating on such a discriminatory regulation against the Chinese was "too much of a bother" [うるさい] for Kōya. This shows an important aspect of Kōya's mentality: as a Japanese, he wants to place himself superior to the Chinese people by regarding such regulation as a trivial matter. Meanwhile, Kōya reacts sensitively to the sense of inferiority that he cannot win against Miyako's white lovers. The sense of inferiority that Kōya feels to Western people stems from the fact that his legs – a part of the Japanese body - are shorter than theirs, which is a visualization of Japan's inferiority compared to other Western forces in Shanghai. Condemned with his short legs, it is impossible for him to free himself from the sense that he is living as territory of the Japanese Empire.

The fact that the body of the Japanese characters in Shanghai are reterritorialized by the Japanese Empire also shapes their gaze toward the Chinese protesters. In this novel, China is not called as *chūgoku* [中国] but as *shina* [支那], which

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[8] Ibid at 248-249.
[9] Ibid at 85-87.
[10] Maeda Ai, *Toshi kuūkan no naka no bungaku* [Literature in Urban Space] (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1983), 457-469.

according to Stefan Tanaka "emerged in early-twentieth-century Japan as a word that signified China as a troubled place mired in its past, in contrast to Japan, a modern Asian nation."[11] As this shows, China is represented as 'the inferior nation of the Orient' for the Japanese in Shanghai reterritorialized by their empire. Therefore, when they observe the Chinese people protesting in May Thirtieth Movement, they cannot grasp them as individuals. In the scene where the spinning mill workers go on a violent demonstration in their factory, the protesters are represented as bubbles: "From large black holes a new mob surged like bubbles."[12] As Shindo Masahiro aptly pointed out, the Chinese protesters in the eyes of the Japanese observers lose their individuality, or even humanity, being nothing more than a component of a collective movement.[13] Such representations of the Chinese people reflect the gaze of the Japanese reterritorialized by the Japanese Empire.

Yamaguchi, an architect friend of Kōya whom he got along with before moving to Singapore, more explicitly shows what a Japanese could do or think as a territory of the empire under these circumstances. Yamaguchi makes a living by selling the skulls of dead bodies and buys fallen aristocrats of Russia as concubines. He thinks that Asia should form an alliance under the leadership of Japan to fight against Western imperialism, and thus called an Asianist by other characters. When an Indian patriot called Amuli criticizes Japanese militarism and appeals to the superiority of Indians in numbers, Yamaguchi thinks:

> But isn't Japanese militarism the only weapon to protect Asia from the threat of Caucasians? Is there any other country? Think of China, India, Siam, and Persia. To admit Japanese militarism, that is the axiom of Asia.[14]

In addition, in a meeting of Asianists, a Chinese called Li Yingpu claims that to liberate Asia from Caucasians, Japan and China must affiliate with each other as nations that share the same race and letters. Yamaguchi's Asianism has a different expectation, as he rebuts Li's argument as follows:

> The alliance of Asia becomes possible only when China and India accept Japanese militarism. Should we let Asia perish just because the Japanese lease of Southern Manchuria has extended to 99 years? We must not forget that Asia had its life prolonged for 99 years thanks to Japan.[15]

Unlike that of Amuli and Li, which endorses the sovereignty of India or China, it is clear that Yamaguchi's Asianism is based on the hierarchy which sets Japan over other

[11] Stefan Tanaka, *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 4.
[12] Riichi, *Shanghai*, 201.
[13] Hirofumi, *Gengo toshi shanhai*, 65-73.
[14] Riichi, *Shanghai*, 107.
[15] Ibid at 108.

Asian countries. Clinging to such discriminatory notions, Yamaguchi functions as a loyal territory of the Japanese Empire. By infusing the Japanese characters living in Shanghai with the contempt for the Chinese people, the sense of inferiority to the West, and the following rhetoric of Asianism which disregards the sovereignty of other Asian countries, the Japanese Empire strongly reterritorializes them.

Sanki the Don Quixote and Osugi as 'the Territory Outside'

Sanki, the protagonist of this novel, shows the process of reterritorialization as well. One of Kōya's childhood friends, Sanki is an employee at a Japanese bank in Shanghai. He has no affection to his profession where the only thing he does is manipulating the amount of deposit to conceal his superior's embezzlement, and constantly wanders throughout the city. In the following quotation, he clearly recognizes that living in Shanghai with a Japanese body he cannot be released from yoke of the Japanese Empire.

> Here, people of various races live as the suckers of their native countries, sucking in each other's money. Therefore, the body an individual plays a very patriotic role here, no matter how nonchalant he is. […] *'My body is a territory. Both my body and Osugi's body.'* (俺の身体は領土なんだ。この俺の身体もお杉の身体も。).[16] [emphasis added]

The terms "suckers of their native countries" and "My body is a territory" expresses the reterritorialization of the Japanese body by the Japanese Empire more directly. Moreover, imagining the death of himself, Sanki thinks that "Japan gets stronger diplomatically when a Japanese is murdered. Then it is better to be killed by a Chinese."[17] This shows that he is regarding himself as a territory of Japan even when imagining the moment of death. In this sense, Sanki represents the reterritorialized Japanese body living in Shanghai as a sucker of one's native country, which is identical to Miyako and Kōya.

However, it would be hasty to conclude that this novel only shows the operation of identity politics by the Japanese Empire. This is because unlike Miyako and Kōya, Sanki shows the pursuit of deterritorialization once more. To demonstrate how the power of deterritorialization works in Sanki's case, it is worth pointing out how his appearance is portrayed. He has "white skin and an intelligent-looking face, similar to the face of an ancient or medieval knight."[18] As I have discussed, it is important to have 'a Japanese body' to be reterritorialized by the Japanese Empire. In this sense, Sanki's non-Japanese appearance alludes to his potential to resist to the reterritorializing power of the Japanese Empire.

[16] Ibid at 75-76.
[17] Ibid at 265.
[18] Ibid at 17.

Moreover, Kōya calls Sanki by the name of "Don Quixote". At first glance, this can be interpreted as a mocking name, since Sanki was voluntarily dismissed from the bank, he was working for by raising objections to his superior's embezzlement. However, Don Quixote also has the meaning of the guardian of rightness. Don Quixote pursues rightness when the era of chivalry has already culminated. Since he not only thinks but acts out his faith for rightness, he cannot avoid being ridiculed by others who live in Shanghai where capitalist competition is at its highest.[19]

The first rightness that Sanki pursues is represented by his resignation from the bank. This distinguishes him from other Japanese characters in the novel whose priority is making money by fair means or foul: Miyako sucks money out of her white lovers, and Yamaguchi continues selling the skulls of dead bodies to keep concubines. Kōya follows the logic of capitalism trying to win against the Philippine lumber company. Oryū becomes a concubine of a Chinese capitalist Qian Shishan and runs a Turkish bath exploiting the homeless Osugi. These characters function as 'suckers' their native country by avariciously seeking financial profit. Contrary to these characters, Sanki prioritizes rightness over financial profit gained by concealing his superior's embezzlement. His decision goes against functioning as a 'sucker' of the Japanese Empire in Shanghai, where "people of various races live as the suckers of their native countries, sucking in each other's money."

Sanki follows another sort of morality, which is empathy for the Chinese people. Discussing this novel, Naoki Sakai argued that Sanki starts to form different social relations with people in Shanghai by freeing himself from subjugation to the imperialist nation.[20] This means that he begins to sympathize with the Chinese people who protest against imperialism. The day after the May Thirtieth Movement, he wanders around the streets in Chinese costumes, once again recognizing that he is Japanese.[21] While having to suppress the movement as a secretary in a textile factory, the fact that he wears Chinese costumes and walks in the middle of the Chinese mob shows his endeavor to identify himself with the Chinese. Although such endeavor cannot succeed with ease, it is certain that he strives to move beyond the limits of his reterritorialized body.

Osugi is another important character when discussing the various reactions of Japanese characters. Osugi worked at Oryū's Turkish bath, but soon gets fired due to Oryū's jealousy and becomes a homeless prostitute. Even though she lives in Shanghai with a Japanese body, she is not represented as the spearhead of the empire. Rather, she strays into the dark backstreets of Shanghai. At the same time, unlike Sanki, she does not resist to the imperial power of reterritorialization. Here I call her 'the territory outside.'

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[19] Yeongchae Seo, *Punggyeong i onda* [The Landscape is Coming] (Goyang: Namu Namu Chulpansa, 2019),141.
[20] Naoki Sakai and Meaghan Morris, *Translation and Subjectivity: On Japan and cultural nationalism* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 137.
[21] Riichi, *Shanghai*, 239.

The territory outside refers to the territory (=the Japanese body) that does not function at all. Osugi does not make use of her Japanese body to play a role as the sucker of the empire. This is because she had not come to Shanghai in her own volition; her migration is close to banishment. Back in Japan, she was living on the pension paid to her in compensation for the death of her father who was a colonel. However, for some unaccountable reason, the pension ceased to be paid and she was told to recompense all the money. Her mother committed suicide and Osugi drifted into a Turkish bath in Shanghai. In this sense, it would be more logical to consider Osugi as a character banished into the backstreets of Shanghai where drug trafficking and prostitution was pervasive, rather than a territory planted in modern Shanghai by the Japanese Empire.

The fact that Osugi is depicted as a silent character also emphasizes her inability to function as the territory of the empire. Kuroda Taiga pointed out that Osugi hardly utters a word until the end of the novel, even when she is raped by Kōya.[22] Osugi's reticence makes a striking contrast to Shanghai, a city where one could hear languages from all around the world. Kuroda also argues that her reticence influences how her eyes observe the world around her. When Sanki comes to the Turkish bath, the only thing that Osugi could do is to "look at" [眺める] him. As a silent character, she can only observe the reality that surrounds herself rather than actively engage in it. Thus, she cannot make relationships with other Japanese characters who function as the territory of the empire. In this sense, Osugi is contrary to Miyako who, as a sucker of the empire, constantly participates in conversations with white lovers in an active way.

In addition, even though Osugi drifted into Shanghai with a Japanese body, she does not have a clear memory of Japan. She recalls her mother when seeing an old woman knitting, and reminisces about Japan as follows:

> At that point, she had almost no knowledge of Japan. What she remembered were stone walls of a castle which formed a long and beautiful line, wind blowing on the branches of pine trees, the thick roofs on autumn days when cold showers of rain came, anxiously crying chickens under the sasanquas, and a black post box standing forever at the street corner just like a face of a man. She remembered such vague scenes without knowing where she saw them. [23]

This shows that Osugi almost lost the memory of Japan. While she retains a relatively accurate memory of the tragedy that swept her family, other landscapes of Japan is recalled only with vagueness. This weakens Osugi's bond with Japan, making it harder to consider her as a territory of the empire.

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[22] Taiga Kuroda, *Yokomitsu Riichi to sono jidai: modanizumu, media, sensō* [Yokomitsu Riichi and His Era: Modernism, Media, and War] (Osaka: Izumi Shoin, 2017), 103-104.

[23] Riichi, *Shanghai*, 213.

"An abandoned stone" [捨石] is the term that shows how Kōya thinks of Osugi, which most explicitly demonstrates that Osugi is located in the outside of the territory of the empire.[24] For Kōya, who works for a Japanese lumber company in Singapore as a loyal territory of the empire, Osugi is nothing more than a stone abandoned by the empire, since a homesless prostitute like her cannot function as a territory. On the contrary, Sanki regards Osugi as "a prospective bride." Through the marital bond with a body alienated from the empire, Sanki attempts to deterritorialize from the empire once more.

In this way, Osugi is 'the territory outside' which does not function as a territory of the Japanese Empire even though living in Shanghai with a Japanese body. This is why she looks attractive to Sanki who has internalized the pursuit of deterritorialization as we will see in the following discussion on the meaning of the union of Sanki and Osugi.

The Impossibility of Deteritorrialization

Having dismissed from the bank, Sanki becomes a beggar and visits Miyako to beg for bread. In this scene, his attention focuses more on the food (bread) rather than the giver of the food (Miyako) and soon leaves her house after a quarrel. Sanki's extreme hunger and obsession with bread is contrary to the reterritorializing power of the empire represented by Miyako. This is because hunger is an instinctive feeling irrelevant to the power of the empire. Moreover, even if he relieves hunger by begging for bread, his action does not benefit the Japanese Empire at all. While Kōya's competition against the Philippine lumber company contributes to the expansion of the Japanese Empire, Sanki's begging does not have any meaning other than satisfying his own physiological desire.

Wandering around the streets after nearly being kicked out of Miyako's house, Sanki encounters a decisive incident that leads his body to deterritorialize. Blankly looking down at the surface of a muddy ditch, he is suddenly thrown into a ship full of excrement by two or three Chinese and realizes that his head is freed after waking up.

> Suddenly, Sanki realized that his body was holding on to one end of the tree tightly. Stretching out his feet he thought, "But where is here?" It was inside the ship that he was looking down a while ago. Looking around, the flat side, which was squishy due to excrement, was wetting him up to his neck. (…) He lay down on the excrement, closed his eyes, and felt his head moving freely again. He tried to follow how far his head was moving.[25]

As Sanki is thrown down to the ship by the Chinese, he is in the position of being gazed by them. This direction of gaze is contrary to that of the characters who

[24] Ibid at 284.
[25] Ibid at 314-315.

are territories of the Japanese Empire. That is, when the territory of the empire is incised in the body of Japanese characters, it is inevitable that they disparage Chinese people as the inferior other, and regard the Chinese as the object of their gaze. However, as Sanki is thrown down by the Chinese, the gaze changes its direction. At this point, Sanki ceases to internalize the gaze as a territory of the empire that despises the Chinese. Kamei Hideo argued that the nationalism of Japanese characters in this novel is "the unwanted approval to let the body serve as a symbol of the nation, which lacks the voluntariness from the bottom of their heart."[26] This means that although the territory of the empire is deeply incised in the body of the Japanese characters, it is incised *only in the body*. Since the nationalism evoked by the territory of the empire engraved in the body "lacks the voluntariness from the bottom of the heart," Sanki could liberate himself from such nationalism after being thrown down by the Chinese people. Eventually, Sanki achieves a deterritorialized body through the baptism of the ship of excrement.

After this incident, Sanki recalls his mother in Japan and a Chinese woman called Fang Qiulan. Fang Qiulan is a communist who leads the strike of Chinese workers in the textile factory. On May thirtieth, she had saved Sanki from the ferocious mob and started to admire him. For Sanki, she is an adorable woman but also a communist with whom he cannot reconcile. After this contemplation, Sanki heads to the red-light district where Osugi is working. Some of the preceding researchers had interpreted that this scene shows Sanki's return to the rhetorical territory of empire. For example, Maeda Ai explained that Sanki in this scene represents "the pursuit of returning to Japan, triggered by the extreme situation of the international city seething with revolution," mentioning that it is 'motherland Japan' that Sanki is thinking of when recalling his 'mother.'[27] Also, Kanei Keiko thought that Sanki "went back to Osugi, a *Japanese* who unconditionally greets him," and Jung Eunkyoung argued that Osugi symbolizes "motherland Japan corrupted by militarism and imperialism," whose fate Sanki decided to embrace.[28] According to such interpretations, Sanki is a character that eventually allows himself to be reterritorialized after the long oscillation between the power of reterritorialization and deterritorialization, and this novel shows the close connection of Yokomitsu to imperialist ideology.

