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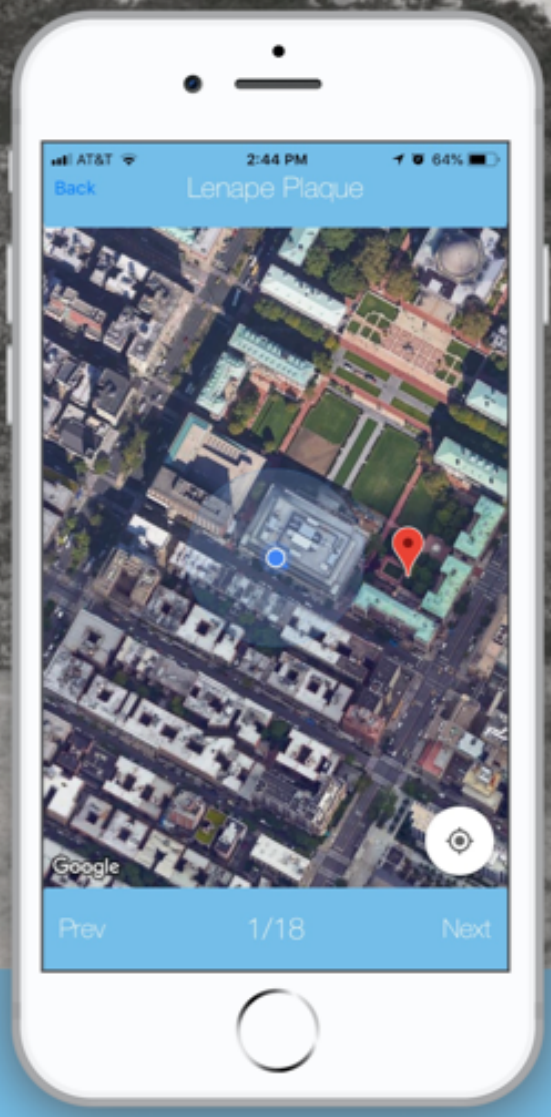

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The Composition of the Fall 2018 Editorial Board

The *Columbia Journal of History*, formerly the *Columbia Undergraduate Journal of History*, is a publication of the Undergraduate History Council at Columbia University and sponsored by the Columbia History Department and Columbia University Libraries. The Journal was founded in 2008 to provide opportunities for students and academics to contribute their research to the field of history. We review student submissions from history departments across the United States and abroad, and then select the most exemplary among them to be published in the Journal. Through our broad and inclusive approach to editorial board creation, community development, and focus on ethical practice, this open access publication provides venues for new academics and subjects to enter the publishing landscape. If you are an advertiser interested in sponsoring the next edition of the Columbia Journal of History, please send us an email at contact@columbiahistoryjournal.com. Cover design by Jordan Glenn.

About the Contributors

Daniel Berardino, *United States Military Academy, West Point, Class of 2019*: specializes in the early Soviet period in Eastern Europe from 1917-1945, with a focus on the Second World War; also majors in Russian Language. After graduation he will serve as a lieutenant in the U.S Army and plans to pursue a PhD in History.

Gabe Levine-Drizin, *Northwestern University, Class of 2018*: specialized in Global History; also graduated with a major in International Studies. He will eventually pursue a postgraduate masters degree in History.

Hongxuan Yang, *New York University, Class of 2018*: specialized in World War II, the Cold War, and modern Chinese history; also majors in Economics. He will be furthering his education by pursuing a J.D. post-grad.

Noe Hinck, *Boston University Class of 2018*: specialized in 19th and 20th century European History; also graduated with a major in International Relations. She is currently pursuing a Ph.M in European Politics at the University of Oxford.

Anthony "TJ" Kalin, *Valparaiso University, Class of 2019*: specializes in American Cultural history and Polish history; also majors in Philosophy. He is the author of a forthcoming monograph on the history of an industrial city in Northern Indiana: Michigan City and the Gilded Age (Charleston: The History Press, 2019). He will work in the public history field post-grad before pursuing a degree in American Studies.

Ngan Ha Dong Bao, *McGill University, Class of 2018*: specialized in World Islamic & Middle East Studies; also majored in Political Science. Their research focuses on nationalism and the formation of the nation-/state, as well as colonial and postcolonial histories, gender in the colonial and "post"-colonial era, language politics, and memory and identity politics. They would like to thank Professor Malek Abisaab for his perspicacious observations not only throughout their research project, but also throughout their undergraduate career.

Acknowledgement from the Editor-in-Chief

On behalf of the Fall 2018 CJH Editorial Board, I am proud to present the Columbia Journal of History, Winter 2018 Edition. After a meticulous, laborious, and impassioned review process, the Executive Committee of the Journal selected six papers for publication—roughly 9% of total submissions. Our staff worked tirelessly with each author over the course of three months to revise their individual manuscripts to the structure, style, and overall expectations of the Journal.

These articles were selected for recognition and publication due to their precision, nuance, and persuasiveness of argument, as well as the grace and elegance of their prose. We hope that the articles we have selected accurately represent the key questions, methods, and techniques of historical inquiry. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the authors of these remarkable articles for providing us with the enriching opportunity to work alongside you throughout the lengthy publication process.

The Columbia Journal of History was founded ten years ago by the Columbia Undergraduate History Council. In its inaugural edition, the 2008 Editorial Board endeavored to describe the role of history itself. I am compelled to acknowledge their conclusions as they are increasingly relevant to the contemporaneous world.

"History, it seems, has fallen out of favor with current intellectual fashions. Students are more interested in 'Theory' and the various iterations of 'post-,' be it modern, structuralist, Freudian, Marxist, or colonial, than in the mundane drudgery of empirical research and concentrated close reading. History's dedication to providing real, meaningful knowledge seems quaint to those who delight in pointing out that sources are misleading and biased, our selection of evidence is necessarily incomplete, and our perspective skewed by dominant discourses and ideologies. These forces, long acknowledged by historians, are used to discredit the project of historical scholarship altogether. History, we are sure, has an important place. While all research is necessarily informed by theory, and inter-disciplinary work and the post-modern turn have made contributions, as a publication we hope to encourage and reward scholarship that is solidly grounded in the empirical core of critical, interpretative historical research."

Today, in an era characterized by the rampant proliferation of sensationalized misinformation, in which the very foundations of empirical research and critical thinking are regularly called into question, universities across the United States are confronted with an influx of students responsively interested in understanding the historical underpinnings of

frequently referenced dogmas through undertaking the history major. Many such students aim to attain the skills necessary to distinguish and interpret such "misleading and biased" sources, and to contextualize the "dominant discourses and ideologies" responsible for perpetuating an environment where these misinformative "forces" can flourish. It is my sincere hope that the Columbia Journal of History may serve as an independent platform to fairly uphold the principles of academic virtue through publishing an amalgamation of articles which represent a spectrum of diverse viewpoints on historical subjects.

Before this edition, the Journal had not published a consecutive issue since its inception a decade ago. I am proud to announce that CJH has revitalized and even expanded, now boasting a staff of over twenty-five student volunteers as well as relationships with the Columbia History Department and University Libraries—the latter two will play more active roles in the publication cycles beginning in February of 2019.

The Fall 2018 Editorial Board of the Columbia Journal of History included fifteen incredible editors—one senior, eight juniors, four sophomores, and two first-years—all of whom were selected from a pool of over forty-five Columbia undergraduate applicants for their excellent quality of writing, attention to detail, departmental standing, unique backgrounds and interests, as well as demonstrated passions for studying the intricacies of historical narratives. I would like to personally thank the fifteen editors who dedicated much of their time during the past semester, and even over their winter breaks, to the development of this edition of the Journal. I would also like to thank the Executive Committee of the Journal who met in-person for over thirty hours this semester to ensure a dutiful and fair review process; to learn more about our fantastic undergraduate editors, I encourage our readers to Meet the Team by perusing the individual autobiographies of our editorial board members located on our website. Thank you for taking the time to read our Journal, and by extension, to support the recognition of exemplary undergraduate scholarship.

To everyone involved in the making of this edition of the Journal, I genuinely wish you all the best in your academic and professional careers.

Sincerely,

Dimitri Vallejo
Editor-in-Chief

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UNMASKING MASKIROVKA

PROTECTIVE COMBAT ACTION AND SOVIET DECEPTION IN BELORUSSIA

Daniel Berardino

United States Military Academy, West Point

Abstract

While much has been written about the Second World War, detailed studies of Soviet operational art are lacking. Two main schools of thought dominate the discourse of the Soviet Red Army's performance during the war—each drawn from different source material and corresponding evaluations of the Red Army's capabilities. This study analyzes the conceptual framework and the Red Army's implementation of the operational concept of Protective Combat Action (PCA) in the 1944 Belorussian Operation. The Soviets understood PCA as the holistic application of deception, active reconnaissance and counterintelligence operations to restrict enemy intelligence operations and achieve the element of surprise. In the summer of 1944, the Red Army's PCA measures achieved unprecedented success. Such successes are evident in the relative ignorance of German leaders to the realities of Soviet plans and the contrasting detailed understanding of Soviet commanders. This paper argues that this disparity of information was the key factor that enabled the surprise attack that effectively destroyed the sole intact German Army Group on the Eastern Front. By exploring the doctrine of PCA, and analyzing its effectiveness on the battlefield, this paper argues that the Red Army was not simply a "steamroller" but a highly competent, modern military force.

Introduction

For many Westerners, the iconic image of World War Two is the American and British cross-channel invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944. This tremendous feat of logistical planning and coordination across all domains of warfare deserves our attention. Yet, exactly sixteen days later, while the Allied Expeditionary Force struggled slowly through the hedgerows of Normandy, a truly colossal undertaking began in the East. Even though D-Day opened a third front in Europe to join the Italian and Eastern Fronts, the vast majority of the coming military clashes would take place in the East, where the German Wehrmacht would ultimately perish. Nearly eight out of ten German soldiers killed during the war died fighting the Soviet Red Army. It was the largest land war in human history and made

possible such unthinkable crimes as the Holocaust and the mass murder of Soviet civilians. Yet, despite its vast importance, the lack of detailed, representative accounts of the war—as well as the bureaucratic barriers surrounding relevant source material—have obscured our understanding of the Eastern Front in general and the Red Army's operational performance in particular.

For the Soviets, the Great Patriotic War began on June 22, 1941 with Germany's Operation Barbarossa, the largest land invasion in history. The plan was simple: three Army Groups (South, Center, and North) would capture Kiev, Moscow, and Leningrad, respectively. The seizure of Ukraine would provide the Reich with food, the destruction of Leningrad would eliminate Russia's cultural center, and the capture of Moscow would deal the fatal blow to the Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracy, which is how the Nazis understood the Soviet Union.[1] After months of preparation, over three million men, thousands of tanks, and tens of thousands of artillery pieces crossed the Soviet border and quickly overwhelmed the unprepared Soviet defenders. Worried about provoking aggression from Germany's Adolf Hitler, Soviet Leader Joseph Stalin had hesitated to send large numbers of troops to the border in the lead-up to Barbarossa. Despite Stalin's reluctance to proactively place troops on the borders, Soviet frontline commanders were repeatedly petitioning the STAVKA (Soviet High Command) to increase the readiness level of the frontier armies. The Soviets' failure to prepare for this invasion proved to be a near-fatal blunder. In the first four months of fighting on the Eastern Front, the Wehrmacht advanced more than 700 kilometers, capturing millions of Soviet soldiers in the process. By mid-October, 1941, just four months after the initial attack, Army Group North was besieging Leningrad, Army Group Center stood just 40 km outside of Moscow, and Army Group South had advanced to Rostov-on-Don, threatening critical oil fields in the Caucasus.

The Red Army performed dismally through the summer of 1941. Orders were often unclear and chaos reigned as the Wehrmacht's speed made accurate intelligence nearly impossible to acquire. Despite these setbacks at the front, the Red Army was miraculously able to re-consolidate, summon reserves, and defend Moscow from repeated German assaults. After the German Army had exhausted itself on the offensive outside the city, Soviet forces under the personal command of Marshal Georgy Zhukov launched a highly successful counteroffensive that drove Army Group Center back from the capital and set the stage for the summer campaign of 1942. Without the resources to mount another general offensive across the entire front on the scale of Barbarossa, Hitler and his generals decided on a southern drive to seize the Caucasus oil fields and, by capturing vital energy supplies,

[1] Hitler believed that the Soviet Union was a Jewish state and Communism a Jewish idea. Thus, when discussing the Soviet Union he often called its ruling elite a Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracy and consequently, toppling them would be an easy task.

destroy the Soviet Union's economy. At first, the summer of 1942 proceeded much like the previous year with Red Army units caught unprepared and fleeing in disarray. However, resistance stiffened as autumn approached and the Soviet 62nd Army under General Vasily Chuikov, inside Stalingrad, successfully defended the west bank of the Volga River. With the German 6th Army bogged down before Stalingrad, the STAVKA planned a grand counteroffensive. Operation Uranus, launched on November 17, 1942 led to the encirclement and eventual surrender of the German 6th Army. This operation, a clear turning point in the war on the Eastern Front, demonstrated the Red Army's new level of professionalism and doctrinal consistency in both the planning and execution phases. Strategically, it put the Germans on the back foot until the Third Battle of Kharkov from February 19 to March 15, 1943, when a skillful German division-size counterattack managed to seal off the Soviet breakthrough on the southern front. This reversal set the stage for the final major German offensive of the eastern war.

The Battle of Kursk, launched on July 5, 1943, represented the definitive end of Germany's dream of an eastern empire. The Germans planned to attack the base of the Kursk salient with two army groups, Center and South, but the Red Army was well-prepared and ground the German offensive to a halt. While the Battle of Kursk was an unmitigated disaster for the Wehrmacht, it was a turning point and confidence builder for the Red Army. Throughout that summer, Soviet forces had dug thousands of kilometers of trenches and devised a brilliant defense scheme that paid dividends. After blunting the German thrust from the north and south, the Soviet Army took the offensive. It first pushed German Army Group Center back behind its starting position and entirely out of Russia. Then, the Red Army launched a series of offensives in the Ukraine, crossing the Dnieper River on September 22, 1943, that almost drove the Wehrmacht entirely out of that republic. Later that winter, on January 27, 1944, Army Group North abandoned the 872-day Siege of Leningrad and retreated westward into the Baltic States. Only Army Group Center stood firm in Belorussia. The fourth year of the Soviet-German War, 1944, would be an important one for the triple alliance of the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. As agreed to at the Tehran Conference of 1943, the Western Allies would invade France in the summer of 1944 and Stalin had promised an all-out offensive in the East. For the STAVKA, the plan was simple: eliminate the last intact German formation still opposing the Red Army and liberate Belorussia.

By the time of the Belorussian Operation in 1944, Soviet operational art, meaning the conception, planning and execution of large-scale, multi-phased military operations, had matured significantly. Having attained the strategic initiative, the Soviet Union had the advantage of being able to choose where and when the next battle would take place.

Although the Germans were anticipating a Soviet offensive, they did not have reliable intelligence as to where it would come from. Up until the Soviet Belorussian Operation, codenamed "Bagration," began on June 22, 1944, German commanders had believed that the anticipated main offensive would take place farther south in the Ukraine and build on the Red Army's success in its winter campaign. Thanks to Soviet operational deception that exploited German intelligence weaknesses, the Wehrmacht failed to detect the Soviet buildup around Belorussia and did not understand the magnitude of the Red Army's plans for the sector until it was too late.

Because of advanced Soviet counterintelligence efforts, the Germans had an incredibly difficult time discerning the purpose of Soviet preparatory moves while the Red Army had ample access to information about German dispositions and movements. This disparity of information demonstrated a crucial tenet of Soviet operational art. In the Belorussian Operation, *Obespechenie Boevykh Deistvii* (Protective Combat Action) combined deception, reconnaissance and counterintelligence to negate German strengths and amplify Soviet local superiority, allowing the Red Army to kill or capture the vast majority of the German Army Group Center.

While the notion of PCA had been doctrine since the start of the war, in the lead-up to the Belorussian Operation, the Soviets successfully applied all aspects of PCA for the first time. Soviet operational art emphasized mobility, initiative, and various deception measures to achieve local superiority and rapid exploitation of enemy weaknesses. Prior to the appointed start date of an operation, the Soviets focused on preparing quickly and concealing troop movements.[2] Soviet commanders concentrated on the preparatory phase of offensive operations in order to provide the maneuver and exploitation phases with the best chance of success. In this context, preparatory operations were critical to Soviet operational thinking; Protective Combat Action ensured surprise and secrecy.[3] Soviet security agencies worked together to ensure the holistic implementation of PCA, allowing successes by each effort to augment the capabilities of the others. By accomplishing PCA objectives collectively, Soviet forces amplified their advantage over the Germans, contributing to the stunning success of the Belorussian Operation.

The Red Army in Historical Debate

Analysis of Soviet operational performance in general and the tactical contributions of individual commanders in particular necessarily engage with two main historical questions

[2] Col Gen. F. Gayvoronskiy, "The Development of Soviet Operational Art," *Voyenno-Istoricheskiy Zhurnal,* No 2, in Russian (Moscow: February, 1978) 38-47 at 42.

[3] David M. Glantz, *The Role of Intelligence in Soviet Military Strategy in World War II* (Novato: Presidio, 1990) 4.

and opposing schools of thought. This case study of Soviet application of PCA during the Belorussian Operation can help answer the question of how the Red Army defeated the Wehrmacht. The older and more established viewpoint in this debate is the so-called German school. According to scholars who support this thesis, blame for German defeat chiefly rests with Hitler's poor decision-making and flawed leadership style. As a result, the German generals and their Western supporters could dismiss Soviet performance as a relative non-factor. The German school maintains that the Red Army was militarily inept and fundamentally flawed and that it only achieved victory through a disregard for human life, inexhaustible resources, and exploitation of geographical factors.[4]

The German school has come to dominate the discourse of the Eastern Front in the West because of its early emergence and political dimensions. After the war, the American Government made concerted efforts to reconstruct the history of the war, especially the Eastern Front that remained mysterious to officials with no first-hand knowledge of that theater. Given the time during which early studies of the war were conducted, these were heavily influenced by Cold War politics. The main goal of these programs was to analyze the Red Army's performance in wartime in order to better anticipate how the Soviet Army would fight in the future.[5] Unfortunately, the dearth of Soviet sources and the relative overabundance of German accounts gave a noticeably pro-German bias to the war study of the U.S. Army's Office of the Chief of Military History. Adding to the English language confusion about events in the East was the massive release of memoirs by key German wartime leaders in the late 1940s and 50s that established the key arguments of the German school. In addition to distancing themselves from Hitler and his policies, such heavyweights as Erich von Manstein and Heinz Guderian portrayed the Red Army as a monolithic enemy without defining details such as troop formations or tactical variation.[6] As such, these early works focus primarily on the first two years of the war and largely attribute the Red Army's eventual triumph in 1944-45 to the increasingly malignant effects of Hitler on German strategy instead of the maturation and effective application of Soviet operational concepts.[7] In turn, this focus on internal German leadership problems has discouraged detailed study

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[4] David M. Glantz, "The Red Army at War, 1941-1945: Sources and Interpretations." In *The Journal of Military History* 62, no. 3 (1998) 595-617 at 597.

[5] Glantz, "The Red Army at War" 597.

[6] Ibid., 602.

[7] Ibid., 603-4. While some of these books like Alan Clark's *Barbarossa* (1965) touched on Soviet operations, they tended to fit with the first wave of German memoirs and documents in their dismissal of Soviet agency. In the 70s and 80s, new works on the Red Army presented a more balanced view. Notably Gerd Neipold's study of the Belorussian Operation, *Battle for White Russia: The Destruction of Army Group Center* (1987), provided a more balanced account of the most complete Soviet operational victory. However, while these works used some Soviet sources, they have not provided a more nuanced view of the Red Army.

of Soviet operational art. While the German school remains dominant today, the Russian school, with its greater focus on Soviet operational performance, offers an opposing view on both major questions.

The chief driver of the Russian school is the newly declassified Soviet military archives.[8] As such, historians who have done major research using archival sources such as Colonel (ret) David M. Glantz, have produced a large body of work that presents a very different view of the Red Army than that which is offered by the German school. While the opening of the archives in recent years has enabled tactical-level studies of Soviet operations, this is not the first time historians have tried to analyze Soviet doctrine. In 1954, Raymond I. Gartoff published a study on Soviet military doctrine and laid the groundwork for future studies on the Red Army.[9] Even though his work was hampered by restricted access to Soviet military documents, his basic observations about the Red Army's way of war served a future generation of historians in their efforts to present a more nuanced and accurate picture of the Red Army.

The Russian school, with its greater access to and utilization of Soviet sources, has traditionally pointed to the Belorussian Operation in its attempts to emphasize the Red Army's outstanding tactical capabilities. Conversely, historians of the German school have not paid as much attention to specific data points and behaviors of the Red Army in 1944, since German strategic failures in the rear have attracted most of their attention. Thus, by utilizing a high volume of modern literature drawn from the Soviet military archives and a wider sampling of Soviet history of the Belorussian Operation, this paper attempts to uncover gaps in understanding that exist between the two schools as it examines both the weakness of German intelligence operations and the skill with which the Red Army exploited those weaknesses. By examining one specific operation to evaluate the effectiveness of Soviet PCA, this paper also provides a more focused analysis of a particular aspect of Soviet late-war operations than is available in other survey-type studies of the war. As will be proven, the Red Army was not an amorphous armed host, but rather a highly technical, proficient and innovative modern army with an effective operational doctrine. No facet of Soviet operational art better demonstrates the Red Army's sophistication than Protective Combat Action.

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[8] Ibid., 605. The two main archives are the Central State Archives of the Soviet Army and the Central Archives of the Combined Armed Forces. These archives are not completely open and access is restricted. However, the increased quantity of documentation enables historians to make more accurate assessments of wartime performance than was previously possible.

[9] Ibid., 612.

The German school, so prevalent in Western discourse about the Eastern Front, paints a monolithic, faceless picture of the Red Army. To the Germans, the hordes of Russians destroying them seemed to be endless and ubiquitous. The majority of accounts attribute this to the massive Soviet manpower reserves. Even so, many German sources remark on the courage and savagery of the average Soviet soldier and the seemingly unnatural survivability of the legendary T-34 tank, but in the end they maintain that weight of numbers was the decisive factor. While technology and numbers certainly contributed to Soviet operational success, it was in the unseen, subtle application of PCA that the Red Army truly made the war-winning difference and in which we can find a practical explanation for how the Red Army was able to surprise the Wehrmacht repeatedly in the final third of the war. Moreover, unlike much of Soviet late-war technology, PCA was not simply a product of exposure to German equipment and tactics. Instead, it was a fundamental component of the pre-war doctrine of deep battle, discredited with the death of Marshal Mikhail Tukhachevsky in 1937 but revived in the early years of war. As the Red Army relearned its forgotten doctrines and settled into an operational rhythm, PCA occupied an increasingly larger role in the planning process. Thus, in order to understand the true sophistication of the Red Army, especially toward the end of the war, a full understanding of PCA's components: *maskirovka, razvedka* and counterintelligence operations, will help to illuminate how the Soviets conceptualized and solved operational problems.

The Doctrinal Components of Protective Combat Action

Maskirovka, or deception, formed the backbone of PCA. Throughout the latter part of the war, the Soviet Union consistently possessed local superiority of forces, allowing the Red Army to achieve breakthroughs in key sectors of the front. This was possible at the front (Soviet equivalent of the German army group) level and below due to secrecy of force deployment, demonstrated actions to deceive the enemy, simulations to confuse the enemy, and disinformation, including the use of false orders and rumors.[10] *Maskirovka* at the operational level emphasized secrecy and propagation of false or misleading information. Such actions at a minimum helped to confuse enemy intelligence and, in the most successful cases, blinded the enemy to key maneuvers.[11] Enemy intelligence and reconnaissance capabilities played a key role in determining the effectiveness of operational *maskirovka*. When the German intelligence-gathering infrastructure was effective, deception operations

[10] David M. Glantz, *Soviet Military Deception in the Second World War,* (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1989) 570.

[11] Ibid., 33.

proved harder to accomplish. In the second period of the war,[12] from 1942-43, *maskirovka* succeeded to varying degrees due to imperfect implementation and a still-formidable German military intelligence apparatus. By 1944 the situation had changed. Improved STAVKA capacity, better Soviet intelligence and weak German intelligence enabled *maskirovka* to achieve all of its objectives in the Belorussian Operation.[13] Expanding capabilities drove the increasing effectiveness of *maskirovka* as a lack of resources and time prevented its full implementation in earlier campaigns. As the STAVKA increased its capabilities, strategic deception came to augment operational *maskirovka,* thus allowing the STAVKA to disguise the location of main strategic operations. These developments made possible *maskirovka's* integral role in the Belorussian Operation.

Razvedka, or intelligence gathering and reconnaissance, formed the second pillar of PCA. The Soviet concept of *razvedka* included both traditional intelligence work as well as reconnaissance, often in force, to produce hard information. Effective *razvedka* operations consisted of ground reconnaissance, air reconnaissance, signals intelligence and the forward deployment of agents into enemy rear areas.[14] While providing the commander with relevant information related to the enemy, *razvedka* could also serve a deceptive role. Soviet commanders created the appearance of local emphasis in non-essential areas of the front and influenced enemy behavior by probing the enemy and conspicuously gathering intelligence on the ground. By conducting reconnaissance everywhere, the Soviets could create the illusion that every sector was equally important. After preliminary *razvedka,* reconnaissance in force allowed Soviet commanders to verify intelligence and seize prisoners for interrogation.[15] *Razvedka* contributed to PCA by informing commanders of the enemy position and assisting in *maskirovka* through diversionary reconnaissance.

The third pillar of PCA, rear-area security, enabled the successful implementation of *maskirovka* and *razvedka* by ensuring Soviet intelligence superiority. The Soviet Union developed strong counterintelligence capabilities through 25 years of internal conspiratorial spy hunting.[16] Drawing on this experience, by the time of the Belorussian operation, two agencies, the NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) and GUKR SMERSH

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[12] There are three generally accepted periods of WW2 in the East: the first period, 1941-Summer 1942; the second period, Fall 1942-Winter 1943; and the third period, 1944-1945.

[13] Ibid., 563.

[14] Glantz, *The Role of Intelligence in Soviet Military Strategy in World War II,* 156-157.

[15] Ibid., 162.

[16] Robert W. Stephan, *Stalin's Secret War: Soviet Counterintelligence Against the Nazis, 1941-1945,* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 46. From the foundation of the USSR, counterintelligence and political policing were hallmarks of Soviet State power. Executing the purges and collectivization required the formation of tremendous state capacity. This capacity was use to great effect during the war.

(Army Directorate of Counterintelligence), handled rear-area security for the Red Army. Both agencies fulfilled different roles in the operational Red Army: The NKVD monitored rear areas for enemy activity while SMERSH operated on the front line and beyond in an active counterintelligence role. Each Soviet front generally had two divisions of NKVD security troops to set up checkpoints and monitor the rear. Prior to the creation of SMERSH in 1943, the NKVD handled counterintelligence in the Red Army. In an effort to streamline counterintelligence operations, in 1943, SMERSH officers took control of these NKVD units and coordinated rear-security efforts with the front commander.[17] As part of the preparatory phase of any operation, NKVD troops routinely cordoned off the operational area to restrict enemy activity. In addition to the physical security, commanders mitigated security threats by using fewer planners and producing less written material.[18] The NKVD, along with political officers, also helped to foster a climate of suspicion among frontline troops and promoted political loyalty in the hopes that soldiers would find and report suspicious activity in the ranks.[19] While these policies often backfired and led to the repression of innocent Red Army men, they did create such a paranoid culture that no German agent could operate confidently in the Soviet ranks. Draconian security measures ensured that all personnel behind Soviet lines belonged there and maintained operational secrecy at all levels.

If the NKVD acted as a shield in the Soviet counterintelligence effort, SMERSH, military counterintelligence, was the sword. After Operation Barbarossa, all Soviet counterintelligence functions were centralized under the NKVD. This was done to streamline the administration in the face of rapid withdrawals and the thoroughly defensive nature of counterintelligence at the time. With the tide of the war changing and the Red Army taking the offensive, the People's Commissariat for Defense reorganized Soviet intelligence in mid-1943 by dividing counterintelligence between the NKGB (People's Commissariat for State Security) for foreign intelligence and counterintelligence within the Soviet Union, while the new organ, SMERSH, focused on military counterintelligence.[20] The NKVD, meanwhile, kept control over internal security, prison and labor camp administration. The purpose of SMERSH was twofold: To prevent the penetration of Red Army units by enemy agents and to capture or kill German spies near the front. Unlike the

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[17] Ibid., 65-66. Checkpoints verified soldier's documents and cleared individuals for travel near the front. Soldier's carried several forms of identification to verify their identity.

[18] Glantz, *Soviet Military Deception in the Second World War,* 566, 568-569. "Planning security improved as NKVD units implemented extensive anti-agent activity in 25 kilometer sectors to the rear of the front and routinely cleared civilian population from the region".

[19] Gayvorinskiy, "The Development of Soviet Operational Art", 43. The author discusses "party-political work," a Soviet euphemism for terror tactics and establishment of informant networks.

[20] Vadim J. Birstein, *Smersh: Stalin's Secret Weapon.* (London: Biteback Publishing, 2011) 179-182.

NKVD, SMERSH units were subordinate to the front commanders.[21] Embedding SMERSH units with combat commands allowed them greater access to officers and proximity to frontline units allowed agents to conduct their counter-infiltration mission. To monitor the vast numbers of troops on the front, SMERSH officers recruited an estimated 13 million military and civilian informants during the war.[22] Informant networks allowed SMERSH to saturate the Red Army and maintain optimum security. SMERSH's tactics, in combination with NKVD security, made it incredibly difficult for German agents to avoid capture. As a result, of the 44,000 German agents deployed in Soviet territory during the war, Soviet counterintelligence rendered 39,500 ineffective.[23] Given the high rate of capture or death, the German spies who survived the war did so without contributing meaningful intelligence to their handlers.

The Course of the Operation

By the time of the summer offensive of 1944, the Soviet military machine was operating at peak efficiency and The STAVKA was implementing all aspects of PCA with unprecedented effectiveness. Prior to the start of the Belorussian Operation in June, the Soviets had maneuvered millions of men, thousands of tanks and planes, and vital engineering assets into the operational area largely undetected. This incredible feat was enabled by efficient implementation of *maskirovka* at both the strategic and operational levels. Broadly, Soviet strategic *maskirovka* influenced German perceptions of summer offensive priorities and concealed true Soviet plans while at the operational level, *maskirovka* hid specific units and their maneuvers to advantage Soviet troops on the battlefield. While the Soviets greatly improved their capabilities throughout the war, German intelligence failures amplified the Soviet advantage in 1944. By this point in the war, Hitler had compartmentalized German intelligence, preventing agencies from working together to provide a coherent picture of Soviet military strategy. German intelligence had become competitive, not truth seeking, incentivizing German agents to tell the Fuhrer what he wanted to hear.[24] While this weakness made the German situation more difficult, the Soviets still had to execute PCA in order to take advantage of the German deterioration and dominate the information battlefield, securing operational surprise. Of the opportunity

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[21] "Regulations on the Main Counterintelligence Directorate of the Defense Commisariat ('Smersh') and its organs," approved by Stalin on April 21, 1943. Document No. 151 in Kokurin and Petrov, *Lubyanka,* 623-6.

[22] Stephan, *Stalin's Secret War: Soviet Counterintelligence Against the Nazis, 1941-1945*, 61-63. While only one SMERSH officer was assigned to a battalion, he would recruit informants and resident agents who were required to recruit 6-8 additional informants.

[23] Ibid., 50, 57-58.

[24] David Jablonsky, "The Paradox of Duality: Adolf Hitler and the Concept of Military Surprise," In *Leaders and Intelligence,* edited by Michael I. Handel, (London: Frank Cass, 1989) 55-118 at 72.

provided by German intelligence weaknesses and the Soviet operations that sought to exploit them, Soviet competence proved comparatively more important.

All Soviet preparations aimed at one goal. Stalin himself put it bluntly in his May 1 written order of the day: "The objective now is to liberate all our territory from the Fascist invaders and to restore the State frontiers of the Soviet Union in their entirety, from the Black Sea to the Barents Sea."[25] To this end, the STAVKA reorganized Soviet forces opposite Army Group Center by reshuffling commanders and areas of operation, so that by the summer offensive there were eight Soviet fronts north of the Pripyat Marshes, a large and impassable swamp that roughly divides Belorussia and Ukraine.[26] Soviet forces numbering roughly one million men in 77 divisions faced 850,000 Germans in 42 divisions. To defeat the significant German forces, the Soviets set out to create a deep encirclement of Minsk. In the north, I. Kh. Bagramian (1st Baltic Front) and I. D. Cherniakhovsky (3rd Belorussian Front) planned to encircle the Germans at Vitebsk. Simultaneously, in the south, Rokossovsky (1st Belorussian Front) would encircle Bobruisk and eventually meet up with the northern elements to capture Minsk.[27] The STAVKA set the date for Bagration to be June 22. Stalin timed the offensive in accordance with his promise to the Western Allies that the summer offensive would support Allied landings in France.[28]

During the planning phase of the Belorussian Operation, the Soviets, in cooperation with the British in Operation Bodyguard, began *maskirovka* efforts by convincing the Germans that a combined Anglo-Soviet invasion of Scandinavia was imminent.[29] The Germans fell for the deception plan as Generals L. A. Govorov (Leningrad Front) and K. A. Meretskov (Karelian Front) launched a diversionary attack in the Vyborg region near Leningrad on June 10, 1944. This offensive drove Finland from the war and diverted German attention from preparations in Belorussia. The combination of Soviet false information and actual, front-level offensives constituted a larger Soviet strategic deception effort designed to coax the Germans into believing the main Soviet attacks would come from the north and south.[30] Following the attack in the Vyborg sector, the Soviets fed the Germans more false information about troop build ups in Ukraine. Together, These efforts effectually convinced German planners that the Leningrad attack was to be a prelude for the main Soviet offensive

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[25] Joseph Stalin quoted in Roberts, "Triumph and Tragedy: Stalin's Year of Victories," 199.