However, although Sanki recalls his mother and eventually chooses Osugi over Fang Qiulan, it is hard to confirm his transformation into a nationalist. First, Sanki's memory of his mother is evoked by an unpleasant experience of the nasty oder of excretion. This implies that the attachment to the motherland is also unpleasant, and eventually, needed to be excreted. Especially, considering that Sanki increasingly shows the urge to deterritorialize his body, "motherland Japan" is rather depicted as a

[26] Kamei*, Shintai, kono fushiginaru mono* [Body, a Mystical Being] (Tokyo: Renga Shobo Shinsha, 1984), 134.
[27] Maeda, *Toshi kūkan no*, 498.
[28] Kamei, *Shintai, kono fushiginaru*, 134; Jung, "A Study on," 103.

place to leave. Also, the mere fact that Osugi possesses a Japanese body does not make her symbolize motherland Japan. For Osugi, the motherland is about traumatic memory and irreconcilable past, which made her drift into Shanghai. Therefore, the possession of "Japanese" body of Osugi, in contrast to Fang's "Chinese" body, is not a return to the motherland but a departure from it. Hence, a different interpretation must be provided.

Fang Qiulan represents the Chinese Marxist force who were protesting to imperialism in Shanghai, including that of the Japanese Empire. Although Sanki is physically attracted by Fang's appearance, the impassable barrier of different ideologies prevents him from further attachment, especially as her fate is interwined with her revolutionary pursuit in Marxism. As Sanki could not think of Marxism as the destination of his deterritorialization, he visits Osugi, the 'territory outside.' By starting a conversation, Sanki tries to make a relation with Osugi who had been a 'silent body'. The union of these two is not the union of territories since they are deterritorialized body (Sanki) and the territory outside (Osugi). In particular, the fact that this union has been a long-cherished wish for Osugi shows that this is the union of individuals based on love, not on the imperial power of territorialization.

Nonetheless, their union takes place in the middle of a dark room, where no one can expect bright future. In the last scene of the novel, Osugi remains silent, looking at the dark ceiling.

> If the army force lands and the disturbance calms down tomorrow, I [Osugi] will have to stay absent-mindedly again. Then, oh, with that rough skin, tongues that smell terribly like garlic, greasy hair, long nails, and unorganized sharp teeth that bite my skin. Thinking of those things, she drooped like a sick man who gave up everything and looked at the dark ceiling.[29]

Thinking that she must face her customers again, Osugi falls into despair, and it seems clear that neither can Sanki who ended up as a beggar expect a hopeful future. The fact that their union does not promise any hope demonstrates how the power of reterritorialization emasculates the power of deterritorialization pursued by the characters who try to treat and love each other as individuals rather than as territories of the empire. Shanghai seems to be a cosmopolitan place far away from the empire, but even in such a city, the characters cannot promise their futures of not being territories of the empire.

Besides Sanki and Osugi, there remains the stories of people who served as faithful territories of the empire. Unlike Sanki who as the guardian of rightness let himself be fired from his workplace, Kōya works as a loyal employee of a Japanese lumber company in Singapore, succeeding in winning three contracts faster than his rival Philippine company. Nevertheless, as the May Thirtieth Movement occurs, the

[29] Riichi, *Shanghai*, 332-333.

dock workers go on a strike and port factories close down, which causes the lumber to rot in ships. Kōya, just like Sanki, becomes penniless in the middle of the revolution. He goes to Yamaguchi's place and ends up staying with one of Yamaguchi's mistresses, Olga. A fallen Russian aristocrat, Olga reveals the tragic story that her family had to go through after the Russian Revolution and goes into a convulsion because of recalling a traumatic memory. Kōya finds beauty from her body under seizure and thinks of her as his future wife. This is the last scene of Kōya. As a loyal territory of the empire, he competed with white lovers of Miyako and worked conscientiously for a Japanese lumber company, but eventually suffers hunger and stays next to Olga. If Yokomitsu understood the territorialization of the Japanese characters by the empire in a positive sense, he would not have written Kōya's ending in this manner since he has functioned as the most faithful Japanese territory in Shanghai.

Neither is Yamaguchi's story a happy ending. Leaving his place after introducing Kōya to Olga, he says that Fang Qiulan seems to have been killed due to the suspicion of having a liaison with a Japanese man. He tells Kōya what to do when he dies in the middle of the revolution, and gives him a letter to his Pan-Asianist comrade Li Yingpu. In this scene, it seems that Yamaguchi is foreseeing his death. He had been a loyal territory of the Japanese Empire, endorsing the alliance of Asia under Japanese rule, but similar to Kōya who becomes destitute, his last scene alludes to his death.

In this way, the stories of Kōya and Yamaguchi, who have functioned as reterritorialized bodies of the empire, are hopelessly put to an end. While Sanki and Osugi showed how the pursuit of deterritorialization is emasculated by the power of reterritorialization, Kōya and Yamaguchi represent how the ones who have been faithfully reterritorialized are eventually estranged from the protection of the empire. Even though they served as the spearhead of the empire, when the wave of revolution threatens them, they cannot expect the empire to shelter them; they have no choice but to meet their gloomy fate. What Yokomitsu conveyed in this novel is the violent nature of the power of reterritorialization. The international colonial city of Shanghai he observed was the place where the attempt to break away from the power of reterritorialization is frustrated, and the ones who devotedly follow this power are also abandoned in the vortex of the May Thirtieth Movement.

Conclusion

Under the setting of Shanghai 1925, Yokomitsu shows how two opposing powers operate in the bodies of Japanese characters: reterritorialization by the empire and the pursuit of deterritorialization. The Japanese characters in Shanghai experience deterritorialization in that they have initially left Japan. However, their bodies as Japanese are not free from the reterritorialization by the Japanese Empire. As loyal suckers of the empire, Miyako, Kōya, and Yamaguchi represent how they are reterritorialized.

The protagonist Sanki also cannot completely free himself from the power of reterritorialization. Nevertheless, unlike other Japanese characters, Sanki sympathizes with the Chinese people and endeavors to abide by morality. His effort shows that a pursuit of deterritorialization is in action in the case of Sanki. Meanwhile, Osugi has a Japanese body but does not function as a territory of the empire. As an 'abandoned stone' of the empire, she silently and passively looks at the reality that ruins her life. In this sense, her body floats around as 'the territory outside'.

After losing his job, Sanki falls into a ship full of excrement, which leads him to obtain a deterritorialized body. Subsequently he is attracted to Osugi, and tries to unite with her, but Osugi's last gaze is met by darkness. Eventually, in the city of Shanghai where everyone is living as territories of their nations, there was no place for Sanki and Osugi who refused the power of reterritorialization.

In the meantime, the stories of Kōya and Yamaguchi ends in misery as well. Enduring hunger, Kōya stays next to Olga who suffers convulsion in the basement of Yamaguchi's place, and it is suggested that Yamaguchi will have to face death. In this novel, Yokomitsu tried to reveal the violent nature of the power of reterritorialization on the part of the empire, which both incapacitates the pursuit of deterritorialization and does not shelter the loyal territories of itself when they are threatened in the chaos of a revolution.

Yokomitsu Riichi made up characters of truly multi-layered natures in *Shanghai*, and successfully depicted the scenery of the backstreets of so called 'modern Shanghai' by imparting unique roles to each of them. Under such settings, the novel shows that the power of reterritorialization suppresses the possibility of the characters to live as individuals not as territories of the empire. Trapped in the body of the empire, they could not expect the possibility of deterritorialization, in seemingly the most international city of Shanghai.

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BALANCING THE SCALES: KUWAIT'S NEUTRALITY AMIDST GEOPOLITICAL RIVALRIES IN A F(R)ACTIOUS MIDDLE EAST

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Introduction

In the last ten years, the Emirate of Kuwait has established itself as a mediatory presence in Middle Eastern geopolitics. Kuwait decidedly and triumphantly remained neutral during the Qatar diplomatic crisis, resulting in Kuwait becoming one of the brokers of the Al-'Ula Declaration, a landmark text which fully restored ties between Qatar and the Saudi-Emirati axis, ending perhaps the biggest crisis within the GCC since its founding in 1981. Kuwait has also consistently been less forceful in its approach to, and condemnation of, the Islamic Republic of Iran, in an attempt to balance economic opportunity with geopolitical duty. This "balancing-act" has also been seen in Kuwait's dealings (or, perhaps, lack thereof) with Israel and in the strengthening of economic ties with the People's Republic of China.

This essay will explore this "balancing-act" to better understand how and why Kuwait seeks to remain neutral amid conflict and tension. Divided into three main sub-sections, the first will revolve around Kuwait's role in the geopolitics of the GCC, specifically with regard to the Qatar diplomatic crisis. The second section will analyze Kuwait's neutrality in the Middle East more broadly, discussing flashpoints of tension such as Iran, Israel, Iraq and Syria. The third and final section of this piece will broaden out to a global level, seeking to examine Kuwait's diplomatic strategy with regards to the US-China conflict.

Kuwait and the GCC

In order to effectively discuss Kuwait's role in the GCC, it would be worthwhile to first mention the context surrounding the founding of the GCC. Following British withdrawal from the Gulf (and the subsequent independence of Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and the UAE), the aforementioned countries (along with Saudi Arabia) convened in Abu Dhabi, signing the GCC Charter and announcing the creation of the Council in 1981. Whilst internal factors such as shared histories and identities were key factors in its establishment, regional and global security threats such as the ongoing Iran-Iraq War and the impact of the Cold War on the region undeniably galvanised the Gulf states to seek national and regional security through the establishment of a Council supporting and promoting cooperation and regional integration. The GCC was thus a way for the Gulf to unite in a way which would

respond to regional security threats and to attempt to change the balance of power in the region.[1]

Tensions within the GCC undeniably came to a climax on the fifth of June 2017, when Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the UAE (among other states outside the GCC) severed diplomatic ties with Qatar, citing the funding of terrorism as their primary reason. Kuwait's late Emir Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah traveled between Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE in an attempt to narrow the rift between Qatar and the Saudi-Emirati axis, seeking a swift diplomatic resolution to the existential crisis. Kuwait's role as a mediator was not all "smooth-sailing"; one of Kuwait's first attempts to rekindle relations between Qatar and the Saudi-Emirati axis was by hosting the thirty-eighth GCC summit, which made little, if any, progress in solving the crisis. The summit was only attended by the heads of state of Kuwait and Qatar; other countries effectively boycotted the event by sending ministers or deputy ministers instead, as a way of further ostracizing Qatar within the GCC.[2] Other early diplomatic interventions in the crisis bore smaller, yet still significant, results: a joint press conference in September 2017 between US President Donald Trump and Sheikh Sabah revealed that Kuwaiti mediation efforts had stopped any military escalation between Qatar and the Saudi-Emirati axis.[3] Kuwait was ultimately instrumental as a neutral mediator between the two parties, as, alongside the US, Kuwait brokered the Al-'Ula Declaration, which restored diplomatic relations within the GCC. Kuwait's role as a neutral mediator in the crisis was even recognized by UN Secretary-General Guterres, whose chief spokesperson Stephane Dujarric was quoted as saying, "The Secretary-General welcomes the efforts and contributions of Kuwait in building bridges of understanding in the Gulf region and beyond."[4]

An analysis of Kuwait's foreign policy would be simply incomplete without a discussion of reasons which led the late Kuwaiti Emir to talk his country on this diplomatic path. The Emir Sabah al-Sabah was a champion of Arab unity and diplomacy, as he sought to increase Kuwait's visibility and importance on a regional and global stage through establishing the Emirate as a mediator and peacekeeper.[5] In contrast to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, who have invested significantly in traditional military power (ranked by the GFP at 0.2966 and 0.5859 respectively – 0.0000 being a perfect score) Kuwait's late Emir chose to lead Kuwait on a different path, focusing

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[1] Omar Al-Hassan, "The GCC's Formation: The Official Version," *AlJazeera Studies,* March 30, 2015, https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/dossiers/2015/03/201533011258831763.html.
[2] Khalid Al-Jaber, "The GCC's worst summit," *AlJazeera*, December 9, 2017, https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2017/12/9/the-gccs-worst-summit/.
[3] Ibrahim Fraihat, "Superpower and Small-State Mediation in the Qatar Gulf Crisis," *The International Spectator* 55, no. 2 (May 2020): 79-91, https://doi.org/10.1080/03932729.2020.1741268.
[4] "Note to Correspondents: Gulf region," United Nations, last modified December 4, 2020, https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2020-12-04/note-correspondents-gulf-region.
[5] "Kuwait's Emir Sheikh Sabah, who championed Arab unity, dies at age 91," *France 24,* September 9, 2020, https://www.france24.com/en/20200929-kuwait-s-emir-sheikh-sabah-who-championed-arab-unity-dies-at-age-91.

on mediatory politics as a way of transforming Kuwait into a significant player with power on both the regional and global stage.[6] Thus, Kuwait's desire to maintain neutrality and be a mediatory player can be explained by the late Emir's wish both to increase Arab unity and to augment Kuwait's influence on the regional and global stage.

In the context of this particular crisis, Kuwait shone as a mediatory force for a variety of reasons. Although the official reason given for the severing of ties between Qatar and the Saudi-Emirati axis was the funding of terrorism, there is significant weight to the thought that the 2017 diplomatic crisis was a continuation and culmination of other diplomatic spats resulting from Qatar's fundamental unwillingness to follow Saudi foreign policy.[7] The perhaps most significant divergence between the foreign policy of Doha and Riyadh is with regard to the Muslim Brotherhood.[8] While Doha strongly supports (financially and otherwise) Muslim Brotherhood and its affiliates across the Arab world,[9] such as the controversial cleric al-Qaradawi, the Muslim Brotherhood is branded as a terrorist organization in the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.[10] Kuwait, meanwhile, boasts a comparatively freer environment for the Muslim Brotherhood. The Hadas movement (the Brotherhood's affiliated group in Kuwait) operates in Kuwait, and its politicians currently hold three of the fifty seats of the National Assembly.[11] This perhaps puts Kuwait in a unique position in its diplomatic mediation between Riyadh and Doha, as it is the only country in the GCC to have Brotherhood-affiliated delegates in a National Assembly. That is not to say that Kuwait in any way actively supports the Muslim Brotherhood; rather, Kuwait's foreign policy has to be more aware and respectful of the plurality of opinions in the Kuwaiti state, given the presence of a democratic institution that does hold (albeit limited) power in the legislation of the country.

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[6] "Global Firepower Countries Index," GFP, accessed April 16, 2022, https://www.globalfirepower.com/countries.php.

[7] Frank Gardner, "Qatar crisis: Saudi Arabia and allies restore diplomatic ties with emirate," *BBC News: Analysis*, January 5, 2021, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-55538792.

[8] Alex MacDonald, "Qatar blockade: What caused it and why is it coming to an end?," *Middle East Eye,* January 5, 2021, https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/qatar-blockade-saudi-arabia-lift-cause-end.

[9] Eric Trager, "The Muslim Brotherhood Is the Root of the Qatar Crisis," *The Atlantic*, July 2, 2017, https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/07/muslim-brotherhood-qatar/532380/.

[10] Adam Schreck, "UAE backs Saudis with Muslim Brotherhood blacklist," *Yahoo! News*, March 9, 2014, https://news.yahoo.com/uae-backs-saudis-muslim-brotherhood-blacklist-083656729.html; "Muslim Brotherhood in Bahrain," Counter Extremism Project, accessed February 16, 2022, https://www.counterextremism.com/content/muslim-brotherhood-bahrain.

[11] "About us," Islamic Constitutional Movement, accessed February 14, 2022, https://www.icmkw.org/portal/index.php#.Yg1jvZbP1PY; "Members of the National Assembly," Kuwait National Assembly, accessed February 14, 2022, https://www.kna.kw/clt-html5/about-en.asp.

This may indeed have been another reason for which Kuwait was ultimately successful in its diplomatic mediation of the Qatar diplomatic crisis; unlike Qatar, which sponsors and supports the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Saudi-Emirati axis, which has proscribed it, Kuwait again took a more neutral and considerate approach to its dealings with the Muslim Brotherhood both as a Kuwaiti political entity and a regional power network, which allowed its diplomacy to seem more genuine and balanced. While Oman does not view the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization either, as the population of Oman is Ibadi-majority (rather than Sunni, like the Muslim Brotherhood), there is less of a reason for the Brotherhood to have any sort of official presence there.

Many consider Oman to be the principal mediator and neutral force in the region; however, there are significant reasons for which Oman was not suited to act in this role during the Qatar diplomatic crisis. The Saudi-Emirati axis view Oman with a degree of suspicion, as Oman has been engaging in joint naval drills with the Islamic Republic of Iran as recently as December 2021.[12] The Saudi-Emirati view might well be that Oman's friendly relations with the Islamic Republic would encourage Oman to favor Qatar in the 2017 disputes, thus jeopardizing Oman's role as mediator. Furthermore, during the crisis, Qatari vessels used Omani ports at Salalah, and their tankers were thus still able to travel through the Strait of Hormuz, ensuring the continued export of Qatar's LNG, a vital part of its economy.[13] This also would have brought Oman's neutrality into question; Kuwait, on the other hand, simply due to its geographic position, was not in a position to supply Qatar with space in its ports or its airspace, and thus its position as neutral would not have been brought into question.

Omani foreign policy is not without its wariness of Saudi-Emirati activity in the region either – Saudi Arabia's military presence in the Mahra Governorate of Yemen, for example, presents a unique problem for Oman, as the governorate was always traditionally in Oman's sphere of influence, through the supply of humanitarian aid and dual nationality.[14] With regards to Omani-Emirati relations, the border regions have proven to be a particular obstacle; Emirati influence in the border territories is viewed as a problem serious enough that Oman has banned non-Omanis from buying any land or real-estate in the area.[15] This all has led to a cooling of relations between Oman and the Saudi-Emirati axis of the GCC, something which ultimately prevented the Sultanate from mediating in the 2017 Qatar crisis.

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[12] "Iran, Oman hold joint military exercises in Strait of Hormuz, Sea of Oman," *PressTV*, December 16, 2021, https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2021/12/16/672788/Iranian-Navy-Oman-joint-military-drill-Strait-of-Hormuz-/.

[13] "Qatar to use Oman ports to bypass Gulf blockade," *ENCA*, June 12, 2017, https://www.enca.com/world/qatar-to-use-oman-ports-to-bypass-gulf-blockade.

[14] Abdulaziz Kilani, "The Limits of a Saudi-Omani Rapprochement," *Newlines Institute,* September 1, 2021, https://newlinesinstitute.org/saudi-arabia/hed-the-limits-of-a-saudi-omani-rapprochement/.

[15] Kristin Smith Diwan, "In a Region Beset by Zero-Sum Conflicts, Oman Remains Open to All," *The Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington,* June 3, 2019, https://agsiw.org/in-a-region-beset-by-zero-sum-conflicts-oman-remains-open-to-all/.

There is also an argument stating that Qatar was a small-state mediator in the region prior to the Qatar diplomatic crisis, during which Qatar lost this role. However, Qatar's prior role in the mediation of regional conflicts was not primarily due to a desire of Arab unity or regional peace. Rather, Qatar's mediation efforts focused on areas which impacted Doha's support for political Islam, such as the 2012 mediation between Hamas and Fatah in Palestine and the recent negotiations with the Taliban.[16] Mediating conflicts was in itself not a foreign policy objective for Qatar; rather, it was a part of its broader plan for the region supporting political Islam, both as an ideology and as a way of increasing its own political influence amid the domination of Saudi-Emirati foreign policy in the GCC.

Kuwait ultimately excelled in its handling of the mediation between Qatar and the Saudi-Emirati axis; while both Oman and Qatar have been, in the past, influential mediators in the region, the fundamental advantage which Kuwait possesses is that Kuwait holds the complete trust of the Saudi-Emirati axis (unlike Oman, through its relations with Iran, and Qatar, through its support for political Islam) whilst still being able to follow an independent foreign policy divergent from that of the anti-Iran Saudi-Emirati axis.

Kuwait and the Middle East

While it would be ill-considered to even suggest that Kuwait holds complete neutrality between Saudi Arabia and Iran, Kuwait has proven itself to be much more cautious and restrained in its condemning of Iran in comparison to the rather brazen and much less restrained attitudes of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the UAE (particularly under the virulently anti-Iran gaze of Donald Trump's foreign policy). When Trump unilaterally withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a landmark agreement that sought to paralyze Tehran's nuclear program in return for the lifting of sanctions, Bahrain, the UAE and Saudi Arabia all expressed their support for and jubilation at the move.[17] In contrast to this, Kuwait released a much more muted response, stating that although Kuwait strongly supported the agreement when it was announced in 2015, it "understands" the US position.[18] Although this may not seem significant, it is necessary to put this comment in the context of Kuwait's loyalty to both the United States and Saudi Arabia. Thus, the lack of the same degree of celebration and support in the official Kuwaiti reaction signifies a marked difference in the foreign policies of Kuwait and the Saudi-Emirati axis. It is also worth bearing in

[16] "Qatar's Mediation Challenges in the Afghan Peace Process," Rise to Peace, accessed April 17, 2022, https://www.risetopeace.org/2021/08/11/qatars-mediation-challenges-in-the-afghan-peace-process/risetopece/.
[17] "Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, Egypt welcome President Trump's withdrawal from JCPOA", *Memri*, May 9, 2018, https://www.memri.org/reports/saudi-arabia-uae-bahrain-egypt-welcome-president-trumps-withdrawal-jcpoa.
[18] "Kuwait follows up US announcement on Iran nuclear deal with great interest", *Kuwait News Agency*, May 9, 2018, https://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2725312&language=en.

mind that Kuwait's late Emir was the first Gulf head of state to visit Iran since 1979, pledging closer bilateral ties during an official visit to the Islamic Republic in 2014.[19] Kuwait's cautiousness with regards to its criticisms of Iran were also shown in 2016, following the storming of Saudi Arabia's diplomatic facilities in Iran. While Bahrain and Saudi Arabia severed all diplomatic ties with Iran, and the UAE downgraded theirs, Kuwait was more dexterous in its reaction, recalling its ambassador from Tehran but still maintaining the same level of diplomatic communication (the same reaction as Qatar).[20] Although there is no doubt that Kuwait was keen to show its support for Saudi Arabia, it is also worth mentioning that Kuwait did not sever channels of diplomacy like other GCC countries did; further evidence pointing towards Kuwait's support for mediatory and multilateral foreign policy.

There are many reasons why Kuwait has chosen a path less aggressive in its criticism of Iran. Firstly, Kuwait has a sizeable Shiite minority, but has so far avoided the sectarian violence which has plagued the likes of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. Keen to maintain this internal stability, and aware of the influence of the Shiite minority in parliamentary elections, Kuwait must be careful not to slip into anti-Shiite rhetoric when criticizing Iran, stirring up a sectarian divide which has so far not been realized. The perhaps surprising unity between the Sunni and Shiite populations in Kuwait was exemplified following the 2015 terrorist attack at a Kuwaiti Shiite mosque. The Kuwaiti Emir was quick to visit the wreckage; reportedly, upon being told that it was dangerous, he responded "but those are my children."[21] The following Friday, joint Sunni-Shiite prayers were held at the Grand Mosque, attended by the Kuwaiti Emir.[22] Economic prospects have also encouraged Kuwait to be more prudent in its criticism of the Islamic Republic. Kuwait's hallmark project "Silk City" is reliant on foreign investment, and Kuwait has been keen to specifically court and target Iranian investment in the scheme. There have also been plans desiring infrastructure connecting Kuwait, Iraq and Iran, to further bolster economic development in the country.[23]

On the thirteenth of August 2020, the Middle East entered a new era of Israel-Arab relations, with the official normalization of ties between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, an agreement which was followed by a similar accord between Israel

[19] "Kuwait's ruler makes rare visit to Iran to build ties", *Reuters*, June 1, 2014, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-kuwait-idUSKBN0EC1LX20140601.
[20] Habib Toumi, "Qatar recalls ambassador to Iran," *Gulf News*, January 6, 2016, https://gulfnews.com/world/gulf/qatar/qatar-recalls-ambassador-to-iran-1.1649619.
[21] "The 2015 Kuwait Mosque Bombing," CrimeScene DB, last modified May 24, 2016, https://crimescenedb.com/the-2015-kuwait-mosque-bombing/.
[22] "Kuwait mosque attack: Sunnis and Shia hold unity prayers," *BBC News*, July 3, 2015, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-33387267.
[23] "Nasser As-Sabah: We will only be safe if we get closer to Iran and Iraq," *Al-Rai Media*, March 23, 2018, https://www.alraimedia.com/article/803176/محليات/ناصر-الصباح-لن-نكون-في-مأمن-إلا-إذا-تقاربنا-مع-إيران-والعراق

and Bahrain.[24] An open secret in Middle Eastern politics is the covert relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia, particularly in the context of fighting the common regional enemy: Iran.[25] Fundamentally, the Israel-Palestine conflict has lost its status as the primary concern for the region, as the security threats posed by Iran have proven more important, leading most of the Gulf to begin the process of collaborating with the Israeli state to cooperate on regional security matters regarding Iran. In the context of regional security and the Iranian threat, Israel has become a natural ally for the anti-Iranian Saudi-Emirati axis. The Palestine question, however, has become less of an issue of regional security and more of an issue of Arab unity and Arab pride; factors which the Saudi-Emirati axis has deemed less important. Kuwait, however, has been steadfast in its rejection of the recent Gulf trend of recognising Israel, stating that Kuwait will be the last Arab country to do so.[26] To some, this position would seem to not be in keeping with Kuwait's role as a neutral mediator, holding the belief that the recognition of both Israel and Palestine is conducive to mediation in the region. However, to recognize Israel would signal to Iran a fundamental aligning with US foreign policy, severing any possibility of Kuwait acting as a mediator in the Saudi-Iranian conflict and jeopardizing its more nuanced and balanced position in this (ultimately more important) regional rivalry. Thus, not recognizing Israel is exactly how Kuwait intends on maintaining its neutral position as it signals that Kuwait is independent in the creation and shaping of its foreign policy, basing it on mediated and multilateral decisions rather than on the whims of powerful political players such as the United States. It must be said, however, that the Kuwaiti population is fiercely pro-Palestine, and the existence of a representative democratic institution in the Emirate would make recognition of Israel an extremely thorny issue in the National Assembly, as the populace and the delegates alike would be against the move.

A core aspect of Kuwait's mediatory foreign policy which has so far not been discussed is Kuwait's policy of humanitarianism, in the context of both Iraq and Syria. The hosts and founders of the International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq, Kuwait pledged $2 billion to the rebuilding of essential infrastructure in Iraq (the most out of any Gulf country).[27] Kuwait's humanitarian foreign policy in the region has been key to their role as a neutral mediator, as humanitarian aid is vital to bring about security and stability, and therefore prosperity, in the region. With a Shiite majority, Iraq has over the last few years become more aligned with Iran; the fact that

[24] Steve Holland, "In break with past, UAE and Bahrain forge ties at White House," *Reuters*, September 15, 2020, https://www.reuters.com/article/israel-gulf-usa-int-idUSKBN2660MC.
[25] "Saudi Arabia and Israel: A history of quietly warming ties," *Ynet News*, November 24, 2020, https://www.ynetnews.com/article/HJ3KaV59D.
[26] "Kuwait says it'll be 'last to normalize' with Israel, will stand by Palestinians," *The Times of Israel*, August 16, 2020, https://www.timesofisrael.com/kuwaiti-officials-reject-israel-normalization-reaffirm-support-for-palestinians/.
[27] "Kuwait International Conference: Increased GCC Role for Reconciliation in Iraq," Gulf International Forum, February 20, 2018, https://gulfif.org/iraq-reconstruction-conference-increased-gcc-role-and-hopes-for-reforms-and-reconciliation-policy-focus/.

Kuwait is so keen to aid a country more aligned with Saudi Arabia's rival shows an eagerness in its quest for mediation and stability.

Although Kuwait joined its GCC neighbors in the supporting of anti-Assad groups at the start of the conflict[28] (and Kuwaiti individuals were implicated in the funding of armed groups and terrorists fighting against Assad), [29] the Kuwaiti government consistently opposed the supplying of arms,[30] and has recently begun to carve its own foreign policy on the matter, one more in keeping with its attachment to mediation, multilateralism and humanitarianism. Kuwait has instead focused on the humanitarian side of the conflict, hosting three conferences to gather humanitarian aid for Syria in 2013, 2014 and 2015,[31] and in 2016 co-hosted the Supporting Syria and the Region Conference, culminating in a record $11 billion pledge. [32] Kuwait's humanitarian policy in Syria and Iraq has inflated the global view of Kuwait, something which Kuwait is keen to translate into local legitimacy. Kuwait has also not been so hasty in its re-establishing of ties with the Assad regime, unlike other GCC states such as the UAE and Bahrain. Kuwait has instead declared that any decision regarding Kuwait's diplomatic relations with Assad Syria is to be taken after any decision on the matter by the Arab League; again, demonstrating Kuwait's commitment to Arab and global multilateralism as a way to counter and cure the f(r)actious nature of the Middle East.[33]

Kuwait and the US-China Rivalry

Like other GCC countries, Kuwait enjoys a very favorable relationship with the US, particularly one focused on defence and security-related issues. This is perhaps the tradition following the United States' operation Desert Storm which ultimately liberated Kuwait from Iraqi occupation; this has given Kuwait and the US an undeniably special bond, one which must not be underplayed. Kuwait houses many military bases used by the US, including the Ali al-Salem airbase, the Ahmad al-Jaber

[28] "Kuwaiti Paper Criticizes Syria: Assad's Regime More Criminal than Saddam's Regime," *Memri*, April 22, 2003, https://www.memri.org/reports/kuwaiti-paper-criticizes-syria-assads-regime-more-criminal-saddams-regime.

[29] Theodore Karasik, "Kuwait's apprehension about normalizing relations with Syria," Atlantic Council, May 21, 2019, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/kuwait-s-apprehension-about-normalizing-relations-with-syria/.

[30] "Kuwait expects more Arab countries to reopen embassies in Damascus," *Reuters*, December 31, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-kuwait/kuwait-expects-more-arab-countries-to-reopen-embassies-in-damascus-kuna-idUSKCN1OU0VP.

[31] Diana Al Rifai, "Donors pledge $3.8bn at Syria crisis meeting in Kuwait," *AlJazeera*, March 31, 2015, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/3/31/donors-pledge-3-8bn-at-syria-crisis-meeting-in-kuwait.

[32] "Supporting Syria and the Region Donors' Conference in London," Center for Mediterranean Integration, accessed February 20, 2022, https://www.cmimarseille.org/highlights/supporting-syria-and-region.