[26] Glantz, *When Titans Clashed,* 196.

[27] Ibid., 198-199.

[28] Roberts, "Triumph and Tragedy: Stalin's Year of Victories," 200.

[29] Ibid.

[30] David Glantz, *When Titans Clashed* (Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1995) 202-203.

in the south. According to the chief of German intelligence in the East, Reinhard Gehlen, the Germans knew Zhukov's plan for a general offensive in the central sector.[31] Even though they knew something was coming in Belorussia, the Abwehr insisted, and the Wehrmacht believed that, as in previous operations, the Soviets would strike from the southwest.[32] Even as the Germans noticed activity in Belorussia, they believed that the Soviet buildup was merely cover for the real attack from the south.[33] The Germans, acting on their false intelligence, sent their reserves to Ukraine and restricted shipments of men and materiel to Army Group Center near Belorussia.

Soviet programs of strategic *maskirovka* proved so effective in this period in large part due to their excellent counterintelligence campaign. Operational and strategic deception measures rely on a pliant enemy to take the bait. The German military intelligence service, the Abwehr, as has been previously discussed, struggled to create an accurate picture of Soviet positions. The efforts of SMERSH and the NKVD to restrict German intelligence gathering in the lead-up to the Belorussian Operation enabled *maskirovka* to succeed to the extent that it did.[34] Soviet counterintelligence performed three crucial activities to mitigate the Abwehr's operations: agent apprehension, radio games (a type of counterintelligence where captured agents report false information back to their handlers), and rear-security measures. To address the threat posed by the German agents sent across the border in 1944,[35] SMERSH agents began to analyze the dress, speech, and documents of soldiers and civilians since they had intelligence that the Germans were attempting to impersonate Soviet officers.[36] This approach proved highly successful, and during Operation Bagration, counterintelligence caught German agents around Vitebsk, Orsha, Mogliev and Minsk. SMERSH turned many of them and used them as part of 183 total radio games designed to convince the Germans that the attack would fall farther south.[37] Radio games were used to identify and apprehend enemy agents operating behind Soviet lines, many of which later

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[31] Reinhard Gehlen, *The Service* translated by David Irving, (Canada: Nelson, Foster and Scott Ltd., 1972) 95-96.

[32] Col. Gen. A. Burdeynyy, "The Sword of 'Bagration'" in *Military Herald* No. 6, (1974) 10-17 at 12.

[33] Glantz, *Soviet Military Deception in the Second World War,* 369-370.

[34] Stephan, *Stalin's Secret War: Soviet Counterintelligence Against the Nazis, 1941-1945*, 148.

[35] Combined British, Canadian, and U.S. Staff, "German Operational Intelligence," 196-197. Agent training generally took 3-6 weeks and was divided into three types: FAK I-training to identify allied units and conduct usual military espionage. FAK-2 trained saboteurs and physically fit candidates. FAK-3 produced all around better spies.

[36] Stephan, *Stalin's Secret War: Soviet Counterintelligence Against the Nazis, 1941-1945*, 67-71.

[37] Ibid., 100, 107. Radio games involved the capture of an enemy agent and using that agent to send false reports back to their handlers.

went on to serve in other Soviet radio games.[38] Even Gehlen himself admitted to Hitler "that Russian security was so good that we had never yet managed to predict the actual date and hour of an attack."[39] In contrast to the under-informed Germans, Soviet planners were able to obtain an accurate picture of the strength and disposition of German units in Army Group Center. The Soviets operated 61 radio stations in German-occupied Belorussia, enabling incredible coordination between partisan groups, the small detachments of local Soviet resistance fighters who carried out reconnaissance and sabotage behind German lines. Additionally, ground reconnaissance verified information received from signals intelligence and identified new German defenses.[40] Soviet front commanders, like First Belorussian Front commander Konstantin Rokossovsky, took it upon themselves to conduct *razvedka* in their own areas of operations. In the First Belorussian Front's sector around Bobruisk, intelligence work included air reconnaissance and some 400 trench raids that captured more than 80 prisoners and also many important German documents, which provided intelligence and intensified counterintelligence operations and radio games.[41] These actions all served to intensify the feedback loop between Soviet *razvedka* and *maskirovka*; as the Soviets increased their own situational awareness, their ability to manipulate the Germans also improved.

The STAVKA utilized various methods in the weeks leading up to the start of the operation to achieve a favorable correlation of forces and achieve operational surprise against the local forces of Army Group Center. Zhukov prescribed that the troops would move only at night, remain dispersed and camouflaged, and observe radio silence along with other measures.[42] All these measures aimed to blind the Germans to the Soviets' own troop movements. As a result of these efforts, the Germans had no access to strategic or detailed operational plans or information.[43] The only reliable German sources of information in Belorussia were observations from frontline units: reconnaissance and fighting patrols, observation posts, and artillery surveying posts.[44] From these sources, German Army Group

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[38] Birstein, *Smersh: Stalin's Secret Weapon,* 223-225. When a plane bound for the Kalmyk lands was shot down, Captain Eberhard von Scheller was captured and volunteered to work for Smersh. He conducted a radio game until August, 1944 resulting in the capture of 21 saboteurs.

[39] Gehlen, *The Service,* 97.

[40] Glantz, *The Role of Intelligence in Soviet Military Strategy in World War II,* 156-157 and 160-162.

[41] Konstantin Rokossovsky, *A Soldier's Duty*, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1985) 237.

[42] "Directive of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command Concerning Concealment," 29 May, 1944, from TsAMO SSSR, fund 48-80, inventory 1795, file 3, sheets 3-5. Original.

[43] Stephan, *Stalin's Secret War: Soviet Counterintelligence Against the Nazis, 1941-1945*, 84-85.

[44] Combined British, Canadian, and U.S. Staff, "German Operational Intelligence," April, 1946, in *German Military Intelligence 1939-1945,* edited by Military Intelligence Division, U.S. War Department, (Frederick, Maryland: University Publications of America, 1984) 206.

Center had an accurate picture of Soviet frontline positions, but thanks to Zhukov's measures, the Germans missed the deployment of three combined-arms armies, a tank army, and several mobile corps. Notably, the Germans believed that two of the Soviet shock formations, 5th Guards and 2nd Tank Armies, were opposite Army Group South Ukraine.[45] Because the Germans did not know the whereabouts of key Soviet formations, their sudden appearance on the battlefield caught the Germans off guard.[46] The Red Army did everything possible to hide its own units while at the same time taking active measures to confuse the Germans through reconnaissance in force.

Key to Soviet *razvedka* operations in the preparatory phase were partisans operating in the German rear in Belorussia. By 1944, Soviet partisans numbered some 140,000 operating in 200 detachments. From June 21-22 partisan units acted as forward observers for Soviet aerial and artillery bombardment, greatly improving the accuracy of the strikes.[47] In the *maskirovka* plan for Operation Bagration, Zhukov explicitly outlined requirements for commanders conducting reconnaissance. He emphasized secrecy and ambiguity, preventing tank soldiers from appearing in special uniforms, among other security measures.[48] From June 20-23, reconnaissance efforts focused on unimportant areas and avoided the critical sectors of the front.[49] Throughout the region of the Belorussian Operation, the Red Army conducted reconnaissance in force broadly over 500 km to confuse the enemy as to the main axis of advance.[50] By spreading reconnaissance efforts along the entire front and thereby protecting troops from detection, the Red Army was able to maintain operational secrecy and augment *maskirovka* efforts.

On the eve of battle, the Germans were objectively unprepared to defend Belorussia even though their strategic reserve forces would have been sufficient to prevent the ensuing debacle.[51] Thus, Army Group Center's total unpreparedness testified to Soviet *maskirovka*

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[45] Glantz, *When Titans Clashed,* 203.

[46] Col. P. Boldyrev, "The Bobruisk Operation," In *Krasnaya Zvezda,* 28 September 1944, In Military Review (March, 1945) 105-108 at 108: "The enemy did not know in what strength, when, and in what direction the blow would be inflicted."

[47] Geoffrey Roberts. "Triumph and Tragedy: Stalin's Year of Victories." In *Stalin's Wars: From World War to Cold War, 1939-1953* (Providence: Yale University Press, 2006) 192-227 at 200.

[48] "Directive of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command Concerning Concealment." "Do not conduct commander's reconnaissance in large groups simultaneously. To conceal the true sectors of action organized the work of commander's reconnaissance groups on a broad front, including the passive sectors. In necessary cases, command personnel on commander's reconnaissance are authorized to wear the uniforms and gear of privates. Tank soldiers are categorically forbidden to appear on commander's reconnaissance in their special uniforms…"

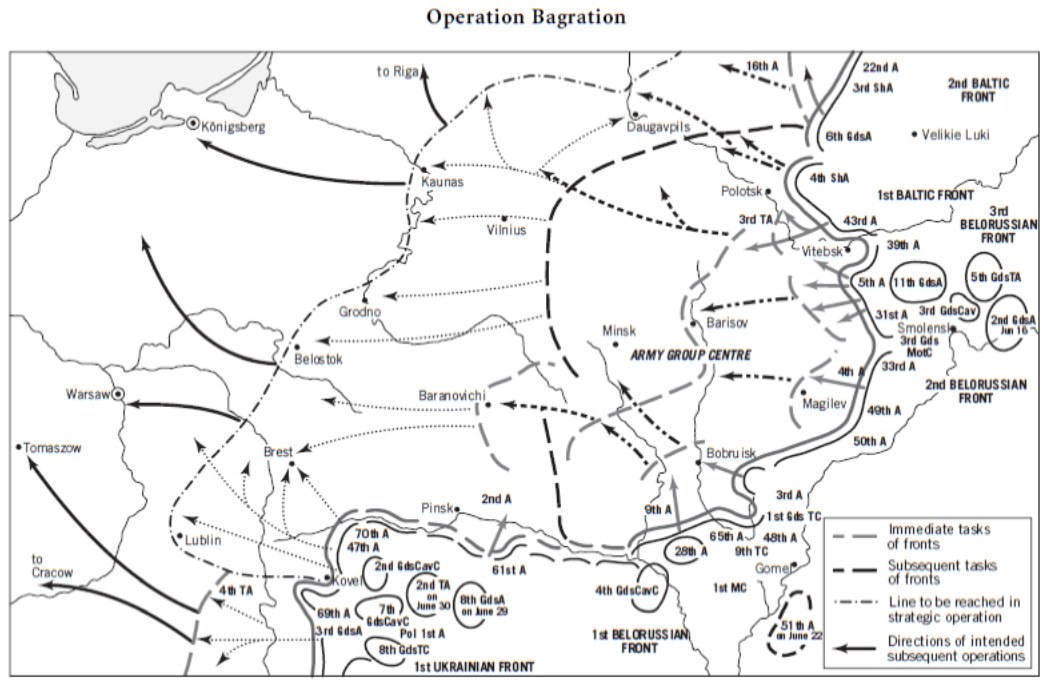
[49] Glantz, *Soviet Military Deception in the Second World War,* 367.

[50] Lt Col. A. Izomsimov, "On the 35th Anniversary of the Belorussian Operation," *Voyenno-Istoricheskiy Zhurnal,* No 6, in Russian, (Moscow, 1979) 45-47 at 47.

[51] Glantz, *The Role of Intelligence in Soviet Military Strategy in World War II,* 213-214.

success, particularly at the strategic level. Operationally, Gehlen anticipated the sectors of attack against Army Group Center when he stated on June 13 that "particular attention should be paid to the areas southeast and east of Bobruisk, on both sides of Chausy, along the highway northeast of Orsha, and on both sides of Vitebsk."[52] While accurate, these warnings were too late due to the lack of strong defensive fortifications and the mobile counterattack forces necessary to slow Soviet armored thrusts.[53] On June 22, twenty-four out of thirty German motorized divisions were south of the Pripyat River in Ukraine, more than 600 km away from the southern end of the Soviet offensive. The Germans had no mobile reserve in the theater to defend Belorussia.[54]

With the pieces set and PCA effectively executed, the new and improved Red Army waited for the order to strike. Soviet attacks on June 22 swiftly broke through the shocked defenders and made rapid progress. Following the artillery barrage on the night of June 21-22, Soviet reconnaissance troops in the north occupied the sparsely defended German positions. The



Germans, caught totally by surprise, could only offer resistance with Panzerfausts and other handheld anti-tank systems, their own tanks nowhere to be found. More often than not, Soviet commanders simply bypassed German positions, leaving them completely cut-off.[55] By midday on June 25, Soviet forces linked up behind Vitebsk, encircling the German LIII Army Corps.[56] Even though German intelligence had anticipated these exact sectors of attack, the German commanders could not do anything to stop it because their panzer formations were simply too far away to respond due to the success of strategic PCA. When the German front line collapsed after a few days of the Soviet offensive, the bulk of German armor was too far south to react to events in Belorussia.[57] Soviet preparations and

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[52] Gehlen, *The Service,* 96-97.

[53] Glantz, *When Titans Clashed,* 204.

[54] Izomsimov, "On the 35th Anniversary of the Belorussian Operation," 46.

[55] Glantz, *When Titans Clashed,* 204-205.

[56] Ibid., 205.

[57] Gehlen, *The Service,* 97.

operational discipline enabled such a strike with efficiency never before seen in multiple axes of attack.

In the southern sector of the attack, on June 24, Rokossovsky's 1st Belorussian Front broke through towards Bobruisk–and quickly overwhelmed the German 9th Army, which consisted of the 12th Infantry and 1st Panzer Divisions behind 100-110 km of defensive lines.[58] Such a high degree of defensive preparations had become a familiar German tactic by 1944. Hitler had designated Bobruisk a *festung*—"fortress town"—meaning that German troops were expected to fight to the death and as a result could not retreat until it was too late for them to escape. Soviet PCA enabled the total isolation of 9th Army, a unit that with adequate support, proved formidable. However, without warning or appropriate flank protection, Soviet forces encircled 9th Army in the city by June 27. Soviet General Issa Pliev's Cavalry Mechanized Group cut off retreat to the West as Rokossovsky's forces took up defensive positions outside the city. Scraping what armored forces were available to 9th Army, a counterattack by the 41st Panzer Corps failed to seal off the breach in the German defenses.[59] While German forces had been defeated and encircled prior to the Belorussian Operation, the total unpreparedness of German troops in the southern sector was new. Soviet PCA prior to the battle ensured that the attack was unexpected and German mechanized forces were too few to respond effectively.

Having totally seized the initiative and beaten-off German counterattacks, the Red Army began systematically destroying the Germans in Bobruisk. The Red Army took advantage of its air superiority to strafe the exposed German units caught without air cover. After days of artillery and air attack, on the night of June 28-29, the commandant of Bobruisk launched a doomed breakout along the Berezina River. Waves of drunk German officers and NCOs charged the Soviet lines, but Soviet artillery decimated them. The survivors retreated into the city and surrendered later.[60] Thus, the once-proud Wehrmacht perished ignominiously in the fields of Belarus, a testament to the repeated failures of German intelligence exploited and exacerbated by the stunning success of Soviet PCA. On top of the deception coup, Soviet forces also displayed their operational prowess in the employment of cavalry mechanized groups in concert with tank armies.[61] The Belorussian Operation proved that by 1944 the strategic initiative belonged to the Red Army at all levels

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[58] Boldyrev, "The Bobruisk Operation," 105.

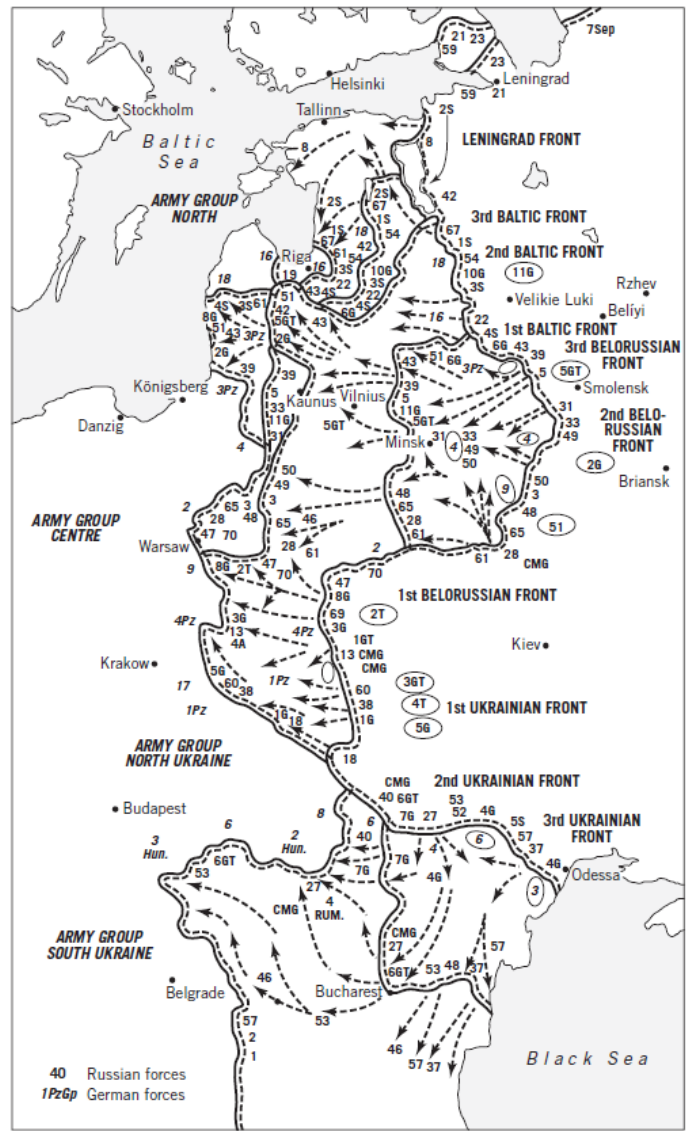
[59] Ibid., 105-106.

[60] Boldyrev, "The Bobruisk Operation," 105-108.

[61] Malinovskiy and Losik, "Soviet Military Art in the Great Patriotic War," 19-20. The lesson of the Belorussian and Vistula-Oder operations was the ability to break through enemy echeloned defenses and pursuing fleeing units and routing approaching reserves with the armored troops. KMG (cavalry mechanized group) designed to break through, breach was exploited by 5th Guards Tank Army.

of war. Without an accurate picture of the front or Soviet capabilities, German leaders continually fought reactively during their long retreat to Berlin. The Belorussian Operation succeeded strategically and operationally, proving definitively that PCA and operational maneuver combined were unstoppable.

Conclusions



The defeat of the German Army Group Center had disastrous implications for the German war effort. After two months of fighting, Army Group Center's active personnel count fell from 880,000 to 445,000 men, despite continuous reinforcement of that front.[62] The Belorussian Operation blew the Eastern Front as a whole wide open. A rolling barrage of operational offensives followed Bagration and threatened to collapse German resistance everywhere. Building on Bagration's success, the Lvov-Sandomierz offensive drove a wedge between Army Group Center and Army Group North Ukraine and a southern offensive broke into Romania and threatened Hungary. Because of these successes, Army Group North found itself encircled in Courland where it would remain under siege for the remainder of the war. For the Soviets, victory in the Belorussian Operation proved the effectiveness of Protective Combat Action. Successful security operations reinforced the emphasis Soviet operational art placed on vigilance in the face of enemy aggression.[63] Soviet planners' focus on PCA and the decisive outcome it produced had far-reaching impacts for future Soviet operational developments, both in the war and beyond such as the increasing activity of SMERSH in POW repatriation and "filtering" after the war and the heavy emphasis placed on *maskirovka* in the post-war nuclear era .

Often scholars of the dominant German school portray Soviet victories in the latter part of the war as inevitable and a product of the Soviet steamroller's inexhaustible resources. However, closer study of the conduct of Soviet operations within the limitations

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[62] Glantz, *When Titans Clashed,* 214-215.

[63] "The Failure of Fascist Aggression Against the USSR (On the 40th Anniversary of the Beginning of the Great Patriotic War)," *Voyenno-Istoricheskiy Zhurnal,* in Russian No 6, Jun 81, signed to press 22 May 81, 3-15 at 14.

of its economy, political considerations, and human capital reveals the difficult nature of Soviet victory. The Red Army won many battles in 1944, triggering the victory salute in Moscow, but they came at a heavy price, with over 3.4 million dead, wounded or missing soldiers in the second half of 1944.[64] This heavy price was justified through a combination of political manipulation through propaganda and the genuine rage of the Soviet people towards the Fascist invaders. As Gehlen put it, "Stalin had mobilized the energy of the Russian people by appealing to their patriotic instincts and by encouraging an imitation Soviet nationalism."[65] Stalin combined the anger of the Russian people with more realistic operational goals and increased delegation to subordinates.[66] By delegating responsibility to low-level commanders, the Red Army was able to realize its complex PCA schemes in Belorussia and the remainder of the war. Each individual agent who apprehended a spy, each commander who observed concealment and each partisan who observed a German position contributed to the victory.

By looking at the complexities of the Soviet operational strategy in the Red Army's self-described magnum opus, students and scholars of military history can effectively reevaluate their understanding of how the Soviet Union achieved such spectacular results and contributed to the end of World War II. While highly focused, this study is by no means the only new work analyzing the Red Army's operational performance using the latest crop of documentary evidence. Other projects, notably David Glantz's recent work consulted in this study, has told the grand story of the war or discussed operational art in general. By focusing solely on PCA and its impact on the Belorussian Operation in particular, however, this paper provides clarity to the operational story, illustrating the unique primacy of PCA in Soviet planning and military success. Future works can build on the ideas laid out in this study by applying a similar methodology to other campaigns and operations. By focusing on particular aspects of key battles, the academic community can grow our collective base of knowledge and begin to establish a picture of what Soviet military doctrine really looked like.

Focusing on the Belorussian Operation, which remains the best example of Soviet operational art in history, allows military historians to determine what Soviet concepts such as PCA and deep battle look like in practice, as described by their practitioners. The application of PCA in particular at all levels of war and the effective exploitation of relative advantages proved essential to the achievement of the operation's ambitious goals. While

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[64] Roberts, "Triumph and Tragedy: Stalin's Year of Victories," 199. For casualty figures by quarter, see Colonel-General G. F. Krivosheev, *Soviet Casualties and Combat Losses in the Twentieth Century.* (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 1997) 85-97.

[65] Gehlen, *The Service,* 103.

[66] Roberts, "Triumph and Tragedy: Stalin's Year of Victories," 202-203.

the Soviets applied *maskirovka* in traditional ways, the effectiveness of deception was reinforced by absolute intelligence superiority. Throughout the preparatory phase of Bagration, Soviet counterintelligence guaranteed operational security and neutralized enemy agents. With the enemy blinded, Soviet intelligence acted in both a deceptive and informative capacity. Soviet troops achieved such stunning success only through a holistic application of PCA and vigorous counterintelligence work. Soviet operations as a whole in the Belorussian Operation helped the Red Army to win decisively and shorten the war. While victory in 1944 was extremely likely, it was not guaranteed. Highly effective Soviet operational art provided the decisive edge.

THE FAILURE OF THE POPULAR FRONT

CONTRADICTORY APPROACH TO SAVING THE REPUBLIC

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Abstract

The Popular Front electoral coalition that came to power in 1936 was composed of contradictory demands, feuding constituents, political rivalries, and parties that abandoned their theoretical grounding. By taking the Socialist experience as the subject, this paper will focus on the doomed decisions, theoretical contradictions, and faulty emotional logic that precipitated the collapse of the Second Spanish Republic. More specifically, in studying the figure of the Socialist leader Francisco Largo Caballero, this paper will analyze the consequences of the Popular Front, reassert the importance of this era for an understanding of contemporary politics, and posit that the Front was due to fail from the beginning.

Introduction

On a wintry Monday in January 1936, a crowd of workers huddled together as Francisco Largo Caballero stood upon the pulpit. The atmosphere in Linares, a city in the province of Jaén, was as tense as the moment demanded: the crowd hung on to every last word of their fiery Socialist leader. In this south central Spanish city, the "Spanish Lenin" started his speech as he always did, by greeting the workers with a touch of empathy. The workers, he told them, were persecuted by a capitalist class based on nothing more than the defense of their ideas. In the beginning, he painted a hopeful picture: a message of light in a Spain on the brink of bloodshed. Hope in the masses, he bellowed, that same proletariat that the bourgeoisie denounced as "ignorant" and "rash," could provide salvation.

To his weary listeners, Largo Caballero preached coalition. He praised his audience for their sharp political instincts, and urged them to endorse the relationship between his Socialists and the newly formed Popular Front, an electoral coalition of the center, left, and far-left cobbled together under the pretense of saving Spain from fascism. But he also added a caveat: "the conquest of power could never occur through bourgeois democracy."

The shrewd historian understands the paradox Largo Caballero injected and imagines the shuffling feet and anxious whispers of the workers, newly confused amidst a contradictory demand. To support the coalition or denounce it as a trick of the bourgeoisie? Their concerns must have been quickly assuaged as Largo Caballero continued to cheers like "long live Karl Marx" and "Death to Fascism!" After decrying the Popular Front as "bourgeois," he returned to his original intention: imploring workers to go to the ballot box and support the coalition. To this, the crowd erupted into applause, an ecstasy unexpected in a Spain where governmental inaction seemed the norm. Largo Caballero could not continue until he had told an audience member, drunk off the frenzy of the moment, to please quiet down, as he was not on the list of speakers. It is possible that this onlooker understood what the orator did not: the speech did not make sense! Six months later, as Spain descended into civil war and the Popular Front coalition collapsed, perhaps this figure in the crowd was the canary in the coal mine.[1]

An Unsettled Debate

While the Spanish Civil War's importance to both the lead-up to World War II and contemporary political trends is often understated in popular discourse, there has been no shortage of scholarship on this multi-faceted conflict. Seen by many as the opening salvo in WWII's fight among fascism, democracy and communism, the coalition fighting for that democracy has been the subject of praise, criticism, and worship. This coalition, known as the "Popular Front," consisted of center-left to center-right Republicans led by Manuel Azaña, a divided Socialist party (*Partido Socialista Obrero Español,* or PSOE), a Comintern-controlled Communist Party (*Partido Comunista Español*, or PCE), various revolutionary leftist organizations (like the POUM), and even the anarchist labor union, the CNT (*Confederación Nacional del Trabajo)*.

Scholars have explained the Popular Front's failure in several ways. For some, the story is one of personal rivalry, with the Socialist division between Francisco Largo Caballero and Indalecio Prieto emblematic of the animosity that inhibited progress.[2] For others, it was the abandonment of revolutionary theory that led to a failure to unify around logically sound rationale—a rationale that could have contextualized Marxist theory in the concrete political realities of 1930s Spain.[3] A focus on the international dynamics at play also dominates the

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[1] The speech in its entirety is in Francisco Largo Caballero, *Discursos*: *En la Campaña de Las Elecciones del 16 de Febrero de 1936 Que Dieran Triunfo al Frente Popular,* (Juventud Socialista, 1936) 40-72. In its transcription, parenthesis in the text like "(loud applause)" help to create a vivid picture of the speech while grounding it in historical accuracy.

[2] See Richard A.H. Robinson, *The Origins of Franco's Spain* (Newton Abbot, 1970) 261 and Paul Preston's *The Coming of the Spanish Civil War* (London, 1978) 134.

[3] See Paul Heywood, *Marxism and the Failure of Organised Socialism in Spain, 1879-1936* (Cambridge, 1990).

literature.[4] A predominant sense of hope echoes from all of these works, with the Popular Front often representing a stalwart effort against the rising tides of fascism, an impressive political ideal, and a noble attempt to address demands for leftist redistribution.[5] In these historical narratives, it is political rivalry, meddling foreign power, or the abandonment of doctrine that dooms the project.[6]

Regardless of the argument put forth about the eventual demise of the Second Spanish Republic, central to any analysis of the event should be the theoretical contradictions it presented for the left. In fact, the words of Caballero himself betray the unresolved contradictions of decades of debates on the left concerning the proper means to achieve revolutionary social change. Even after accounting for the divisions between those purveyors of the anarchist persuasion in socialism and those that disavowed its idealism and impracticality,[7] amongst the latter the question of how to seize power was far from settled. While the history of the proletariat's defeat at the hands of the bourgeoisie in the various revolutions that racked France[8] seemed to point towards a distrust of electoral coalitions with the latter, recent history had illuminated the issue's ambiguity. It was in fact the Soviet Union itself, the country that had "seized power" by eschewing the ballot box in its democratic revolution,[9] that dropped its earlier "Third Period"[10] denunciation of social democracy as "social fascism" in favor of its "Popular Front" strategy.

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[4] See Paul Preston and Helen Graham's *The Popular Front in Europe* (St. Martin's, 1987) and Michael Alpert's *A New International History of the Spanish Civil War* (St. Martin's, 2004).

[5] Texts that support the Communist policies of the era tend to follow this line. A few classic examples include Dolores Ibárruri, *They Shall Not Pass* (Lawrence & Wishart, 1967) and Fernando Claudín, *The Communist Movement* (Peregrine, 1970).

[6] For Paul Preston, the rivalry between the Indalecio Prieto and Largo Caballero is of importance. Michael Alpert is representative of the tendency to blame a lack of international aid. Paul Heywood's text places the failure of the coalition squarely on the shoulders of an abandonment of theory. The texts of these authors have already been mentioned.

[7] This division is best exemplified by the battle for influence over the First International between Karl Marx and Mikhail Bukharin.

[8] Similar contradictions racked the French left in the wake of the Soviet Union's change in tactics. In addition to the fact that Léon Blum's Popular Front government of 1936 would eventually crack due in part over whether or not to intervene in the Spanish Civil War, the debate over whether to seize power electorally or through force had often taken the form of rehashing various interpretations of French Revolutionary history, as exemplified by Marx's numerous writings on the subject. See *The Class Struggles in France, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, and *The Civil War in France*.

[9] Lenin also grappled with the question of coalition as his Bolsheviks tacitly "co-ruled" with the Provisional Government under Alexander Kerensky in the wake of the February Revolution. As the Provisional Government repressed the left and became more openly allied with fascist elements of the Old Russian Empire, the Bolsheviks under Lenin's leadership finally "seized" power in October. One could argue that his "seizure" of power was done in a quasi-democratic way: the Provisional Government itself had crumbled and the Bolsheviks had waited until they had the popular support of the majority of the Soviets to organize the final "coup." See China Miéville, *October: The Story of the Russian Revolution* (Verso, 2017).

[10] See Nicholas N. Kozlov and Eric D. Weitz "Reflections on the Origins of the 'Third Period': Bukharin, the Comintern, and the Political Economy of Weimar Germany" In *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (July, 1989) 387–410.

The unsettled nature of the debate about the correct way to pursue leftist political change is essential to understand the actions of the radical Socialist Francisco Largo Caballero. In fact, while this paper uses Largo Caballero as a means to evaluate the relationship between center and leftist politics, the underlying contradictions of the Popular Front are indeed mildly exculpatory for his later blunders. While I conclude that Caballero ineffectively toes the line between a center against which he lashes out and a base whose promises he cannot fulfill, his failure is representative of an alliance of mutually antagonistic components that formed a faulty whole. As his own words demonstrate, Caballero thought the coalition's failure was inevitable, entered it on shaky moral grounds, and had not reckoned with the theoretical consequences of a Socialist coalition with the ruling elite.

By taking the Socialist experience as my subject, I will focus on the doomed decisions, theoretical contradictions, and faulty emotional logic that precipitated the collapse of the Second Spanish Republic. In order to explore the reasons for this failure, it is useful to consider some essential questions: "what did Largo Caballero think about the Popular Front coalition?," "what was his role in its formation?," and in a contemporary context, "are his actions indicative of larger political trends that remain pertinent today?" To discuss these questions, I will rely on the words of Caballero, thorough his memoir and speeches, and I will also consider secondary literature which posits answers and adds context to these questions.

Although I will document the divisions that plagued the Popular Front in the run-up to its electoral campaign and the brief period it ruled before the outbreak of war, this paper will not focus on the divisions in the eventual "army"[11] that would end up defending Spain from the uprising military generals. While the divisions among the various factions of the "army", which broadly resembled the Popular Front electoral coalition, are indicative of an inability to address the project's inherent contradictions, the eventual failure of the army at the hands of Franco, Mussolini, and Hitler will remain outside the scope of this paper.