[33] Theodore Karasik, "Kuwait's apprehension about normalizing relations with Syria," Atlantic Council, May 21, 2019, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/kuwait-s-apprehension-about-normalizing-relations-with-syria/.

airbase and the Mohammed al-Ahmad Kuwait Naval Base. Furthermore, Kuwait allowed the US and its allies to base over 100,000 troops within its borders in preparation for the 2003 invasion of Iraq.[34] This was symptomatic of a wider network of clientistic relationships that the US had been building in the Gulf region of the last few decades, and these defence-focused relationships have largely lasted, as the US is still Kuwait's biggest supplier of arms, and the US and Kuwait have a very strong bilateral relationship.[35]

That being said, given the growing dual hegemonic world order of the US and China, Kuwait has been keen to court China in order to guarantee the economic support for its landmark "Kuwait Vision 2035" project, aiming to diversify Kuwait's extremely oil-reliant economy. Kuwait's economy is the most oil-reliant in the GCC, with ninety-four-point two percent of its exports being of fuel, as well as over fifty percent of its GDP being reliant on oil.[36] This has made Kuwait's economic diversification paramount to the survival of the state; in the face of unreliable oil prices and a global trend towards renewable energy sources, Kuwait has been courting China as the principal financial contributor to this hallmark project. This long-term national plan centers around large-scale infrastructure projects to transform Kuwait into a high-tech regional and international financial hub, including the development of Kuwait's currently uninhabited northern islands and the establishment of the aforementioned 250-square-kilometre city coined Madinat ah-Tahreer, or Silk City (a name which fits neatly into China's Silk Road-inspired Belt and Road Initiative).[37] Kuwait has also been key in talks targeting the establishment of a Free Trade Area between the GCC and China, further integrating the Chinese economy into the post-oil plans for the GCC.[38] Balancing the economic promise of China's BRI, which has partnered with Kuwait to fund and construct the infrastructure projects of Kuwait Vision 2035 (particularly Bubiyan Island's Mubarak al-Kabeer port), with growing political animosity between China and the US (Kuwait's biggest security partner), has again pushed Kuwait to shape its neutral foreign policy in a way which angers neither hegemon while benefitting from both.[39]

Particularly in recent years, however, Kuwait has been shifting its outlook on the global scene from one reliant on American support to one more independent from American foreign policy and instead focused on GCC multilateralism. For example,

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[34] "U.S has 100,000 troops in Kuwait," *CNN*, February 18, 2003, https://www.edition.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/02/18/sprj.irq.deployment/index.html.
[35] Thomas Frohlich, "Saudi Arabia buys the most weapons from the US government. See what other countries top list," *USA Today*, last modified March 26, 2019, https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2019/03/26/us-arms-sales-these-countries-buy-most-weapons-government/39208809/.
[36] "Kuwait," OEC, accessed February 20, 2022, https://oec.world/en/profile/country/kwt/.
[37] Ehsan Bayat, "What you need to know about Kuwait's Silk City," The Bayat Foundation, last modified July 2, 2020, https://ehsanbayat.com/what-you-need-to-know-about-kuwaits-silk-city/.
[38] Weida Li, "China and Kuwait agree to establish strategic partnership," FindChinaInfo, July 10, 2018, https://findchina.info/china-and-kuwait-agree-to-establish-strategic-partnership.
[39] Bayat, 2020.

Kuwait joined other GCC countries in supporting China's policies in both Hong Kong and in Xinjiang, advocating for the respect of China's territorial integrity and sovereignty.[40] Much like in other conflicts, Kuwait is keen to create a unified GCC response to conflicts in order to strengthen the Council's position on the global stage. In parallel with the other GCC countries, Kuwait sees the United States' pushing of a "human rights agenda" as a potential obstacle to long-lasting close relations and another reason for its gradual shift to a less America-focused foreign policy. Although, from a Western perspective, it seems somewhat strange to say that defending the policies of China regarding its treatment of Uyghur Muslims is an example of multilateralism, from the perspective of the GCC, the real threat is the possibility of human rights issues within the GCC preventing trade between the Gulf and the West. Therefore, through a unified GCC response supporting China's policies, the GCC is trying to indirectly support their own policies that are deemed by some to be human rights abuses. As these issues become more and more important in the US-China rivalry, it is not impossible that GCC countries will find themselves in a position where they must begin to align themselves more closely with China, a trend that we may already be seeing in Kuwait's growing defence ties with China.

The last five years have proven that Kuwait is looking to diversify its sources of high-tech security and defence. In 2018, during the late Kuwaiti Emir's visit to China, a new strategic partnership was announced between the two countries,[41] and China's State Administration for Science, Technology and Industry for National Defence announced an agreement with the Kuwaiti government to increase defence industrial co-operation in the same year.[42] Furthermore, China and Kuwait announced on the twelfth of January 2022 that they would intensify bilateral co-operation with a special five-year plan. A key part of this new co-operation is the development of 5G telecommunication networks in Kuwait, something which has been deemed a security threat by some Western countries. [43] Kuwait's growing ties with China in any sphere will understandably concern the US, but defence and security sectors have been traditionally dominated and supported by American efforts and investments into Kuwait. The beginning of a trend away from this is indicative of a larger, more regional

[40] Dave Lawler, "The 53 countries supporting China's crackdown on Hong Kong," Axios, July 3, 2020, https://www.axios.com/countries-supporting-china-hong-kong-law-0ec9bc6c-3aeb-4af0-8031-aa0f01a46a7c.html; Catherine Putz, "Which Countries are For or Against China's Xinjiang Policies?," *The Diplomat*, July 15, 2019, https://thediplomat.com/2019/07/which-countries-are-for-or-against-chinas-xinjiang-policies/.

[41] Weida Li, "China and Kuwait agree to establish strategic partnership," FindChinaInfo, July 10, 2018, https://findchina.info/china-and-kuwait-agree-to-establish-strategic-partnership

[42] Charles Forrester, "SASTIND signs collaboration agreement with Kuwait," Janes, July 11, 2018, https://www.janes.com/article/81689/sastind-signs-collaboration-agreement-with-kuwait?from_rss=1

[43] "China, Kuwait to intensify efforts for five-year co-operation plan," CGTN, January 12, 2022, https://news.cgtn.com/news/2022-01-12/China-Kuwait-to-intensify-efforts-for-five-year-cooperation-plan-16Loz4C0Uak/index.html.

trend away from total reliance on the US to a more nuanced and balanced approach taking into account the undeniable growing power of China whilst still largely supporting US interests in the region.

Conclusion

In an ever more polarized world, presidential speeches harboring and supporting aggression and "gun-boat diplomacy" are becoming more and more commonplace; one needs only to look at Russian President Putin's speech announcing the invasion of Ukraine to see that war and violence still constitute a large part of modern international relations. Kuwait, however, stands out as an outlier within the GCC, within the Middle East more widely and quite possibly on a global level as well, through its tireless efforts to find multilateral and diplomatic solutions to the biggest geopolitical challenges.

Kuwaiti foreign policy takes into account this somewhat destabilized political world order through a considered neutral and mediatory foreign policy supported by humanitarianism and multilateralism. This has allowed Kuwait success in its mediation of the Qatari diplomatic crisis, and its delicate balancing-act between Saudi Arabia and Iran has meant that Kuwait will receive maximum economic and political benefit while not betraying fundamental alliances. Its "tough" stance on recognizing Israel is a part of this strategy with regards to Iran; and its keen support for humanitarianism in Syria and Iraq has put Kuwait in a favorable position on a global level, inflating Kuwait's status and significance on the world stage. The full effects of Kuwait's strategy with regards to the US-China conflict remain to be seen; but growing ties with the People's Republic certainly bring into question the status-quo of a blindly pro-American Gulf. As a country whose modern history has been defined by an invasion, it has been essential for Kuwait to stand against violence and aggression in geopolitics through its carefully crafted and nuanced foreign policy, one which seeks to fight against the growing f(r)actiousness of the geopolitical world order.

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K-POP FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL: A STUDY ON CULTURAL NATIONALISM IN KOREAN POP CULTURE

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Introduction

When K-pop's first-generation soloist BoA made her first debut on stage approximately 20 years ago, people never imagined Psy's Gangnam Style would create a viral sensation with its unique horse dance, chalking up 1 billion views on YouTube. Nor did people even think that a K-pop boy band would rank first on the Billboard Hot 100 chart. K-pop today has undoubtedly developed into a global pop culture phenomenon, with fans all over the world. In the past, Koreans had always trotted out cliched questions like "Do you know Kimchi?" and "Do you know Park Ji-Sung?" to all foreign visitors to check and recheck South Korea's international profile. However, Korea has outgrown its relative obscurity in the realm of global popular culture. Now, global fans voluntarily consume K-pop and visit Korea, its birthplace. Moreover, as it is forming positive first impressions of South Korea worldwide, K-pop is not merely a cultural phenomenon but also a robust soft power asset, boosting national competitiveness and diplomatic power.

One of the common characteristics of K-pop today is the growing number of non-Korean members in K-pop music groups. It is widely accepted among music agencies that to receive global attention, they must scout for talents abroad. Park Jin-young, the founder of JYP Entertainment, once mentioned in his keynote speech how "blending in international members into a K-pop act" has been a vital step in K-pop's internalization.[1] JYP's popular nine-person girl group TWICE, for instance, includes four members from Japan and Taiwan. Foreign members not only present a different glamour which catches the eyes of Korean fans, but also captivate non-Korean fans, especially those from their homelands, with their mother tongue and ethnic familiarity. Yet, there are clear downsides to this trend. Among Korean fans, many controversies have come about because certain K-pop group members' have different national identities. On April 30th, 2019, TWICE's Japanese member Sana faced backlash over

[1] Kim Young-dae et al., "What the Rise of Black Pink and BTS Says About the Future of K-pop", *Vulture*, August 28, 2018, https://www.vulture.com/2018/08/bts-black-pink-and-the-continued-success-of-k-pop.html.

her Instagram post. While she plainly confessed her personal thoughts on the transition from the Heisei era to the Reiwa era along with the change in imperial throne, her words unfortunately triggered an unintended response, stirring up anti-Japanese sentiment among many Korean netizens. Some criticized Sana for lacking sensitivity for Koreans and their history, as the Japanese era and Tenno institution are deeply related to Japanese militarism and imperialism. As a result, Koreans who still bear the historical colonial scars could not possibly accept the Japanese celebrity's short post with optimism. Meanwhile, there were others who claimed that it is too much to connect Sana's post to the bygone imperialism and that the Japanese today find the era as nothing but "a periodic division natural like air."[2]

A similar incident occurred with Chinese K-pop members. When the Permanent Court of Arbitration(PCA) in 2016 adjudicated that China's claim over the South China Sea lacks legal basis, Chinese stars including EXO's Lay, Fiestar's Cao Lu, Miss A's Fei simultaneously posted on their social media the well-known phrase "China cannot become any smaller,"[3] expressing dissent over PCA's ruling. Chinese fans supported their patriotic deeds, while fans from Southeast Asian countries and Korea harshly criticized their actions. The latter group were enraged at the overt show of unilateral jingoism that did not consider the emotions of Southeast Asians, whose lives are directly affected by the maritime dispute, and Koreans, who themselves have their own experiences of historical distortions and territorial disputes with China and Japan.

In short, both incidents portray nationalism hidden beneath the seemingly unrelated realm of K-pop. Sana faced public hostility due to Japanism represented by the Tenno institution and Korea's long-standing nationalistic animosity against Japan, an emotion proper to Koreans. On the same line, the unified actions of Chinese K-pop stars also reveal strong nationalism present in China. This article aims to examine how K-pop and nationalism are intertwined and eventually suggest what K-pop should consider for it to truly develop into a constructive global pop culture.

Development of K-pop

To further investigate how K-pop and nationalism are related, we must first look back on how K-pop has developed over the past three, four decades. In the 1970s, Koreans had access to largely three types of music. Traditional folk song, or *minyo*, remained popular in the countryside, while few urban elites enjoyed listening to

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[2] Chŏng Hyŏn-mok, "Twaisŭ sana ŭi yŏnho nonlan yi nach'i chosŏn ŭi p'asijŭm irago?" 트와이스 사나의 연호 논란이 '나치 조선'의 파시즘이라고? [TWICE Sana's era controversy is 'Nazi Joseon's fascism?], *JoongAng Ilbo*, May 7, 2019, https://news.joins.com/article/23460114.

[3] 中国一点都不能少 can either be translated as "China cannot become any smaller" or "China cannot spare one dot." A hashtag and an image bearing the same phrase widely spread among Chinese after PCA's ruling. China stakes claim to almost all of the South China Sea, basing their statement on their historical rights to the nine-dash line(南海九段线). Thus, the hashtag signifies China's unified resolve to never concede their claim.

Western classical music. Meanwhile, the most popular was *trot*, a unique genre recognized most often as the oldest form of Korean popular music today. During the Japanese colonial period, a lot of Japanese culture was introduced to Korea. For instance, formal education including music education was modeled on the Japanese system. Naturally, traces of Japanese influence were easily found among Korean culture even after Korea regained sovereignty. However, after the fall of the Japanese empire, Korean culture started to undergo changes because of the United States' influence over the newly independent nation. Schools taught music courses based on Western classical music, and so music from the West began to occupy a significant part of Korea's mass culture. Therefore, while the elite minority appreciated classical music in the 1970s, soon it was hard to find any Korean who had never heard of classical music. Yet, as the Park Jung-hee regime prohibited hip hop and rock music, claiming that such genres coaxed people into sex, drug abuse and sociopolitical deviance, non-classical music with strong American colors could not easily find a place in Korean mass culture.[4]

Nonetheless, government censorship could not reverse the growing tidal wave of non-classical American popular music. People quickly showed affinity towards tabooed music. In the early 1990s, Korean popular music witnessed a "quantum leap" with the rise of Seo Taiji and Boys.[5] Widely known today as the pioneer of present-day K-pop, the boy band was one of the first in Korea to incorporate hip hop and rap into Korean music. Indeed, the band was the leaven of cultural, musical innovation. Ironically, their songs garnered great success because they *deviated* from the norm. Naturally, there were those who found them awkward and uncomfortable. The group was criticized for being overly non-Korean. The young generation, on the other hand, welcomed the change.[6] After all, Korea embraced the new trend and started to actively utilize this change to promote its own cultural industry. The immediate result was the establishment of several entertainment agencies, which began to hunt and foster talented youths. This led to the advent of what people recognize as K-pop today.

Experts divide the history of K-pop into three distinct periods.[7] The first ranges from 1990s to early 2000s during which the first idol group of K-pop powerhouse SM Entertainment, Highfive of Teenagers(HOT), made its debut and remained active. There were cases in which K-pop entered the global market in this period, but most of the activities and strategies were focused on the domestic market. The second period, represented by groups such as Wonder Girls and Girls' Generation, is when K-pop began to receive outside attention and therefore venture out of Korea. From then on, K-pop employed various globalization and localization

[4] John Lie, "What Is the K in K-pop? South Korean Popular Music, the Culture Industry, and National Identity," *Korea Observer*, vol.42, no. 3 (September 2012): 347.
[5] Ibid at 349.
[6] Ibid at 349-350.
[7] Yi Gyu-t'ak, *Galdŭng hanŭn k'ei, pap* 갈등하는 케이, 팝 [K-pop in Conflict] (Seoul: Threechairs, 2020), 13-16.

strategies, reflecting the tastes of global consumers. As a result, the pop culture gave birth to groups such as TWICE and BTS, opening the third and current period.

It is important to realize that this stream of cultural development was not achieved solely by the public sector. From early 2000s, the Korean government, which had been seeking new sources of power for future growth, recognized K-pop's potential, and extensively promoted it as a means of introducing the country's cultural excellence to the international community. For instance, as mentioned in Roh Moo-Hyun Administration's "Policy Vision Report on Cultural Industry" published by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (present-day Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, MCST), the Korean government designated *Hallyu*, the Korean Wave, as one of its major strategic industries to raise Korea's profile as a global cultural powerhouse. In 2005, the Prime Minister's Office held a meeting and set comprehensive measures that transcend the administrative boundaries of the MCST to make Hallyu a pan-governmental project. Follow-up policies were prepared accordingly. In other words, K-pop could grow into Korea's representative contemporary mass culture due to the agencies' efforts as well as the government's full support and guidance. Because of government intervention, K-pop did not only become a culture attractive to both Koreans and non-Koreans but also turned into a national strategic product. Consequently, it further evolved into an item of cultural nationalism that "exerts a certain amount of political, diplomatic hegemony on East Asia."[8] K-pop, a result of public-private collaboration, "received attention as an important driving force of the Korean economy," and, moreover, became "a social phenomenon that displays Korea's cultural excellence and imbue Koreans with nationalistic pride."[9]

An interesting point about K-pop is that it is difficult to find Koreanness within the culture. To begin with, it is hard to pinpoint commonalities between K-pop and traditional Korean music. While the latter is based on the pentatonic scale, coarse voices, and melismatic melodies, the former utilizes a diatonic scale and includes a lot of English words in its lyrics, with powerful dance moves often accompanying thunderous drum beats as well.[10] Furthermore, the word *K-pop* itself was not coined nor first used in Korea. The expression was first introduced and generally used among the Chinese-speaking countries in the late 1990s, and it was not until late 2000s that the word became well-known in Korea. Thus, K-pop, which in essence means Korean popular culture exported overseas, is a genre defined *abroad*. Surely, this does not mean that there are simply no signs of Korean identity found in K-pop. Park Sang-jin, a professor emeritus for traditional Korean music at Dongguk University, believes that

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[8] Yi Dong-yŏn, "Hallyu munhwa jabon ŭi hyŏngsŏng gwa munhwa minjok ju'ŭi" 한류 문화자본의 형성과 문화민족주의 [The Formation of Hallyu Cultural Capital and Cultural Nationalism], *Munhwa Gwahak* (2005): 184.

[9] Chu Sŏng-hye, "Hallyu, uri munhwanŭn segyerŭl ŏttŏk'e mannaya halkka?" 한류, 우리 문화는 세계를 어떻게 만나야 할까? [Hallyu, how should our culture meet the world?], *Ch'ŏrhakkwa hyŏnsil* (2016): 114.

[10] Lie, "What Is the K in K-pop?...," 360.

Psy's Gangnam Style received global attention because "there is something peculiar about it that cannot be found in western music."[11] He claims how Gangnam Style is in fact a piece based on *Hwimori jangdan*, a traditional *janggu* (double-headed drum) rhythm known for being "fast as a whirlwind." Interestingly, the sonic waves of Gangnam Style's main melody closely resemble those of *Hwimori jangdan*. While Park admits that it is unlikely that the composer intentionally based the music on Korean traditional rhythm, he speculates that such a surprising similarity might not just be a mere coincidence but rather a natural consequence of the Korean "cultural, artistic DNA."[12] Furthermore, the fact that Korean stars still hold the absolute majority, the use of Korean lyrics, distinctive stage performance, dance style, costume, the local incubating system and *Kalgunmu* (perfectly synchronized dance) clearly separates it from other world music. Still, because it is difficult to say that K-pop has truly inherited the elements and values of traditional Korean music, it may be somewhat misleading to state that K-pop is indeed native to Korea or representative of Korea's cultural excellence. So, if K-pop is not fully Korean to the core, what was the factor that made it represent Korean pop culture? In other words, how was Koreanness inserted into K-pop? This article believes that nationalism has played a crucial role. Yet, nationalism here does not merely indicate the national pride that has arisen from K-pop's development and success. Nationalism within K-pop is much more complicated than it seems. In this sense, the answer to the question above may be related to the unique double-sidedness of K-pop explained below.

K-pop's Unique Double-Sidedness

Over the past decades, K-pop has rapidly developed into a transnational mass culture, which not only represents Korea but also East Asia. The surge in foreign member recruitments, establishment of overseas fandoms, and numerous world tours manifest that K-pop now identifies itself as a global music genre. However, the unique aspect about K-pop is that while it looks transnational and universal, it is in essence nationalistic and state-centric. K-pop clearly transcends cultural, geographic barriers and boasts both fans and stars of diverse backgrounds, but at the same time, there has always been some "Korea" in its roots. This deeply rooted Koreanness is linked to the strong sense of nationalism found in the country. Nationalism has buttressed K-pop's growth, yet as the culture grew out of its cradle, the stout pillar has also become a factor of discord and controversy that the K-pop industry ought to consider. On the whole, Korean pop culture has presented three benefits to Korea as a country: (1) K-pop functions as a strategic soft power asset that has helped South Korea's position on the world stage, as argued above, (2) K-pop's profitability and global marketability has brought capitalistic success to the country, and (3) the implicit Koreanness of K-

[11] "MBC net'ŭwŏk'ŭ t'ŭksŏn 'p'ungnyu"' [MBC 네트워크특선 '풍류'], MBC, video, November 3, 2014, 39:10-39-23.
[12] Ibid at 39:24-42:34.

pop and its success abroad offer Koreans a point of national pride. Greater success led to higher expectations. Fortunately, K-pop has lived up to those growing hopes. Yet, nationalism in Korea does not simply reflect the pride of Korean people. It is a *national, political, and historical heritage*. Koreans share a heartbreaking history of colonial rule, a painful lesson that teaches that one must strengthen national power for history to not repeat itself – a self-conscious belief that their country should not lag behind culturally. All these elements are intertwined with nationalism.[13] Koreans have formed a single discursive ideology because they share such critical elements. This may be the reason Koreans so desperately tried to prove their excellence to the world. Therefore, it is only natural that there has always been patriotic interest in K-pop, spirit of national prestige among K-pop officials, and national pride among Koreans behind K-pop.[14] In short, nationalism in K-pop is both the cause and effect of a complex system of bilateral translation that, for one, translates aspects of Korean identity into a digestible cultural product for the global audience and, for another, translates the ever-globalizing K-pop back into Korea's national culture. Such a cyclic system constantly reminds Koreans of their national identity deeply rooted within K-pop, while they, the Korean government, and agencies quench their nationalistic thirst and experience a boost in self-esteem, eventually seeking for even greater cultural globalization as K-pop receives more spotlight overseas. Simultaneously, Koreans and K-pop fall in a paradox, as its efforts to *denationalize* by creating a cultural product for a globalized market only makes them further realize the true nature of K-pop – how it is an utterly regional culture inseparable from Koreanness. Thus, K-pop eventually "finds itself *renationalizing* back to its birthplace."[15] Just as K-pop seems to become more non-Korean, so is it becoming more Korean due to the rise in patriotism and nationalism.

K-pop in Dilemma

Until now, K-pop's double-sided nature of denationalization and nationalism has been helpful in achieving its success. K-pop became a viral sensation because the industry could firmly establish a solid foothold in Korea and confidently step out into world markets, thanks to domestic and foreign fans. However, the double-sidedness has backfired, putting the K-pop industry in a serious dilemma. Agencies incorporate transnationalism to meet the demands of fans abroad and ultimately maximize their profit. In this process, patriotic nationalism that develops along with it is becoming a drag on its growth. One of the most successful globalization strategies is to recruit talents from foreign countries and train them into idols. Most foreign members present in K-pop today are from East Asian countries such as China, Japan, and Thailand, as K-pop is especially a megahit in those regions. Once a member from a certain country

[13] Yi Dong-yŏn, "K'eip'ap(K-pop): sinjayujuŭi sidae ch'ogukchŏk kungmin munhwa ŭi aik'on" 케이팝:(K-pop) 신자유주의 시대 초국적 국민문화의 아이콘 [K-pop: Icon of transnational national culture in the neoliberal era], *Naeirŭl yŏnŭn yŏksa*, vol.45, (Winter 2011): 237.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Yi G., *Galdŭng hanŭn k'ei, pap,* 127.

makes a successful debut, K-pop can address the country's fans in a more friendly manner, while those fans in turn feel a sense of pride and satisfaction. The buildup of congenial atmosphere allows agencies to further prosper abroad. Thus, multinationalization has become necessary for K-pop to solidify its position as the popular culture of East Asia. However, cross-cultural ventures do not necessarily bring about positive results. While Koreans regard non-Korean stars as K-pop celebrities and public figures, the stars prioritize their identity as nationals of their home country. At the same time, agencies constantly request those stars to keep and display their national identities, as there is constant need to maintain and raise popularity overseas. This clashes with the Korean way of thinking. Conflicts further intensify as Koreans are filled with pride at K-pop's achievement. Agencies do provide their foreign members with education, raising them as stars with Korean mentality, yet there clearly are limitations to those efforts to Koreanize since the members have already grown up in different environments and received different educations. Moreover, agencies cannot force their foreign stars to only embrace the Korean perspective and identity as they are the ones who have strategically decided to transnationalize and multinationalize.

Controversies over Sana's comment on Japan's era transition and the patriotic posts made by Chinese celebrities on the South China Sea dispute are all incidents that signify the dilemma K-pop is currently facing. The former is an example of cultural nationalism as "a counter-concept of cultural inferiority complex built up since the colonial period."[16] The historical legacy that Koreans must *never* lose to Japan, a sentiment most evident in the ever-intense *hanil-jeon* (Korea-Japan football rivalry) matches, plays an important part. From the Korean viewpoint, no matter how important the member is to K-pop's globalization strategy, Koreans almost instinctively turn away from the idol if he or she crosses the "wrong" line. This demonstrates that K-pop can never be detached from Korean nationalism no matter how transnational it becomes. As for the latter, the incident arose as an example of territorial dispute between countries. Border disputes are concerned with physical national boundaries, one of the most basic elements in defining a nation. Therefore, such disputes are likely to develop into discords between nations, or the people of each nation, as most countries today are essentially modern nation-states. It is only natural that K-pop fans from Southeast Asian countries especially the Philippines, the claimant of the court case, harshly criticized the Chinese idols. Furthermore, Koreans, who themselves are in ongoing historical, territorial disputes with China and Japan, sympathized with the Southeast Asians. As witnessed through these controversies, East Asia lies amid acute and chronic tensions between countries. Furthermore, economic, political, social, historical conflicts in East Asia are intricately connected and therefore inseparable from each other. Political conflicts are linked with historical issues, which are associated with larger social problems. Again, such comprehensive

[16] Yi D., "K'eip'ap(K-pop)…," 185.

conflicts are closely related to nationalism. Thus, East Asia, where nationalism tends to appear strongly in each country, has always been a powder keg full of potential sparks. Culture is never free from this reality, and nationalistic clashes among fans and celebrities will continue to arise in the future. The K-pop industry is currently facing an unavoidable fate of having to pursue both local and global goals.

K-pop and Cultural Imperialism

In addition, as nationalism in Korea consolidates, it gives rise to perilous values - those reminiscent of cultural imperialism. During the colonial era, empires meticulously used culture as a means of legitimizing and stabilizing their rule. Not only did they boast their superiority by enrooting their own culture in colonies, but also justified their deeds, praising their lopsided, violent acts as the white man's burden. In other words, empires drew a line between the west and non-west, created cultural hierarchies, and established an asymmetrical composition of power. The cultural "illusions" concocted by the Western powers were solidified in each colony, and they have had an immense impact on people ever since. Vestiges of Western-centrism still remains undiminished in majority of countries.

Korea is no exception. The so-called "west complex" is prevalent in Korea. For instance, Koreans show different attitudes toward people who come from Western Europe or the United States and those who come from Asian countries. Such a gap is evident in K-pop as well. Whenever K-pop successfully hosts a concert in the United States or Europe, journalists flood the Internet with gushing articles, commenting how K-pop has finally "hit the world stage, the home of pop music."[17] As for Koreans, they share a belief that stems from the desperate loss felt during the Japanese colonial rule, a strong will to modernize, and an understanding that modernization basically means westernization.[18] The west complex is founded on this belief and has a great influence on Koreans. To the contrary, Koreans do not necessarily respond to East Asia, more specifically Southeast Asia in the same manner. Although K-pop boasts a greater market share in this region, Koreans often assume an attitude of superiority or even look down on fellow Asians. For instance, Koreans have shown opposite reactions to the all-foreigner K-pop groups EXP Edition, Z-boys, and Z-girls depending on their racial composition.[19] Furthermore, a Korean netizen's remarks on BLACKPINK's Thai member Lisa – "with makeup on, she totally looks like a Russian elf … but with darker hair and no makeup, she looks like any average Thai woman …" – enraged both Korean and global fans.[20] All these incidents clearly exemplify the racist attitudes certain Korean fans have based on nationalism and their admiration of the West. Moreover, when NiziU, JYP

[17] Chu, "Hallyu, uri…," 121.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Yi G., *Galdŭng hanŭn k'ei, pap,* 103.
[20] Dong Sun-hwa, "BLACKPINK's Lisa victim of online racial remark", *The Korea Times*, January 16, 2019, http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2019/01/682_262177.html.

Entertainment's all-Japanese girl group, made its first appearance on stage, some Koreans were displeased at K-pop's "superior" skills being shared with and leaked to Japan.[21] Such behaviors are the outcome of over-excessive national pride, and manifests how Koreans are creating their own cultural hierarchy, placing K-pop – and Korean culture itself, by extension – on the top.

After witnessing K-pop's global success, Korean politicians have advocated to "make Korea the world's cultural hub," as if it is Korea's destined goal.[22] However, as speculated above, such desires can both solidify the already present hierarchy between the West and the non-West and even establish a new hierarchy within Asia. An asymmetric cultural power structure may form once people are enraptured by their own cultural supremacy. The Economist had once explained Hallyu as an ostentatious act of "showing off soft power to poor countries and performing sub-cultural imperialism."[23] K-pop already shows signs of becoming a culture that actively internalizes the "logic of cultural dominance and imperialism, away from excessive counteraction on its own cultural inferiority complex."[24] In short, cultural imperialism that once took power under the Western logic of delivering superior culture to the inferior non-West is now being *inversely* reproduced in Korea.

Some may argue that it is too early to criticize and dismiss K-pop, which is still struggling to find permanent ground in the global market. In comparison to other major popular genres, it cannot yet be considered a global cultural hegemon. The term "cultural imperialism" might be a misnomer too grand for the still growing popular culture. However, it is important to recognize that cultural imperialism mentioned in this section is a probable future that K-pop should work to avoid, rather than the status quo. After all, the young culture, along with the nationalism associated with it, is currently showing ominous signs of delinquency reminiscent of cultural imperialism that did occur in the past. While K-pop might be relatively small and young compared to other cultural hegemons, it is surely not a newborn. Without doubt, it does boast a large share in the global market, especially in Asia. If K-pop does grow into a major global popular genre in the future overlooking the current warnings, it will be practically impossible to fix the problem then. The stable should be closed before the horse flees.

Suggestions on K-pop

[21] Yun Gwang-ŭn, "K'eip'apŭi segyehwaga bijŏnaen hŏsang" 케이팝의 세계화가 빚어낸 허상 [Illusion made by the globalization of K-pop], *Mediaus*, December 12, 2019, https://www.mediaus.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=169780.
[22] Chu, "Hallyu, uri…," 122.
[23] Kim Myŏng-su, "'Hallyu' chejohagi: yŏksajedojuŭi jŏk haesŏk" '한류' 제조하기: 역사제도주의적 해석 [Manufacturing 'Hallyu': a Historical Institutional Analysis], *Han'guk sahoe hak*, vol. 49, no. 2, (2015): 43.
[24] Ibid.

Koreans' pride-filled love towards K-pop is totally understandable, and it has long set the foundations for cultural development. However, K-pop today finds itself on the verge of falling into the trap of cultural nationalism and imperialism. Thus, Koreans must ask themselves the introspective question: do we really want our treasured culture to become the hotbed of nationalistic conflict and the symbol of cultural imperialism in Asia?

It is imperative that K-pop finds ways to defuse nationalistic conflicts for it to further prosper as a truly global culture. Problems associated with nationalism are not easy to solve. In essence, nationalism is irrational based on commonly shared sentiments and is linked with politics, society, and history. Furthermore, humans are born with the natural inclination to believe *ours* to be better than *theirs*. As a result, situations can only exacerbate when left alone, driving the culture into an even deeper pit of imperialism. People must make painstaking efforts to fully comprehend and overcome the status quo.