The speeches of Socialist leader Francisco Largo Caballero that deal with the Popular Front, an analysis of the electoral coalition's moderate platform compared to Largo Caballero's demands, as well as the motivations behind his eventual joining of the coalition provide the framework for this essay. It is in the words of this animated leader of the

[11] Various groups maintained different level of involvement in the Second Spanish Republic's "army," an army made up of the same groups of the electoral coalition. The Anarchists, for example, participated more actively in the defense of the country than they had in the electoral coalition. Whereas the Anarchists and the ultra-left POUM had given their "support" to the electoral coalition by not outwardly calling for abstention, their role in military matters was much more prominent. The "revolutionary response" unleashed by these "true purveyors of revolution" (Heywood, 175) only highlighted the contradictory answers to the fundamental question plaguing the defending "army" over the "primacy of war" or the "primacy of revolution."

Socialist left that one can find the causes of the Spanish Republic's failure to defend itself. While the ambivalence and opportunism of the leader contributed to the project's downfall, the insurmountable contradictions of the movement imposed their will. This paper will demonstrate that the project was flawed from the beginning, its failure serving as a lesson to those seeking to form coalitions in an era of polarized politics.

The Spanish Lenin

Who was Francisco Largo Caballero, why was he so important, and what were the historical circumstances in which he found himself immersed? Born in Madrid in 1869, throughout all his life's work–beginning with stuccoing walls and reaching its apex during his brief stint as Prime Minister–Largo Caballero had in his heart the plight of the working class.[12] However, Largo Caballero was, for the beginning stages of his life, decisively moderate. The "typical" Socialist of the era, his political career began in 1905 as an official of the UGT.[13] By gaining the trust of the party's rank and file members, Largo Caballero ascended the political ladder. In 1918 he became General Secretary of the UGT, leading the party he had entered as a mere plasterer.[14] Largo Caballero's moderation, while a product of the "thoroughly reformist" UGT's platform, brought him into conflict with other members of the left because he advocated *for* collaboration with the General Primo de Rivera Dictatorship that began in 1923.

After he served as State Councilor to the dictatorship, upon its 1931 fall and the subsequent creation of the Second Spanish Republic, Largo Caballero was one of three Socialists to join the bourgeois coalition, a controversial move among the deterministic Marxists of the party who advocated for abstention. It is during this stint as Minister of Labor Relations that he began the process of political radicalization, a reflection of his government's brutal repression of the left, his inability to pass legislation, and widespread radicalization within the UGT. By the time that the power to govern passed to the right in the 1933 elections, which did not include participation of the Socialists under the advice of Largo Caballero, his political transformation was complete.[15] As the right governed with increasing brutality from 1933-1935 and new elections were scheduled, the question of another bourgeois electoral alliance reared its ugly head, this time leaving Largo Caballero torn.

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[12] Julio Arostegui, *Largo Caballero: El Tesón y La Quimera*. (Debate, 2013) 22.

[13] Andy Durgan, "The Rise and Fall of Largo Caballero." In *International Socialism*, no. 18, ser. 2, (1983) 2.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

The debate over a possible far-left alliance with more moderate leftists or even the bourgeois center was far from settled when it reached Spain in the 1930s. While the direction from above was "clear" for Communist parties in the form of a shift in Comintern policy towards the Popular Front, other components of the Austrian, American, Italian, French, German, Chinese, and of course, the Spanish left were all dealing with a similar problem in different ways.[16] In Spain, the center and moderate socialists had been scrambling for a solution ever since the Socialist (PSOE) abstention in the 1933 elections ceded power back to an increasingly fascistic right.

Contrary to popular belief, it was the Republican leader Manuel Azaña, not the Soviet Union, who provided the impetus for a coalition of the center Republicans and the Socialists.[17] This is a crucial point that exposes the unique potential position of power of the Spanish left, as, in the past, the impetus for the formation of the "Front" had most often come from left parties beholden to the Comintern's policy shift. While Largo Caballero's own words about the Republicans' carrying out "the most indignant blackmail" in history[18] betray his sense of powerlessness in the coalition, the fact that it was the center that reached out to the left should not be forgotten. In fact, his own memoir provides an interesting yet revealing tidbit: the coalition at this time was *not* known as the "Popular Front."[19] The fact that this coalition is described as the "Popular Front" only after its existence highlights the tendency of historians to overemphasize the coalition's impact and link it to the Soviet Union, as well as the potential power of a Spanish left that was not yet beholden to Moscow.

In the end, however, not even the moderate political aims of the electoral pact that was finally signed by the PSOE and its affiliated UGT, the Communists (PCE), the POUM, and a coalition of Republicans could dampen the excitement of the left. The hope that this process evoked was captured in the Madrid-based Socialist Newspaper *El Socialista's* January 16th, 1936 proclamation: "Towards a decisive victory."[20]

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[16] The width of the ideological spectrum to be crossed in the prescribed "Popular Front" varied from country to country, perhaps limiting or increasing the probability of success. The Chinese case, one that would also settle itself in an eventual Civil War, even saw the Chinese Communist Party ally itself with far-right aspects of the Nationalist Party of China (Kuomintang) in a United Front to repel a Japanese invasion.

[17] Heywood, 156.

[18] *Los Repulicanos "se aprovecharon de esa situación trágica del proletariado para practicar el chantaje más indigno que se haya cometido en todos los anales politicos"* in Largo Caballero, *Escritos,* 286.

[19] *"Frente Popular,"* Largo Caballero, *Escritos de la Republica,* 295.

[20] "Hacía una victoria rotunda" in "El Pacto Electoral De Los Partidos De La Izquierda." El Socialista, 16 Jan. 1936.

At the center of the formation of the *"Frente Popular"* was the polarizing Largo Caballero, the leader of the left faction of the Socialists, a faction that radicalized more and more each day. Sensing a shift toward political moderation in the mid-1930s, Largo Caballero jumped on the idea of the electoral coalition late and was a nuisance to the other members. Out of what seemed like mere spite, he demanded the inclusion of the Communists and constantly threatened the coalition with his withdrawal in a futile attempt to drag the coalition towards the left.[21] These actions, however, should not have been surprising. The speeches he made in front of thousands in favor of the electoral pact betrayed his mixed feelings, a product perhaps of the coalition's own contradictory premises. In his speeches leading up to the 1936 elections, his begrudging acceptance of the need for an anti-fascist alliance and the contradictions inherent in his politics are apparent. Nevertheless, in mid-January 1936, it seemed that the momentum was in the hands of those seeking to end the spread of fascism: the government in power had recently collapsed and the coalition had won the elections of February 16 with moderate factions leading the way.[22]

However, the inability of the coalition to address its own ideological contradictions paved the way for its dissolution. Upon its electoral victory, crisis after crisis racked the newly formed government. First, in April and May, Azaña and Prieto successfully had conservative President Alcalá Zamora impeached in the Constitutional Cortes. While their impeachment plan was successful, the failure to plan for the fallout "gave credence to the view that the most malignant of fates presided over Spain's destiny."[23] When Azaña succeeded the Presidency and asked Prieto to form a government under Azaña's leadership, the failure to unify the Socialists reared its ugly head.

Knowing that Largo Caballero and his followers would refuse to support his government, Prieto wavered. In a "mixture of weakness and decency," the new Spanish government lost out on a strong prime minister as Prieto refused to challenge the left Socialists.[24] Although many of his followers would later regret the vetoing of Prieto's ascendancy to Prime Minister,[25] the failure of the plan reflected the strength of the radicalizing faction of Socialists at this crucial moment.

While the new government floundered under weak leadership, it faced the task of crushing rebellions and land seizures led by its own more radical supporters. This, it seems,

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[21] Heywood, 171.

[22] Ibid., 172.

[23] Preston, 61.

[24] Ibid., 62.

[25] Jackson, 31. "The Spanish Popular Front, 1934-7." In *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 5, no. 3, (1970) 21–35.

should have been expected: after all, central to the electoral coalition were the demands of Anarchists, Communists, and Socialists alike who expected the government to reward their loyalty. After the election results, excited workers looking for revenge began seizing land, invading estates, and demanding agrarian reform. In response to the rising tide of "'red' violence," many flocked to the fascistic right, where a continuation of the violence initiated and exacerbated by the right's electoral defeat would culminate in the military uprising that precipitated the civil war.[26] Largo Caballero, at this point president of the UGT, the Madrid-based section of the Socialist party, and the president of the Socialist's parliamentary party, did not seek to quell this rebellion. Instead, he toured the countryside proclaiming revolution and insisted that the Republicans governed without the aid of the Socialists. In short, he facilitated popular perceptions that the moderate government lacked popular legitimacy.[27]

In 1936, as July 17th turned to July 18th and the military garrisons rose up against the government to initiate what would become a three-year long bloodbath,[28] the fragile Republic faced nearly insuperable problems: a feeble government racked by infighting and Soviet interference,[29] a lack of popular support, and the need to train an army from antagonistic political parties. To whom would these fighters turn to for motivation to defend a Republic that they themselves distrusted? The very leaders of the left like Largo Caballero who, themselves unclear on the correct path, were forced to defend untenable positions, alienating both those too far to the left and those too far to the center.

The historical verdict about the leader's actions is not decided, as Largo Caballero's role in the events of the lead-up to and leadership during the Spanish Civil War, an era that would end with the fall of the Republic to Franco's forces in 1939, has been the subject of immense debate. Perhaps the most agreed upon aspect of his legacy are his strategic failures

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[26] Preston, 64.

[27] Ibid., 65.

[28] Ibid., 73.

[29] The Soviet role in the Spanish Civil War helps explain the exacerbation of tensions amongst the various groups among the left. While the international leaders of the fascist order, notably Mussolini and Hitler, were quick to aid Franco in his battle for control of Spain by sending arms, soldiers, and planes, the role of the USSR was always more ambivalent. The Comintern shift in policy itself was a product of Stalin hoping to avoid antagonizing the Western Powers that he knew he would rely upon to counter the fascist threat in the coming World War. Stalin, although eventually aiding by the construction of the famed International Brigades and the sending of a substantial amount of weapons and personnel in direct contradiction of Non-Intervention Committee (NIC), sent no ground troops and sought merely to "gain control over the Communist Party and to infiltrate Republican government." Regardless of the fact that the Spanish Republic would have fallen much quicker without Soviet aid, the NKVD (Soviet interior ministry) agents sent to Spain eventually took the form of cleansing the Spanish left of "political enemies," most notably the "Trotsykist" POUM. See John McCannon, "Soviet Intervention in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-39: A Reexamination." In *Russian History*, vol. 22, no. 2, (1995) 154–180.

during the 1934 October insurrection in Asturias, a strike that was unprepared and hindered due to party squabbling. The resulting bloody defeat of the workers in the wake of the failed insurrection "exposed the hollowness of Largo Caballero's leftism,"[30] left his followers "perplexed,"[31] and decisively influenced the march towards the Popular Front coalition; it demonstrated the limits of a utopian republic. It is no wonder, then, that many decry the opportunism of Largo Caballero, question the nature of his revolutionary beliefs, and place the blame for the Republic's fall upon his shoulders. Paul Preston's treatment of the man is indicative: he describes Largo Caballero as "intoxicated by Communist flattery,"[32] "naïvely confident"[33] and writes that it was "debatable whether Largo Caballero was ever genuine in his revolutionary pronouncements."[34]

There are others, however, that see in Largo Caballero a man that fought nobly for the working class of Spain. While one prominent writer calls him the man "most representative of his class" in all of Spanish history,[35] another goes as far as to label him as representative of "the best of the Popular Front."[36] Perhaps the latter quote reveals a fundamental truth about the whole Popular Front experiment itself: if Largo Caballero, the only man to preside over a cabinet representing all elements of the Popular Front in his brief stint as Prime Minister, could not "bridge the widening gap"[37] between the right socialists and communists on the one hand, and the left socialists and anarchists on the other, then who could? When skirmishes inevitably erupted between antagonistic Republican forces that should have been focused on fighting Franco, the leader of the time would inevitably be forced to step down, torn either too far to the left or to the center to remain a popular figure.

One thing, however, is perfectly clear: the Spanish Socialists who relied on Largo Caballero for advice on how best to navigate the theoretical contradictions created in the joining of forces with the Republicans, would not find clarity. His own past as a decisively moderate politician that had joined the dictatorial Rivera government seemed to lead to a distrust of the leader's motives, even though the vacuous denunciations of the bourgeois

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[30] Ibid.

[31] Arostegui, 303.

[32] Paul Preston, *A Concise History of the Spanish Civil War.* (Fontana Press, 1996) 65.

[33] Ibid., 62.

[34] Ibid., 65.

[35] Arostegui, 21.

[36] Jackson, 33.

[37] Ibid.

that littered his speeches and his actions during the May Day seemed to be the work of a truly radical leader. Even in the run-up to the outbreak of war, before Largo Caballero would reach the presidency, in his speeches, the "Spanish Lenin" stumbled over the necessity to join the coalition, railed against bourgeois democracy, and actively boycotted the government he had helped elect.

A Contradictory Speech

On January 20th, 1936, Largo Caballero gave one of his more celebrated speeches in front of Spanish workers in Linares, a south-central town in the Andalusian province of Jaén. It was here, in a speech already mentioned in this essay, that workers could, if they sifted through the ideological contradictions and revolutionary rhetoric, be convinced of the necessity of voting for the Popular Front Coalition. Before delving into his usual, bombastic rhetoric, he laid out the case for joining. At the top of his list of concerns was amnesty for those who had been imprisoned as a result of the failed 1934 uprising in Asturias.[38] "Let us join the electoral coalition," he preached, "in order to achieve an amnesty-something we can't remedy any other way."[39] The amnesty was necessary in order to rebuild the left since, in the uprising's wake, thousands of leftist workers sat in prisons, the UGT's entire executive was in jail, and the torture of the prisoners reflected an unknown brutality.[40] Of course, the fact that the amnesty of the political prisoners of the 1934 Asturias uprising was central to Largo Caballero's politics is not surprising if we consider the fact that many blame the leader himself for the failure of the momentous event.

He went on, however, succumbing to one of his typical hyperbolic episodes after receiving bouts of praise from the crowd: "We are joining this coalition because we want to contain the triumphal march of fascism in Spain."[41] To his crowd of workers, Largo Caballero explained that the Popular Front was responsible for containing the march of fascism, something that could only be stopped through the adoption of socialism. This coalition would have been a peculiar way to stop the march of fascism, as the adoption of Socialist values, if that was what was necessary to stop the former, was never truly on the table. Nevertheless, Largo Caballero moved on quickly, addressing the last concrete reason

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[38] Largo Caballero was one of the thousands imprisoned for this failed uprising. To highlight the controversy that follows this leader, it is said that in his prison cell, the "Spanish Lenin" picked up Marx for the first time.

[39] *"Vamos à la coalición electoral...por obtener una amnistía-cosa que no hay mas remedio."* See Largo Caballero Francisco. *Discursos: En la Campaña de Las Elecciones del 16 de Febrero de 1936 Que Dieran Triunfo al Frente Popular*, Juventud Socialista (1936) 57.

[40] Preston, 56.

[41] *"Vamos a la coalición porque queremos contener la marcha triunfal del fascismo en España,"* Ibid., 60.

for supporting the coalition: the end of the ability to fire employees for their political opinions and participation in the failed October uprising in Asturias in 1934.[42]

At the same time that he focused upon the potential benefits of joining the coalition, Largo Caballero recognized its limits during his speech in Linares. Attaching to his calls for participation a list of stringent demands that *had* to be met, the Socialist leader sought to bridge the theoretical gap created by his involvement in the bourgeois republican endeavor. First was a demand that had been propounded by the left since the founding of the Second Republic in 1931: the nationalization of land. Recognizing the radical nature of this demand amidst the backdrop of a wide coalition, Largo Caballero made clear that the Socialists explicitly excluded small landowners from their calls for land redistribution, actually demanding that the land be put to use for Spain's "collective exploitation."[43] Largo Caballero's comment, a response to the center of the coalition's frequent actions in which they incorrectly told small landowners "they want to take your land," betrays the sheer impossibility of working collectively in the Popular Front on a progressive agenda.

Hand-in-hand with the nationalization of land was the nationalization of the banks, a radical demand that sought to end the use of public funds by private companies and to put the state in charge of the national savings.[44] The urgency of these demands for the Socialist leader can easily be called into question, as, in the end, Largo Caballero's fears of the agreement's moderation would turn out to be valid: the Popular Front program rejected any mention of nationalization, eschewed workers' control, and was a victory for the Republicans with its "decidedly moderate" aims.[45] When the electoral platform was finally signed and Largo Caballero's calls for nationalization were ignored, the perils of collaboration came to the fore as the radical left was ignored. These feelings of dejection experienced by the left would underlay the inability of the coalition to solve its ideological divisions, a crucial task considering that Republicans would soon fight Socialists in the street.

While Largo Caballero's speeches reflect the fact that he saw the coalition as a vehicle through which to achieve the specific policies mentioned above, the very same speeches reflect his complete disavowal of the Popular Front project itself. In the same speech where he highlights the need for going to the polls, Largo Caballero says, "by means of bourgeois

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[42] *"porque tenga tales o cuales opiniones,"* Ibid.

[43] *"...para su explotacíon colectiva..."* Ibid., 52.

[44] *"Los bancos deben ser nacionalizados, para que sea el estado el que disponga del ahorro de la nación y no las empresas particulares las que usen en beneficio propio el dinero de todos"* Ibid., 55.

[45] Heywood, 171.

democracy, the workers will never, never be [in] power."[46] Largo Caballero then deepened his denunciation of bourgeois democracy: "And we, as Marxists...have to say that the capitalist society cannot be transformed by means of the capitalist democracy."[47] His denunciation of a capitalist democracy's ability to ameliorate the plight of the worker fell on the ears of men being both persuaded and dissuaded from heading to the ballot box. These contradictions were left unanswered and Largo Caballero was aware of the utter lack of "socialism" present in his demand for political participation. Even in his speech he saw this as a failure: "in this program there is not one Socialist outcome" he declared.[48]

Finally, to raucous applause, Largo Caballero concluded by screaming in favor of the necessity of joining the coalition, albeit "with the least effort and sacrifice possible."[49] After displaying his lack of investment by highlighting the desired lack of effort on the part of his Socialists, Largo Caballero asked for loyalty from his suspicious followers.[50] Ending his speech with democratic hopes and visions of the ballot box, the frenzied crowd believed that which the orator did not: the Popular Front would bring salvation to the Spanish people.

In sum, Largo Caballero's words reveal that he was hardly a proponent of the coalition itself, let alone the moderation of its electoral platform. Considering the theoretical and emotional contradictions that riddle his speeches, it is difficult to locate any other reason for the eventual withdrawal of PSOE support for the newly-elected government than to "weaken the Republic in order to make way for the Revolution."[51] This interpretation is backed up by Largo Caballero's comment that socialism could only form after the "bourgeois limitations" had been reached,[52] a comment that reflects a mechanistic understanding of Marxism that relies upon specific "stages" of development that must be attained before revolution is possible. Marxist theory is unable to provide an adequate answer to the riddle of the Popular Front's participation in the bourgeois electoral coalition, a reality that portrays Largo Caballero less as an opportunist than as a leader stuck in an untenable position.

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[46] "*Por medio de la democracía burguesa, jamás, jamás, podrá ser Poder*" Largo Caballero, *Discursos,* 45.

"*Y nosotros, como socialistas marxistas...tenemos que decir que la sociedad capitalista no se puede transformar por medio de la democracía capitalista.*" Ibid., 44.

[48] "...en ese programa *no hay ninguna conclusión socialista*" Ibid., 62.

[49] "*con el menor esfuerzo posible, con el menor sacrificio posible...*" Ibid., 63.

[50] "*A la coalición se va lealmente*" Ibid., 68.

[51] Jackson, 31. "The Spanish Popular Front, 1934-7." Journal of Contemporary History, vol. 5, no. 3, (1970) 21–35.

[52] Preston, 60.

Curved Revolutionary Ambitions

Before passing judgement on Largo Caballero, it is necessary to examine the constraints upon the left during the Spanish Civil War. Even in the face of damning evidence detailing his supposed opportunism, scholars are right to point out the uniquely difficult situation that Largo Caballero faced during his time both in and outside of government. The overwhelming role of the Communists, with direct Soviet support, in putting an "end to revolutionary social activity"[53] in the Republican zone tied Largo Caballero's hands. Also, his calls to arm the people in order to defend the Republic from the military uprising went unheeded until it was much too late.[54] In addition, an appeasement-driven Western Europe supplied no aid to the Spanish Republic, even as Largo Caballero slowly agreed to temper his revolutionary pronouncements in order to garner their support.[55] Finally, Largo Caballero had the right to withhold support for the Republican coalition government, given the Spanish "center" government's drive to clamp down on revolutionary activity during the early 1930s.These two years of failure during the birth of a new Spanish Second Republic help to explain why Largo Caballero was unwilling to slide towards the center. His past experience correctly led him to believe that the Republican center did not have the interests of the workers in mind.[56]

Perhaps the most constraining factor of the Spanish left, however, was the sheer width of the ideological spectrum that composed the Popular Front. No other episode expresses the sheer impossibility of maintaining the army tasked with defending the Spanish Republic better than the "May Days." The May Days, which erupted in 1937, provided a stage upon which perhaps the essential question of the left of the Popular Front would be answered: must the Republic "first win the war, then carry **out the** revolution," or did this slogan merely conceal "the real aim of smothering the revolution."[57] Famously described in George Orwell's *Homage To Catalonia,* the fight that emerged between the bourgeois United Socialist Party of Catalonia (PSUC) and the anarchists (CNT) in control of the telephone exchange that had been monitoring the government laid bare the tensions upon which the Popular Front had been operating.

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[53] Ibid., 289.

[54] Largo Caballero, *Escritos de la Republica,* 302.

[55] See Preston's chapter entitled "The Great Powers Betray Spain." Preston, 98-115.

[56] See Preston's "leftist Challenge, 1931-1933" in Ibid., 24-44: details the failures of the Alcalá Zamora government to pass any meaningful economic or social reforms.

[57] Andres Nin, "El significada y alcance de las jornados de mayo frente a la contrarrevolution, May 1937." Central Committee of the POUM.
https://www.marxists.org/archive/nin/1937/05/maydays.htm (Accessed December 19, 2018).

Perhaps no better metaphor for the failure of the Popular Front project exists than the barricades that were erected in the streets of Barcelona between the days of May 3rd and May 7th. Just as the barricades behind which radical workers in the streets of Paris in 1830, 1848, and 1871 had hidden, the barricades in the streets of Barcelona attempted to protect the Anarchists from a bourgeoisie that had, just days before, been their ally. Eventually, this conflict would epitomize nearly all the divisions of the front: those between the variously divided Anarchists, like the POUM, CNT, and FAI that could not work as a single front during the fight; the Communists and the POUM, the former seeking to eliminate the latter from the political scene and succeeding in the aftermath of these events; and finally, those between then-President Largo Caballero on the one hand and the right wing of the PSOE as well as the Stalin-controlled PCE on the other, this event led to Largo Caballero's stepping down in favor of Stalin-backed Juan Negrín.[58]

Largo Caballero, here, was a man stuck in a quagmire: plagued by a revolutionary base yet clamped down upon by a centrist coalition of Republicans, he seems to have no answer. To his credit, in the end, Largo Caballero attempted to deliver to the former, resigning as a result of the May Days due to his refusal to outlaw the POUM at the behest of the Soviets.[59] Due to the deep divisions inside the party and the "theoretical gymnastics"[60] that enabled its participation in a bourgeois republican coalition, the Socialist Party's (PSOE) experience in the lead-up to the Spanish Civil War was emblematic of the difficulties experienced by all skeptical and factionalized leftist parties during the Popular Front era. Nevertheless, instead of either sticking to his denunciation of the coalition as a trick of the bourgeoisie and forgoing participation or abandoning his concerns for a complete acceptance of the coalition of the center, Largo Caballero toes the line between both ineffectively, lashing out at a center that cannot deliver while providing nothing but empty promises to his base.

Conclusion

The applicability of the Spanish left's experience during the war extends beyond the era in which it occurred: its battle against a fascistic threat, albeit a failure, should serve as a point of departure for a contemporary global left that finds itself in a similar "socialism or barbarism" moment. One who looks back upon the history of the 1930s in order to seek to remedy the present with a dose of moderation, it seems, would be none too shrewd.

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[58] See Pierre Broué, "The 'May Days' of 1937 in Barcelona." In *Revolutionary History*, vol. 1, no. 2, (1988).

[59] McCannon, 172.

[60] Ibid., 167.

The fact that the Spanish Socialists could not see their eventual failure in a lukewarm support of the government reflected an inability to understand the myriad examples of center cooptation that had plagued these alliances in the past. However, even when Largo Caballero ascended to the presidency in what represented the culmination of his radicalization, the nature of the Popular Front itself made radical political change a mere impossibility. Abandoning his own dichotomous approach to the question of ending the spread of fascism, that of "socialism or barbarism," Largo Caballero ensnared himself by choosing an uninspired center. The disastrous consequences of this approach, however, have not been fully appreciated. Today, instead of seeing in the Popular Front a project that was fundamentally incapable of achieving radical political change, historians can easily fault singular figures like Largo Caballero himself in order to preserve a project whose moderation is admirable to those in power.

THEY USED TO BE OUR BROTHERS

BEIJING'S STRATEGIC CALCULATIONS BEHIND ITS DECISION TO COMMENCE THE 1979 SINO-VIETNAMESE WAR

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Abstract

This paper examines what considerations motivated the Chinese leadership headed by Deng Xiaoping in 1979 to launch a cross-border offensive against Vietnam. It aims to understand the domestic and international challenges faced by China from 1975 to 1979, as well as how these factors inspired such a large-scale attack regardless of the potential consequences in the midst of the Cold War. Two archival collections provided most of the primary evidence of this project: the digital collection of People's Daily—the official propaganda apparatus of the Chinese Communist Party—and the Zbigniew Brzezinski Collection at the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library, which has only been declassified in 2009. Drawing heavily from these two sources—mainly because they have not received much scrutiny in the existing historiography of the 1979 war—this paper argues that China's decision to launch the attack emerged out of its fear of a potential Soviet-Vietnamese encirclement and its myriad ramifications. While the Chinese regime ostensibly presented a patriotic explanation of the offensive to its domestic public and an anti-Soviet justification of war to the international community, the rationale behind its war decision went beyond mere expression of Chinese pride and opposition to Soviet dominance.

Introduction

Three days after Valentine's Day in 1979, six corps of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), totaling approximately 200,000 combat troops, crossed the Sino-Vietnamese border and rolled into Vietnam.[1] The events of February 17 eerily resembled those almost ten years prior when, in March of 1969, a border clash involving defense units of the Soviet Union and People's Republic of China (PRC) broke out near Zhenbao (Damasky) Island and shocked the world. For the second time in a decade, the Communist Bloc of the Cold War witnessed its major powers not only at odds with one another, but also at war.

[1] Zhang Xiaoming, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War—The Military Conflict between China and Vietnam, 1979-1991* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015) 90.

The Sino-Soviet border clashes of the '50s and '60s took the world by surprise, as the conflict involved the two primary perpetrators of global communist ideology; furthermore, the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War proved shocking due to the unprecedented scale of its warfare as well as China's unilateral initiation of war. The historical context preceding the 1979 conflict further highlights the perceived unlikelihood of such a direct hard power engagement. Globally, the decade of the 1970s was rife with the reshuffling of old alliances and antagonisms. The Sino-Soviet split in the late 1950s and early 1960s weakened the alliance between the two regimes; the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) further complicated international and regional diplomacy in light of the Vietnam War. Furthermore, following the Sino-Soviet border clash of 1969, both the USSR and China sought diplomatic advantages over one another by approaching the U.S. in the early '70s—the Soviet Union did so through détente policies, and China did so through the establishment of diplomatic contact that had effectively been nonexistent until that point.

In this sense, the DRV found itself entangled in a triangular relationship between the USSR, PRC, and the U.S., the alliances with its communist counterparts being tenuous at best.[2] On one hand, the rapidly deteriorating relationship between China and the Soviet Union made it increasingly difficult for Vietnam to secure aid from either side without enraging the other. Conversley, the rise of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia in 1975 intensified tension within the Communist Bloc, which further deepened the rift between China and Vietnam.[3] The Khmer Rouge, motivated by a historic fear of foreign intervention, engaged in an all-out anti-Vietnam campaign, sparking a full-scale military retaliation from Hanoi in November of 1978. Beijing acquiesced this aggression, as it arguably wanted to use the Khmer Rouge to contain growing Vietnamese influence in Indochina; thus, Hanoi favored Moscow who not only offered more modern military equipment than China, but did so without threatening the DRV's borders. Consequently, in November 1978, Vietnam—as it escalated its campaign in Cambodia—signed a mutual defense treaty with the Soviet Union, which had already become the biggest threat to Beijing within Asia. Already, the division between the major powers of the Communist Bloc sowed the seeds of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War.

Domestically, by 1979, China had just concluded the ten-year turmoil of the Cultural Revolution. Following the death of Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, the first generation of PRC leaders, a heated political struggle for power raged on within the country, from which Deng

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[2] Ibid., 14.

[3] Odd Arne Westad, "Introduction" in *The Third Indochina War—Conflict Between China, Vietnam and Cambodia, 1972-1979,* ed. Odd Arne Westad and Sophie Quinn-Judge (New York: Routledge, 2006) 2-3.

Xiaoping, the leader of the reformist faction, emerged triumphantly.[4] Upon seizing power, he immediately implemented programs to recover China from what he considered a disastrous decade of ideological frenzy masked under the guise of economic development. His two major prescriptions were the incremental introduction of a market economy as well as the establishment of international trade to advance Chinese science and technology industries. In order to catch up with the advanced countries of the West, Deng formulated a foreign policy centered around the idea of "*tāoguāng yǎnghùi, yõusuõ zuòwéi* (韬光养晦, 有所作为)," which roughly translates to "hiding from the spotlight to build up strength while also doing what has to be done."[5] The policy aimed to minimize international attention toward China by fostering positive diplomatic relations with its peers of the East and West, thereby concentrating finances on fixing the nation's broken economy and antiquated technology without critical losses in national interest such as the protection of its borders. Therefore, the domestic circumstances illustrate the PRC's decision to launch a large-scale offensive against Vietnam in 1979 as counterintuitive—as the Chinese leadership expressly privileged economic development and modernization over international conflict.

Considering the global and domestic contexts of the Sino-Vietnamese War, this paper will advance the argument that Beijing's rationale behind its decision to initiate the 1979 war was effectively twofold. One, the PRC's rationale stemmed from its interpretation of Vietnamese policies of the '70s as both a chauvinistic aspiration for establishing an Indochinese Federation headed by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV)—established after the DRV unified the Republic of Vietnam in 1976—and a Soviet-sponsored enterprise aimed at expanding Moscow's global influence. Archival evidence suggests that Deng's disdain toward Vietnam exacerbated when Vietnam invaded Cambodia, as he perceived the invasion as the start of the SRV's larger expansionist program that aimed to engulf the entire Indochina and Southeast Asia. Two, considering the USSR's military support of Vietnam, the 1979 war represented an apt disruption to not only a possible military dominance by Vietnam in Indochina, but also that of the Soviet Union in Asia.

With these two considerations, China's geographical position further clarifies the decision to launch a full-fledged offensive in 1979. A Southeast Asia dominated by Vietnam, a nascent foe sponsored by the PRC's greatest rival within the Communist Bloc, meant that China would be strategically encircled by the Soviet Union from the North, Vietnam from the South, as well as heavily Soviet-backed India and Afghanistan from the West. Such an

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[4] Ezra F. Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013) 184-214.

[5] Huang Hua, Huang Hua Huiyilu—Qinli yu Jianwen [Memoir of Huang Hua—Experiences and Witnesses] (Beijing: World Knowledge Press, 2007) 206-210.

encirclement entailed two obvious consequences. First, a potential coordinated attack from the North and the South signified an imminent threat to the fundamental existence of the Beijing regime, as the capital is located close to the Sino-Soviet border. Second, even if no such attack were to materialize, the encirclement represented threats to a number of trade routes key to China extending from the South China Sea which, if interrupted, would paralyze Deng's modernization program that sought the expansion of trade with the West. In short, for Deng, the fundamental reason to attack Vietnam was, therefore, to eliminate the possibility of such encirclement. While multiple motivations potentially contributed to Beijing's decision to initiate war, the fear of a strategic encirclement is clearly the most plausible explanation in justifying such a large-scale military operation.

A Scarcity of Primary Source Documents

The salient difficulty in analyzing the Sino-Vietnamese War of 1979 is the scarcity of available primary sources, which is understandable given that three of the most important actors in the war—China, Vietnam, and the Soviet Union—were all Communist regimes who have been notoriously reluctant about releasing government documents.[6] Indeed, the PRC Foreign Ministry Archive in Beijing as well as the Provincial Archives of Guangxi and Yunnan—from which the 1979 offensive was launched—carry no records pertinent to the war. The few Chinese documents available to the public are usually leaked and scattered across various American archives; most notably, the Cold War International History Project at the Woodrow Wilson International Center and the manuscripts of the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library, which recently declassified memos of meetings between the U.S. and China leading up to 1979. The most significant of these documents include minutes of conversations between Zbigniew Brzezinski—Jimmy Carter's National Security Advisor—and various Chinese leaders. Deng's eventual trip to Washington, and the subsequently generated records, are another example. These documents help to reveal the Chinese rationale behind the decision to engage in warfare, but the reader must also be considerate of the interpretation Deng wished to relay to the American leadership. In short, these records alone provide an incomplete picture.