Then, how should K-pop cope with the dilemma it is facing? First, K-pop celebrities should take a more considerate and restrained attitude toward other cultures. The more attention K-pop draws, the greater the influence individual idols hold. Then, their voices can easily bring about change in behavior among fans. For example, when BTS donated in support of the Black Lives Matter campaign, a huge number of fans joined the cause, sharing the news on social media via #MatchAMillion. BTS and its fans raised more than an astounding $190,000 in just 6 hours.[25] Likewise, depending on how individual idols act, their words may trigger nationalistic conflicts, or spark changes toward peace. Just as BTS's actions lead to a positive movement towards the universal value of human rights, other stars can also motivate people to alleviate conflicts in East Asia. If fans witness their idols respecting and considering others, they will naturally adopt their behaviors. Hence, celebrities must take responsibility for what they say and should especially be cautious when making comments on sensitive issues. They must remember that they are role models to numerous people.

Next, Koreans must realize that K-pop is no longer the preserve of Korea. K-pop cannot just be seen as a lucrative money-making business nor a strategy to enhance national prestige. It has already crossed Korean borders and has flown to a wider world. It cannot only respond to Korea's demands. K-pop today is a mass culture mixed with the diverse colors of East Asia. This diversity and vibrance is essentially the source of Korean pride, and these values are the reason K-pop has experienced constant change and development without stagnation. Yet, if Koreans, dazzled by K-pop's glory, only view the pop culture as a purely Korean product and

[25] Ko Gyŏng-sŏk, "BTS ami, hŭgin in'gwŏn e 't'ong k'ŭn kibu'… haeoe ŏllondo nollatta"BTS 아미, 흑인인권에 '통 큰 기부' … 해외 언론도 놀랐다 [BTS Army, generous donation on black human rights … alarmed foreign media], *Hankook Ilbo*, June 9, 2020, https://www.hankookilbo.com/News/Read/202006091893745285.

perceive other people as subordinate objects, not as autonomous subjects, true trans-cultural communication cannot be achieved. Without communication, not only will nationalistic conflicts remain unsolved, but K-pop's globalizing efforts will also reach its limit. If K-pop only pursues economic profit and focuses on national pride, it will degenerate into "a manneristic cultural product devoid of diversity and communicative abilities."[26] To the contrary, once Koreans boldly confront its own Korea-centric, Korea-first mindset and open their ears to diverse voices, they will be able to shed their cultural, nationalistic superiority. For K-pop to further thrive in the global market, Korean fans must boldly face the fact that the culture must actively embrace the unfamiliar heterogeneity.

Lastly, appropriate education should be conducted accordingly so that all people develop a balanced view on different cultures. Respect toward others is not a virtue only celebrities must embody. All people, including K-pop lovers, must understand and cherish differences in gender, country, and race. Moreover, education addressed here is not just limited to conventional classroom-based courses. Heated online arguments that arise from nationalistic conflicts can also become an effective educational venue if discussions proceed in a constructive manner. Some may argue that it is extremely unlikely that constructive debates would take place in such a haphazard, arbitrary setting. However, that may not be true. In September 2020, Bella Poarch, a Filipina TikTok star, unknowingly posted a video that revealed her tattoo depicting the Rising Sun Flag of Japan. This enraged a lot of Korean netizens. Poarch immediately issued an apology, explaining that she was unaware of the history behind the flag. However, anger among Koreans did not subside, and a few users went on attacking the 19-year-old girl with racial slurs. Malicious comments such as "uneducated short people" and "poor country" sparked anti-Korean posts among Filipinos, which aggravated the already bitter situation. Some even fought racism with racism, mocking Koreans of their "plastic surgery faces."[27] Surprisingly, Koreans and Filipinos did not part with unresolved malice in their hearts, but rather worked toward a mature finish. Koreans offered apologies, emphasizing the friendly ties between the two countries. Filipino netizens replied with their apologies. As shown, mature dialogues are indeed possible on the Internet even amid hostile circumstances.

Conclusion

The nationalistic conflicts East Asia face today is a natural consequence of the cultural bonds formed among different nations. Sharing a common mass culture, countries have bridged gaps and have come across the heterogeneity that had not been fully realized before. In this sense, K-pop may be seen as the catalyst which caused the

[26] Chu, "Hallyu, uri…," 124.
[27] Lee Hyo-jin, "Filipinos angered by racist comments from internet users in Korea," *The Korea Times*, September 10, 2020, https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2020/09/113_295819.html.

ever-present, latent conflicts to rise. East Asia is currently undergoing a transition period.

As experienced through controversies over Sana's Instagram post and Chinese idols' unified dissent over PCA's ruling, K-pop will witness similar heated arguments in the near future. Nevertheless, such debates are *not* negative nor undesirable. While conflicts may worsen situations and bring about hostility, K-pop may also preferably create opportunities for greater mutual understanding, depending on which course people choose to take. K-pop *has* the potential to overcome nationalistic conflicts and promote a more respecting community. Although K-pop has not always taken the smoothest route going through turbulence, the transnational bonds it has formed can certainly be seen as a huge step forward. K-pop's response to its current dilemma may suggest possible clues for resolving deep-rooted conflicts in East Asia.

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A "STATE OF EMERGENCE": THE NEGOTIATION OF TAMIL WOMEN'S IDENTITIES UNDER CONDITIONS OF WAR IN SRI LANKA

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Introduction

"Her forehead shall be adorned not with/*kumkumam* (but) with red blood./On her neck will lay no *tali* (but) a/cyanide flask!"[1]

This is an excerpt from a poem written by a woman in the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a militant group that fought for a separate Tamil nation-state during the Sri Lankan Civil War (1983-2009). *Kumkumum*—a powder—and a *tali*—a pendant—both symbolize marriage. This poem raises several questions about how the LTTE portrayed women. On the one hand, it depicts a jarring and radical departure from traditional gender norms, because the woman in the poem has pledged her life to the LTTE cause rather than to marriage. On the other hand, the woman is still figuratively "married"—not to a husband but to the LTTE. Is her participation in the LTTE truly a departure from "traditional" gender roles that the poet might have intended to imply? In any case, her identity is communicated through what she wears on her body. With her membership in the LTTE, her body, like the bodies of other Sri Lankan Tamil women, has "become the symbolic site of communal, caste, and class enmity"—enmity that characterized the civil war period as a whole.[2]

The Sri Lankan Civil War, while involving conflicts between many ethnic, religious, and political groups, was primarily a conflict between the Sri Lankan government, which promoted a Sinhalese nationalist vision of a single state of Sri Lanka, and the LTTE, which promoted Tamil nationalism and fought for a separate Tamil nation-state, or "Tamil Eelam." While the immediate catalyst for the war was a riot in Colombo in 1983, its underlying causes emerged under British colonial rule (1815-1948) and became more apparent after Sri Lankan independence. During the colonial period, many Tamils had opportunities for economic gain, and the notion that Tamils were unfairly privileged consequently emerged in the Sinhalese community.[3] Thus, Sri Lanka's postcolonial government codified Sinhalese dominance, failing to

[1] Neloufer de Mel, *Women and the Nation's Narrative: Gender and Nationalism in Twentieth Century Sri Lanka* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2002): 206-207.
[2] De Mel, *Women and the Nation's Narrative,* 17.
[3] Sumit Ganguly, "Ending the Sri Lankan Civil War," *Daedalus* 147, no. 1 (Winter 2018): 79; S.J. Tambiah, "The Colombo Riots of 1983," in *The Sri Lanka Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, ed. John Clifford Holt (Duke University Press, 2011), 647; Ganguly, "Ending," 79.

legislate protections for the Tamil minority and at times marginalizing Tamils through laws such as the Sinhala Only Act of 1956.[4] In 1977, when the United National Party replaced the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, shifting the economy away from state welfare and toward a liberal capitalist model, Tamils became scapegoats for the resulting economic difficulties of Sinhalese entrepreneurs.[5] It was in this context that the civil war broke out. At several points during the war the Indian government intervened, once in an attempt to disarm rebel groups, but it ultimately withdrew. [6] Many international actors classified the LTTE as a terrorist organization, allowing the Sinhalese government to label its violence as anti-terrorist. [7] Ultimately, the government took aggressive military action that defeated the LTTE and ended the war on May 18, 2009.[8]

Since my research focuses on the LTTE, it is important to note that the LTTE's structure and ideology changed over time. In the 1980s, the LTTE was rooted in "popular militancy," fueled by young people who "voluntarily left their homes to join militant groups who were considered at that time marginal, risky, and foolish."[9] At this point, the LTTE was one of "five groups that dominated the militant scene": the TELO, LTTE, PLOTE, EPRLF, and EROS.[10] My paper focuses more on the LTTE in the 1990s, when it was the dominant group and became a "militarized quasistate structure" that primarily relied on forced conscription.[11]

During the civil war, an entire generation grew up under a condition of violence. Inspired by the work of Lee Ann Fuji on the Rwandan genocide, this project examines violence as a destabilizing and productive force, rather than only as the result of pre-existing social structures and conflicts. Notably, Fuji's study has a different aim than the one I pursue here; put frankly, she seeks to understand why people kill each other—why neighbors turn on neighbors, and how violence operates at the micro-level to enable such an outcome. Still, she also highlights the importance of considering violence as social and not only political, an approach that I also seek to take.[12] Yet in this project, I consider violence as more of a background condition that sets the terms of the relationship between individuals and ethnic groups. To be clear, I do not mean to overlook the important differences between the systemic violence enacted by the

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[4] Ganguly, "Ending," 79.
[5] Tambiah, "The Colombo Riots," 647.
[6] Ganguly, "Ending," 82; Sree Padma, "Neither Sinhala nor Tamil--On Being a South Asian in Sri Lanka," in *The Sri Lanka Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, ed. John Clifford Holt (Duke University Press, 2011), 680.
[7] Ganguly, "Ending," 83.
[8] "Timeline: Sri Lanka's 25-year civil war," Reuters, accessed October 5, 2021, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-srilanka-war-timeline-sb/timeline-sri-lankas-25-year-civil-war-idUSTRE54F16620090518.
[9] Sharika Thiranagama, *In My Mother's House: Civil War in Sri Lanka* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011): 187, 197.
[10] Thiranagama, *In My Mother's House,* 185.
[11] Ibid, 187.
[12] Lee Ann Fuji, *Killing Neighbors: Webs of Violence in Rwanda* (Cornell University Press, 2009): 19.

Sinhalese state and the militant response of the LTTE; rather, for the purposes of this study, I see the social and political violence of the war as a whole as context for the formation of Tamil ethnic identity. As Neloufer de Mel argues, "States of emergency are also 'always a state of emergence.' That is when a re-visioning of society and its economies takes place, changing the direction in which the nation journeys."[13] The view that the Sri Lankan Civil War created a "state of emergence" forms the foundation of my central research question: How did the destabilizing condition of war and violence facilitate the renegotiation of Tamil ethnic and gender identities by the LTTE and those it sought to recruit?

To investigate this question, I use Lee Ann Fuji's framework of a "script" for ethnicity, which is part of her claim that periods of violence are periods in which new expressions of identity emerge. Fuji argues that in the Rwandan genocide, ethnicity was state-sponsored and that people performed it according to a script: "As a script, state-sponsored ethnicity was not some 'thing' inscribed in people's cultural DNA or collective histories; it was a set of constructions that were intended for performance but remained open to interpretation."[14] According to Fuji, these scripts meant to "conjure a new reality and social order out of existing and familiar elements."[15] The poem discussed above exemplifies this phenomenon—it takes the familiar markers of marriage for women and reframes them to "conjure" a new vision of the Tamil militant woman. Thus, I extend Fuji's conceptualization of scripts for the performance of ethnicity to also include scripts for the performance of gender and gendered ethnicity. Rogers Brubaker's conceptualization of "minority nationalism" also applies to the LTTE in some ways. He argues that "'national minority'…designates a political stance, not an ethno demographic fact," thereby further highlighting how ethnic identities are constructed through nationalisms rather than existing intrinsically. [16] As shown below, in addition to demonstrating minority nationalism, the LTTE script tells Sri Lankan Tamils how to perform their ethnicity in response to the "nationalizing nationalism" of Sri Lanka and the "homeland nationalism" of Tamils in India; these are two other types of nationalism that Brubaker identifies.[17]

I argue that just as the destabilizing nature of the crisis period lent itself to new iterations of Tamil ethnic identity, so too did it create space for the renegotiation of Tamil womanhood.

First, I use newspapers and a book produced by leaders and supporters of the LTTE to argue that the organization created a script for how Tamils should perform their ethnic and gender identity. This script positioned Tamil women as emblematic of the Tamil nation, both by positioning them as victims who need protection and by

[13] de Mel, *Women and the Nation's Narrative,* 17.
[14] Fuji, *Killing Neighbors,* 121.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (OUP, 1996): 5.
[17] Ibid.

arguing that their liberation through militant nationalism represents the liberation of Tamils as a whole. Second, I examine the testimonies of Tamil women themselves to argue that the LTTE was both an agent and a product of the condition of violence during this period, thereby facilitating both agency for and oppression of women. Tamil women therefore sought agency by at times following scripts for the performance of their identities and at times deviating from those scripts. Due to the range of sources that I was able to access, I ultimately focus more on how women negotiate the LTTE script from within rather than outside it, and recognize the room for further investigation of the latter question. While I am attentive to longer histories of pre-war Tamil ethnic and gender identity, I demonstrate that to understand the LTTE's script for the performance of gendered ethnicity, it is also important to consider the more immediate context of violence as a cause of the renegotiation of Tamil women's identities.

Oppression and Liberation: The LTTE's Script for the Gendered Performance of Tamil Ethnicity

Amidst violence that sometimes victimized women and at other times gave them the agency to break from assigned gender roles, the LTTE created a script for the gendered performance of Tamil ethnicity that made women symbols of the national struggle: their victimization symbolized Tamil oppression, and their rebellion symbolized Tamil liberation. Thus, the LTTE script asked Tamils to perform their ethnicity in ways that aligned with these dual conceptualizations of women, which were at times aligned with and in tension with each other.

First, Tamil women were often perceived as the core of Tamil tradition and identity; therefore, their oppression in times of war became, according to this ideology, emblematic of the broader oppression of Tamils. Therefore, when the LTTE script told Sri Lankan Tamils perform their ethnic identities by supporting its efforts to defend Tamils the Sinhalese threat, this mission included protecting Tamil women from Sinhalese violence. The LTTE appealed to Tamils abroad as well as those in Sri Lanka. Sharika Thiranagama argues that since Tamil diasporic communities faced marginalization both in Sri Lanka and in the Western countries to which they migrated, there was a perception that the LTTE was "guard[ing] Tamil life against 'Sinhalese genocide' and 'Western culture' simultaneously."[18] By reflecting that sentiment, the LTTE documents I examine below demonstrate how transnational ethnic identities are formed through common experiences of oppression and the subsequent development of nationalism, which aligns with this paper's contention that violence against Tamils in the Sri Lankan civil war transformed Tamil ethnic identities.

For example, the *Tamil Guardian*, a newspaper for the Tamil diaspora that is produced in the UK, reveals the broad contours of the LTTE script regarding Tamil

[18] Sharika Thiranagama, "Making Tigers from Tamils: Long-Distance Nationalism and Sri Lankan Tamils in Toronto," *American Anthropologist* 116, no. 2 (2014): 272.

oppression and the performance of Tamil identity through support for national liberation. First, a key argument of these articles is that Tamil people are victims of ethnic cleansing and genocide and that a militant response is therefore necessary. For example, one 1998 article in the *Tamil Guardian* characterizes one of Sri Lankan president Chandrika Kumaratunga's policies as a "slave writ for the Tamils," and argues that the "chauvinistic Sinhala leadership" is operating with "institutionalized racism."[19] A political cartoon in the *Tamil Guardian* (fig. 1) portrays Kumaratunga as Hitler, wearing his distinctive mustache while doing a Nazi salute.[20]

Fig. 1. Political cartoon published in the London-based newspaper the *Tamil Guardian*, a publication for the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora. Portrays Chandrika Kumaratunga as Hitler. "Follow the Leader," *Tamil Guardian*, July 25, 2001, 7.