The *People's Daily*, an official newspaper of the Chinese Communist Party that often carries substantial party propaganda, and various autobiographical accounts of Chinese diplomats offer important glimpses into the historical context of the 1979 war. In terms of the *People's Daily*, the language of its editorials help clarify the decision-making process of China's central leadership and the changing dynamics of their concerns. Owing to the

[6] Rachel Donadio, "The Iron Archives," *New York Times,* (New York: April 22, 2007). https://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/22/books/review/Donadio.t.html (Accessed December 20, 2018).

nature of these editorials, however, they serve only to convey messages that the Communist leadership intended its domestic and international audiences to internalize. While it would be dangerous for a historical study to treat them at face value, a meticulous analysis can still produce valuable insights. Moreover, the aforesaid writings of Chinese politicians help fill in the rest of the gaps. Huang Hua, the PRC Foreign Minister from 1976 to 1981, recounted the formulation of Deng's Foreign Policy in his memoir *Personal Experiences and Knowledge*.[7] Yang Gongsu, the last PRC ambassador to Hanoi before the war broke out in February 1979, recalled his experience in Hanoi prior to the War as well as his participation in the post-war negotiations in his memoir *Ninety Years of Winds and Rains*.[8] These works by Huang and Yang —coupled with recently declassified material from the Jimmy Carter Presidential Archive as well as *People's Daily* editorials—will serve as the primary evidence used in this paper to elucidate Beijing's strategic considerations behind its war decision in 1979.

Existing Historiography

Historiography on the Sino-Vietnamese War is significantly lacking with several possible causes. First, as noted previously, there is an extant shortage of archival material on the subject. Second, Beijing continues to remain silent on the topic. After the normalization of the Sino-Vietnamese relationship in 1991, the PRC has enjoyed a rather close yet cautious relationship with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV). Thus, the maintenance of this re-forged alliance alone stands as reason enough for China not to bring back memories of the rather recent bloody war between the two. In addition, considering Beijing's support of the notorious Khmer Rouge regime leading up to 1979, historical amnesia presents itself as a secure option in preventing attention on past controversies that may undermine the legitimacy of the ruling class in Beijing today. For these reasons, there is an absence of scholarly works written from the perspective of the belligerents themselves. Third, the U.S., an outside observer of the War, concerned itself more with the establishment of a positive Sino-American relationship, the Soviet Union's aggression in Afghanistan, and the subsequent reversal of détente politics than with what it saw as relatively minor Chinese regional disputes.[9]

Within the realm of existing historical analyses, various contending explanations of Beijing's rationale in 1979 have emerged since the Sino-Vietnamese War, but none have achieved academic predominance or consensus. Apart from the clear dearth of primary

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[7] Huang, *Huang Hua Huiyilu*.

[8] Yang Gongsu, *Cangsang Jiushinian—Yige Waijiao Teshi de Huiyi* [*Ninety Years of Winds and Rains—Memory of an Ambassador*] (Hainan: Hainan Publishing House, 1999).

[9] "Milestones 1977-1980," Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State. https://history.state.gov/milestones/1977-1980/china-policy (Accessed Jan 4, 2019).

source material, the lack of an accepted perception of the PRC's motivations is primarily due to Chinese calculations existing as complicated, esoteric, and multifaceted, stretching across domestic, regional, and global dimensions. The chronological distribution of scholarly works written about the Sino-Vietnamese War has two clusters. The first lies in the second half of the 80s and the early 90s, before the end of the Cold War. Notable examples include "China's Vietnam War, New and Old Imperatives" by Dennis Duncanson, "Contending Explanations of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War" by Bruce Burton, *China's Vietnam Policy* by Ross Roberts, *China's War with Vietnam* by King C. Chen, and *Dragons Entangled* by Steven J. Hood.[10] The second cluster of works are from the 2000s and 2010s, roughly coinciding with the declassification of records from the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library. These works include *The Third Indochina War* edited by Odd Arne Westad and Sophie Quinn-Judge, *Chinese Military Strategy in the Third Indochina War* by Edward O'Dowd, *On China* by Henry Kissinger, and *Deng Xiaoping's Long War* by Zhang Xiaoming.[11]

Burton's "Contending Explanations" provides an overview of articles published in 1979 on the Sino-Vietnamese War, and presents several explanations of Chinese rationale that other scholars have reiterated or regurgitated. The first of such explanations is the issue of border disputes between China and Vietnam as well as Hanoi's treatment of ethnic Chinese living in Vietnam, which the *People's Daily* often cited as one of main reasons behind China's decision to attack.[12] Although most scholars mentioned above have emphasized this explanation to varying degrees, Sino-Vietnamese border disputes and Vietnamese treatment of ethnic Chinese do not completely capture the strategic importance of the offensive. Steven J. Hood provides a more multidimensional explanation, focusing on China's geographical proximity to Vietnam as a major impetus behind the conflict.

Odd Arne Westad and Dennis Duncanson echo Hood's analysis on the role of geography in the emergence of war. Westad argues that the competition for dominion in Indochina between China and Vietnam incentivised the former to support the Khmer Rouge in its conflict with Vietnam, which eventually escalated to total war. Westad proposes here

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[10] Dennis Duncanson, "China's Vietnam War: New and Old Strategic Imperatives," *The World Today*, Issue 35, No. 6 (1979) 241-48; Bruce Burton, "Contending Explanations of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War," *International Journal*, Issue 34, No. 4 (1979) 699-722; Ross Roberts, "China's Vietnam Policy, 1975-1979: A Politics of Alliance Termination," (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1984); King C. Chen, *China's War with Vietnam, 1979: Issues, Decisions, and Implications* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1987); Steven J. Hood, *Dragons Entangled: Indochina and the China-Vietnam War* (London: M.E. Sharpe, 1992).

[11] Odd Arne Westad and Sophie Quinn-Judge, ed., *The Third Indochina War—Conflict Between China, Vietnam and Cambodia, 1972-1979* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Henry Kissinger, *On China* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2011); Zhang, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War*.

[12] Burton, "Contending Explanations," 699; "Women de Rennai shi Youxiandu de [Our Restraint has a Bottom Line]," *People's Daily,* December 25, 1978, *People's Daily* Database. http://58.68.146.102/rmrb/20171207/1 (Accessed October 24, 2017).

that rescuing the Democratic Kampuchea from obliteration was China's major reason to go to war with Vietnam. Duncanson, on the other hand, offers a slightly broader explanation, accentuating China's general desire to prevent Indochinese neighbors from reaching uncheckable strength. The Vietnamese expansion, Duncanson argues, ran directly against the Chinese plans of economic expansion, which catalyzed Beijing's decision to wage war. Although plausible, Westad and Duncanson both ignore a major factor that the *People's Daily* had mentioned continuously until the outbreak of war—the Soviets. Robert Ross addresses this omission of the USSR in Beijing's rationale in his dissertation, claiming that the Soviet Union—more specifically the SRV's 1978 alliance with the USSR—represented the single most influential factor in determining Beijing's attitude toward Hanoi. Ross relegates all other elements as only symptoms of this fundamental conflict between the two largest Communist regimes. Yet, Ross, too, fails to provide a complete picture, as he overlooks the strategic importance of Beijing's support toward the Khmer Rouge.

All of these scholars, however, fail to recognize the role of the U.S. in contributing to the emergence of the 1979 war, partly because the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library only declassified key documents pertaining to the War in its Brzezinski collection by 2009.[13] Documents in the Brzezinski collection confirm the significant role Washington played in the build-up of the War. Kissinger argues in his 2011 book *On China* that Beijing's decision to go to war with Vietnam had two major motivations. First, the PRC wanted to use the offensive to expose the limit in Soviet's capacity to wage proxy wars so that it could undermine the USSR's international image; Beijing sought to use the war to draw Washington closer to the Chinese side and thereby place the PRC as the dominant regime in Indochina and the broader Communist Bloc.[14] A post-war conference report made by Deng himself—which was only leaked in 2013—corroborates Kissinger's argument. Zhang Xiaoming, drawing upon the Brzezinski records, argues that Deng wanted to use the war against Vietnam as proof of Beijing's role as a forerunner in the global anti-Soviet struggle. This paper further develops the analyses of Kissinger and Zhang to accurately capture America's role in China's decision-making process; moreover, it suggests that—along with the international context that shaped Beijing's decision to attack—Deng sought to legitimize his leadership and actualize his policies through generating public support by waging a successful attack. In essence, this paper emphasizes that Beijing's calculation cannot be explained by one single hypothesis; rather, it proposes that Beijing's ultimate goal in the Sino-Vietnamese War was to safeguard China's modernization program—which was hinged

[13] Archivist Brittany Parris to author, Feb 1, 2018, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[14] Kissinger, 340.

upon a positive relationship with the U.S.—by preventing a potential encirclement of the country by the USSR and SRV.

China Attacks Vietnam

On February 18, 1979, the *People's Daily* published an editorial titled, "Fight Back with Valor to Safeguard the Border Area," which outlines the causes behind PLA's offensive.[15] The editorial states that the intrusion had been a direct response to the over 700 border provocations directed by the Vietnamese authority in the six months prior that resulted in the deaths and injuries of over 300 Chinese nationals. Moreover, the editorial also cites Hanoi's state-sanctioned expulsion of ethnic Chinese in Vietnam as another reason behind the attack. Together, these two explanations constituted what the editorial refers to as an "insane anti-China scheme" designed by Hanoi.[16] From the perspective of the Chinese leadership, this hyperbolic portrayal was justified since Vietnamese leaders referred to China as its arch enemy at the June 1978 Politburo meeting of the Vietnamese Communist Party (VCP). The tone of the editorial conveys a heavy resentment toward what Beijing saw as Vietnam's infidelity, especially considering the economic and military aid China offered to the DRV during the Second Indochina War. The language also accentuates the fact that Beijing had restrained from resorting to military means for a long time and that Hanoi's ignorance left it no other option but to strike back. The editorial quotes Mao Zedong's famous words: "We will not attack unless we are attacked; if we are attacked, we will certainly counterattack."[17]

The agitative nature of this specific editorial makes it reasonable to speculate that it sought to legitimize China's military operation by garnering support from its domestic and international audiences. However, the content of the editorial contrasts the thought processes of Chinese leadership. One apparent evidence of such a discrepancy can be observed through the scale of the offensive itself. While the editorial defines PRC's attack as an operation for border protection carried out by defense units, Beijing effectively mobilized over 200,000 regular PLA troops; some of the units were even assembled from several inland military districts.[18] The enormous scale of the Chinese assault suggests that the perceived risks of Beijing in the war were far more serious than any of the explanations given in the editorial.

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[15] "Fenqi Huanji Baowei Bianjiang," *People's Daily,* February 18, 1979, *People's Daily* Database. http://58.68.146.102/rmrb/20171207/1code=2. (Accessed October 24, 2017).

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Edward C. O'Dowd, *Chinese Military Strategy in the Third Indochina War—The Last Maoist War* (New York: Routledge, 2007) 51; also see, Zhang, 71.

Conversations between Chinese officials and their foreign counterparts, as well as earlier *People's Daily* editorials, help to construct a more accurate image of Beijing's determination to attack Vietnam. The PRC made explicit its concerns over expanding Vietnamese power in Indochina as early as May of 1978, when Brzezinski—Carter's National Security Advisor—visited Beijing.[19] By that time, Hanoi had already fought two border disputes, one against China and the other against Cambodia; moreover, it had started to expel Chinese nationals and ethnic Chinese from Vietnam.[20] These acts by Vietnam, however, were never China's primary concern; rather, Chinese leadership regarded such acts as indicative of the ultimate objectives behind their communist neighbor's behavior.[21]

Beijing firmly believed that Hanoi had been flirting with expansionist nationalism since the establishment of the SRV; Vietnamese presence in Laos, for example, was interpreted by Chinese leadership as clear evidence of Vietnam's desire for expansionism. Owing to Laotian communists' reliance on the DRV during the Second Indochina War as well as the Laotian Civil War, Vietnamese influence in Laos strengthened considerably in the '50s and '60s.[22] In July of 1977, however, the Vietnamese capitalized on its influence by concluding the Lao-Vietnamese Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, which—as claimed by PRC Foreign Minister Huang Hua—allowed People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) troops to station themselves in Laos, and granted Vietnamese advisors the authority to supervise "every level and every department of the Laotian government."[23] Beijing interpreted Laos as under the "total control" of Vietnam and, therefore, perceived Hanoi's actions as an aggressive attempt at extending its influence in the region.[24] Moreover, Vietnam's hostility toward Cambodia, which had been steadily increasing since 1975, was seen by Beijing as simply another case of a Vietnamese expansionist policy.[25]

Senior leaders in Beijing had not forgotten Ho Chi Minh's aspiration to establish a greater Indochinese federation during the First Indochina War in late 40s and early 50s. Deng even believed that Hanoi's ideal federation would "go beyond the three countries of the former French Indochina but also eventually include the entire Association of Southeast

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[19] "Memorandum of Conversation between Huang Hua and Zbigniew Brzezinski," May 21, 1978, Geographic Files, container 9, Brzezinski Collection, Jimmy Carter Presidential Archive, 10.

[20] Zhang, 37.

[21] "Memo of Conversation between Huang and Brzezinski." May 21, 1978, Brzezinski Collection, 10.

[22] Norman B. Hannah, *The Key to Failure—Laos and the Vietnam War* (New York: Madison Books, 1987), 112-153.

[23] "Memo of Conversation between Huang and Brzezinski." May 21, 1978, Brzezinski Collection, 10.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid., 11.

Asian Nations (ASEAN)."[26] Beijing unilaterally denounced the notion of a Vietnam-controlled Indochinese federation. A *People's Daily* editorial of the events in November of 1978 reiterates Vietnam's national chauvinism (民族沙文主义), indicating that Vietnam saw itself as the "superior race" in Indochina and deserving of dominion over the entirety of Southeast Asia.[27] Beijing was also wary of Vietnam's increasingly apparent desire to claim sovereignty over the Tonkin Gulf and the South China Sea.[28] These factors, alongside Hanoi's *de facto* control of Laos, solidified the Chinese leadership's impression of Vietnamese intention in initiating border clashes as well as expulsion of Chinese nationals and ethnic Chinese.[29] In a meeting between U.S. and Chinese leadership in May 1978, Huang told Brzezinski that Hanoi's design effectively constituted a quest for regional hegemony, which Huang described as the origin of all problems in Indochina.[30] The portrayal of Vietnam as a rogue state pursuing an aggressive policy of expansionism at the expense of its regional neighbors perfectly aligned with Beijing's overall foreign policy of anti-hegemonism, providing Beijing with a legitimate reason to oppose Hanoi even if opposition entailed military operation.

Beijing's interpretation of Vietnamese intentions included those of the Soviet Union as, given the substantial Soviet influence in Vietnam dating back to the 1950s, Chinese vigilance to the influence of USSR in Indochina was inevitable. A late 1978 editorial of the *People's Daily* presents a sophisticated illustration of the Soviet factor in Indochina.[31] The editorial claims that the actions of Moscow, in a similar fashion as Hanoi, were motivated by national chauvinism, advancing a similar narrative of the communist neighbor's desire for regional and eventually global hegemony. According to the editorial, Hanoi served as an important asset to Moscow's position in Indochina and Southeast Asia; the Kremlin, as the "expert" of political subversion and armed invasion, stands as the primary supplier of resources necessary for Vietnam to take over Indochina.[32] For the Chinese leadership, the Soviet-Vietnamese Treaty was an apparent military alliance that had rendered Vietnam the

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[26] "Memorandum of Conversation between Deng Xiaoping and Zbigniew Brzezinski," May 21, 1978, Geographic Files, container 9, Brzezinski Collection, Jimmy Carter Presidential Archive, 2.

[27] "Yuenan Dangju Xiang Ganshenme," *People's Daily,* November 10, 1978, *People's Daily* Database. http://58.68.146.102/rmrb/20171207/1code=2 (Accessed October 24, 2017).

[28] Zhang, 37.

[29] "Women de Rennai shi Youxiandu de" *People's Daily,* December 25, 1978, *People's Daily* Database. http://58.68.146.102/rmrb/20171207/1code=2 (Accessed October 24, 2017).

[30] "Memo of Conversation between Huang and Brzezinski," May 21, 1978, Brzezinski Collection, 10.

[31] "Suyue Baquan Zhuyizhe Yuanxingbilu," *People's Daily,* December 16, 1978, *People's Daily* Database. http://58.68.146.102/rmrb/20171207/1code=2 (Accessed October 24, 2017).

[32] Ibid.

"Cuba of the Orient."[33] Considering Huang informed Brzezinski in May of 1978 that Beijing understood Cuba as a complete Soviet proxy—or "shock force" to Moscow's expansions—the late 1978 editorial's description of Vietnam as the "Cuba of the Orient" confirms that Beijing regarded its neighbor as such a "shock force" as well.[34] The Chinese leaders deemed Moscow and Hanoi as both bounded by overlapping interests in hegemonic expansion in Southeast Asia.

In Deng's view, the shared priorities of Hanoi and Moscow were exactly what warranted a large-scale, cross-border military offensive against Vietnam, as the two communist neighbors threatened Deng's plan of modernization by possible encirclement.[35] In his private meeting with President Jimmy Carter on January 29, 1979, Deng communicated his calculation of the situation to the U.S., depicting the planned Chinese offensive as a last resort. Deng first appealed to American leaders' sense of ethics, accentuating secondary reasons behind a Chinese attack—such as the need to solve constant border provocations, the expulsion of ethnic Chinese from Vietnam, and China's responsibility as a good neighbor to support the Cambodian people's sovereignty. Deng also spent the majority of the meeting explaining the Soviet design, reiterating that "Soviet strategic dispositions must be disrupted" to thwart its possible dominance Southeast Asia.[36] Concerning Vietnam, Deng held a similar attitude, stating that "if we do not punish them [the Vietnamese], their violent actions will continue on a greater scale."[37]

Although Deng linked Vietnamese expansionism with the Soviet global design, Chinese accentuation of the Soviet-Vietnamese connection was not simply rooted in the desire to gain U.S. approval of the 1979 offensive; rather, evidence suggests that Chinese leadership genuinely regarded the alliance as a global threat beyond Indochina.[38] Beijing reasoned that if Vietnam were allowed to establish an Indochinese federation within Moscow's Asian Collective Security System framework, Vietnam would be able to concentrate its resources in Indochina to mount a challenge against Thailand. The fall of Thailand entailed Soviet-backed Vietnam standing at the doorstep of Malaysia, then Indonesia, Singapore and so on, which threatened the existence of all ASEAN countries and

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[33] "Memo of Conversation between Deng and Carter," January 29, 1979, Brzezinski Collection; "Suyue Baquan Zhuyizhe Yuanxingbilu,"December 16, 1978, *People's Daily*.

[34] "Suyue Baquan Zhuyizhe Yuanxingbilu," December 16, 1978, *People's Daily*.

[35] "Memo of Conversation between Deng and Carter." January 29, 1979, Brzezinski Collection.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

[38] "Sulian Quanqiuzhanlue de Xindongxiang," *People's Daily,* September 19, 1978, *People's Daily* Database. http://58.68.146.102/rmrb/20171207/1code=2 (Accessed Oct 24, 2017).

the neutrality of Southeast Asia. Beijing understood that, for Moscow, a Southeast Asia under Vietnamese domination represented the Soviet Union's control over the critical juncture between the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean, from which a joint military operation could flank the Middle East and even Europe.[39] As a result, Soviet presence in Vietnam was of immediate concern to China, evidenced by Chinese diplomats making constant inquiries to the U.S. about military developments of USSR in the Tonkin Gulf.[40] For example, China's Vice Premier Geng Biao told Brzezinski in 1980 that Beijing saw the Soviets as trying to "push southward" after failing to advance west toward Europe and east through Korea as well as Japan to the Pacific.[41] According to Geng, Moscow's plan for southward expansion had two prongs: one through Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan toward the Persian Gulf and the other through Vietnam into Southeast Asia. Beijing reasoned that both paths had to be eliminated to prevent the global power balance tilting toward Moscow. Considering Geng's viewpoints in 1980, the Chinese rationale in early 1979 likely maintained the same perspectives.

One should not, however, immediately make the verdict that halting Soviet-backed Vietnamese advancement in Southeast Asia was the sole reason behind the Chinese offensive. Deng indeed depicted the interruption of Vietnamese expansion as a strategic move that would also impede Moscow's pursuit of global dominion.[42] However, records of Deng's meetings with U.S. leaders include minimal, if not any, mention of what China were to gain from its 1979 offensive, suggesting that China wanted the U.S. to leave the meeting with a specific view of the situation in Indochina—one that illustrated China as a peaceful nation interested in safeguarding the sovereignty of itself and its neighbors. In January of 1979, Deng told Brzezinski: "we want a tranquil border," and nothing more.[43] Moreover, Deng specifically framed Vietnamese expansionism as a threat to ASEAN countries, not just China. He stressed in particular how "a majority of the ASEAN countries assessed this [the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia] an extremely grave matter."[44] Given that the ASEAN countries were not formally aligned with the Soviet Union, and that they held an intrinsic importance to U.S. balancing in the region, China's use of the ASEAN nations in describing the circumstances in Southeast Asia to the Americans is fitting. In actuality, the sovereignty

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[39] Ibid.

[40] "Zbigniew Brzezinski Report to the President on China Visit (May 20-23)," May 25, 1978, *Brzezinski Collection*, Geographic Files, container 3, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[41] "Memorandum of Conversation between PRC Vice Premier Geng Biao and Zbigniew Brzeziński," May 29, 1980, Geographic Files, container 9, Brzezinski Collection, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[42] Ibid.

[43] "Memo of Conversation between Deng and Carter," January 29, 1979, Brzezinski Collection.

[44] Ibid.

of other nations in the face of growing Soviet influence was never of much concern to China. Of all Soviet-led developments during the Cold War, only the Soviet-backed Vietnamese expansion provoked such a severe reaction from Beijing. As previously noted, China appealed to American leaders' sense of global ethics, as Deng asked Carter for "moral support in the international field" in their meeting of January 29, 1979.[45] As Deng calculated accurately, portraying China's offensive as a necessary response to the imperiled sovereignty and neutrality of ASEAN countries stood a better chance in acquiring Washington's support. In reality, the veiled rationale of Chinese leadership rested with other intentions, one of which concerned the Democratic Kampuchea.

In his conversation with Carter, Deng mentioned Cambodia as the first victim of the Soviet-Vietnamese expansion in Indochina; according to the Chinese leader, the only connection between China and Cambodia came from the former's moral responsibility to protect the latter's sovereignty and independence.[46] This, of course, was a massive understatement of the significance of Cambodia to Beijing, but Deng had likely spoken as such to avoid discussing the violent domestic policies of the Khmer Rouge. In reality, Beijing's close ties with Cambodia dated back to 1956, when King Sihanouk provided political support to Beijing, particularly over the issue over Taiwan, in return for forty million dollars of Chinese economic aid.[47] This *de facto* alliance survived through the Khmer Rouge regime. During the three years of intense clashes between Vietnam and Cambodia from 1975 to 1978, China stood firmly on the side of Phnom Penh. Immediately after the start of PAVN's second phase of offensive into Cambodia on December 15, 1978, the *People's Daily* published an clearly pro-Cambodian editorial in which the editors extoll the fighting spirit of the Cambodian people and reaffirm Beijing's support of the Pol Pot regime.[48]

Beijing's unconditional support of the Khmer Rouge was not about loyalty to a long-lasting friendship. During Huang's conversation with Brzezinski in May 1978, the Chinese Foreign Minister clarified that "the existence of an independent Cambodia in the region" served crucial strategic interests in the wake of Vietnamese expansion in Indochina.[49] Beijing did not simply perceive Cambodia as a first victim of Vietnam's Soviet-sponsored expansion; rather, Cambodia was the last country holding out in Indochina.[50] Huang

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[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.

[47] David Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History: Politics, War and Revolutions since 1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991) 86-95.

[48] "Suyue Baquan Zhuyizhe Yuanxingbilu," *People's Daily* (Beijing: December 16, 1978).

[49] "Memo of Conversation between Huang and Brzezinski," May 21, 1978, Brzezinski Collection, 10.

[50] "Memo of Conversation between Geng and Brzezinski," May 29, 1980, Brzezinski Collection, 6.

responded by explicitly denouncing Washington's silence toward Vietnamese intrusion of Cambodian territory as well as U.S. criticism of human rights violations by the Khmer Rouge.[51] While China desired to establish a positive relationship with the U.S. through meetings such as those between Huang and Brzezinski, the possible souring of relations by criticizing the U.S. highlights the strategic value of Cambodian sovereignty to Beijing.

Thus, there is validity to historical analyses that cite the Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia as one of the main objectives of the Sino-Vietnamese War.[52] Chinese demands in postwar negotiations between PRC and SRV illuminate confirm this point, as a belligerent's demands at post-war negotiations often reflect why it engaged in warfare in the first place. Yang Gongsu, the last PRC ambassador to Hanoi before the war broke out in February, recalls in his memoir, *Ninety Years of Winds and Rains*, that the glaring disagreement between China and Vietnam in their May negotiation emerged from the Cambodian issue. Yang firmly insisted on Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia as Deng had instructed him to do so.[53] This suggests that Beijing attacked, in part, to force Vietnam to withdraw from Cambodia since it saw the Khmer Rouge regime as the last force in Indochina capable of containing Vietnamese expansionism. Beijing's postwar demand for Vietnamese withdrawal, however, embraced more than just the preservation of the Pol Pot regime. During the negotiation, Beijing outlined several conditions for further negotiation that was based on the Panchsheel Treaty of 1954, proposed by Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai and Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru. These conditions were: 1) to not seek hegemony of any form in Southeast Asia; 2) to not militarily occupy any country; 3) to not establish military bases in other countries; and 4) to not provide military bases for other countries.[54] The first three points reveal that China's demand for Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia arose from Beijing's desire to thwart Vietnamese expansionism. The last point illuminates Beijing's perception of Vietnam as a Soviet proxy. Therefore, Beijing's real rationale behind its demand for Vietnamese withdrawal embraces an objective of impeding Vietnamese expansionism and, more importantly, USSR presence in Southeast Asia.

Conversely, one could argue that China waged war to bring Hanoi to the negotiation table in the first place, since Beijing had failed to do so prior to 1979. After all, as Yang recalls in his memoir, the inclusion of an anti-hegemony clause and Vietnam's withdrawal

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[51] "Memo of Conversation between Huang and Brzezinski," May 21, 1978, Brzezinski Collection, 11.

[52] O'Dowd, *Chinese Military Strategy*, 6; Gareth Porter, "The Sino-Vietnamese Conflict in Southeast Asia," *Current History*, xlv (December 1978) 193.

[53] Yang Gongsu, *Cangsang Jiushinian*, 207.

[54] Ibid.

from Cambodia were both presented as prerequisites for negotiation.[55] This meant that, for Hanoi to resolve any problems with China as well as to avoid any future attacks, it had to oppose regional hegemony by giving up its vision of an Indochinese federation as well as standing up against the Soviet Union.[56]

Apart from its opposition to dominance by its communist counterparts, national security also motivated China to break the Soviet-Vietnamese bond, owing to the anxiety of encirclement. As noted previously, Beijing interpreted the Soviet-Vietnamese Treaty of Friendship as a *de facto* military alliance. Given the shared borders between the PRC, the USSR, and the SRV, such an alliance signified a lethal threat in multiple dimensions. For example, U.S. intelligence reports provided to Chinese leadership indicated that the Soviet Red Army had 54 divisions along the Sino-Soviet border.[57] Considering the Red Army's tanks surpassed those of the PLA in combat and size, the USSR held the upper hand in land warfare. Moreover, the topography of northern China—the majority of which were vast plains conducive to the maneuver of large-scale armoured and motorized operations—rendered the city of Beijing especially vulnerable since it was located only 500 kilometers away from the Sino-Soviet border. Facing such unfortunate conditions in the north, Chinese leadership knew the country could not afford another enemy in the south. A potential coordinated attack by the USSR and the SRV would pose a near-impossible challenge to the PLA's military capacity. Thus, for the PRC, attacking Vietnam seemed the only way in which this strategic encirclement could be prevented.[58]

Coupled with national security, a possible Soviet-Vietnamese encirclement also imperiled Deng's domestic programs of modernization and industrialization—both outlined as the nation's top priorities since the new leadership emerged in Beijing. The various editorials in *People's Daily* addressing Vietnamese and Soviet expansionism mention that China was engaged in domestic reconstruction that necessitated a stable environment, home and abroad.[59] These editorials, however, ignore the major implications behind a Soviet-Vietnamese alliance that motivated Chinese leadership to attack in 1979, including Vietnam's possible annexation of Cambodia and the subsequently likely encirclement which would undermine Deng's plan for modernization. Rather, the editorials simply cite Vietnam's border provocations as a source of regional instability that required uprooting. In

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[55] Ibid., 208.

[56] "Memo of Conversation between Geng and Brzezinski," May 29, 1980, Brzezinski Collection, 6.

[57] "Sino-Soviet," DCI Briefing, January 23, 1979, *China and U.S. Intelligence, 1945-1990*, Digital National Security Archive.

[58] "Suyue Baquan Zhuyizhe Yuanxingbilu," *People's Daily* (Beijing: December 16, 1978).

[59] "Women de Rennai shi Youxiandu de," *People's Daily* (Beijing: December 25, 1978); "Yuenan Dangju Xiang Ganshenme?" November 10, 1978, *People's Daily;* "Fenqi Huanji Baowei Bianjiang," *People's Daily* (Beijing: February 18, 1979).

reality, encirclement would have forced China to keep its military training and production at maximum capacity, severely jeopardizing modernization projects by lowering finances available for boosting peacetime civilian industries.

Furthermore, a Soviet-Vietnamese encirclement also represented a threat to foreign financial investments and global trade, which Beijing had been actively seeking from the U.S., Europe, and Japan.[60] Considering foreign investors were more likely to support business projects free from possible roadblocks, a possible occupation of any Chinese territory would have inevitably turned away western capital from flowing into China. In addition, if Soviet-sponsored Vietnam were to dominate Southeast Asia, loss of southern trade routes would have been imminent and disastrous to Chinese modernization efforts as trade routes through northern provinces of China were already blocked by the Soviet Union. Rapidly expanding into Afghanistan and India, the USSR had refused China open access to the Middle East and the Indian Ocean. A hostile Vietnamese presence in Southeast Asia entailed a near-total elimination of trade with the Middle East and the Indian Ocean through the Malacca Strait, leaving Japan the only channel through which Beijing could bypass encirclement. Yet, considering Japan was also under diplomatic pressure from the Soviet Union at the time, Beijing risked seclusion from the world economy if Soviet-Vietnamese encirclement were to become reality.[61]

Conclusion

China's decision to strike Vietnam in 1979 embraced regional and global considerations. The rationale was multifaceted: it focused on both short-term and long-term threats from Vietnam as well as the Soviet Union. On a regional level, the continued border provocations by Vietnam proved reason enough to justify an attack. On a global level, the USSR's support of the SRV provided legitimacy to a Chinese offensive, as all major western powers held an anti-Soviet stance by the dawn of the '80s. In other words, China fought the war to safeguard national security and domestic programs, mainly because the war fit the international narrative of opposing Soviet hegemony. Thus, the analysis of Beijing's strategic calculations behind its war decision carries two historical implications.

One, the very fact that China launched such a large-scale offensive against Vietnam exposes the widespread oversimplification of the Cold War as a binary opposition between two ideologies—the capitalist west and communist east—and rejects the characterization of each side as a monolith. The Sino-Vietnamese War became one of the main proofs of extant

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[60] National Foreign Assessment Center, "Overview of Chinese Economy," January 1979, *NSA Files*, Brzezinski Collection, Container 3, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library, 2-3.

[61] "Memo of Conversation between Huang and Brzezinski," May 21, 1978, Brzezinski Collection, 11.

tensions within the Communist Bloc, highlighting the prevalent misconceptions embraced by several U.S. administrations. The notion of international Communism, promoted by Truman and Eisenhower, is one example. These administrations ignorantly believed—or strategically propagandized—that either all communist countries were controlled by the Kremlin or that Communism itself was invariably evil, always aiming toward a violent world revolution. Archival evidence disproves such interpretations, and highlights communist regimes as often being rational players in the theater of international politics with numerous differences in their aspirations—ideological and political. Moreover, Beijing's tumultuous relationship and eventual war with Hanoi reveals the dynamic between ideology and *realpolitik* within Chinese leadership. In previous Cold War conflicts in Asia—like the Korean War—China and the Soviet Union fought western forces together. In the case of the Sino-Vietnamese War, the PRC showed that while political interests shape the country's ideological stance, national ideologies rarely have greater influence on political aims.