Another article in the *Tamil Guardian*, titled "Why Tamils Say Genocide," argues that violence against Tamils in Sri Lanka meets the UN criteria for genocide, as well as scholars' definitions of physical and cultural genocide.[21] Thus, characterizing this conflict as nothing less than a genocide of the Tamils is central to the newspaper's ideological argument. From the premise that Tamils are facing genocide, the newspaper then argues against the government's classification of the LTTE as "terrorist" and instead portrays it as righteously defending the victimized community. One article makes this argument as follows:

> If the Western framework is to be taken at face value, all non-state political violence is, by definition, illegal and therefore terrorism. All states battling armed opposition groups are, by the same logic, fighting terrorism. But this simplistic categorisation has deemed that there is no such thing as a freedom movement. History and

[19] "Prevarication, not Peace," *Tamil Guardian*, August 15, 1998, https://web.archive.org/web/19981203034622/http://www.tamilguardian.com/edit/index.html.
[20] "Follow the Leader," *Tamil Guardian*, July 25, 2001, 7.
[21] "Why Tamils Say Genocide," *Tamil Guardian*, October 18, 2006, https://web.archive.org/web/20061111115922/http://www.tamilguardian.com/article.asp?articleid=911.

> contemporary politics prove that many states unleash violence that is - by virtue of its effect - terrorism against their citizens as well as their neighbours.[22]

According to the *Tamil Guardian*, the LTTE militants are freedom fighters, not terrorists. Challenging the term "terrorist" and describing the brutal violence against Tamils as "genocide" is part of the narrative of oppression that is central to the LTTE script for Tamil identity. Moreover, the Tamil militant identity is crafted in response to the oppressive violence of the Sinhalese state, demonstrating how violence was a productive force for the emergence of new identities.

Moreover, the newspaper articles claim that to perform their ethnicity, diasporic Tamils must support the fight for their collective liberation by supporting the LTTE. For example, one article titled "Being 'religious' has become merely a social pastime" argues that Tamil Hindus who "detach themselves" from the conflict in Sri Lanka because of its violence are contradicting their religious texts, which support "the use of violence to defend justice and truth," concluding with the claim that Tamils' duty is "to our suffering fellow Tamils first and foremost."[23] The author of this article links Tamil marginalization in the West and Sri Lanka by arguing that religion—which she views as a core component of a shared Tamil culture—is both a means through which to empower generations of Tamils growing up in the West and a source of moral justification for support of Tamils in Sri Lanka. As Sharika Thiranagama argues, diaspora Tamils who follow the LTTE script equate the LTTE with "Tamilness," both in Sri Lanka and abroad.[24] She also argues that "the LTTE…represented itself clearly as the supreme upholder…of the Tamil family, the Tamil nation, and Tamil culture more generally."[25] Thus, the Tamil diaspora demonstrated the minority nationalism that the LTTE promoted because its perception of itself as a minority was rooted in its experience of marginalization both in Sri Lanka and abroad.[26]

As shown above, the LTTE script asked Tamils to perform their identity by supporting LTTE violence. It framed this support as necessary defensive action through which to protect the core of Tamil identity in the face of oppression by the Sinhalese. This script mapped its narratives of oppression and liberation onto gender.

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[22] "Binary Logic: Terrorism defies definition because states practice it," *Tamil Guardian,* November 28, 2001, https://web.archive.org/web/20030218123752/http://www.tamilguardian.com/tg137/editorial.htm#Terrorism%20defies.

[23] "Being 'religious' has become merely a social pastime," *Tamil Guardian*, April 4, 2001, https://web.archive.org/web/20010409040123/http://www.tamilguardian.com/culture.htm#The%20Arangetram.

[24] Thiranagama, "Making Tigers from Tamils," 265.

[25] Thiranagama, *In My Mother's House*, 217.

[26] Thiranagama, "Making Tigers from Tamils," 269.
Sharika Thiranagama discusses how Tamil Canadians have faced discrimination; for example, there is a stereotype that Tamil youth participate in gangs. With respect to those who did join gangs, her study reveals Tamil parents' concern about the generational trauma that their children are inheriting; some "wondered uneasily" about the "parallels" between youth participation in the gangs and "the violence in Sri Lanka from which they had so recently fled."

As de Mel argues, nationalist gender ideologies in Sri Lanka were such that "the male [is] the author and subject of the nation, while the female stands for the nation itself, in need of male protection, the reproducer and nurturer of future generations and transmitter of cultural values."[27]

These newspapers show that the condition of violence in which societal norms were destabilized lent itself to the solidification of Tamil ethnic and national identity around the goal of defending Tamils—particularly Tamil women—against the Sinhalese threat. For example, another article asks its readers: "Did any pray for the people back home?...Did any pray for the orphans and the families that have lost their breadwinners? Did any pray for the young girls who have been raped?"[28] Here, girls who face sexual violence become a symbol of the suffering Tamils in Sri Lanka that Tamils outside of the country ought to protect. Another article reported on the murder of a fifteen-year-old Tamil Canadian girl named Sharmini, arguing that "In a community that has lost many of its young stars to (often senseless) violence, the death of Sharmini should not be another unresolved tragedy."[29] Notably, this article links violence against a girl in Canada to the violence against children that families in the diaspora often experienced in Sri Lanka. Thus, the LTTE script for its diaspora supporters drew upon their experiences under the condition of violence from which they fled, revealing how the war created a "state of emergence" for new performances of ethnic and gender identities.

Yet simultaneously, the LTTE leadership and women within the organization also characterized women as embodying Tamil liberation. This seeming paradox or contradiction between narratives of oppression and liberation both contribute to a common phenomenon—that of women representing the nation. de Mel cites Rajeshwari Sunder Rajan's concept of "sufficient modernity" to describe this contradiction: "in recognition of the needs of national development, human rights and civil liberties, women are no longer denied a role in 'the time-space of the modern," but while promoting the modernity of its women, the LTTE nevertheless engaged in "female containment" characterized by the promotion of "discipline and chastity."[30] This containment is evident in how the script promotes women's complete obedience to the cause, which curtails their freedom of expression. de Mel notes that this restriction of agency is characteristic of militancy overall because the "reality of [the militant's] driving impulses lies in complete obedience to the will of the militant leadership on whose behalf s/he struggles."[31] This narrative of Tamil women's

[27] de Mel, *Women and the Nation's Narrative*, 3.
[28] "Can we not at least spare a prayer for our people?" *Tamil Guardian,* August 15, 1998, https://web.archive.org/web/19981205172153/http://www.tamilguardian.com/article/index.html#a5.
[29] "Standing United," *Tamil Guardian,* November 6, 1999, https://web.archive.org/web/19991112130226/http://www.tamilguardian.com/editorial.htm#Traditional
[30] de Mel, *Women and the Nation's Narrative*, 7, 218-219.
[31] Ibid, 204-205.

liberation through their obedience to the cause parallels the narrative discussed above about the Tamil nation as a whole—that Tamils are being victimized at the hands of the Sinhalese and must stay true to their Tamil identity by supporting the LTTE. Thus, in the LTTE script, the performance of ethnicity and gender are intertwined.

Adele Ann Balasingham, who was a leader of the LTTE women's wing, wrote the book *Women Fighters of Liberation Tigers* to highlight the stories of the LTTE women she worked with. This book exemplifies the script that women LTTE fighters were made to follow. The script glorifies women who will forego traditional gender roles to sacrifice for the cause, and positions the LTTE as an agent of women's liberation and the liberation of Tamils, as a whole. First, it pairs the oppression of Tamils with the oppression of women and then positions the LTTE as a way to escape both. Balasingham writes:

> For decades Tamil women have been exposed to violence, torture, murder and rape by Sinhala settlers and their military protectors. Thousands and thousands of women have had their family life totally destroyed by premature widowhood, by sons and daughters and extended family members shot dead in front of their eyes…With such a horrendous history of genocidal destruction forming part of their consciousness Tamil women cannot be anything other than fiercely patriotic.[32]

Thus, Balasingham identifies the Sinhala people and state as the oppressors of Tamil women, drawing a parallel between the oppression of Tamils as a whole and the oppression of women in particular. She references the discourse of genocide that formed a key component of the LTTE script, as discussed above. Moreover, she lays out a script for how Tamil women must perform their ethnic identities in response to marginalization: they must emerge from their trauma with a fierce Tamil patriotism.

Notably, Balasingham also writes that "the Tamil society is a deeply entrenched patriarchal society."[33] Her purpose in doing so is to position the LTTE, as opposed to other Tamil political organizations, as the liberating force for the Tamil people. She argues that "the militant patriotism of Tamil women finally blossomed" only when they were able to join the LTTE and free themselves from "the forms of social constraint which had obstructed their deeper participation earlier," which, her book suggests, included "parliamentary politics and non-violent struggle" as well as "conservative images of women."[34] In contrast, she argues that the male LTTE leadership is always supportive of women. For example, in her discussion of how Prabhakaran responded to LTTE women's demands for a "separate women's military structure," she says that these women had "grown in self-confidence" and Prabhakaran "appreciated their aspirations and unhesitantly gave his support to the women

[32] Adele Ann Balasingham, *Women Fighters of Liberation Tigers,* (Jaffna: Thasan Printers, 1993), in "Military Training of Women Cadres in the East."
[33] Balasingham, *Women Fighters,* in "Introduction."
[34] Balasingham, *Women Fighters*, in "Women Join the Armed Struggle."

fighters."[35] She later writes that "For [Prabhakaran] the independence of women is crucial to their liberation and the assertion of courage and self-confidence is a prerequisite to the realization of such independence."[36] The discussion of women as needing support from the male leadership to reach their full, self-confident potential reflects the paternalistic notion of the male protector and author of the nation that de Mel discusses. This suggests that the LTTE script might not actually ask its women militants to depart from their "traditional" gender roles as much as it claims to.

Moreover, the notion that the LTTE is liberating Tamil women from both its Sinhala and Tamil oppressors enables Balasingham to justify their forced recruitment. She writes:

> Constant exposure to oppression has had a profound effect on the life and thinking of young Tamil women…With the large scale induction of women into the LTTE the female cadres have overcome inestimable difficulties and challenges in the process of their metamorphosis from patriotic village girls into revolutionary guerrilla fighters.[37]

When read in the context of the forced conscription of women into the LTTE, this script for Tamil women suggests that any resistance to joining the organization stems from their internalized oppression, the result of decades of oppression from which the LTTE will liberate them.

Finally, Balasingham's script for Tamil women tells them to perform their ethnic and gender identities by sacrificing their lives to the cause. This supports Thiranagama's argument that "the LTTE highlighted its rigid control of the sexuality of its women cadres, representing them as 'virgin warriors'"[38] and that the LTTE was "valorizing women only on the basis of their LTTE membership and their willingness to sacrifice themselves for the nation."[39] Balasingham praises women who sacrificed aspects of women's daily lives to fight for the cause, such as "woman cadres [who] struggled in the darkness to carry out such routine practices as hair brushing and plaiting."[40] She also glorifies women who willingly sacrificed their lives, such as one militant who died firing at the Sri Lankan army to slow their advance.[41] While Balasingham claims that these women have broken free of conservative notions of "selfless, sacrificing mothers and wives who encourage bravery and heroism in their sons and husbands," her script for violence instead tells LTTE women to sacrifice themselves for the agenda of male leadership who claim to believe in women's liberation.

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[35] Ibid, in "The Formation of an Independent Structure."
[36] Ibid, in "Epilogue."
[37] Ibid, in "Introduction."
[38] Thiranagama, *In My Mother's House*, 216.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Balasingham, *Women Fighters*, in "The Siege of Jaffna Fort."
[41] Ibid, in "Gallantry."

Analyzed together, the *Tamil Guardian* articles and *Women Fighters of Liberation Tigers* demonstrate the dual narratives of oppression and liberation, applied to women and the nation as a whole. While the *Tamil Guardian* portrays women as victims and Balasingham portrays them as agents and beneficiaries of liberation through the LTTE, both scripts for the gendered performance of ethnicity characterize women as the site upon which the nation's identity is negotiated. Thus, Tamils as a whole and women, in particular, are told to perform their ethnicity and gender by sacrificing for the LTTE cause.

Joining the LTTE: Performing the Script Under Conditions of Violence

Just as the LTTE script perpetuated dual narratives of Tamil women's oppression and liberation, so did women who joined the LTTE experience both the loss and gain of agency by choosing to follow the LTTE's script. Through an analysis of testimonies from such women, I argue that some chose to follow the LTTE because it aligned with their experience of violence during the context of the war. They were victims of violence that the Sinhalese state enacted upon women, aligning with the LTTE's portrayal of the oppression of women as emblematic of the oppression of the nation. Through the LTTE, they were able to seek agency in the fight against the state that harmed them; this aligns in some ways with the LTTE narrative of women's liberation. Still, simultaneously, their performance of the script resulted in the loss of agency that de Mel discusses. Also, their decisions to join the LTTE did not necessarily align with the transition from traditional to modern, the "metamorphosis from patriotic village girls into revolutionary guerrilla fighters" that the LTTE script ascribes to them.[42] Instead, their decision arose from the destabilization of gender norms under the condition of violence in which they were raised, once again demonstrating the immediate context as a productive force for the negotiation of their identities. Ultimately, their stories of renegotiating identity amid violence complicate the LTTE's portrayal of itself as a "liberator" from "tradition" in two ways: first, by demonstrating that the idea of "traditional" womanhood was in part an LTTE construction that emerged in the context of violence, and second, by revealing how the idea of "liberation" fails to acknowledge continuities between their pre-LTTE and post-LTTE realities.

The documentary *My Daughter the Terrorist* follows two young women LTTE fighters, Darshika and Puhalchudar, as they discuss their lives within the LTTE and their motives for joining it. These two women were in the Black Tigers, a wing of the LTTE that conducted suicide attacks. Their testimonies exemplify how women LTTE militants sought to transcend the role that both the Sinhalese state and some nationalist narratives gave them—namely, the role of the Tamil victim upon whom Sinhalese state violence is enacted. Darshika and Puhalchudar, like other women of their age who lived through the war, grew up under a condition of violence. Antonia, the mother of

[42] Balasingham, *Women Fighters,* in "Introduction."

a woman named Darshika who joined the LTTE, said of Darshika's childhood: "We couldn't separate ourselves from the war. We lived inside it."[43] Darshika said that she joined the LTTE, or "the movement," because it saved her family: "When we were running through the shelling, the army attacked us but the movement fought back. After that I felt I had to save these people. I thought if I don't join the movement, our people will be forced into slavery. That's why I joined the LTTE."[44] Darshika's story exemplifies how her experience aligns with the script for Tamil ethnic identity discussed in the previous section. As demonstrated earlier, the LTTE script characterized Tamil oppression at the hands of the Sinhalese, described as ethnic cleansing and genocide, as central to Tamil ethnic identity. For Darshika, the prospect of oppression at the hands of the government—the forcing of Tamils into slavery—led Darshika to describe Tamils as "our people." The image that her story creates—that of a movement saving a family, which is the core unit of the nation that makes possible its reproduction—also aligns with the masculinization of militant nationalism and the feminization of the nation that was a central component of nationalist narratives. Thus, Darshika's experience aligns with the nationalist script expressed in documents like the *Tamil Guardian*.