Two, although the Sino-Vietnamese War occurred several decades ago, it can still serve as a blueprint of how China might deal with its neighbors in any future military conflicts—regional or global. In the past few years, the South China Sea has once again become a source of tension within South East Asia as well as between China and western powers. While the advent of new weaponry like the Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) continues to globalize warfare, direct combat between China and western powers is unlikely for a number of reasons. First, the mutually assured destruction doctrine of nuclear warfare served as sufficient for the Cold War to remain cold and there are no signs of a substantial reverse on nuclear policy. Second, proxy conflicts, cyber wars, and other forms of indirect engagements have become the primary mechanism of warfare since the dawn of the Cold War. Lastly, the four major armed conflicts that the PRC engaged in during the Cold War—the Korean War, the Sino-Indian Border War, the Sino-Soviet border clash, and the Sino-Vietnamese War—suggest that geographical proximity will remain dominant in dictating any offensive decision by China.

Ultimately, this paper only addresses one aspect of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War—Beijing's strategic calculations behind its war decision based on China's perception of domestic, regional, and global developments. It attempts to put the readers into the perspective of Chinese leadership at the time to reconstruct the world as they saw it and reveal their rationale. Owing to the particular perspective of this project, however, it inevitably embraces shortcomings, such as the absence of discussion regarding why both sides claimed victory after the 1979 war or how this particular conflict might have influenced those that followed. Moreover, other issues—such as the scarcity of primary sources from Chinese archives—further limits the depth and scope of this paper. Thus, any

future declassifications of archival records or discoveries of new documents will benefit further research and may yield more accurate conclusions.

QUEEN VICTORIA'S DIAMOND JUBILEE

The Parade that Restored the British Monarchy

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Abstract

During Queen Victoria's reign in the 19th century, the fading presence of the monarch after her husband's death and the inherent economic disparity between socioeconomic classes caused great popular discontent. This paper examines how the British political leadership used the sovereign as a tool to assuage both developments and unify the people with the celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. By tracing the jubilee procession route, this study considers the role of London's urban landscape and Britain's imperial dominions as key contributors to the success of royal ceremonial display. In addition, the paper analyzes how members of different socioeconomic classes in London perceived the celebration, comparing public sentiments from before and after the ceremony expressed in various historical newspapers as well as diary entries.

Introduction

On June 22, 1897, London celebrated its monarch's sixty-year reign with Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Londoners decked their streets with flags, banners, and flowers. Glitz and splendor transformed the English capital into a sparkling stage for their Queen.[1] The royal procession sensationalized the celebration, progressing through the neighborhoods North and South of the Thames, the longest route in British history. It commenced with the military procession, followed by European, Colonial, and British royalty. Dressed in official, bright red military uniforms and decorated with shiny medals and honors, soldiers on horses headed the parade as masses of people cheered on. The crowd could not restrain its enthusiasm when the Queen appeared in a large open carriage, modestly dressed in a black costume and carrying a white parasol.[2] On the surface, the Diamond Jubilee procession seemed merely to resemble a grande occasion that glorified the

[1] See Image 4 and Image 5 in the *Appendix* at the end of this article.

[2] "The Diamond Jubilee," *The Times* (London: June 23, 1897) 9-14.

national pride and imperial success embodied by Queen Victoria. However, behind the scenes, the British political leadership had orchestrated the parade as a shrewd ploy for solidifying power.

By 1987, Great Britain was faced with a monarchical and social crisis. Following Queen Victoria's beloved husband and political advisor Albert's death, the widow mourned in seclusion and withdrew from her official duties. Despite backlash from the masses and increasing republican sentiments, she refused to return to the public stage.[3] Concurrently, the lower classes suffered in worsened conditions facilitated by the Industrial Revolution. The poor demanded an improvement of the state of their neighborhoods, but the government dismissed them.[4] To avoid a complete political and social breakdown of the country, the ministers required a prompt and efficient solution. On one hand, the urban space of London intensified the persisting class conflict between the nobility and the working class. On the other hand, it also served as the only location where these tensions could be relieved. Using royal ceremonies, the cabinet hoped to remedy the loosening connection between the public and the monarchy and government. This process necessitated multiple attempts to achieve the cabinet's goal, finally culminating in the Diamond Jubilee. This paper argues that, based on Prime Minister William Gladstone's planning of the 1872 thanksgiving procession, the Jubilee's parade route used London's urban dynamics to unite the people. To achieve this national unity, the British political leadership staged a"supra-hierarchical" event, using its urban socio-economic geography, in which the wealthiest and poorest neighborhoods were packed tightly into the small city space. The ceremony, emphasizing Imperial symbolism, functioned as an intricate social and political tool that reinvigorated the relationship between the sovereign and her people, potentially dampening all prospects of a national collapse. Newspaper articles as well as diary entries representative of London's class stratification illustrate different narratives around the image of social conditions in Britain and the image of the monarchy, yet all univocally praise British institutions after the Jubilee ceremony. The findings highlight the unique role of the monarchy as a political tool disguised as an apolitical actor in British national life, as reiterated in texts post-Glorious Revolution 1688.[5]

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[3] Gilles St. Aubyn, *Queen Victoria: A Portrait* (New York: Atheneum, 1992).

[4] Roy Porter, *London: A Social History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).

[5] The most famous text on the apolitical role of the monarchy is Walter Bagehot's *English Constitution,* in which he describes England's constitution as if it existed; he devotes multiple sections on how power is divided between the monarchy and the government—highlighting the 'apoliticalness' of the sovereign following the loss of absolute power as a result of the Glorious Revolution in 1688.

Historical Context

Before the Diamond Jubilee ceremony in 1897, Queen Victoria's reputation as Britain's female monarch did not enjoy consistently favorable support from the people. She relied heavily on her husband Albert both as a political advisor and an emotional chaperon, steering her attention towards social causes, which traditional politicians ignored. His death crippled her perceived capabilities as a monarch *for* the people and thus also her popularity.[6] Although she enjoyed a successful reign with Albert by her side, his early death in 1861 as well as her prolonged and excessive grief hindered her from fulfilling the public expectations of a sovereign. Her practical incapacity gravely upset her subjects and threatened the already fragile status of her rule. Ascending to the throne at only eighteen years of age, the Queen confronted powerful figures, superior in age and experience, who watched her every move for opportune weakness. In the first years of her rule, she heavily relied on the guidance of Prime Minister Lord William Melbourne, for which the Tories notoriously criticized her. After she married Albert in 1840, he led her through political matters, much to the satisfaction of the political leadership.[7] But such careless bliss did not last; after twenty-one years of marriage, Albert fell ill and died suddenly, leaving Victoria heartbroken. She isolated herself to Osborne and Balmoral, fulfilling no more than the bare minimum of her public duties in London—namely, giving the speech at the opening of Parliament, receiving foreign representatives, and participating in ceremonial events—all of which she completed insipidly.[8]

With Albert's death, Queen Victoria not only lost the love of her life but also her key political advisor. Albert had been greatly concerned with the disparity between classes in Britain whereas, in contrast, her mentor Lord Melbourne—who cared little about classes below the nobility—deliberately steered Queen Victoria away from the sights of social issues, such as the ongoing class conflict as well as the horrid living conditions of the working classes in London.[9] Unlike Lord Melbourne and the majority of politicians, Albert actively engaged in domestic affairs; the conditions of workhouses as well as the housing situation of the lower classes horrified him, and the political leadership and municipal authorities' negligence shocked Albert even more.[10] Unofficially but undeniably occupying the position of co-regent of Great Britain, Albert committed to transforming his wife into a

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[6] Aubyn, 151-152.

[7] Ibid., 80-145; Daphne Bennett, *King Without A Crown: Albert, Prince Consort of England, 1819-1861* (New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1977) 136.

[8] Aubyn, 152.

[9] Ibid., 117-118.

[10] Bennett, 101.

more socially conscious monarch. The Prince's biography *King Without A Crown* claims that he successfully influenced his wife's reign to convert it into one of the "few [that] had shown an interest in social conditions at home."[11] Albert taught the Queen using the perspective he had gained while visiting the working houses and encouraged her to organize charity events for helping the poor. Already in the 1840s, he recognized "how near violence was to the surface of society; poverty, unemployment and the callousness of employers were to him the roots of discontent, and the way to forestall violence was to eradicate them."[12] Following the death of Albert, however, Queen Victoria retreated from the public eye; the same aristocratic politicians, concerned with all but the increasingly dire conditions of the lower classes, surrounded the grief-stricken monarch again.

In the meantime, Great Britain gleamed as the most powerful international and imperial power through her consolidation of power in India as well as her continuous expansion eastward into Asia. The Victorian era witnessed vast colonial acquisitions accompanied by massive increases in the volume of international trade Within the Victorian century, trade increased from 8 million pound sterling in 1815 to 120 million pound sterling in 1913.[13] As Britain prospered economically, her imperial holdings symbolized the physical manifestation of power accompanying her immense wealth—the British political leadership reminded its citizens on every occasion of these great national accomplishments.[14] The unceasing success of British international hegemony constantly reinforced a sense of superiority allowed the idea of empire to unify with the British identity.[15] A link between imperialism and the monarchy, perpetuated by royal ceremonies, made Queen Victoria the face of this great accomplishment. While the domestic perception of her as sovereign ruler over the British people crumbled, the international image of Queen Victoria as the ruler of the world's largest empire flourished.

Historical Analysis/Data

Newspaper articles and personal accounts offer the contemporary reader a glimpse into the perspective on historical events of any given time period as well as an insight into how a person perceived and judged such events. Historically, literacy has acted as a huge limitation on who could obtain information and also determined the audience for whom the the

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[11] Ibid., 168.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Andrew Porter, *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume III: The Nineteenth Century,* ed. Andrew Porter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 6.

[14] Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) 19, 92.

[15] Ibid., 92-93.

newspapers were writing. By the end of the 19th century, however, the illiteracy rate in Britain was close to zero.[16] Another constraint constituted financial flexibility. The duties levied on newspapers, ranging from stamp to paper duties, precluded many working class or lower class people.[17] This paper examines newspaper articles from the *Times, Reynold's Newspaper,* and the *South London Press,* all of which had distinct readerships. Because they appeal to different audiences, their content interpreted events differently, which their articles and choice of topics reflect. The *Times*'s broad clientele—though substantially from the upper classes—demanded a liberal and rather government-friendly to neutral tone in its writing; in contrast, *Reynolds Newspaper* catered explicitly to government-critical, anti-monarchical, and republican readers.[18] The local newspaper of the British capital, *South London Press,* primarily addressed the southern boroughs of London whose readers were largely the working class inhabitants of Lambeth and Southwark.[19] Personal accounts include reports by Robert Woodger Bowers, a member of the working class, Lady Mary Monkswell, a member of the upper class, and even Queen Victoria herself. The contributors supplemented newspaper articles in shedding light on personal opinions regarding the proceedings. Combining these two sources provides valuable insight into how perceptions of the monarchy and the social situation developed parallel to the events that the political leadership orchestrated.

The absence of Queen Victoria from the public stage exasperated the political and social cleavages that simmered for a long time in Britain. Losing patience after three years of absence from the public eye, the irritated British people questioned her authority and fitness as their monarch. On the anniversary of Albert's death in 1864, the *London Times* bemoaned that "the living have their claims as well as the dead"—claims to a monarch who fulfilled her duties.[20] The article warned that for "a recluse to occupy the British throne, … a gradual weakening of authority which the Sovereign has been accustomed to exert" was unavoidable, alerting the Queen that she was beginning to lose the respect of the people, the foundation of her power.[21] "Her Majesty will think of her subjects' claims and the duties of her high station, and not to postpone them longer to the *indulgence* of an unavailing grief,"

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[16] David Mitch, "Education and Skill of the British Labour Force," In *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain, Vol. I: Industrialisation, 1700-1860,* eds. Roderick Floud and Paul Johnson, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 344.

[17] Ed King, "British Newspapers 1800-1860" *British Library Newspapers* (Detroit: Gale Cengage Learning, 2007) http://find.galegroup.com/bncn/topicguide/bncn_05.htm (Accessed Dec. 10. 2018).

[18] Ibid.

[19] "South London Press," *British Newspaper Archive.* https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/titles/south-london-press (Accessed Dec. 10. 2018).

[20] Editorial, *The Times,* (London: December 15, 1864) 8.

[21] Ibid.

the *Times* requested in the name of the people.[22] Two years later, when the Queen inspected the statue of her late husband's memorial, the *South London Press* ridiculed the statue as "the *only bait* that has any power to draw [her] from her seclusion."[23] The blatantly hostile tone of their complaints emphasized the urgency of her return. *Reynolds's Newspaper* and other newspapers even demanded her abdication if she did not resurface from her isolation at once.[24] However, such openly harsh reproaches did little to upend the Queen's state of mind, and the period of solitude ploughed on.

Simultaneously, her absence provided republican voices in the political sphere with a legitimate reason to attack the institution. Charles Dilke and Charles Bradlaugh, both Liberal party affiliates and radical politicians, spearheaded two major republican movements. They published works on the rationality of a republican form of statehood and delivered speeches across the country. In a speech to the working classes, Dilke deplored the monarchy's high expenditure using taxpayers' money to aliment the "vast number of totally useless officials" of the Royal Household who costed the public 131,000 pounds a year.[25] In Glasgow, Bradlaugh harangued an estimated 2,000 people on reasons to establish a republic and abolish the monarchy.[26] Their indictments of the monarchy resonated with parts of Britain's upper echelons as well as the general public. William Gladstone, leader of the Whigs, and Benjamin Disraeli, leader of the Tories, both concurred that a visible change in the monarch's attitude must surface soon before the public's discontent became irreversible.[27]

The monarchical crisis coincided with a time when class conflict was worsening; the city of London magnified this crisis as the proximity of the social classes within the limited urban space further increased. Studies on the Victorian era highlight how the "palaces and slums side by side" that shocked Albert protruded from the urban landscape of London.[28] The Victorian sociologist Charles Booth embarked on the highly ambitious task of measuring wealth and poverty throughout London in hopes of gaining a better understanding of how to fight poverty.[29] He conducted an extensive survey on different

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[22] Ibid. (*Italics* mine)

[23] "Notes on Passing Events," *South London Press,* (London: November 24, 1866) 1. (*Italics* mine)

[24] "Ruler or Regent," *Reynolds's Newspaper,* (London: April 27, 1879) 3.

[25] "Parliament Out of Session," *The Times,* (London: November 9, 1871) 6.

[26] "Republicanism in Glasgow," *The Times*, (London: April 2, 1872) 8.

[27] J.A. Thompson and Arthur Mejia, Jr., *The Modern British Monarchy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1971) 11-15.

[28] Ibid., 55.

[29] "Charles Booth," *Encyclopedia Britannica.* https://www.britannica.com/biography/Charles-Booth (Accessed Nov. 19. 2018).

social classes in London and constructed a virtual map that displayed the neighborhoods of London in different colors depending on social class.[30] The different colors visually separated the small urban space into three parts: the upper classes and nobility around Hyde Park and Piccadilly, the middle class East of Piccadilly next to the City and the working classes in London's southern borough of Lambeth and Southwark. While the lower classes inhabited some streets in the City as well, what Booth labeled as the "vicious, semi-criminal...lowest class" conglomerated strikingly in the South of London. Even today, Booth's studies are praised for their attention to detail as well as their honorable aims and are regarded as a window to the actual conditions of Victorian London.[31]

Analyses of the different city districts of Victorian London highlight the reality that the same Londoners, depending on their social status, lived in completely different worlds that bore no resemblance to each other. In the affluent West End, large, terraced townhouses accommodated the nobility, which their servants and staff maintained. When they left their country houses and moved into the city during the social season, networking and mingling with other members of their class consumed the aristocrats' daily schedules. A specialist in London's historical geography from Durham University, Kathryn Wilkins, investigated London's upper class and found that leisurely activities, "such as balls, dances, concerts and dinners were purposefully designed to allow for social mixing and congregation."[32] Fittingly, the establishments in this relatively affluent neighborhood supported these socializing efforts: tea gardens, bowling-greens, and a suburban race course endowed their residential area.[33] The area the rich monopolized radiated an abundance of wealth which materialized in the urban features and structures of the West End, available for any person to admire.

In contrast, the lower classes suffered immensely under poverty and poor living conditions and ascribed the lack of improvement to the upper classes. Socialization bore completely different meanings in southern London. The rapid growth of the population in the nineteenth century bred the overcrowding of poorer districts, most severely in the district of Southwark.[34] "Dominated by a tangle of works and warehouses and infilled with slums," the South repudiated the ideals of comfortable living.[35] Instead of townhouses,

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[30] See *Image 1*.

[31] "Who was Charles Booth," *London School of Economics.* https://booth.lse.ac.uk/learn-more/who-was-charles-booth (Accessed Nov. 28. 2018)

[32] Kathryn Wilkins, "A Study of the dominance of the super-wealthy in London's West End during the nineteenth century," In *Geographies of the Super-Rich,* ed. Iain Hay (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd., 2013) 111-113.

[33] Porter, 212.

[34] Ibid., 186.

[35] Ibid., 222.

whole families packed a single room, "sleeping where they could find space on the floor, or five or six adults in the bed and the children in a row across the foot."[36] Sanitation was nonexistent; filth, disease, and suffering were commonplace.[37] A *South London Press* report chronicled that "poor wretches have hardly bread to eat" and that "it is so hard, so very hard, to believe in undeserved misfortune and sheer ill-luck."[38] In letters to the editors of the *Times*, the people turned to the Queen, believing that "the remedy lies in the hand of Her Majesty more than in those of any other person."[39] The lower classes lost faith in their local governments and instead appealed to their sovereign directly in a desperate effort to improve their lives. To their disappointment, however, she was hiding far away from London.

Envying the nobility's lavish lifestyle in such spatial proximity, the lower classes' dissatisfaction with their government's disregard for their suffering and hardships in the slums exploded in the second half of the nineteenth century. They despised the upper classes, finding it "very annoying" that "every year [widened] the great gulf fixed drop between the middle and the lower classes."[40] Such unhappiness manifested itself in protests, which often turned violent. The Chartist movements in 1839 and 1848 as well as the Reform Leagues in 1866 and 1867 organized protests that demanded voting rights for the working class. Suffrage was reserved for men owning property of a threshold value that virtually excluded the entire working class. Nevertheless, such concerns remained largely ignored. In 1867, the Reform Act addressed suffrage, which allowed only parts of the working class to vote. Only weeks before Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, the working classes demonstrated against unfair wages, rights, and living conditions in Hyde Park. A participant proclaimed "he would curse the Diamond Jubilee if nothing was done for the working classes and would say 'shame upon those 60 years'" because "there seemed to be nothing but to fight for their own class."[41] In 1897, political as well as social issues profoundly threatened the legitimacy of the British monarchy and stability in London. Great Britain desperately required a solution that could remedy both issues.

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[36] Liza Picard, *Victorian London: The Life of a City 1840-1870* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2005) 74.

[37] Ibid., 75-76.

[38] "The Wickedness of Poverty," *South London Press,* (London: November 6, 1880) 3.

[39] W.D.B. and T.H.M., letter to editor, "Worked to Death," *The Times,* (London: June 26, 1863) 8; also see, Sincere Well-wisher, letter to the editor, *The Times,* (London: September 1, 1863) 5.

[40] "Playing with Peril," *South London Press,* (London: November 6, 1880) 1; also see, "Notes on Current Topics," *Norfolk Chronicle,* (London: September 2, 1893) 7.

[41] "Labour Demonstration in Hyde Park," *The Times,* (London: May 3, 1897) 14.

The British political leadership—in particular, Prime Minister Gladstone—recognized the destabilizing effects of the social and political divisions; he made the first attempt at using royal ceremonies to appease these cleavages. Gladstone's plans for the Queen's thanksgiving procession established one of the most important precedents for royal ceremonies: acknowledging the role of the city as a significant actor through the emphasis of the procession-part of the ceremony. When the people publicly sympathized with the mourning Queen after her son, the Prince of Wales, fell ill in 1871, Gladstone jumped at the opportunity to revitalize the royal image. As a gesture of appreciation, the Prime Minister proposed to organize a grand thanksgiving service at St. Paul's Cathedral, believing that such a celebration would simultaneously rehabilitate the monarchy's general relations with the public. He insisted on a long procession, even defying Queen Victoria's wishes to shorten the time, and deliberately integrated the media to cater the event to a broader audience.[42] Within the ceremony, he particularly stressed her procession to the cathedral, of which "the observance would have the grace of being entirely voluntary," and involved the popular media.[43] He informed the *Times* about the details of the procession and agreed to *The Illustrated London News'* proposal to allow more people into St. Paul's Cathedral.[44] This way, he ensured that a broader spectrum of people would feel compelled to partake and would also have the ability to do so. People across social classes participated in and enjoyed the spectacle, achieving Gladstone's goal with overwhelming success.[45]

Gladstone's thanksgiving procession started the cumulative effort of the ongoing, rocky process of mending public opinion about the monarchy. In February of 1872, London witnessed the most spectacular royal show thus far, which the media further elevated and delivered to a broader audience beyond the nobility. Flags, flowers, garlands, wreathes, as well as crimson and gold cloths adorned London's streets; moreover, the cavalry and infantry contained "hard pressed masses from breaking all bounds."[46] The day following the ceremony, the *Times*'s four-page report on the event meticulously detailed every aspect of the procession and the service at St. Paul's Cathedral. "No monarch ever saw such a spectacle as Queen Victoria did," the *Times* declared on this occasion. Despite the long period of seclusion and public discontent, the people "spent [the great holiday] in manifestations of thankfulness and loyalty the genuineness of which no one can doubt."[47] The article even

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[42] Kuhn, 44.

[43] Gladstone cited in Kuhn, 41.

[44] Ibid., 44.

[45] Ibid., 46.

[46] "The National Thanksgiving Day," *The Times,* (London: February 28, 1872) 5-10.

[47] Ibid.

included reports of celebrations in different neighborhoods within, as well as cities and towns outside, the city of London, enabling its reader to relive the holiday in his or her mind.[48] Gladstone's effective reinvention of royal ceremonial tradition drew the blueprint for the Jubilee ceremonies that would constitute the decisive step in the rehabilitation process of the monarchy's status and national unity.

Nonetheless, the topics of the Queen's seclusion as well as the disproportionate poverty of her subjects reappeared in some newspapers, especially Liberal and republican ones. In 1882, *Reynolds's Newspaper* condemned her return to a state of isolation, ridiculing her as "something that lives in so complete seclusion, and about which is so little known." It asserted that "royalty, since the death of Albert the Consort, has been a dead letter."[49] Another article lamented that "few or none of the public duties of a monarch are performed by her."[50] At the same time, the *South London Press* revealed the conditions of the poverty-afflicted working class neighborhoods.[51] Overall, however, the number of critical articles shrunk significantly since the thanksgiving holiday in 1872.[52] By the time of the Diamond Jubilee, the planners of the ceremony recognized the tremendous potential of processions that could silence these dissenting voices.

To lay the criticism against class-based poverty and Victoria to rest for good, the political leadership took advantage of the great celebration of Queen Victoria's 60 year-long reign and achievements, using the lessons learned from Gladstone's planning of the 1872 thanksgiving parade. The Diamond Jubilee procession created special momentum by including the poor neighborhoods of Lambeth and Southwark that the upper classes avoided and looked down upon, intensifying the "unprecedented intimacy" that was so appealing to the people. The grandeur of the British Empire replaced the traditionally religious focus of the ceremony, which Gladstone initially intended as the unifying force. To highlight the diversity and the enormity of the Empire, Indian princes, officers, and colonial escorts as well as the Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand dominions constituted a large portion of the participants of the procession. The great number foreign representatives partaking in the procession reflected Great Britain's global influence and respect as a major global

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[48] Ibid.

[49] "Notes," *Reynolds's Newspaper,* (London: December 3, 1882) 5.

[50] "Our 'royal' family," *Reynolds's Newspaper,* (London: May 17, 1891) 4.

[51] See "The Wickedness of Poverty," *South London Press;* "Playing with peril," *South London Press;* and "Notes on Current Topics," *Norfolk Chronicle*.

[52] The frequency of keywords, such as "seclusion," "Queen Victoria," "Albert," "republic," and "dethrone" significantly decreased in newspapers after March 1, 1872, compared to before this date, see *British Newspaper Archives*. https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk.

superpower.[53] As seen in the "Map of the Route of the Procession" of the official *Illustrated Programme of The Royal Jubilee Procession*, starting at Buckingham Palace, all these participants galloped through the entire northern part of the city before crossing the London Bridge, travelling through the southern borough, and overpassing the Westminster Bridge to return to the Palace.[54] Overlapping this route with Booth's poverty map exposes that the procession even dared to pass some of the worst, "semi-criminal" neighborhoods.[55] The detour into the southern borough not only permitted the lower classes to engage in an event that had exclusively pertained to the nobility but, through the emphasis on the grandiosity of the British Empire, also built the people's confidence in their national self-image. The procession pushed class differences into the background as national pride, embodied in imperial symbols, and celebrations took the center stage.

Tensions still persisted between traditional beliefs of class-based separatism and national unity that were difficult to overcome for the political leadership. Although the commissioning of an illustrated program, as mentioned above, attended to the lower class's issue of illiteracy, discrimination against lower classes endured. Kuhn captures the mindset of the nobility in his analysis of Gladstone's belief that royal ceremonies were, in fact, only relevant to the upper classes, as they would trigger a trickle-down effect. The upper class would attempt to imitate the monarchy's behavior: because every class would mimic the behavior of the immediately above-standing class, Gladstone thought the effect would eventually permeate into the lowest classes.[56] The illustrated map, too, visually favored the northern part of London, the home of the upper classes, as sketches of elegant and elaborate buildings artistically represented the north, whereas a bleak, dark shadow depicted the southern borough.[57] However, although this map may appear skewed for a contemporary observer, a 19th century Londoner may have regarded it as a revolutionary route that, for the first time, entered the territory of the poor social classes. Remarkably, the planners of the Jubilee overcame their traditional beliefs. The new procession route connoted the transformation of the monarchy from an elite institution to a symbolic head of state for the people.

The Diamond Jubilee arose as a major national celebration on a scale never seen before in British history at the time. At 11am, before departing from Buckingham Palace for the

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[53] "The Procession," *Illustrated Programme of The Royal Jubilee Procession* (London: Publishing Office, 190, Strand, 1897).

[54] See *Image 2*.

[55] See *Image 3*.

[56] Kuhn, 50, 54.

[57] See *Image 2*.

grand procession through London, Queen Victoria sent a telegraph through the Empire expressing her gratitude: "From my heart, I thank my beloved people, and may God bless them."[58] Outside, the sun illuminated the parade that had begun with the military procession.[59] The tallest officer in the British Army, Captain O. Ames, headed the long line of officers and generals.[60] The Deputation of the Imperial Services, consisting mainly of Indian soldiers, followed the British soldiers, and sixteen carriages escorted the British and German royals. After the Colonial Escort and the Escort from the Regular Indian Army, finally, the Queen greeted her subjects.[61] A service outside the steps to St. Paul's Cathedral briefly interrupted the procession where the clergy paid tribute to both the Queen and her late husband. Photographs of the event recount the rows of eager spectators dwarfing the extravagant street decoration. A wall of the British National Guard kept the line of the procession route intact, pressing against the masses of people cheering on the horses and carriages. The onlookers climbed onto the rooftops of nearby buildings just to get a glimpse of their monarch and the pageantry.[62] The entire city gleamed in high spirits for the Queen's celebration of her 60 year-long reign.

The procession and the high attendance astounded even the members of the upper classes—the usual audience for royal events and ceremonies—observing the Queen's unifying effect. In the most popular and decorated area of the parade route along Hyde Park Corner and Piccadilly to Trafalgar Square, the wealthy nobility seized the most expensive seats. Lady Mary Josephine Monkswell, wife of a British Liberal politician, kept a diary in which she also recorded her impressions of the Jubilee ceremony. Under the right wing of the National Gallery, one of the best available seats, she remarked that "it was overwhelming looking round upon the sea of people… one mass of galleries and people to the very roofs."[63] When she described the moment of the Queen's appearance, she shifted to a collective account, remembering that "*we* did have an emotion when before *our* eyes, *we* beheld the dear old Queen—and what a cheer they gave her, it made the tears come to my

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[58] Diary Entry by Queen Victoria, 22 June 1897, Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee Scrapbook, Royal Archives. http://www.queen-victorias-scrapbook.org/contents/8-1.html.

[59] "The Diamond Jubilee," *Times*.

[60] Ibid.

[61] George Charles Haité, *Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee Procession passing the Houses of Parliament,* 1897, painting, 66.6 x 153.9 cm, Art Gallery of New South Wales. https://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/6119/.

[62] See *Image 4* and *Image 5*.

[63] Lady Mary Monkswell, *A Victorian Diarist: Later Extract from the Journals of Mary, Lady Monkswell 1895-1909,* ed. E.C.F. Collier (London: Butler & Tanner, Ltd., 1946) 31.

eyes."[64] Her recollection of the event captured the united emotional response at the sight of the monarch. While the majority of the people present in Lady Monkswell's vicinity shared her social class, it nevertheless affirmed the joint sensation of unity, pride, and joy that the Queen's public performance evoked.

Although the number of existing accounts of the lower social classes in the southern borough on the Jubilee is scarce, a detailed account by Robert Woodger Bowers, a specialist in the history of Southwark, reconstructed the experience of the southern borough, which coincided with that of the aristocracy.[65] The enthusiasm and euphoric atmosphere also hovered over Southwark, without any signs of disagreement despite the working class's tense relationship with the monarchy and government. In preparation of the Queen's reception, the borough "literally blazed with colours and bright embellishments, from the unpretentious little bannerette, fluttering from the window-sill of the poor man's tenement, to the gorgeous glory of triumphal arch, laden with a wealth of bunting and floral adornment."[66] The excitement compared with that of the other classes; in certain respects, it even exceeded what Lady Monkswell described in her diary entry. Similar to her narrative, Bowers, too, sensed a unifying force of the celebration. He noted that they were "all rejoicing the great gathering and in the ties of a common brotherhood" and that "all differences were forgotten in the significance of the event which called the vast crowd together."[67] In unison, the *Times* remarked that "unaccustomed to pageants conducted on this magnificent and lavish scale, words of gratitude and thankfulness that they had been privileged to assist in this testimony of loyalty and esteem to the Queen."[68] Historians analyzing the working classes come to the conclusion that, though it depended on the social context, a general consensus had emerged that the monarchy should be celebrated.[69] The southern borough's ardor loomed visibly throughout the entire ceremony.

The procession through the southern borough also bore a noticeable equalizing effect on the classes. "The Borough as a whole, may be said to have come out well in its competition with the richer and more fashionable districts," admitted the *Times*.[70] Reinforcing these observations, the *South London Press* illustrated the people's enjoyment of

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[64] Ibid., 32. (*Italics* mine)

[65] Also, see *Image 5*.

[66] Robert Woodger Bowers, *Sketches of Southwark Old and New* (London: William Wesley and Son, 1905) 178.

[67] Ibid., 182-183.

[68] "The Diamond Jubilee," *Times*.

[69] David Cannadine and Elizabeth Hammerton, "Conflict and Consensus on a Ceremonial Occasion: The Diamond Jubilee in Cambridge in 1897," *The Historical Journal* 24, no. 1 (1981) 145-146.

[70] "The Diamond Jubilee," *Times*.

the moment of wealth and splendor in the southern borough, which "statistical gentlemen are never tired of telling [them] is 'the poorest and most crowded neighborhood of London."[71] Its article declared that the poor were simply "invisible on Tuesday."[72] The borough could, for a day, forget the poverty that plagued their daily lives to celebrate their monarch. By including all citizens, regardless of class, the Jubilee effectively attained an unprecedented level of respect and splendor among the people. Furthermore, perhaps most notably and significantly, the celebration impressed the working class that was, for once, part of this formerly elite occasion.

Even the critical *Reynolds's Newspaper* could not belittle the spectacle and the people's tremendous affection for the Queen during the ceremony. Only a few days before the ceremony, the newspaper, once again, complained that "never has a Civil servant, whose establishment costs the nation about a million a year, been so shy of facing her employers."[73] Celebrating the Jubilee equated celebrating "the fact that she has reigned sixty years and that for more than half the time she has failed to discharge her principle business, that is, making a show of herself," *Reynolds's Newspaper* claimed.[74] Once she had made "a show of herself" on Jubilee day, however, its tone softened. It did not shy away from describing "the Queen's state carriage drawn by the cream-coloured horses" as "gorgeous" and the "Queen looking exceedingly well."[75] Although, in its critical fashion, the newspaper did call attention to accidents and other incidents that befell the procession route, it nevertheless acknowledged the inherent enthusiasm of the crowds that fervently awaited their Queen.

Her subjects' overpowering support deeply moved the Queen—the ceremony, and especially the procession, deeply inspired her. In her journal entry of the eventful day, Queen Victoria detailed her appreciation for the people showing astounding support and affection all over the city. The majority of the entry focused on her impressions of the procession; she spared only two sentences for the Jubilee service in St. Paul's Cathedral. On the "never to be forgotten day," Queen Victoria felt that "no one ever… has met with such an ovation as was given to [her], passing through those 6 miles of streets."[76] The "deafening" cheers and

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[71] "The Diamond Jubilee," *South London Press,* (London: June 26, 1897) 5.

[72] Ibid.

[73] "The Skeleton at the Feast," *Reynolds's Newspaper,* (London: June 20, 1897) 1.

[74] Ibid.

[75] "Jubilee Show," *Reynolds's Newspaper,* (London: June 27, 1897) 5.

[76] Diary Entry by Queen Victoria, June 22, 1897, Royal Archives.

chants of "God Save The Queen" and the sheer "denseness of the crowds" stunned her.[77] Her exuberant experience inspired her emotionally on such a high level that three weeks later, in mid-July of 1897, she drafted an address for the national press to publish throughout the Empire. In it, she shared with her people that "this great enthusiasm" was "indeed deeply gratifying after so many years of labour and anxiety for the good of [her] beloved country."[78] Reinforcing the monarchy's position in Great Britain, expressing her "deep sense of the unbounded loyalty evinced," she also took the opportunity to emphasize that she, as a person, united the people, "[finding] them joining in the acclamations of loyal devotion to [herself]."[79] Witnessing such great support from her subjects—which she had not observed for a long time partly due to her seclusion and also to the alleged neglect of her duties—her confidence as their monarch recovered.

While the Jubilee achieved the ministers' goal of restoring the monarchy's position, effectively curing the political and social issues that momentarily put it into crisis, it also carried an unforeseen double-edged effect: not only did the subjects regain their confidence in the Queen, but Queen Victoria, too, recouped her poise in her role as their monarch with respect and devotion for her subjects, as the language in her diary entry suggested. Recognizing that she had become important and relevant to the people again through "indescribable" crowds whose "enthusiasm [was] truly marvelous and deeply touching," Queen Victoria found "that [her] exertions have been appreciated," as asserted in her address to the people.[80] The combination of these two effects of the ceremony played a crucial role in alleviating the monarchy's reputation among the people and saving it from the threat of serious republican uprisings.

Scholarly Debate

The existing literature presents different interpretations of the meaning of ceremonies and their functions in a broader political context. However, it mainly agrees that the "apolitical" appearance acted only as a disguise for greater political aims. In 1867, the political and economic journalist and editor-in-chief of *The Economist* Walter Bagehot encapsulated the understanding of the modern monarchy's function in his seminal work *The English Constitution*, defining it to be ceremonial and full of pageantry that ultimately

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[77] Ibid.

[78] Queen Victoria to the British Empire, telegram transcript, July 15, 1897, Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee Scrapbook, Royal Archives.
http://www.queen-victorias-scrapbook.org/contents/9-6.html.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Diary Entry by Queen Victoria, 22 June 1897, Royal Archives; Queen Victoria to the British Empire, telegram transcript, 15 July 1897, Royal Archives.

supported the government's position. He described the monarch to have three roles: to consult, to encourage, and to warn the British political elites.[81] The political motivations were concealed from the public, however, overshadowed by imposing old traditions manifested in ceremonies and extravagant displays. Bagehot contended that Queen Victoria masked the British government's ultimate political goals which were informed and shaped, in part, by herself. The monarchy was not so much a tool of the government but the seemingly apolitical engineer of political ploys.

The British royalty historian William Kuhn's article "Ceremony and Politics" corroborates Bagehot's claim that the monarchy's ceremonies blanketed greater political goals. Kuhn argues that Prime Minister William Gladstone ushered in the serious consideration of royal ceremonial display as a means to restore the reputation of the monarchy, as his successful planning of the 1872 thanksgiving procession proved. He identifies that "dignified ceremony required the contributions and calculations of efficient ministers far more than was then or has heretofore been recognized."[82] This "human agency behind the ceremonies" became especially significant when the monarchy entered a state of crisis after Albert's death.[83] For Gladstone, Kuhn asserts, royal displays "represented the beauty, dignity and grace of a Christian people united for centuries in self-government."[84] In accordance with Bagehot's argument, Gladstone pledged to recover the monarchy's and government's reputation by employing a liturgical spectacle to unite the nation through their common religion.[85] However, unlike Bagehot, he observed the political elites as utilizing such royal ceremonies to achieve political objectives, as displayed in the thanksgiving procession in 1872.

The acclaimed British historian David Cannadine argues that, while royal ceremonies symbolize a recurring theme in British history, their meaning to the people underwent dynamic reinterpretations with the changing social, political, and economic context in Britain.[86] Monarchical processions enjoyed a long history in Great Britain, though political leaders did not fully recognize their importance in forming a singular cultural and social

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[81] Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution,The English Constitution,* 2nd ed.(Ontario: Batoche Books, 1999) 60-61.

[82] William M. Kuhn, "Ceremony and Politics: The British Monarchy, 1871-1872," *Journal of British Studies* 26, no. 2 (April 1987) 134.

[83] Ibid., 135.

[84] Kuhn, 34.

[85] Ibid., 36, 39.

[86] David Cannadine, "4. The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the 'Invention of Tradition', c. 1820-1977," In *The Invention of Tradition,* ed. Eric Hobsbawn and Terrence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) 105-106.

identity until Gladstone. Traditionally, long processions through the city of London graced only north of the Thames. In 1415, Henry V was the last monarch to proceed through the southern borough returning from the victorious Battle of Agincourt.[87] In early nineteenth century Britain, rulers primarily regarded these pageants only as part of commemorations of military victories or royal affairs, such as coronations or weddings—not celebrations of the nation explicitly.[88]

For much of Queen Victoria's early reign, upper class exclusivity and her unpopularity with the public prohibited royal ceremonies from having greater political effects on the people. Cannadine underlines the class-dividing issue that "the lack of pictures made even the greatest of royal ceremonial something of a mystery to all except the most literate and wealthy.[89] Under these unfavorable preconditions for ceremonies, the political elite succeeded in "placing [the monarch] above politics."[90] Exclusivity to the upper classes also collapsed with the involvement of the media and longer processions. The news "nationalized and sensationalized" the ceremony and "described with unprecedented intimacy and vividness in a sentimental, emotional, admiring way, which appealed to a broader cross section of the public than ever before."[91] In this respect, Cannadine subscribes to Kuhn's claim that the political leadership reconstructed the image of the monarch that hit rock bottom by stressing its disconnect from politics through ceremonial display.

In agreement with Cannadine's interpretation of ceremonies' context-dependency, Mary Ryan, Professor of American History at Johns Hopkins University, argues in her article "The American Parade" that these designs of parades in particular mirrored the cultural, social, and political context of the ceremony.[92] Despite coming to these findings based on her research on celebrations in American cities, the Diamond Jubilee procession resonates with them. The stark divisions between classes in the city of London emphasized inequality and dissatisfaction of the working classes as well as the lower classes, reaching a peak at the time of Queen Victoria's later reign. The increasing social tension changed in the social context that now required a "reinvention" of ceremonial processions. The conception of the monarch as a divine individual was undergoing a rapid alteration following the Glorious Revolution in 1688 and Bagehot's argument that the modern state reduced the monarchy to

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[87] "Royal Processions through the City of London," *The Gentleman's Magazine* (July 1831) 18-21.

[88] Ibid., 18.

[89] Cannadine, "The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual," 111.

[90] Ibid., 122.

[91] Ibid., 121-123.

[92] Mary Ryan, "The American Parade: Representations of the Nineteenth Century Social Order," In *The Making of Urban America,* ed. Raymond Mohl and Roger Biles (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997) 74-75.

merely an advisory role.[93] The notion of "rights" and restriction of monarchical power embodied the new meaning of royal ceremonies, reflecting the understanding of British culture and identity at the time. Therefore, Gladstone's new take on processions constituted what Ryan calls a "capsule summary of a culture," fitting the social and cultural understanding—or expectation—that the monarchy was a non-political, religious, national figurehead.[94] Scholars on the history of the British monarchy, J.A. Thompson and Arthur Mejia, Jr., claim that, during her reign, Queen Victoria transformed into "the quintessence of her country," and "in the public mind throne and nation became one."[95] Although they only mention that such a conception of her materialized in the latter years of her reign with the assistance of the growing Empire, the Jubilee's enormous success asserts that the occasion and procession constituted a pivotal moment in consolidating this new British national identity. As the keeper of order and harmony within the country, the monarch responded to political problems that needed solutions with one of the few but powerful means—royal ceremony.

This paper's historical analysis confirms these scholars' arguments that royal ceremonies have great political significance that involves intricate calculations, but it also fills the void in the literature on the sociopolitical issues that created the Diamond Jubilee. The earliest analysis and interpretation of the monarchy by Bagehot recognized the monarchy's power rested in its symbolic nature, which was expressed in ceremonies and pageantry. Kuhn and Cannadine expand on this claim, arguing that the government manipulated this symbolic power for its own political interests through detailed plannings of royal events. While none of these authors mention the spatial context of ceremonial display or identity formation, Ryan as well as Thompson and Mejia conclude that ceremonies included considerations of both urban and cultural contexts. What is missing is the social and monarchical crisis—the increasing cleavages between classes and Queen Victoria's domestic absence—that drove the political leadership and monarchy to "reinvent" ceremony to save its face and that of the British Empire.

Conclusion

In 1819, after years of unrest, the working class of Manchester massively protested their living and working conditions. As the British people demanded suffrage as compensation for their suffering, the police and military responded by crushing such dissidence as well as the immediate subsequent upheavals; the result of such severe

[93] Bagehot, 60.

[94] Ryan, 74.

[95] Thompson, 16.

austerity measures were the hundreds of citizen casualties now known as the Peterloo Massacre. Instead of acting with restraint, the British government enforced the Six Acts, which repressively limited the rights of the people even further to prevent future mass-protests.[96] The monarchy did not consider the uprisings in Manchester as representing an urgent risk to its position in power and thus cared little about carefully managing any localized and isolated challenges to its legitimacy.

By contrast, the capital of London represented Great Britain nationally and internationally. As a British city that separated classes geographically within its limited urban space, it created a political environment that allowed these criticisms to jeopardize national stability. The government could not dismiss or suppress the London uprisings as easily as it had in Manchester because the unique circumstances had the potential to extrapolate into a breakdown of domestic civil order which would soil the international image of British prestige. Under close global scrutiny, London forbade both complete agreement as well as disagreement with the claims of the working classes. Instead, the government preferred a glittering royal ceremony as an effort to acknowledge the working class over any riots, civil or class war, or even revolution—any visible sign of domestic unrest could have endangered the image of British imperial success, which underpinned its projection of power at home, in Europe, and in its colonial Empire. The global context in the second half of the 19th century increased these stakes, and the political leadership had a great interest in decreasing risks.

Recognizing not only the significance but also the vitality in relieving national tensions, royal ceremonies and public displays in London have become entrenched in British national life. Their political role as apolitical actors, as defined by Bagehot, sustained national unity in times of British political disunion. Economic development and technological advances facilitated an increase in the mobility of classes, which amplified contact between different income groups. London drew international attention again during the preparations of the Brexit vote in June 2015. The people took to London to both rally for and against the referendum. Surprisingly, however, even in the midst of the heyday of national division, the British people still unitedly celebrated Princess Charlotte's birth in May as well as the Queen's birthday only two weeks before the exit referendum.[97] Ultimately, the role of the monarchy increasingly transitioned to exercise a form of disguised soft power intended to strengthen national unity in times of instability; the gradual realignment of the British state

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[96] For a more detailed analysis of the Peterloo Massacre, see Donald Read, *Peterloo: The 'Massacre' and its Background* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958).

[97] "Royal Baby: William and Kate present daughter to the world," *BBC* (London: May 2, 2015). http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-32567875.

apparatus is a lasting side-effect of the institutional response to the London uprisings during the reign of Queen Victoria.

Appendix

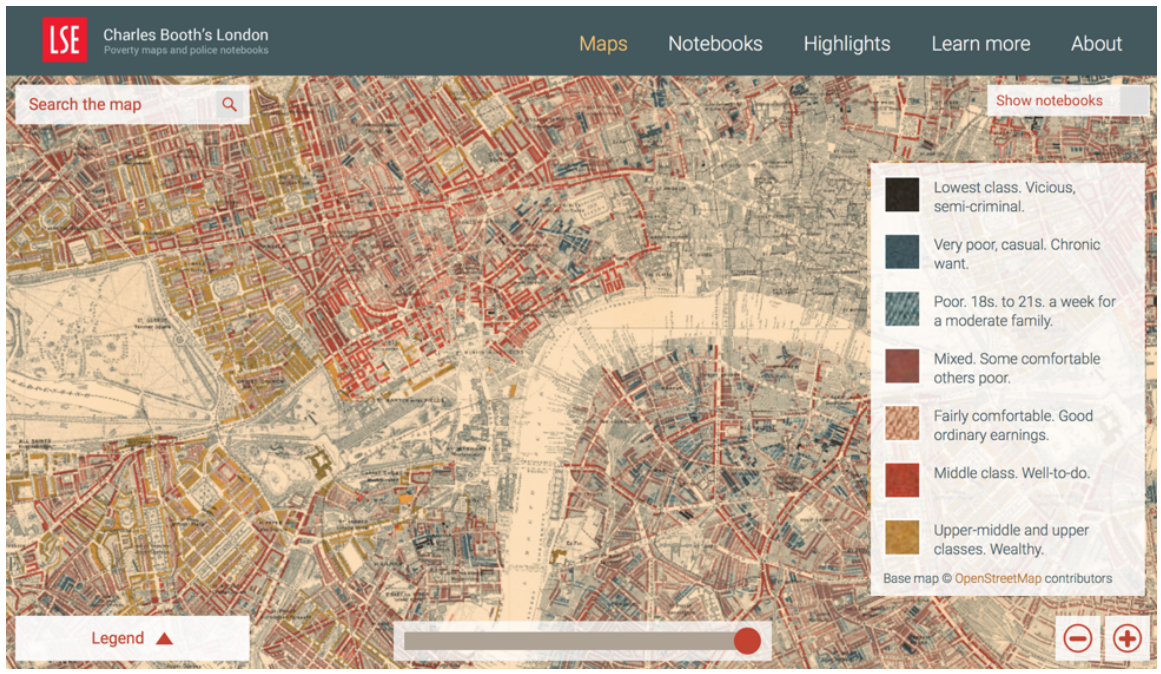

Image 1
"Charles Booth's London," London School of Economics

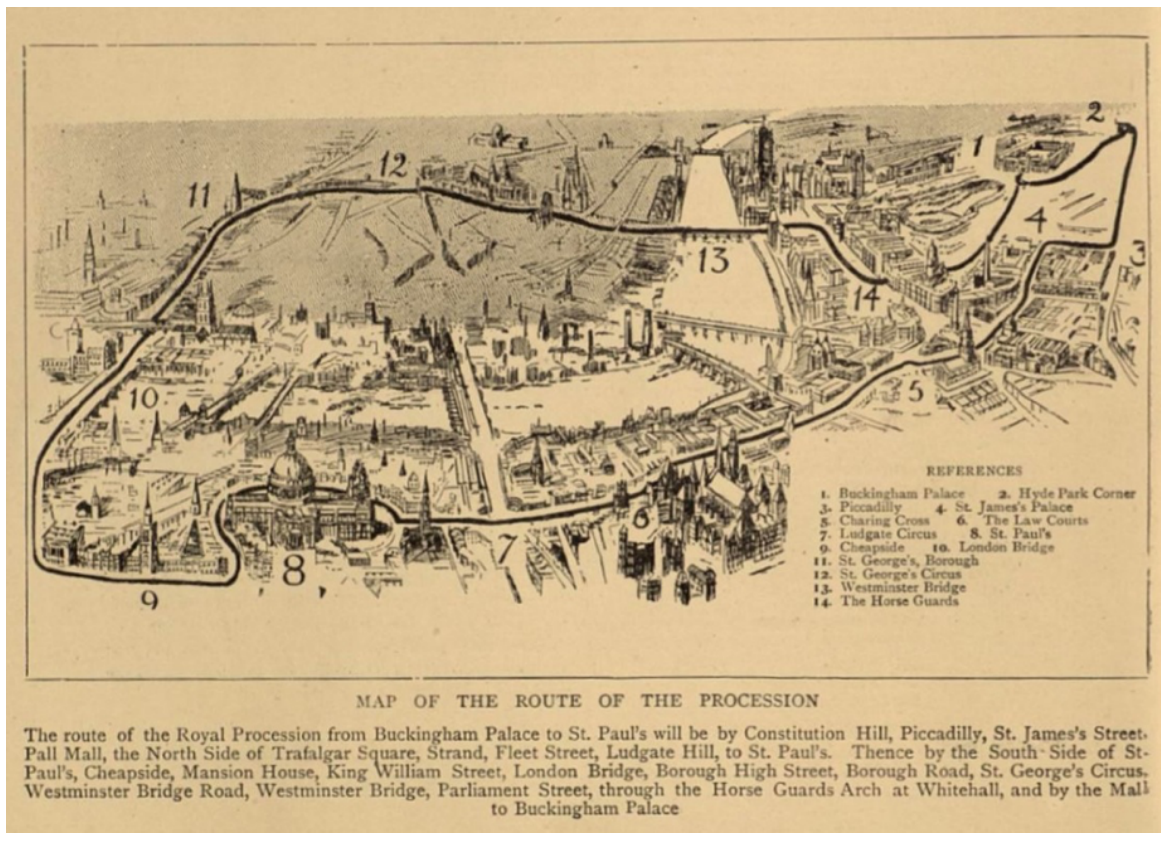

Image 2
"The Map of the Route of the Procession" from the Official Program of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, June 20, 1897

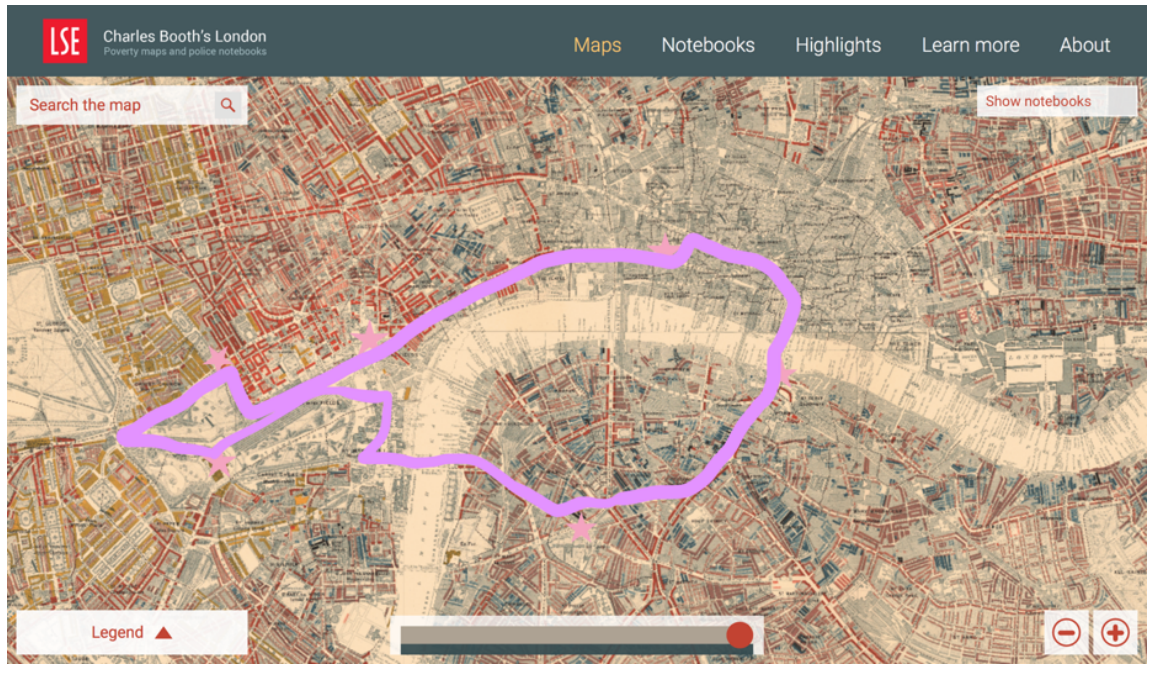

Image 3
Procession Route projected on "Charles Booth's London"

Image 4
The Diamond Jubilee Procession, Mansion House, Birds Eyes View (Daily Mail)

Image 5
Diamond Jubilee Procession, South London, View from Crowd (The Cine Tourist)

ZATRYMAJ KOŁO HISTORII

THE KATYN MASSACRE AND SOVIET ETHNIC CLEANSING

Anthony “TJ” Kalin

Valparaiso University

Latami będzie chodzić w Belwederze.
Piłsudski nigdy nie uwierzy w trwałość.
I będzie mruczeć: "Oni nas napadną".
Kto? I pokaże na zachód, na wschód.
"Koło historii wstrzymałem na chwilę."

For years Piłsudski paced in the Belvedere
He could never believe in permanence
And would say again: “They will attack us”
Who? He pointed to the East, the West
“I’ve stopped the wheel of History a moment.”
-Czesław Miłosz, *A Treatise on Poetry* (1957)

Introduction

Poignant Poland, sandwiched between Prussian aggression and Russian insecurity, was partitioned between Russia, Prussia, and Austria three times in 1772, 1793, and 1795; and, in 1939, the tragic wheel of history brought her fourth partition. In the early morning of September 1st, 1939, five German armies rolled across Poland's northern, southern, and western borders. Surrounded and abandoned by the French and the British, the Polish army was quickly pushed back but still managed to fight the Germans until early October. On September 17th, 1939, the Soviet Union attacked Poland from the east. The Molotov-Ribbentrop nonaggression pact, signed between the Soviets and Germans on August 23, 1939, contained a secret protocol outlining the division of Poland between the two powers

after the invasion and the subsequent spheres of influence, making 1939 Poland's fourth partition.[1]

During the invasion, the Red Army captured between 230,000 and 240,000 Polish prisoners.[2] The People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD), the top Soviet secret police organization, separated roughly 15,000 officers from the enlisted and placed them into special camps set up by the NKVD. Kozelsk, a camp set up in an abandoned monastery held 4,599 officers prisoner in April 1940; Ostashkov, also in a monastery, held 6,364 in March 1940; and a third special camp, Starobelsk, another monastery, held 2,232 officers in October 1939.[3] Attempts were made by the NKVD to convert the Polish officers to Soviet ideology, their efforts overwhelmingly failed as the Poles, the bulk of whom were descended from gentry, were strongly anti-Russian and anti-Communist.[4] A Politburo decision on March 5, 1940, claimed the officers were all "sworn enemies of Soviet power" and the NKVD found it essential "to apply to them the supreme punishment" [execution] for all 14,736 prisoners in the three camps.[5] In the weeks following the March 5 decision, the families of the prisoners were deported to Kazakhstan while the NKVD prepared for the mass execution of the prisoners. Between April and May 1940, the officers in the three camps, along with thousands of members of the Polish intelligentsia, were transported to various NKVD holding cells, as well as the basements of several *dachas,* or villas, at an NKVD resort. There, the Poles were executed and buried in mass graves.

After Hitlerite Germany invaded Russia in 1941, the Russians fought on the same side as the Polish Government, in exile in London since 1939. In this time, Polish military, and political leaders pressed Stalin over whereabouts of their missing officers. In January 1943 the first of the mass graves were discovered by the Germans in the Katyń forest outside Smolensk.[6] The Germans used the discovery of the graves as a propaganda tool, inviting Red Cross and Polish officials to investigate the bodies for themselves in an attempt to drive a wedge between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union. The Polish Government in Exile demanded an explanation from the Soviets, but Stalin responded that the Poles were in

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[1] Anna Cienciala, Natalia Lebedeva, and Wojciech Materski. *Katyń: A Crime Without Punishment,* Annals of Communism Series. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008) Document 2.

[2] Ibid., 26.

[3] Ibid., 29-30.

[4] Ibid., 34.

[5] Ibid., Document 47.

[6] Ibid., 215.

cahoots with the Germans on their claim; after further failed diplomacy the Soviets broke off formal relations with the Polish government in mid-April of 1943.[7]

In the following decades, Poles clamored for the truth about the massacre, struggling to find the fate of the fifteen thousand officers that disappeared in 1940. Polish investigations, American congressional investigations, and an *ad hoc* Soviet investigation, the Burdenko Commission, were all undertaken to ascertain the fate of the missing officers. For the following decades, Soviet denial and the Polish quest for the truth about Katyń dogged relations between the two countries. During Glasnost, Gorbachev's policy of openness in the years directly preceding the 1991 collapse of Soviet Union, pressure from a handful of Soviet historians of Katyń led to the release of NKVD documents on Katyń that exposed the NKVD's planning and implementation of the massacres.[8] After the fall of Soviet Union, Russian president Boris Yeltsin publicly admitted Soviet guilt for the massacre; subsequent Russian politicians moved away from this apology, notably Vladimir Putin in 2010.[9]

In the postwar era, a large body of Katyń scholarship was produced. This scholarship worked to ascertain and defend the truth about the massacre amidst attacks by the Soviet and later Russian academy. Katyń scholarship plays a role at the border of public and academic discourse. The Poles, known for their heightened sense of historical consciousness, made the Katyń saga a public battle over truth and meaning in historical memory.[10] The scholarship of Katyń is in an awkward place, answering to the demands of academia and public opinion, all the while under attack from the Russian academics and broader society.

I contend that Katyń scholarship in the post-Glasnost era has failed to escape the framework of the pre-Glasnost document era; scholars with access to NKVD documents still ask the same questions and seek the same answers they did when NKVD documents were not available. While this tendency is understandable, it does not open the door to using other Glasnost NKVD documents that provide novel yet positive perspectives on Katyń. I will also motivate a new narrative of Katyń that asks questions outside the pre-Glasnost framework, using documents from the 1930s not utilized in the current scholarship. This new narrative places Katyń in a line of development set against the context of Soviet ethnic

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[7] Ibid., 217.

[8] Inessa Jażborowska, "Russian Historical Writing About the Crime of Katyń" *The Polish Review* Vol. 53, No. 2 (2008) 139-157.

[9] Michael Schwirz "Putin Marks Anniversary of Katyń Killings" *New York Times* April 7, 2010; David Satter "Russia's Missing Apology for Katyń" World Policy Institute Blog, *World Policy Institute,* April 10, 2010.

[10] For an overview of Polish history with an eye for the development of Polish historical consciousness, see Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland.* 2 Vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982; 2005 revised).

cleansing, concerning Stalin's Polonophobia,[11] and the 'Polish Operations' of the NKVD. Finally, I will evaluate this new narrative in light of historical consciousness and retroactive justice.

Katyń Historiography

There are two generations of Katyń historians: those writing before Glasnost, without the availability of NKVD documents and those writing after Glasnost, utilizing the NKVD documents. Pre-Glasnost Katyń scholars had to rely upon non-Russian primary sources in their reconstructions and interpretations of Katyń. These scholars interpreted Soviet relations with the Western powers during and after the war in an attempt to determine if Stalin had committed the crime of Katyń; looking for signs of guilt in Soviet behavior. These sources include British, Polish, and American foreign policy documents; the findings of the 1951-1952 congressional investigation into Katyń, the Madden Committee; and several Polish investigations. During Glasnost, NKVD documents about Katyń were released after Russian scholars of Katyń applied pressure to Gorbachev. These documents provided a nearly complete picture of Katyń from NKVD policy in the camps to Soviet attempts to indoctrinate the officers. These documents include the secret protocol of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, NKVD directives ranging from camp administration to the execution of the Poles and the destruction of prisoner records in the 1950s. The NKVD were the primary, direct agents in the massacre making their records the core of any causal account of Katyń.

Monographs on Katyń written without the use of the Glasnost sources fixated upon implicating Soviet guilt. One of several early examples is Joseph Mackiewicz' *The Katyń Wood Murders* (1952) which relies upon diplomatic and journalistic sources to reject the official Soviet position that the massacre was the Germans' doing.[12] Later, a general framework for scholarship on Katyń took shape, set by Janusz Zawodny's causal theses for Katyń in *Death in the Forest* (1972): (1) theSoviets officials viewed the Poles as enemies of the Soviet Union; (2) the Poles' elimination would create a "leaderless vacuum" for Soviet takeover in Poland; (3) the NKVD believed they could not convert the Poles to Soviet attitudes; and (4) Lavrentiy Beria, Stalin's NKVD Chief, misinterpreted an order by Stalin that had instructed him to liquidate the camps and instead Beria liquidated the prisoners.[13] Interpretations of and responses to theses set the ground for subsequent monographs, narrowing the

[11] Polonophobia is a term used by Eastern Europeanists to describe xenophobia directed explicitly against Poles.

[12] Joseph Mackiewicz, *The Katyń Wood Murders* (London: World Affairs Book Club, 1952).

[13] Janusz Zawodny, *Death in the Forest: The Story of the Katyń Massacre* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972) 127.

framework of questions and answers on Katyń within terms of the Second World War and the Postwar era, all predicated on non-Russian sources.

After Glasnost a plethora of works on Katyń came onto the scene that applyied the NKVD documents to Zawodny's theses. A few of these works, such as Allen Paul's *Katyń: Stalin's Massacre and the Triumph of Truth* (2008) utilized the new primary sources to reconstruct the massacre in an almost-novel-like form.[14] Paul narrates the massacre from the perspective of a few families and individuals involved, an approach commonly described as 'bottom-up' history.[15] Katyń had a severe impact on the cultural memory of the Poles and works like Paul's attempted to fill in the phenomenal, personal texture of the massacre to appease the general historical conscious. While works like Paul's mixed into the public discourse on Katyń, a more significant number of strictly academic works on Katyń were also published.

Three works representative of the approaches toward Katyń made by most scholars are: George Sanford's *Katyń and the Soviet Massacre of 1940: Truth, Justice, and Memory* (2005); Anna Cienciala, Natalia Lebedeva, and Wojciech Materski's *Katyń: A Crime Without Punishment* (2007); and Victor Zaslavsky's *Class Cleansing: The Katyń Massacre* (2008). These three monographs represent three different methods of approaching to Katyń massacre that still work inside the same framework. Each have different perspectives on the massacre that all share in the Zawodny framework and together they highlight the trends and self-imposed limits of post-Glasnost Katyń scholarship.

George Sanford's *Katyń and the Soviet Massacre of 1940: Truth, Justice, and Memory* is a comprehensive monograph on almost all aspects of Katyń. Sanford's primary focus is on the weeks surrounding the massacre itself and foreign relations between the Western Powers, Poland, and the Soviet Union both during and after the Second World War. Sanford reconstructs the events surrounding Katyń in painstaking detail, working from diaries, memoirs, and NKVD documents from 1939 onwards. While he does mention interwar relations between the Soviet Union and Poland as well as Soviet ethnic cleansing, they are merely prefaced and play no role in his overall argument; the real focus is on the war itself and the following decades.

For Sanford, Katyń is a process of attempted Sovietization, wartime foreign affairs, postwar diplomacy, and historical investigation that spans 1939-1991. Sanford places the cause for the massacre squarely on the NKVD's failure to recruit the captured Polish officers

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[14] Allen Paul, *Katyń: Stalin's Massacre and the Triumph of Truth* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010).

[15] Mathew Schwonek, "Review: Stalin's Massacre and the Triumph of Truth 2nd Edition by Allen Paul" In *The Russian Review,* Vol. 70, No. 2 (April, 2011) 350-5.

to the Soviet cause; a thesis derived from Sanford's close study of the plethora of NKVD documents pertaining to the interrogation of the prisoners as well as the operation of the camps.[16]

> "My own view is that the 1940 massacre can not be explained in terms of these larger historical outcomes [Stalinism and Polonophobia] and that one has to focus on the context of the time."[17]

Sanford focuses on minute, mechanical causes for Katyń and avoids interacting with, larger, broader concepts of causation such as Stalinism, Polonophobia, and general Soviet xenophobia. The "context of the time" Sanford is referring to is grounded both in the direct actions of the NKVD and Soviet foreign relations, a narrow view of the 'context of the time'; i.e., the Soviets did not want to keep the prisoners that could not be converted to Marxism-Leninism, and they were not cost-effective to maintain.[18] These two claims are constructed from the Zawodny framework.

The latter half of Sanford's monograph places Katyń in the context of postwar relations between the West, Poland, and the Soviet Union and discusses the role truth and justice have played in the postwar Katyń narrative. This section relies heavily on British, American, and Polish sources on Katyń. Sanford's perspective on Katyń, and Soviet guilt, afforded by the analysis of Soviet diplomatic behavior after the massacre and the use of NKVD documents to determine the mechanics of the massacre form two narratives. The first narrative is an interpretation of Katyń through Soviet diplomatic behavior. The second is a tightly historicist, almost mechanical narrative based on the NKVD documents. Taken together, the two reveal Sanford's treatment of Katyń as a process beginning in 1940 and running through the 1990s rather than a singular event that occurred in 1940.

Anna Cienciala, Natalia Lebedeva, and Wojciech Materski's *Katyń: A Crime Without Punishment* is a comprehensive monograph on Katyń that runs alongside a translated, annotated set of documents from the Soviet archives opened during Glasnost. The monograph outlines a long narrative of Katyń focusing heavily upon the operation of the NKVD camps, the mechanics of the massacre, and the postwar scholarship with its quest for truth and reconciliation, a similar focus to Sanford. Only twenty-two out of three-hundred and fifty-three pages of prose and commentary on documents relating to the massacre are devoted to Polish-Soviet relations before the war. The interwar relations and pre-war Soviet

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[16] Sanford George, "Katyń and the Soviet Massacre of 1940: Truth, Justice, and Memory" In *Routledge Series on Russian and East European Studies 20*. (New York: Routledge, 2005).