Darshika's narrative of gender-related violence that she faced also reveals how her experience aligned with the LTTE's characterization of itself as an agent for women's liberation. She and her mother witnessed how soldiers "harassed" women and girls, and "even ten-year-old girls were scared of what the soldiers might do." They were "defenseless" against the army.[45] Darshika tells a story exemplifying this defenselessness:

> Once, the army forced my mother, sister and me to sit outside in the baking sun. The commander was sitting in the shade under a big umbrella held by the soldiers. To protect us from the burning sand my mother put my sister and me on a towel. The soldiers yelled at us, grabbed the towel and put us back on the hot sand again.[46]

This story demonstrates the oppression of Tamil women at the hands of the Sinhalese military, aligning with the LTTE narrative of victimization. The fact that Darshika's mother was unable to protect her and her sister also signifies how the army destabilized the family structure, positioning Darshika's story in line with narratives of the LTTE as an upholder of the Tamil family. Thus, for Darshika, LTTE membership was also an act of agency in the fight for the family and against the state, aligning with the LTTE script for Tamil women's performance of identity and presumably making it easier for Darshika to follow that script, even when it meant participating in violence that victimizes others.

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[43] Morten Daae, *My Daughter the Terrorist* (Nordic World, 2007), 23:18.
[44] Ibid, 44:15-44:44.
[45] Daae, *My Daughter,* 24:42-24:49.
[46] Ibid*,* 25:20-25:43.

Finally, Darshika's loss of socioeconomic opportunity due to military violence also appears to have contributed to her decision to join the LTTE. In the documentary, she says, "By the time I was 13 years old we were permanently displaced [from Jaffna]. I had to stop studying and everything was lost."[47] Therefore, for Darshika the LTTE became an alternative to a life without permanent housing and consistent education. Notably, that loss of housing and education was a direct result of the destabilizing condition of violence in which she lived, revealing the role of immediate conditions of violence, in shaping the lives of young women such that they would join the LTTE for an alternative. Thiranagama also notes how the LTTE positioned itself as a chance for opportunity: "The LTTE with its promise of power through recruitment promised another route to achievement, given that the traditional route, education, was no longer available to the same degree."[48]

As Fuji argues, "Looking at the effects of social relations does not rob actors of their agency" but rather "provide[s] the immediate context in which people act and interact for, against, and toward others."[49] Thus, the above testimony does not deny that Darshika joined the LTTE and followed its script by choice and that this was an act of agency on her part. At the same time, her motives for becoming a Black Tiger—a desire to protect Tamils as a whole, a desire to fight for women like herself and their families, and a desire to find an alternative to life after displacement—at times map onto Balasingham's script for women cadres and directly result from the conditions of violence in which she was raised. As de Mel and others also suggest, the role of the LTTE in the lives of women who joined it did not fully align with its narrative that it was an opportunity for women to break free from "traditional" gender norms. As the above evidence demonstrates, gender relations that these women experienced before their militancy were not only products of long-held norms but were also products of the more immediate destabilizing condition of violence during the war.

Meanwhile, the new Tamil womanhood that the LTTE script told women to perform bore as many resemblances to their previous experiences as it did differences. Before deciding to join the LTTE, Darshika wanted to be a nun. She says, "At one time I was always talking to God. I wanted to be pure and live a life of celibacy…After my father's death [in the war]…I wanted to fight against all this."[50] To explain why she instead joined the LTTE, Darshika asks, "If there is a God, why does He keep us in this endless misery? Even those who came to the church for protection ended up in pools of blood."[51] This story again reveals how a time of violent crisis was the catalyst for her decision to follow a new script for performing her gender identity. Despite what the LTTE script might suggest, Darshika's choice was not between the LTTE and a "traditional" path of marriage and subservience to men. Rather, as her plan to

[47] Daae, *My Daughter,* 27:21-27:30.
[48] Thiranagama, *In My Mother's House,* 37.
[49] Fuji, *Webs of Violence*, 18.
[50] Daae, *My Daughter,* 5-5:22.
[51] Ibid*,* 19:30-19:44

become a nun indicates, she had access to another expression of womanhood that went beyond the "traditional" Tamil woman. The destabilizing condition of violence narrowed the opportunities for Darshika's future as a woman, and only under those conditions did the LTTE emerge as a way out.

In addition to complicating the notion of "traditional" Tamil womanhood from which the LTTE claims to liberate women, Darshika and Puhalchudar's accounts also demonstrate continuities between women's conceptualizations of their roles before joining the LTTE and after. For example, as different as they are, there are some core similarities between becoming a nun and serving the LTTE celibacy, forming communities with other women rather than within a marriage-based family unit, and complete devotion to a particular belief system and leader who promotes those beliefs. de Mel discusses how this complete commitment to the cause, which suggests a loss of agency, also parallels "traditional" visions of Tamil and Sri Lankan womanhood in general and not just for nuns: "the notion of warrior-mother [created by the LTTE] did not displace deep-seated notions of normative female identity which…continue to instruct the Sri Lankan woman on her symbolic value as the sexually chaste, enlightened, altruistic maternal being."[52] Thus, the stories of LTTE women fighters complicate the LTTE narrative of their singular progression from a victimized woman to a liberated one by exposing how both notions of womanhood were products of the condition of violence in which they emerged.

While Darshika and her friend Puhalchudar joined the LTTE seeking agency to fight against their oppressors, their loyalty to the LTTE's script of violence still reflects the "complete obedience" to leadership that de Mel characterizes as a feature of LTTE militancy, and suggests a loss of agency for these women while continuing to demonstrate how both ethnic and gender relations were defined through the process of violence. Both Darshika and Puhalchudar said that if the other were a traitor to the movement, they would shoot her—and the Leader is the one who would order it.[53] Darshika and Puhalchudar's ideological arguments also resemble those in the newspapers discussed earlier; for example, Darshika redefines what the public might mean by "terrorist" to say, "We fight for true justice. They spread false rumors that we don't fight for justice, that we kill civilians."[54] On the topic of the 1996 LTTE's bombing of the Colombo central bank, she says, "Our Leader would never choose a target like that. Our Leader would never choose anything that causes devastation to civilians."[55] This denial of reality in favor of the script for violence promoted by the Leader reveals a loss of independence for these women, supporting the argument that LTTE leaders like Prabhakaran "contain" and "protect" the LTTE women by ensuring that they follow the plans of the male leadership.[56]

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[52] de Mel, *Women and the Nation's Narrative (?),* 215.
[53] Ibid*,* 35:41-35:57.
[54] Ibid*,* 51:47-52:12.
[55] Ibid*,* 52:25-52:31.
[56] de Mel, *Women and the Nation's Narrative*, 222.

Avoiding Recruitment: Rejecting the LTTE Script

> My eldest daughter was taken [by the LTTE] but she escaped and came back. I took off my thaali and made her wear it. I put the red pottu of a married woman on her forehead – because married women were less likely to be taken away by the LTTE. Then to make things more convincing I folded a sari and wrapped it around her stomach so that she would look pregnant.[57]

This story from a Tamil mother stands in direct contrast to the poem cited in the introduction. It reaffirms the oppositional relationship between membership in the LTTE and the more "traditional" woman's life of marriage and maternity. But rather than celebrating the replacement of the *kumkumam* with blood and the *tali* with cyanide, it represents the choice of a woman to enter into "traditional" gender norms in order to avoid that fate. This story demonstrates that both the "traditional" and the "liberated" are, to some degree, constructions of Tamil womanhood that emerged during a destabilizing period of violence. Notably, the LTTE constructed notions of "traditional" womanhood in its actions as well as in its script for Tamil civilians. Sharika Thiranagama discusses how "even as the LTTE advocated radical forms of relatedness within the movement as forms of exceptional life, it increasingly policed and regulated a version of the conservative normative Tamil family for those who were not cadres."[58]

While the testimonies of Tamil women who avoided the LTTE are in many ways the exact opposite of the testimonies of voluntary LTTE militants, both perspectives highlight how the construction of Tamil nationalism in the context of violent conflict takes place on and through women's bodies. Both perspectives also demonstrate how the notion of "traditional" Tamil womanhood, like the LTTE's notion of the "liberated" Tamil woman, is a product of the violent condition in which it arose. These competing ideas of the Tamil woman, and the discrepancies in the ways that different women find agency, demonstrate the fluidity of gender roles resulting from the destabilizing context of ethnic cleansing. Still, the stories of women who avoided the LTTE, in particular, highlight how Tamil women were alienated from the LTTE script when it was incompatible with their lived experiences under conditions of violence. Therefore, these women exercised agency by strategically adopting and diverging from that script.

For example, one mother said that the LTTE forcibly took her daughter away from her studies, and after her daughter escaped and resumed studying, "a bullet entered her head and she died instantly."[59] In contrast to Darshika's story of joining the LTTE as a response to the loss of access to education, this mother's daughter had

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[57] "We Lived Under a Mango Tree," Interview by Radhika Hettiarachchi et. al., *HERSTORIES,* http://theherstoryarchive.org/photo-essays-vavuniya/we-lived-under-a-mango-tree/.
[58] Thiranagama, *In My Mother's House*, 29.
[59] "Mullaitivu Letter 58," letter published on *HERSTORIES,* http://theherstoryarchive.org/photo-essays-vavuniya/we-lived-under-a-mango-tree/.

educational opportunities and lost them at the hands of the LTTE. The story complicates the LTTE's narrative of providing opportunity for women to emerge from an existence of "housekeeping, reproduction, and slavish submission to men," as Balasingham says in her book. [60] Still, the daughter here also shares a core experience with Darshika—the condition of violence interrupted her previous plans for education, showing again how violence destabilizes gendered experience. In this case, however, the LTTE directly victimized a young woman, a far cry from "liberating" her.

Another mother told a similar story of the LTTE committing violence against women:

> One night at around midnight, the LTTE surrounded my house and demanded my daughter. I begged them to leave her alone. They dragged her out. I ran after them and grabbed her arm. Then a cadre kicked me, and took my daughter away. On May 13, 2009, I heard my daughter's name on the LTTE radio broadcast of the LTTE dead. My eldest son went into the camp to identify her body and saw her laid out on the ground. I never saw my daughter. After she died, I got her O levels results and she passed her exams well.[61]

This story is strikingly similar to Darshika's story of being made to sit on the burning ground with her mother and sister. The key difference is that the LTTE was the agent of violence here, rather than the Sri Lankan military. Read together, these stories once again demonstrate how, regardless of their relationship to the LTTE, conditions of violence lead women's bodies to become the site upon which Tamil ethnicity or national identity is performed.

Thiranagama also challenges "the conventional story told of how Tamils came to identify with a collective discrimination and fear through the 1983 riots," pointing to the discrepancies between the ideologies of different Tamils depending on their particular circumstances. [62] This again highlights the multiplicities of identities generated amidst violence and reiterates that the LTTE did not in any way represent the entirety of the Sri Lankan Tamil population in Sri Lanka or abroad, even though it claimed that following its script was an essential component of Tamil identity. Thiranagama's interviews with Tamils in both Jaffna and Colombo shows how their experiences diverged from some of the main components of the LTTE script, which included resisting state violence and defending a national homeland. How could Tamils follow this script if they experienced violence from the LTTE as well as the state, and had no clear sense of a "homeland" because they had been displaced? Thiranagama also discusses how the very idea of a single home and life was destabilized

[60] Balasingham, *Women Fighters*, in "Women Joined the Armed Struggle."
[61] "I tried to protect my children but still lost them," Interview by Radhika Hettiarachchi et. al., *HERSTORIES,* 2:08-3:20. http://theherstoryarchive.org/videos-mullaitivu/i-tried-to-protect-my-children-but-still-lost-them/.
[62] Thiranagama, *In My Mother's House*, 89.

during the period of violence: "The constant remaking of life--a task ceaselessly embarked upon in Sri Lanka--is as much a sign of violence as it is an act of 'healing.'"[63]

Amidst this violence, many Tamil families rejected the LTTE script for how Tamil ethnicity should be performed and instead performed their ethnic identities according to their own visions for Sri Lankan society. One mother said, "I have nothing against anyone, whether Sinhalese, Tamil or Muslim. I have a lot of faith in all the religions. All the gods are the same to me. I pray that my family and I can live in peace. What else would I want?"[64] Many of these feelings of solidarity with other Sri Lankan ethnic and religious groups emerged from their experience of displacement; thus, paradoxically, conditions of violence brought them together with other communities. For example, one mother said, "Earlier we had very little interaction with Sinhala people, now that has changed. We think it's a good thing."[65] Another said that after being displaced, she now lived with "a few Muslim and Sinhala families," and they all "live well together."[66] Another wished that "someday, [her] children might be able to live as equals in society."[67] In her interviews with survivors, Thiranagama also found a belief that the "transformation of the political structures" was necessary for change in the country. [68]

Therefore, these women diverged from the LTTE script because it did not align with their experiences under the condition of violence created during the civil war. This demonstrates how Tamil women exercised their own agency by strategically adopting or rejecting the script and moving beyond the narrative of women as emblematic of the nation.

Conclusion

Adopting Neloufer de Mel's characterization of the Sri Lankan civil war as a "state of emergence," I argued that this period of violence destabilized ethnic and gender relationships, leading the LTTE and the Tamil women it sought to recruit to renegotiate Tamil women's identities. I applied Lee Ann Fuji's framework of a "script" for the performance of ethnicity to LTTE's doctrine to argue that the LTTE's "script" for how Tamil women should perform their ethnic and gender identities reveals the conceptions of Tamil womanhood that emerged during this period. The LTTE script represents women as symbols of the nation, at times portraying them as victims and

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[63] Thiranagama, *In My Mother's House*, 104.
[64] "What Else Could I Want?" Interview by Radhika Hettiarachchi et. al., *HERSTORIES,* http://theherstoryarchive.org/photo-essays-mullaitivu/what-else-could-i-want/
[65] "There's So Much We Want to Forget," Interview by Radhika Hettiarachchi et. al., *HERSTORIES, http://theherstoryarchive.org/photo-essays-vavuniya/theres-so-much-we-want-to-forget/*
[66]"We Lived Under a Mango Tree," Interview by Radhika Hettiarachchi et. al., *HERSTORIES,* http://theherstoryarchive.org/photo-essays-vavuniya/we-lived-under-a-mango-tree/.
[67] "I hope our children will live as equals," Interview by Radhika Hettiarachchi et. al., *HERSTORIES,* http://theherstoryarchive.org/videos-vavuniya/video-vavuniya-i-hope-our-children-will-live-as-equals/
[68] Thiranagama, *In My Mother's House,* 104.

at times as liberators. It told its supporters to perform their Tamil ethnicity by supporting its mission to defend the Tamil home and family, while it simultaneously told its women that it was completely breaking from oppressive Tamil tradition by fighting for the cause. It appealed to potential supporters and recruits by drawing from their experiences under the immediate condition of violence in which they lived.

For women who avoided the LTTE, and even for some who joined, their experiences before and during the war did not always fit the LTTE's narrative of a transition from "traditional" to "liberated" Tamil womanhood. Tamil women's choice to obey or reject the LTTE script for their self-representation depended in part upon whether their experiences aligned with the LTTE narrative. My analysis therefore suggests that while the ideologies of the LTTE and other Tamil groups draw from the long histories of ethnic relations in Sri Lanka, Tamil communities' relationships to the LTTE during the war were directly shaped by the renegotiation of their identities under the condition of violence that the war created.

This study leaves a number of questions to further explore. In the final section, I was only able to examine a select number of testimonies from Tamil women who rejected the LTTE script and formed their identities outside it. There is much room for a more in-depth study of how women navigated scripts for Tamil womanhood to ultimately avoid LTTE recruitment. In addition, I acknowledge the scholarship that problematizes concept of "agency" that I have used and calls into question the perspective on violence that I take in this project. In a further and more extensive study, I would seek to more fully theorize these terms and examine how the context of the Sri Lankan civil war contributes to our understanding of them.

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