[17] Ibid., 84.

[18] Ibid., 85.

activities are mentioned only as background information with no substantive bearing on the narrative or argument. The bulk of the text deals with the postwar and wartime consequences of Katyń, accented by Soviet documents.

Cienciala, Lebedeva, and Materski frame Katyń in terms of Zawodny's theses from *Death in the Forest*. They even emphasize that the first three of his theses are "shared by most Katyń historians today."[19] The sources used in the monograph are primarily from the massacre onwards and encompass the same foreign policy documents in the pre-Glasnost era as in Sanford's monograph. Katyń is again implicitly interpreted as a process beginning in 1940 and ending with the 1990s, with a focus on implicating Soviet responsibility. The Glasnost documents are presented to confirm Zawodny's theses and Soviet guilt.

Victor Zaslavsky's 2008 *Class Cleansing: The Katyń Massacre*, takes a different angle on the massacre, yet still revealing of scholars' inability to approach the massacre outside the framework of Zawodny. Zaslavsky relies mainly upon Russian primary sources, often quoting NKVD documents at length, alongside a sprinkling of German sources. The majority of Zaslavsky's secondary sources are Russian monographs on Katyń, but he does include the mainstream English, Italian, and Polish monographs on Katyń. Zaslavsky also incorporates several monographs on totalitarianism and political theory including works by Hannah Arendt and George Orwell.

Zaslavsky used a broad theory that funneled into an interpretation of Katyń. His method still seeks to implicate Soviet guilt, but he does so by outlining the Marxist superstructure and its application to Katyń. For Zaslavsky, Stalinist classism is a sufficient explanation for the massacre:

> "According to Marxist-Leninist doctrine, capitalist society is a class society…The chief characteristic of this ideology would be described as 'classism': similar to racism, but in this case with a hierarchy of social classes defined to justify discrimination of some classes against others."[20]

Zaslavsky moved outside Katyń and interpreted Marxist theory in a way that he thinks applies to the massacre. This is an abstract cause, but Zaslavsky intends it to be a theory with supposed concrete efficacy. The agents involved, Stalin and the NKVD, are just minor characters employing this ideology. The bulk of Zaslavsky's book interprets his theory's implications for Katyń and the postwar era.

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[19] Cienciala, 141.

[20] Victor Zaslavsky, *Class Cleansing: The Katyń Massacre,* trans. Kizer Walker (New York: Telos Press, 2008) 44.

Zaslavsky's approach is unsuccessful. His use of theory before history is unwarranted. Stalinism cannot be taken and plugged into an event to produce a historical narrative, especially in the case of the Poles. A theory of Stalinism that does discriminate between different ethnic groups is too broad to be applicable in cases where ethnic cleansing was a factor, especially since Soviet ethnic cleansing was directed to different degrees against specific groups; Poles are a particularly unique case.[21] With Zaslavsky, it appeared as if Katyń scholarship is advancing, but the advance is not substantive, it is merely a different, defective, way of thinking about the same questions and the same narrative using the same documents.

These post-Glasnost authors reused the sources from the Pre-Glasnost era to place themselves in the ongoing historiography of Katyn. Such a decision consigned their analyses of Katyń in the framework of Zawodny. Zawodny's theses had defined how subsequent historians thought about Katyń, but all he sought was the implication of Soviet guilt.[22] After Glasnost, historians of Katyń continued to stay within an approach that proved Soviet guilt and the only use of the post-Glasnost documents had been to confirm Zawodny's, and Poland's, suspicions. The continuation of the Zawodny framework kept Katyń scholarship in the same box it was in before Glasnost, a box constructed by the questions and limits of past scholarship. However, this is not entirely their choice.

Zawodny was trying to find the truth, and once it was found by others in the 1990s, the truth had to be defended. After Glasnost, several Russian, formerly Soviet, scholars continued to attack the truth about Katyń, preferring the findings of the *ad hoc* Burdenko Commission over the NKVD documents. Even today there are still Russian scholars of Katyń who deny Soviet responsibility.[23] Katyń historiography is an open battlefield; Polish and Western scholars still contend with Katyń denial. Even Vladimir Putin has chosen victim-blaming as his position on Katyń, claiming the massacre was Stalin's response to Soviet PoW deaths in Poland during the 1920 Polish-Soviet War, a thesis rejected by the Western academy.[24] Historians of Katyń have to continue to protect the truth of Katyń. NKVD documents turned Katyń scholarship from offensive to defense; truth first had to be

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[21] See Terry Martin *Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union 1923-1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).

[22] As of December 2018, *Death in the Forest* had 140 citations on Google Scholar making it by far the most-cited work on Katyń as opposed to Sanford's *Katyń and the Soviet Massacre of 1940* (65), *A Crime Without Punishment* (65), and Zaslavsky's *Class Cleansing* (17). Even since 2016, Zawodny's monograph had been cited eight times versus Sanford (3), Zaslavsky (2), and *A Crime Without Punishment* (7).

[23] See Jażborowska "Russian Historical Writing About the Crime of Katyń" as well as Chapter 6 of Alexander Etkind, Rory Finnin, Maria Mälksoo, Matilda Mroz, Julie Fedor, Simon Lewis, and Uilleam Blacker. *Remembering Katyń*. (Cambridge: Polity, 2012) 99-113.

[24] Etkind, et al., 113.

ascertained, but after 1991 it needed to be protected and defended. Zawodny's theses were about finding the truth were reused to defend the truth. However, the Zawodny box is not the only restriction on Katyń scholarship.

Western notions of the Second World War incline Katyń scholars to write about Katyń in the context of WW2, delving into the foreign relations and diplomacy of the war. This was a method of understanding Katyń before the NKVD documents were available; the approach enabled scholars to understand Katyń by analyzing Soviet behavior in and after the war and interpreting the behavior to implicate Soviet guilt, looking to see whether or not Stalin acted guilty. This defined Katyń as an event in WW2 and Western scholars latched onto this definition, pushing aside perspectives and interpretations of Katyń predicated on historical Polish-Russian relations or interwar Soviet-Polish relations and actions. Remaining in the Zawodny framework and writing from the perspective of the Second World War has negative implications for Katyń.

The lack of documents in the postwar era forced scholars to read history backward to interpret an event that occurred at the very beginning of the war under entirely different circumstances. Katyń is read primarily in terms of the Second World War and the postwar era itself even though the massacre occurred only a few months into the war. The Second World War's start date, September 1st, 1939, is a defined historical marker now, but in early 1940 it was not clear what had happened. After all, the Soviet Union never even declared war on Poland. All three of the monographs are guilty of following this abstract historical marker. Katyń historiography's defensive status and WW2-orientation has trapped scholars within a narrow way of thinking about Katyń itself.

Each of the three monographs focused more on the postwar and wartime effects of Katyń, implicitly defining Katyń as a process of truth-finding, diplomacy, and Soviet behavior that began in 1940 and ran through the 1990s. The corollary of this framework is that Katyń scholarship is more about what Katyń caused than what caused Katyń. Their causal accounts of Katyń themselves are focused on the few months leading up the massacre, looking at the direct actions taken by NKVD agents in running the camps and planning the executions, their view does not put the massacre in the concrete context of its time. This may be in part to the defensiveness of Katyń scholarship; only documents that protect the truth about Soviet guilt are used, i.e., documents that confirm Zawodny. Such a defensive position keeps Katyń scholars reading history backward through the postwar era and the war, sticking in the old framework of questions, using the new documents in the same way as the old. While this is a meaningful context, the focus on postwar relations means that other relevant contexts, documents, and novel perspectives are overlooked.

Each monograph above mentioned Stalin and the 1920 Polish War, historical Polish-Russian antagonism, and only of them, Sanford, mentioned Stalin's persecution of the Poles in the 1930s, but none of them used any documents or insights from the interwar period in their central arguments. Stalin's agency is a line of continuity between the persecution of Poles in the Soviet Union in the 1930s and Katyń, but Stalin is merely prefaced and does not play a substantive causal role in current Katyń scholarship. Unpacking Stalin's connections to Katyń and investigating lines of continuity between the interwar period and Katyń moves this scholarship outside the framework set by Zawodny. In the following section, I engage Glasnost era documents to ground a few lines of continuity between Katyń and Stalin's waves of ethnic cleansing that preceded the massacre.

The 'New' Katyń 1937-1940

Katyń occurred as the capstone of a long line of Soviet Polonophobia beginning in 1920 when the Soviet Union went to war with Poland following the independence of the Second Polish Republic. The conflict was primarily over Poland's wish to expand into their historic western frontier; the Soviets, on the other hand, wished to expand the revolution into Central Europe and the West. When the German evacuated the Lithuanian-Belarusian region at the end of the First World War a vacuum was created in which Polish and Russian ambitions clashed. The Polish-Soviet war of 1920 saw the poorly equipped, disorganized Polish army defeat the Red Army in an unexpected turnaround on the banks of the Vistula river outside Warsaw, the "The Miracle on the Vistula." The war was a major upset for the Soviet Union and is a key factor in Lenin's endorsement of "Socialism in one country" and the New Economic Policy, a reversal of Soviet policy and spirit up to that point.[25] The Polish defeat halted the Soviet Union's ambition and folded the USSR into an isolationist, xenophobic police state.

The Miracle on the Vistula took place under Stalin's nose; the Western Military Region was his responsibility, which saddled him with responsibility for the major loss. Trotsky prominently cited Stalin's "private ambitions" for the defeat outside Warsaw that ended the war; it was Stalin's command front and lack of coordinated communication that ostensibly caused the defeat by the lesser Polish army.[26] Stalin himself would blame Trotsky after Trotsky was purged, but Stalin's responsibility would still be hard to shake for years to come. Stalin maintained an interest in the historiography of the war throughout the interwar period, shifting blame from himself and identifying Poland with the White Army

[25] Notably Norman Davies' thesis in *White Eagle Red Star: The Polish-Soviet War 1919-1920 and the Miracle on the Vistula.* (New York: Random House, 2003) 274.

[26] Norman Davies, "The Soviet Command and the Battle of Warsaw" *Soviet Studies* Vol. 23, No. 4 (April 1972) 573-585 at 577.

and Western hostility in general; the Polish War stands out as the premier example of theory and historical practice in the Soviet Union being shelved before political ends.[27] Stalin's insecurity involving the Poles was disclosed through his involvement in the subsequent historiography, this disclosure affords a degree of insight into his later relations with the Polish minority in the Soviet Union. More generally, The 1920 war also ended inconclusively. Although the Poles won the battle, the peace process was confusing, and the problem of the border regions was open, stoking future Soviet insecurity.[28] The 1920 war began Stalin and the USSR's hostile relationship with the Poles, grounding the atmosphere of Polonophobia that culminated in Katyń.[29]

After the 1920 war drove the Soviets inwards, Soviet internal policy in the 1920s became centered around national self-determination for the ethnic groups of the vast USSR. The "Piedmont Principle" dictated this internal policy from the 1920s through early 1930s. The Piedmont Principle sought to promote internal ethnic loyalties to the Soviet Union that would, in turn, bring in cross-border ethnic loyalties, propagating Soviet influence abroad.[30] In this period the Soviets promoted local languages and created new national homelands within the USSR, creating the world's first modern Jewish state in Birobidzhan, among others, and nearly creating a Korean ethnic homeland. This policy worked smoothly before it ran into the historic roadblock of Russian insecurity, and Polonophobia.[31]

The Poles were the chief factor in the degeneration of the Piedmont principle. Terry Martin, historian and professor of Russian studies, identifies the 1926 coup that brought Jożef Piłsudski to power in Poland as the turning point in Soviet policy: "Marshall Piłsudki's coup d'état was interpreted by the Soviet leadership as the first step in an imminent attack

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[27] The thesis of James McCann's "Beyond the Bug: Soviet Historiography of the Soviet-Polish War of 1920" *Soviet Studies* Vol. 36, No. 4 (October 1984) 475-493 at 490, McCann claims the war has its own political "tradition."

[28] Norman Davies' thesis in *White Eagle Red Star: The Polish-Soviet War 1919-1920 and the Miracle on the Vistula.* (New York: Random House, 2003).

[29] This is the beginning of the USSR's antagonism with the Poles, but Russian-Polish antagonism dates back hundreds of years. Deep-past Russian-Polish relations play a factor in this narrative, but for the sake of this etiology it is useful to focus on Soviet-Polish antagonism, highlighting the beginning and course of the antagonism even if it may be a translation of the historical relationship between Russians and Poles. See Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland*; note that I use "Poles" as opposed to "Poland" as the relationship investigated is distinctly ethnic as opposed to political. The course of this narrative will speak of Poles in general, whether they are in the Soviet Union or the Second Polish Republic as the diplomatic and political borders shift and gain transparency under this degree of inquiry.

[30] Terry Martin "The Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing" *The Journal of Modern History* Vol. 70, No. 4 (December 1998) 813-86 at 831.

[31] As pointed out in chapter eleven of Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia and the Russians: A History* (Harvard: Belknap, 2001), the Soviets created a plethora of national homelands but neglected to create any homeland for the Russians themselves, grounding their insecurity.

by world imperialism on the Soviet Union.[32] Pilsudski had gotten the better of Stalin in 1920, and after 1926 he led a nation right on the border with the Soviet Union. Piłsudski's effect on Stalin's insecurity was a crucial dimension in Stalin's agency in the oppression of Poles in the Soviet Union. That, confounded by the Poles' dense, homogenous communities, and deeply ingrained Catholicism, resulted in the coming mass repression and ethnic cleansing of the Soviet Union's Polish minority.[33]

Throughout the interwar period, tens of millions of Soviet citizens died due to artificial famine, slave labor, and purges. While the government espoused principles of ethnic determinism and nationalism, the killings themselves took on ethnic lines. For example, collectivization was officially intended to be non-ethnically oriented, but for the most part, Germans were generalized as Kulaks, and the violence of the *Holodomor* became directed against all Germans, even poor Germans that were far-removed from being 'Kulak.[34] Political violence against the bourgeoisie and cosmopolitanism was identical with ethnic cleansing, and the Soviet Poles became one of the most disproportionately targeted groups.

Poles were first targeted explicitly during the deportations in Ukraine in the period of collectivization. An appendum to a Soviet order on the deportation of Kulaks explicitly added "those of Polish nationality" to be deported due to a "Polish-Kulak counter-revolutionary movement"; these deportations would quickly spawn exclusively "Polish Operations.[35] The identification of Poles with the Kulak element marked a shift toward explicitly targeting Poles. The initial targeting of the Poles was, hypocritically, later followed by the creation of a small Polish national homeland in 1932.[36] The first few years of the 1930s was an indefinite period in which the Piedmont principle was still in play while concurrently in the process of reversal by Polonophobia and Soviet oppression which would only continue to narrow in on the Poles.

Besides being a historical enemy, the Poles constituted one of the minorities in the western border regions; the regions of highest Soviet insecurity and xenophobia where deportations, ethnic cleansing, began in 1935. While Poles and Germans were a minute part of the population in the border regions, they ended up comprising fifty-seven percent of

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[32] Martin, "The Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing," 843.

[33] Catholicism and ethnic population density are factors highlighted by Tomasz Sommer, "The Polish Operation: Stalin's First Genocide of the Poles" *Sarmatian Review,* Vol. 32, No.3 (September, 2011) 1618-1625 at 1618.

[34] Martin, 837.

[35] Ibid., 839.

[36] Ibid., 840.

those deported, a testament to the ethnic line of the 'security measures.[37] Soon afterward, Soviet policy explicitly shifted against its previous banner of ethnic pluralism and began singling out Polish national institutions for destruction, believing they fostered anti-Soviet Polish nationalism.[38] The disproportionate oppression of the Poles became a recurring theme through the rest of the 1930s.

As the 1930s dragged on, purges and ethnic cleansing against the Poles intensified until the Soviet Poles were effectively wiped out. The early deportations would be followed by a wave of ethnic cleansings in conjunction with the "Great Terror," the series of Party, Red Army, and peasant purges that roughly began in 1936; these ethnic cleansing became known as "The Polish Operation of the NKVD." The Polish Operation was the final purge of the Soviet Poles, as well as the largest officially mandated operation against the Polish minority. Of the "National Operations" against different ethnic groups in the Great Purge, the "Polish Operation" was the largest.

The Great Purge is the peak of the long line of purges that began with the Reds' seizure of power in 1917. While it is customary to speak of various purges or 'waves,' Soviet violence merely flowed at an increasing rate for the duration of the interwar period (picking up again after the Great Patriotic War) and each 'purge' or 'wave' is highlights a slice of the continuum.[39] The Polish Operation of the NKVD took on two dimensions: the oppression of Poles that were technically within the Soviet bureaucracy and the purge of ethnic Poles outside Soviet organs. Spy 'manias' gripped the Soviet organs in the years directly antecedent to the Great Purge. The spy manias were when Soviet xenophobia turned inwards towards the bureaucracy. Around 1936 NKVD chief Nikolai Yezhov[40] began lamenting the influence of foreign spies in the border regions, especially Poles.[41] From there the Soviet Party organs systematically removed ethnic Poles from all positions in the state apparatus. Yezhov's spy fears resulted in nearly all members, roughly 5,000, of the Polish Communist Party (KPP) being purged along with the NKVD's own Poles in 1936, the Polish Communist Party itself was then disbanded in 1938.[42] These early Polish purges, fueled by

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[37] Ibid., 848.

[38] Ibid.

[39] See the second chapter of the first volume in Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago: An Experiment in Literary Investigation,* translated by Thomas Whitney, 3 Vols. (New York: Harper and Row, 1974).

[40] Also transliterated as Ezhov.

[41] James Morris, "The Polish Terror: Spy Mania and Ethnic Cleansing in the Great Terror" *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 56, No. 5 (July 2004) 751-766 at 754.

[42] Ibid., 756.

spy 'mania' and xenophobia, received official mandate with the commencement of the Polish Operation in 1937.

The 'official' Polish Operation began with an order from Yezhov, the head of the NKVD before Beria, Order 00485, issued from Moscow, August 11, 1937.[43] The order was signed by Yezhov, but it was only accepted and executed by the Politburo under Stalin's direction.[44] Order 00485 described the Poles as spreading "its diversionist network into the Soviet economy.[45] The Poles in the organs of the state were perceived as a threat and the Polish community as a whole was seen as support for this 'threat.' Yezhov further stated that it is "the fundamental task of the organs of the GUGB [secret police] to smash the anti-Soviet work of Polish intelligence and the complete liquidation of the widely-spread insurrectionist base of the 'PMO' [Polish Military Organization]."[46] NKVD agents' vague interpretation of Yezhov's 'base of support' for the PMO led to pervasive oppression of the Poles that would wipe out the entire community.

Within three weeks, by September 1st, 1937, Yezhov reported to Stalin, Vyacheslav Molotov, and Lazar Kaganovich that 930 Polish agents had been tried and executed, it would turn out that this was only a small piece of the picture.[47] To another report two weeks later, outlining nearly 23,000 arrests, Stalin replied "Very Good! Kick and Exterminate the Polish Spy Filth, Annihilate it in the interest of the USSR", the dictator still holding onto his resentment of the Poles.[48]

Order 00485's tragic vagueness resulted in widespread, unrestrained implementation. Earlier orders had outlined arrest and identification methods and quotas, but 00485 lacked any explicit framework, leaving only unreliable means of identification and unrestricted executive power to the NKVD officers who effected the order.[49] The vagueness of the order was then compounded by the absence of any further orders from the top for over a month

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[43] Printed [translated from Russian to Polish] as document 21 in Jerzy Bednarek ed. *Wielki Terror: Operacja Polska 1937–1938 [The Great Terror: Polish Operation 1937-1938],* Polska I Ukraina w Latach Trysdziestych-czterdziestych XX Wieku. Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2013.
[Lines cited in English are author's translation, later another translation was used as a point of comparison, found at URL https://msuweb.montclair.edu/~furrg/research/no00485.html].

[44] Tomasz Sommer, "Execute the Poles: The Genocide of Poles in the Soviet Union, 1937-1938 Documents from Headquarters" *The Polish Review,* Vol. 55, No. 4 (2010) 417-436 at 428.

[45] Ibid., Document 21.

[46] Ibid., Document 21.

[47] Order reprinted in the previously cited Sommer "The Polish Operation" 1623.

[48] Bodion Musial, "The 'Polish Operation' of the NKVD: The Climax of the Terror Against the Polish Minority in the Soviet Union" *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (January, 2013) 98-124 at 109.

[49] Morris, 761.

and a half, culminating in total unrestrained Polonocide.[50] As a result, the Polish Operation became the largest and most oppressive of all the national operations in the period of the Great Terror. Around 110,000 Poles were shot in the operation with around 150,000 arrested out of a total USSR Polish population between 600,000 and 800,000.[51] Most of the operation took place in the Ukraine where the majority of the USSR's ethnic Poles lived but it was also conducted in Belarus, Kazakhstan, and almost anywhere else Soviet Poles resided. Orders stipulated that the operation only last fourteen months, through November 1938, but the Polish purge continued for an unknown period. Taking the unofficial continuation into account, the summary executions of Poles that were left out of the official record (there are estimated to be quite a few) means that these numbers are far higher.[52]

In relation to the Great Terror as a whole, Poles "accounted for 17 percent of those executed...despite only being .4 percent of the total population."[53] The Polish Operation was a significant part of the Great Terror, but it was only accidentally the peak of the Soviet repression of Poles. Very few of those executed were 'spies' or 'counter-revolutionary,' and most of the Poles within the Party organs had already been purged in 1936, the Polish Operation instead had overwhelmingly executed and arrested apolitical farmers and factory workers.[54] From these numbers, it is ostensible that the Soviet Leadership (Stalin personally oversaw the entire operation) was targeting the Polish ethnic community as a whole to disarm and nullify their enemy. Morris' interpretation of the operation cites fear as the motivating factor for the operation along with Stalin and the Politburo's 'zeal' in conducting the operation.[55] The end of the operation occurred because the population of Poles to persecute became exhausted. There was no change in attitude or policy that brought the operation to a close; its end was contingent, accidental, predicated upon exhausting the supply of Poles to persecute.

Combining the number of Poles (roughly 20,000) who died in simultaneous Kulak operations with the numbers killed and arrested in the Polish Operation and comparing the

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[50] Tomasz Sommer, "Execute the Poles" 420; 'Polonocide' is my term for the murder and targeting of Poles by individual (NKVD) units. In use, it is closer to homicide than genocide. Genocide (or democide) is an apt term when looking at the oppression of Poles as a whole. The introduction of this term is an attempt to underscore the unique nature of Soviet violence toward Poles, see Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (1953).

[51] 110,000 is a conservative estimate found in Morris (2004), Musial (2013), Sommer (2010), and Martin (1998) to name a few but estimates based upon census data, as opposed to unreliable NKVD estimates, drive the numbers higher, see, e.g. Martin (1998) footnote 246.

[52] Sommer, "Execute the Poles" 420.

[53] Bodion Musial, "The 'Polish Operation' of the NKVD" 108.

[54] Ibid., 117.

[55] Morris, 763.

total against the entire Soviet-Polish population, between 46 and 48 percent of all adult Poles in the Soviet Union were killed or arrested.[56] Those executed were almost exclusively male; assuming an even sex ratio, nearly every adult Polish male in the Soviet Union was purged or removed from Soviet society.[57] This staggering statistic makes the Polish Operation appear to be the peak of Soviet interwar Polonophobia, but despite the official end in November 1938 the operation's attitude and spirit were not over.

Within a year of the Polish Operation, the Soviet Union invaded Poland and six months later, in May 1940, the 15,000 officers were executed. Order 00485's protocols were strongly similar to the orders leading the imprisonment and execution of the officers at Katyń.[58] A directive given by Beria on 'Operational-Cheka' work in the NKVD camps on October 8th, 1939 describes the kind of threats the Soviet bureaucracy saw in the Poles executed at Katyń: Beria ordered the NKVD to "uncover c-r [counter-revolutionary] groupings among the POW's and to shed light on their moods.[59] Beria perceived the Poles as counter-revolutionary, and he sent officers in to root out counter-revolutionaries, but in the end, he had all of the Poles executed. The Poles in 1940 were perceived as the same kind of threat as they were in 1937 and were delivered the same treatment that the Soviet Poles received from the NKVD in 1937-8. Katyn was a calculated massacre of Poles undertaken in the same manner as the Polish Operation.

The process of Katyń itself bore a strong resemblance to the process of the Polish Operations: the bureaucratic organs operated in the same manner, the NKVD organizing and implementing the orders. Stalin oversaw and directed both operations from the top, a principal agent and factor in the continuity of both cases. The same internal political attitude also prevailed: Polonophobia and Reverse-Piedmont internal policy.

Furthermore, the Soviet Union never officially declared war on Poland in 1939. A note from the Soviet government to Polish ambassador Wacław Grzybowski on September 17, 1939, claimed that the Red Army crossed the frontier into Poland to 'protect' Poland from internal collapse caused by the German invasion a few weeks earlier.[60] Even though the previously mentioned secret protocol in the Molotov Ribbentrop pact made it abundantly clear that the highest levels of the government knew it to be a war, the Soviets hid the fact that it was an invasion to gain territory. Essentially, Katyń was implemented as an internal

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[56] Musial, 118.

[57] Ibid., 118.

[58] Bednarek, Document 21.

[59] Cienciala, Document 16.

[60] Ibid., Document 4.

police action, following a similar path as 1937-39 and undertaken by the same bureaucratic organs. This dimension of the situation in 1939 blurs the line between whether it was a clear and distinct invasion in the general sense. No "war" began; 1939 was not the distinct historical marker it would later become. In the face of the Soviet stance on the invasion and the blunt texture of history as its agents perceived it, the Katyń massacre is distinctly within the narrative of the 1930s. While it is true that the 1940 officers were not Soviet citizens as the victims of the purges were, they were still Poles, and the Soviets has already shown themselves to discriminate very little between occupation or expatriate status in the past. The previous operations were unambiguously against ethnic Poles, and similarities between the 1940 officers and the upwards of 110,000 murdered in 1937-1939 makes the citizenship difference diminutive. In 1940, Stalin, still under the same mindset as the previous operations, had merely come into possession of another population of Poles to persecute and the violence picked up where it left off.

The prevailing attitude toward the Polish minority in the Soviet Union had its extension in Katyń. The killings in the May 1940 followed the same pattern and occurred under sufficiently similar conditions as the 1937-39 purges, not to mention Stalin's agency in both events, qualifying Katyń to be considered an extension of the purges and ethnic cleansing. To call the 'new' Katyń a purge denotes a specific internal operation as opposed to the massacre of foreign combatants. These two tragedies follow a single line of Soviet Polonophobia and oppression, taking overwhelming measures against any Polish population the USSR had control over. Overall, the narrative of Katyń fits best in a line of continuity with Soviet ethnic cleansing; a line of continuity that connects Katyń more closely with the narrative that preceded it than the narrative that followed, i.e., the narrative of WW2 and the postwar era.

Coda

Katyń, interpreted in light of the 1937-1939 purges, stands outside mainstream Katyń historiography. I have not redefined the massacre; instead, I have proposed a new framework of historical questions and answers on Katyń. Defining Katyń as the capstone of a historical process rather than as a defensive Soviet-WW2-whodunit provides a new perspective on Katyń that take advantage of the insights from Glasnost-era sources that do more than merely confirming historiographical arguments and suspicions from the 1970s.

Logic and historiography aside though, Katyń was an atrocity of which the perpetrators were never punished. Herein lies the value of the mainstream historiography: it drives

toward the defense of truth and retroactive justice.[61] The mainstream approach is one way of respecting History's victims against those who defend its aggressors but the framework presented in my argument is a third path. This narrative focuses on the events leading to Katyń, rather than the events after Katyń, giving primacy to the temporal order the agents in 1940 lived through. Considering the massacre in its own terms, as if Katyń was the present, avoids using the future (as it was to the victims) to interpret the past, essentially treating the massacre on terms with its victims. In this sense, it is an argument against the fallacy of presentism. The Poles who died in the forests in those few tragic weeks of 1940 lacked agency, but they also felt the texture of history. They lived and existed as if they were in the present and an evaluation of the event that took their lives ought to mirror that experience. While the academic payoff is avoiding presentism and redundant truth defending, this approach also eschews looking at the victims as cogs in history. Reading history backward makes the agents, or victims in this case, means to the present, but in reality, each historical actor is an end in herself. These victims existed in their own right, and any historical perspective must account for the dignity of the victims and responsibility of the agents. If we stop the wheel of history, as Piłsudski thought he did: *zatrzymaj koło historii,* where its stopped for its victims, then we can begin to salvage their humanness.

[61] Retroactive justice refers to the historiographical method of István Rév, *Retroactive Justice: Prehistory of Postcommunism. (Cultural Memory in the Present)* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005). Rév worked through unreliable communist sources to form a historiography poised to confront past, unreconciled injustices (11); retroactive justice arises when present historiography in post communist states clarifies past injustice.

THE DIALECTIC OF AMNESIA AND NOSTALGIA

LEBANESE STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE (RE)CONSTRUCTION AND EVOCATION OF POST-CIVIL WAR MEMORIES

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Abstract

This paper examines the process of (re)construction and evocation of war memories after the Lebanese Civil War by both state and civil society actors. In the interpreting the war, the state and civil society act independently as (re)constructors of knowledge and of public space while striving for control of the postwar narrative. The selective use of symbols, ideas, and events all constitute political acts that express an intrinsic power struggle as well as a contestation of other postwar representations in the public sphere. The strategic use of amnesia and nostalgia is not conducive to the shaping of a collective Lebanese national consciousness, let alone indicative of a constructive reconciliation and truth-seeking process. Nevertheless, conflicting representations of the war recall earlier war events and resuscitate the mythological, yet divisive, trope of a "war of the Others."

Introduction

The Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) erupted as a result of intrinsic socio-economic inequalities intersecting various religions and geographical regions, as well as in response to the vastly unproportional political representation and the pressures of the Palestinian refugee crisis. When hostilities exploded in 1975, the Maronite Christians had already established the Lebanese Forces a few years prior to maintain their political domination by expelling the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) from Lebanese territory; conversely, the Lebanese National Movement (LNM) unified left-wing Lebanese groups, Arab nationalist forces, and the PLO—together they demanded social and political reforms, declaring their support for the Palestinian cause. Considering the number of actors involved, most scholars on the subject have emphasized the dialectic of outsiders-insiders as the fundamental source of unrest that led to the conflict. Walid Khalidi, a prominent scholar in

Lebanese studies, affirms that the causes of the war, and its rapid escalation of violence, emanated from internal as well as external developments—especially the Arab-Israeli conflict and inter-Arab rivalries.[1] In a similar fashion, political science professor at the American University of Beirut Farid El-Khazen argues that state, non-state, local, and foreign parties were involved in violent disagreements over values, beliefs, ideologies, and interests—all of which were exacerbated by local political crises and socio-economic inequalities.[2] Likewise, while examining "civil" and "uncivil" violence in Lebanon, Lebanese sociologist Samir Khalaf—who has written extensively on sexuality in the Arab world—concludes that previous unresolved socio-economic and political grievances ultimately fueled civil strife.[3] As external forces supported the local groups whose interests were in line with their own, Lebanon quickly devolved into a proxy battlefield for regional and international powers to test their might against one another, serving only to further entrench domestic cleavages.[4]

Considering such interpretations, the Lebanese Civil War remains a painful memory in the consciences of those who endured it. In a postwar context, the conflict has transformed into a narrative framework used by numerous groups in the political and social arenas to represent their individual cleavages. Not only did the war remove meaning from human existence, but it also obscured the reality in which the survivors remain—perhaps most evident in its treatment of public spaces. If each fragment of a damaged public space represents an individual fragment of war memories, then who is responsible for the destruction of these symbolic spheres that once bound the different individuals together? How do individuals and groups make sense of the rapid succession of events? As Maurice Halbwachs—French sociologist who developed the concept of collective memory—has shown, individual memory is intimately linked with collective memory in an organic fashion because the individual is not alone in the act of remembering and representing war memory.[5] Rather, the collective body aids the individual in remembering and reminiscing through a system of signs, symbols, and ideas showcased in the public sphere. Hence, the (re)construction of war memories rests upon common notions that reside in both individual and collective spirits. Halbwachs also makes a distinction between history and collective memory; while considering the former as an anthology of events regarding changes and

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[1] Walid Khalidi, *Conflict and Violence in Lebanon: Confrontation in the Middle East* (Cambridge: Center for International Affairs, 1979) 13-14.

[2] Farid El-Khazen, *The Breakdown of the State in Lebanon, 1967-1976* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000) 3-5.

[3] Samir Khalaf, *Civil and Uncivil Violence in Lebanon: A History of the Internationalization of Communal Contact* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002) ix-x.

[4] Khalaf, xii; also see Charles Winslow, *Lebanon: War and Politics in a Fragmented Society* (London: Routledge, 1996) 4-6.

[5] Maurice Halbwachs, *La Mémoire Collective* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968, second edition) 36-37.

ruptures, the latter is maintained along a continuity and retains past occurrences pertinent to the group's existence and identity.[6]

Likewise, French historian Pierre Nora adds another dimension to the theoretical distinction between history and memory. By affirming that history exists as a problematic and incomplete reconstruction of the past while memory remains subject to manipulation and appropriation, Nora interlaces the dialectic of remembrance and amnesia.[7] In addition to portraying a bond that connects members of a group to the present in an effective and symbolic way—by relying on images, symbols, and spaces in the empirical domain—memory also aims to produce an illusion of timelessness by mythologizing past events, which remain politically relevant to the group's identity.[8] This ongoing reiteration of past events delineates each group within a grand narrative of differences, for the variation in memory-making is transposed onto political, social, and even economic implications. The emergence of the media as a field of exchange of ideas, different groups—whether they be the political elite, public intellectuals, civil society actors, and religious groups—can publicly narrate their own version of war memories. Hence, the revival and representation of war memories will remain a site of contestation amongst state officials and civil society actors.[9] The role of civil society and state institutions as knowledge (re)constructors is crucial in this process of interpretation. As societies collect fragments of war memories to manipulate the past by constructing or reconstructing their origin stories, they offer legitimacy to their identity and behavior by assigning meaning to each memory.

This paper argues that the selective use of symbols, ideas, and events constitutes a political act because the particular use of each is ultimately indicative of both an expression of power and a contestation to other representations of the war in the public sphere. This paper will focus on the multiple manners in which the state and civil society actors—namely the artistic, intellectual, and religious circles—crafted war memories. Specifically, this analysis will seek to highlight the role of the media in creating a unified sphere of exchange and communication for the individuals involved in (re)construction to become aware of one another's ideas. Nonetheless, such media efforts are far from unification, let alone conducive to the consolidation of a Lebanese "national consciousness." Debates triggered by state institutions, such as the postwar legislation on amnesty or the reconstruction of downtown Beirut, are expanded into civil society; in turn, counter-hegemonic strategies challenge the

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[6] Halbwachs, 77-78.

[7] Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," translated by Marc Roudebush, In *Representations no. 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-memory* (Spring, 1989) 8.

[8] Nora, 9.

[9] Halbwachs, 166.

manner with which state institutions attend to war memories. Therefore, this paper aims to elucidate the role of artistic, intellectual, and religious circles in the depiction of war memories and the creation of an epistemic framework from which reconciliation can arise. Ultimately, the project aims to show the limits of postwar reconciliation and the obstacles to unifying a fractured Lebanese civil society, particularly the actualization of war memories with the 2005 assassination of Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri (1944-2005) and recent sectarian animosities.

The Dialectic of Amnesia and Nostalgia in postwar Governance and the Political Elite's postwar Reconstruction of Downtown Beirut

The narrative of recent Lebanese history has been deeply influenced by wars and threats of invasion. The transition from the 15-year-long civil war into peacetime stability was not without the mediation of the international community. In 1989, leaders of different Lebanese factions congregated in the Saudi Arabian city of Ta'if to outline the institutional framework for the reconstruction of a more balanced power-sharing system, the disbandment of militias, and the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanese territory.[10] Branded as a new assertion of Lebanese sovereignty, the Ta'if Accord postulated the institutionalization of a parliamentary democratic system in terms of mitigating the disenfranchisement of Lebanese minorities by allowing for proportional Muslim representation at the state level. Moreover, the agreement intended to reinforce the Prime Minister's power while reducing executive dominance.[11] Despite these liberalizing agreements, the next fifteen years would mark the transformation of Lebanon under Syrian tutelage.[12] The Ta'if Accord, ratified by the United Nations and the Arab League, granted Syria the authority to act as the guarantor of Lebanese political security.[13] The involvement of outside guarantors simply provided the illusion of stability, highlighting the fragility of the Lebanese state in its quest for domestic unity. Postwar legislation on war memories presented by the Lebanese political elite also reflect this malaise in reaching unity at the state level. Borrowing from the definition of "political elite" in *Pax Syriana: Elite Politics in Postwar Lebanon* by Texas A&M professor Rola El-Husseini, this group is best identified as possessing influence over the political decision-making apparatus within society—such as state officials, leaders of industries and corporations, owners of media companies, and

[10] Rola El-Husseini, *Pax Syriana: Elite Politics in Postwar Lebanon* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2012) 13-14.

[11] Khalaf, 296.

[12] El-Husseini, 15.

[13] Ibid., 17.

leaders of sectarian communities.[14] Within the boundaries of state institutions, the political elite adopted a dialectic of amnesia and nostalgia through a policy project qualified as "state-sponsored amnesia." The term, coined by the Lebanese intellectual Samir Kassir[15] (1960 – 2005), also selectively projects its nostalgic vision of the past in the reconstruction of downtown Beirut in an attempt to forge a questionable model of authenticity. The Lebanese political elite endeavored to invent a new historical narrative as well as a new version of authenticity; thus, they aimed to achieve hegemony over the politics of remembrance while simultaneously repressing guilt and shame. The 1991 law on general amnesty, the subsequent state-sanctioned censorship law, and the ascendance of Rafiq al-Hariri in 1992 to Prime Minister together illustrate the extent to which the political elite constructed this dialectic of amnesia and nostalgia.

Firstly, the promulgation of the 1991 law on general amnesty—pardoning all crimes committed during the civil war—exposed the political elite's official doctrine *vis-à-vis* war memories; such a motivation was intertwined with the political reality surrounding the Syrian tutelage of Lebanon, and reminiscent of the adage of the short-lived 1958 civil war "لا غالب لا مغلوب" (no victor, no vanquished).[16] By withholding the condemnation of any actor for fueling the civil war, the postwar regime censored memories of external involvement in the bloodshed—specifically the Syrian and Israeli interventions—while refusing to censure actors who were previously supported by these same regional and international influences. It is also important to note that the 1991 law solely applied to crimes committed before May 1991,[17] therefore, immunizing former warlords from judicial constraints. Militia chiefs—such as Nabih Berri of the Shi'a Amal[18] militia or Elie Hobeiqa of the Maronite Phalangist movement—were implicated in the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacre which, though notorious for mass rape,[19] torture, and kidnapping,[20] did not prevent the warlords from continuing to enjoy impunity while maintaining key positions in the state.[21]

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[14] Ibid., xvi-xvii.

[15] Samir Kassir, "Dhākira Lilmustaqbal," *An-Nahar* (11 February 2000) 11. http://samirkassirfoundation.org/documents/articles/pr000392.pdf (Accessed January 2, 2019).

[16] Lucia Volk, *Memorials and Martyrs in Modern Lebanon* (Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010) 22.

[17] Sune Haugbolle, *War and Memory in Lebanon* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 71.

[18] Amal was founded as the Movement of the Deprived (formed by Musa al-Sadr) in 1974 to call for a reform of Lebanese politics. The movement was mostly composed of poor and landless Shi'a peasants from Southern Lebanon who migrated to Beirut for better economic opportunities, as the Shi'a had been systematically marginalised from Lebanese politics and economic developments. The Afwaj al-Mouqawma Al-Lubnaniyya later became the Harakat Al-Mahrumiin's armed wing.

[19] Michael Johnson, *All Honourable Men: The Social Origins of War in Lebanon* (Oxford: Center for Lebanese Studies, 2001) 62.

[20] Volk, 107.

[21] Craig Larkin, *Memory and Conflict in Lebanon: Remembering and Forgetting the Past* (London: Routledge, 2012) 5.

Initiated from above, state policies encouraged society toward collective amnesia in an attempt to make peace with past traumas; yet, such policies simultaneously failed to hold any actor accountable for the violence committed against noncombatants. These policies effectually masked the deep-rooted problems and malfunctions of the institutional apparatuses within Lebanon. The establishment of truth and reconciliation committees, as well as the declassifying of war flies, would ultimately lead to the delegitimization of the nascent regime; such an effect is expected due to both the monopoly of former warlords over political institutions as well as the legitimacy of their rule perpetuated through Syrian guardianship. The potential invalidation of Syrian oversight of Lebanese domestic politics may also promote renewed unrest in a time when order and stability were of utmost importance to the political ruling class.[22] Ironically, the name of the Ta'if Accord is a wordplay on "sectarian" in Arabic, or "طائفي," which indicates the absence of a neutral, non-sectarian umpire—such as war tribunals or reconciliation and truth committees. As Middle East social historian and author Sune Haugbolle emphasizes, the doctrine of "no victor, no vanquished" represents the state's unwillingness to discuss recent traumas as well as the reconstruction of a coherent narrative of the war. Akin to Ghassan Tueni's infamous 1985 book title *Une Guerre Pour Les Autres*, such avoidance implies a lack of public accountability as well as a denial of complicity in engendering atrocities.[23] Both the charged phrases of "no victor, no vanquished" and "war of the others" are indicative of systemic avoidance of accountability as a means to maintaining in power. Instead of admitting their involvement in the conflict, the political elite continued to affirm that neither side won or lost the war; rather, by strategically placing the blame on the geopolitical context of the time, the ruling classes asserted that external powers manipulated them to kill one another. Thus, both of these notions elicit a central question: was the war from 1975 to 1990 a civil war, or was it not?

From this perspective, because the war was "one of the Others," Lebanon was merely a victim of a proxy war perpetuated by the manipulations of external powers keen on serving their individual interests.[24] The mythologization of the civil war, based on the vague idiom of a "war of the Others," mirrors the state's proclamation of "no victor, no vanquished" and amnesty legislation; because the war was caused by outside actors, a projection of shame and guilt upon the so-called 'Others' serve to camouflage the deep-seated political and economic malfunctions that have plagued the country for decades. Furthermore, the binary

[22] Larkin, 5.

[23] Haugbolle, 13.

[24] Ibid., 17-18.

of "victory" and "defeat" is not representative of the aftermath. Instances of fratricide,[25] for example, were masked—such as during the 1975-1976 clashes between the right-wing Lebanese Front and the left-wing PLO-LNM coalition, the creation of a Green Line separating Christian East Beirut from Muslim West Beirut, and during the 1983 War of the Mountain between Druze and Maronite communities.[26] The myth of a "war of the Others" also enlarged the scope of the blame game—Maronites accuse the Palestinians and the Syrian government for creating bloodshed; while Shi'ite groups, such as Hizbullah and Amal, accuse Israeli leadership.[27] However, to contend the civil war as simply a sectarian conflict is reductionist; rather, the essence of any conflict lies in the struggle for power, survival, and the hegemonic definition of a nation. Many of these struggles—such as that between the left-wing, pro-Palestinian LNM[28] and the right-wing, Zionist-backed Lebanese Front—were, in actuality, either class-based, non-sectarian, or ideological which, in turn, encouraged violence during and after the civil war. Such brutality was especially observable in the divisions between the pro-Palestinian LNM and the Zionist-backed Lebanese Front.[29]

Moreover, the engagement of any open discussions concerning the conduct and motivations of the conflict would elicit questioning the legitimacy of the postwar regime which—as both the political elite and civilians were still attempting to clarify the rapid succession of traumatic events—seemed an unnecessary undertaking to many individuals living in Lebanon. Furthermore, the omnipresence of former war criminals within the postwar government—as well as the repression of war traumas that followed—mirrored the increasing information blackout directed at civilians. As citizens mobilized in 1996 to combat the 1993 legal prohibition of public protests, for example, the Lebanese government reacted by ordering the immediate deployment of the military to end what they interpreted as "civil disobedience."[30] The systemic repression of collective societal traumas also manifested in the 1994 broadcasting law against audio-visual content inciting sectarian violence—which represented the institutional reaction to an intrinsic fear of unrest perpetuated by the lack of domestic discourse on the causes and effects of the civil war.[31]

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[25] Fratricide is used here as an example of a deep-rooted cause of the civil war. It would be against state propaganda if instances of family infighting surfaced, since the war was illustrated as a proxy rather than as caused by domestic issues. Fratricide suggests the causes of the war as intrinsic to the domestic condition of the state (i.e., the economic disparities, the lack of Shi'a representation in domestic politics, the urban-rural divide, class dimensions, etc.).

[26] Ibid., 20-21.

[27] Ibid., 18-19.

[28] The LNM was initially the Syrian-backed Lebanese Front during the early phases of the war.

[29] Winslow, 176.

[30] Johnson, 239.

[31] Haugbolle, 72.

From the political elite's point of view, the past needed to be forgotten because it threatened to tarnish their reputations and weaken their legitimacy as the ruling class; thus, they had to encourage society to forgive, forget, and march forth into the future. By adhering to a progressive vision of history, the state projected its own telos toward a better future. Such a future was to be free from the guilt and shame of the civil war; yet, paradoxically, the 1994 legislation on media censorship hindered a constructive intellectual discussion on historical events and, in turn, generated barriers preventing civil society actors from voicing discontent.

The contradiction of state-initiated acts of amnesia was further entrenched by the ascendance of Rafiq al-Hariri to the office of Prime Minister in 1992.[32] Hariri's mandate signaled the start of what he advertised as the "economic revival" of Lebanon. Hariri was at the forefront of the Future Movement, which aimed to regroup a congregation of corporations. Not only did the movement aim to reorganize the *Société Libanaise pour le Développement et la Reconstruction du Centre-ville de Beyrouth*, or Solidère, which was the Lebanese joint-stock company responsible for planning and redeveloping Beirut Central District since 1994, but also the influential media "Future" channel owned by the Hariri family. His vision to reconstruct downtown Beirut, while reviving the Lebanese economy, was enshrined in the name of his political movement: the Future movement. While his reforms appeared positive to many, such optimism actually functioned to further repress the painful memories of the civil war while selectively highlighting historical narratives of glory and pride. Thus, in a declared state of *tabula rasa*, Hariri pursued a policy of demolishing historical buildings and prewar neighborhoods in an attempt to bring about a future in which the civil war was no longer a point of contention.[33] Although reconstruction plans had dated back to 1977, with initial aims to rebuild the central district ravaged by the civil war as well as to restore the cosmopolitan heritage of Beirut, fighting abruptly resumed and the initiatives were abandoned.[34] Solidère's advertisement "Beirut–Ancient City of the Future" laid out the architectural and ideological framework for the reconstruction project; yet, without any consultation with intellectuals, experts, or the public, the entirety of the project was supported by the logic of the free-market economy—discarding moral, intellectual, and historical considerations.[35]

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[32] Winslow, 277-278.

[33] Haugbolle, 84-85.

[34] Saree Maksidi, "Laying Claim to Beirut: Urban Narrative and Spatial Identity in the Age of Solidère," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 23 no. 3 (Spring 1997) 666-667.

[35] Aseel Sawalha, *Reconstructing Beirut: Memory and Space in a Postwar Arab City* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010) 30.

The central function of the Future Channel was, expectedly, to display Hariri's postwar policies for the reconstruction of downtown Beirut and to broadcast spectacular promotional images of his rehabilitation program.[36] Advocates of Hariri and Solidère's plans attempted to resuscitate Beirut's Phoenician past of glorious Roman cultural, artistic, and intellectual heritage; moreover, they claimed that Beirut had historically offered a safe haven to outsiders who, in return, ravaged the city and played the Lebanese off one another.[37] Similar to this romantic vision of Beirut, other proponents of the project also reminisced over the Ottoman period—which had endowed the capital with charming architecture, public gardens, thriving educational institutions, and healthcare facilities.[38] The "Beirut–Ancient city of the Future" slogan was evidently in alignment with the greater dialectic of amnesia and nostalgia.[39] By highlighting the heritage—or *turath*—of Beirut,[40] and by reviving the image of the city as having once been the "Paris of the Middle East,"[41] Solidère fabricated an illusion of the perpetuity in Beirut's charm and sensuality.

Not only did the rehabilitation project's capitalist focus and laissez-faire attitude correspond to the rewriting of the city's history, but it was also indicative of self-Orientalization. If Orientalism invents the Orient as well as its people, cultures, and institutions, then self-Orientalizing tendencies—cardinal to the Lebanese political elite's program of reconstructing downtown Beirut—reimagined Beirut while restoring its past sensuality and romanticism.[42] The Beiruti urban landscape was, therefore, converted into a spectacle which mirrored the logic and hegemony of capitalism. Reconstruction was, thus, simultaneously the project and result of the capitalist model of production, with the empirical domain existing as an accumulation of spectacles.[43] These spectacles would conform to the new reality, whereas such a reality would re-emerge within these spectacles to produce a sense of loss and alienation amongst residents who were once familiar with the prewar urban configurations.[44] This "monopoly of appearance"—coined by Guy Debord—transformed Beirut and the historical knowledge within its ruins into a picturesque

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[36] Bassel F. Salloukh, Rabie Barakat, Jinan S. Al-Habbal, Lara W. Khattab, Shoghig Mikaelian, and Aram Nerguizian, *The Politics of Sectarianism in Postwar Lebanon* (London: Pluto Press, 2015) 138-140.

[37] Sawalha, 31-32.

[38] Ibid., 32-33.

[39] Haugbolle, 86.

[40] Sawalha, 36.

[41] Ibid., 89.

[42] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979) 3.

[43] Guy Debord, *La Société du Spectacle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992) 17 and 15.

[44] Ibid., 19.

commodity devoid of any contextualization or history.[45] This monopoly then tacitly encouraged ordinary citizens to identify themselves with the flows of the free-market economy because, as the conflict had annihilated the remnants of Beirut, the sole direction of history now progressed toward this capitalist development; not only did it exclusively conform to the expectations of the capitalist model, but it was also transformed into an illusion of the sempiternity of past romanticism and forgotten times. The banality of capitalist hegemony, routinized by Hariri's revitalization plans, converted Lebanese circumstances to an advertisement for redevelopment investments and triggered the commodification of time.[46] Although this well-calculated project pushed for the reinvigoration of Beirut's profile in the aftermath of destruction, it paradoxically utilized the nostalgia of lost times to commodify urban terrain as well as to forge the elite's narrative of authenticity. This signified a form of paralysis of historical development—a blockage stemming from the actualization of the past that prevented the political elite from achieving future capitalist objectives.

Correspondingly, Samir Khalaf depicts remembrance as consolidatory for both collective memories as well as group identities and existence; whereas, to forget is to escape from the uncertainty of the present through taking refuge in nostalgia—scrupulously reinventing a new narrative of authenticity rooted in past events.[47] Therefore, the political elite generated a discursive framework of oblivion and remembrance—founded on global capitalism and a debatable model of authenticity—to craft artificial legitimacy as well as a "culture of disappearance."[48] From this perspective, memory, after having undergone a meticulous process of selection and omission, acts as both representation and misrepresentation of the past.[49] Whether it be from a Muslim or Christian perspective, to equivocate the corporate narrative on war memories with an ordinary Lebanese citizen's memory of the war is to cover up the inequalities and tensions that underlie the society. The capitalist interests in Lebanon do not necessarily capture the diversity of human experiences, as the goal of reparation is to erase the dolorous marks of war staining the city. However, by manipulating and appropriating past memories, these efforts constitute an act of voluntary amnesia. Although the postwar reconstruction was solely limited to Beirut, other spaces—such as the south of the country—remained a war zone amidst the high tides of reconstruction. Notably, as part of their Operation Grapes of Wrath to spite Hizbullah's

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[45] Ibid., 20.

[46] Ibid., 154.

[47] Khalaf, 307.

[48] Ibid., 307.

[49] Haugbolle, 9.

troops, the Israeli Defense Forces committed the 1996 Qana massacre in the south of Lebanon at the site of a United Nations compound sheltering Lebanese civilians.[50] This raises the question of the state's priorities and its capacity to establish sovereignty over its territory to protect citizens who reside in the peripheries. Beirut, as the capital city of Lebanon, ought to have matched the polished image that its reconstructors wished to deliver to the world; nonetheless, the state simultaneously neglected areas where war memories and massacres—perpetrated by external forces—remained very much lived realities for the inhabitants.

Nevertheless, despite highlighting the flaws in the postwar remembrance movement initiated by state legislation, Haugbolle affirms that the government's aversion to interfering with the reconstruction of war memories signified a step toward the decentralization of war memory; thus, allowing for alternative war narratives to develop and spread mostly uncontested.[51] Likewise, San Francisco State University professor of international relations Lucia Volk argues that the 1991 amnesty law granted the perpetrators of alternative war narratives new opportunities to shape the meaning behind such memories. Such projects may even eventually attain reconciliation,[52] as public spaces are implicit arenas for the power struggle between state institutions and civil society over controlling the historical narrative.[53] Despite the fact that state legislation clearly suffered from amnesia, the decentralization of memory represented the first step toward reconciliation by allowing disparate groups of civil society to develop their own narratives as a challenge to the official doctrine and the political elite's version of authenticity.[54]

Attempted Challenge to "State-Sponsored Amnesia": an Emerging Public Debate

In opposition to the "culture of disappearance," Samir Khalaf stresses the emergence of a "culture of resistance" amongst Lebanese civil society actors against the lack of elite remembrance of the war as well as to the corporate reconstruction of downtown Beirut.[55] The concept of "civil society" is associated with the paradigm of Western liberal democracy —where the state and civil society engage in a complementary, synergetic relation.[56] This

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[50] Volk, 117-118.

[51] Haugbolle, 27.

[52] Volk, 193-194.

[53] Ibid., 4-5.

[54] Ibid., 23.

[55] Khalaf, 307-308.

[56] Krishan Kumar, "Civil Society: An Inquiry into the Usefulness of a Historical Term," *British Journal of Sociology,* Vol. 44 No. 3 (September 1993) 375-376.

concept gained more traction after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 as it was triggered by citizen agency and, thus, was utilized by Western scholarship to illustrate the triumph of the liberal democratic model over "Eastern authoritarianism."[57] Deep-rooted in the Western tradition of political philosophy, the idea of "civil society" dates back to classical writings—such as those of Aristotle and Cicero where civil society was linked with civilization and civility amongst political actors, altogether reigned in by the rule of law.[58] During the Enlightenment, the concept evolved into the secular antithesis of despotism with "civil society" representing the bedrock for democracy in Western contexts—as previously argued by the preeminent theorists of democracy and civil society such as Alexis de Tocqueville, Max Weber, and Robert Putnam.[59] Nonetheless, both Krishan Kumar of Uppsala University and Masoud Kamali of the University of Kent at Canterbury contest the notion of "civil society" as an intrinsically Western phenomenon. Kumar argues that the notion of civil society emerges even in countries without an entrenched democratic system, which serves as a counter-hegemonic sphere to the state dominated by a self-interested elite and constitutes an alternative model of governance.[60] Similarly, though Kamali points out the lack of consensus on a fixed definition of "civil society," he nevertheless stresses that certain agreed-upon characteristics—such as individual liberties or democratic institutions—deny the existence of a civil society in the Arab world.[61] Traditional forms of socialization—such as critical sermons, welfare institutions, intellectual circles, and solidarity networks—constitute an alternative model of civil society in the public sphere that does not conform to the Western definition of the concept; rather, they enjoy a relative degree of autonomy from the state with their legitimacy deriving from social authority and the extent of their socio-economic networks.[62] Thus, neither individualism nor democratic institutions are the pre-conditions for the creation and consolidation of civil society, because these ideals attempt to universalize the Western version of modernity. Conversely, existing structures form an alternative model of modernity in the Arab world and do not fall under the conventional, hegemonic understanding of modernity.[63] Taking this critique of the Eurocentric definition

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[57] Ibid., 375-376.

[58] Ibid., 376-377.

[59] Ibid., 377; also see Michalle Browers, *Democracy and Civil Society in Arab Political Thought: Transcultural Possibilities* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2006) 5-6; also see Samar El-Masri, "Interethnic Reconciliation in Lebanon after the Civil War," in Joanna R. Quinn, ed., *Reconciliation(s): Transitional Justice in Postconflict Societies* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009) 264.

[60] Kumar, 383.

[61] Masoud Kamali, "Civil Society and Islam: A Sociological Perspective," *European Journal of Sociology,* Vol. 42 No. 3 (December 2001) 457.

[62] Ibid., 457-459.

[63] Ibid., 458.

of the concept of civil society into considerations, it is now possible to properly examine the role of religious groups—such as Hizbullah, the artistic, and intellectual circles—in challenging the state's narrative of the war and legislated policies to enforce amnesia.

In the 1980s, Western-educated Arab scholars initiated discourse on the idea of "civil society" as parallel to the zenith of international human rights and democracy—especially in anti-Apartheid and post-Soviet contexts; thus, international interest in the civil sphere of society, in relation to the state, was a more recent phenomenon.[64] This concurrent timeline is crucial in any examination of postwar remembrance in Lebanon because the 1980s witnessed the appearance of early civil war narratives produced by Hizbullah-affiliated intellectuals acting as moralizing makers of war memories.[65] In Hizbullah's 1984 publication of *Al-'Ahd*, the Christian "Other" was responsible for the outbreak of the civil war; they accused Lebanese Christians by selectively referencing the 1975 Bus Massacre of Ayn al-Rumana, which was committed by the Phalangist *Kata'ib* against Palestinian refugees.[66] In an attempt to define the culture of the "Other" as the "culture of massacre," Hizbullah accused the Maronites of orchestrating numerous crimes against humanity—such as the Shatila and Sabra massacre in 1982 which followed the Israeli invasion of the Lebanese south.[67] It is also important to note that these particular massacres were directed against the Palestinian 'Others,' non-Lebanese communities, as well as Lebanese Muslims primarily to exact vengeance for the interpretation of 'Others' as major contributors to the disintegration and subsequent devastation of Lebanon.[68] Through these optics, Hizbullah perceived certain Maronite compatriots as committing treason for falling under the influence of Israel. By weaponizing the printed press, Hizbullah reconstructed various memories of the war in an attempt to generate division; they primarily stood as a fervent critic of Maronite domination within Lebanese political institutions while also accusing the Maronites of causing the civil war and cooperating with Israel—the ultimate enemy.[69] Hizbullah, writing their own war narrative, enumerated its personal legacy of resistance and martyrdom to juxtapose itself with the "culture of massacre" perpetrated by Lebanese chauvinists—Zionist collaborators. As University of Stirling lecturer Bashir Saade suggests, the centrality of the commemoration of martyrs constitutes the group's politics of remembrance, which is neatly

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[64] Browers, 62.

[65] Bashir Saade, *Hizbullah and the Politics of Remembrance: Writing the Lebanese Nation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016) 63.

[66] Ibid., 69.

[67] Ibid., 69-70.

[68] Johnson, 62.

[69] Saade, 68.

inserted into Hizbullah's larger narrative of a continuous struggle against Israeli occupation.[70] Consequently, the constructive resurrection of war memories by Hizbullah marked their background effort amidst the last episodes of the civil war—spawning divisive and sectarian war narratives in the public sphere and, thus, adding a ferocious discursive dimension to the carnage.

Starting in the mid-1990s, Lebanese intellectual and artistic circles prompted debates over the meaning of recent war memories to defy the state's official silence on the matter. In the field of performing arts, the al-Medina theatre became an arena for prominent discussions.[71] One figure at the forefront of the intellectual movement against amnesia was the novelist Elias Khoury whose play, *Mudhakirat Ayoub,* dealt with the issue of kidnapped Muslim and Christian children during the civil war—warning of the dangers in forgetting the past.[72] Moreover, because intellectuals and artists showed no confidence in the political elite's handling of war memories, and because of the 1996 Qana massacre perpetuated by Israeli forces in a postwar context, the televised media reckoned that discussions about the war—including whether it had ended—were of utmost importance. As a result, the media gave rise to new discussion sections about the civil war on televised talk shows, notably *Kalam An-Nas* (the People's Talk) or *Sira wa Infatahit* (Open for Discussion).[73]

Similarly, the need for a more critical perspective toward the commodification of public space led to the emergence of public art as a form of contestation. Art represented a mission for authenticity and nostalgia in the beginning of the 2000s, simultaneously acting as a counter-hegemonic tool for perpetuating the political elite's culture of amnesia. For example, Nada Sahnaoui's 2003 installation *Ataddhakar* in Martyrs' Square attempted to direct public attention to the remembrance debate as its memorialization strategically omitted and erased particular memories; thus, the need to restore this forgotten past equaled the need to reclaim the Beiruti citizens' spatial and emotional attachment to their historic urban configurations.[74] Likewise, Hassan Saouli's "13th of April" included a replica of the original 1975 passenger bus which was ambushed by *Kata'ib* militiamen. The artwork raised questions of guilt, shame, and public accountability by utilizing disturbing symbols to help individuals interact with their remembrance of the civil war.[75] Remembrance and

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[70] Ibid., 46-47.

[71] Haugbolle, 75.

[72] Ibid., 75.

[73] Ibid., 77.

[74] Ibid., 117-118.

[75] Ibid., 132-133.

reminiscence, facilitated by art, were the sole manners with which individuals could access the public sites that had been privatized by corporate interests and rehabilitation program by the elite. Through these means, independent actors could reach the echoes of the past and bygone spaces—such as coffee shops or public markets—as these spaces once symbolized unity and debate within Lebanese society, regardless of their sectarian confession.[76]

Subsequently, intellectual and artistic pioneers raised the issue of absence in public commemoration of the civil war's outbreak as well as the tragic events that constituted its bloodiest episodes. Another initiative, for example, was the 2001 *Memory for the Future Colloquium* which—founded by historian Amal Makarem and journalist Samir Kassir—aimed to compile distinct memories of the war through active debates and ceremonies of commemoration—such as the designation of April 13th, the day of the bus massacre, as a symbol of national unity.[77] Amal Makarem also criticized selective "state-sponsored amnesia," as well as the absence of an epistemic framework to reconstruct public memories and make sense of the civil war, in order to educate future generations while enabling reconciliation as a forthcoming reality in Lebanon. By repudiating divisive narratives which highlighted violence amongst different sectarian groups, the *Colloquium* created a space for the plurality of war narratives that reflected political grievances and socio-economic realities of ordinary citizens who were victims of the conflict.[78] The creation of an intellectual discussion led to the establishment of the *Association Mémoire pour l'Avenir*, which united a myriad of academics, journalists, and writers to endorse a national campaign aimed at raising public awareness about the need to publicize war memories for a larger national audience.[79] In opposition to the postulations of the ruling government, this initiative illustrated the ability of civil society to generate peaceful methods of conflict resolution and harmonious social relations without relying on top-down or external forces.

Another neglected legacy of the war was the question of displaced peoples. The question was further complicated by the corporate rehabilitation project because displaced families of the civil war—notably Southern Shi'ite migrants settling in the Southern Beiruti suburb of *al-Ḍaḥiya*—were moving into poor neighborhoods in Beirut or in the annihilated and, thereby, unoccupied downtown spaces.[80] After escaping massacres and threats in the

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[76] Sawalha, 12.

[77] Elsa Abou Assi, "Collective Memory and Management of the Past: The Entrepreneurs of Civil War Memory in Post-war Lebanon," *International Social Science Journal,* Vol. 61 No. 202 (December 2010) 400.

[78] Assi, 401.

[79] Haugbolle, 198.

[80] Sawalha, 109.

south of Lebanon that had quickly devolved into a theatre of war against Israeli invasions, displaced families found themselves refugees in their own country and even on their own properties. Although state institutions—such as the Ministry for the Displaced or the Central Fund for the Displaced—were erected by the postwar regime to attend to the issue, Solidère continued to pay displaced families inadequate compensation to clear them out of the soon-to-be demolished downtown area. Instead of accommodating the displaced with responsible urban planning, the company introduced a form of cleansing and showed no consideration for postwar social realities, exacerbating the chaotic effects of social cleavages produced by the war.[81]

Because displaced peoples lacked the resources, power, information, and self-determination—and because they were forced to confront an uncertain future over which they had no control—informal groups and networks—such as Hizbullah's *Jihad al-Bina'*—emerged even before Solidère to challenge state-sponsored neglect and the government's favorable attitude toward the free-market economy. These organizations even developed an autonomous, sophisticated system of charity organizations that offered healthcare services and basic amenities to the displaced peoples fleeing southern Lebanon.[82] Hizbullah's specific ideology of resistance influenced the forces in opposition to state weakness and neglect, forming a "society of resistance."[83] Moreover, they styled their resistance through the image of an armed struggle against Israeli invasion. Hizbullah's activities challenged the mandatory secular component that is rigidly tied to the Western understanding of civil society because, if "civil" is the antonym of "religious," then Hizbullah itself would fall just short of the hegemonic Western interpretation of "civil society," fundamentally discrediting its charity work in the public sphere. Yet, Hizbullah's experience demonstrates that organizations in the public sphere do not have to remain secular to be capable of "self-management" or to palliate the institutional void generated by a weak state's neglect. Imposing a Western interpretation of "civil society" upon a network, which joined the political arena after the 1992 elections, represents not only the application of Western model of modernity upon Hizbullah, but also denies Hizbullah of their status as a fully operational civil society actor with a heavily armed wing. Not only did artists in the fields of performing and public arts succeed in evoking suppressed war memories, but both public intellectuals and religious organizations also actively challenged the official state-sanctioned narrative by creating a space for constructive action. Therefore, as this paper has demonstrated, different groups—religious, intellectual, or artistic—actively participated in

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[81] Ibid., 111.

[82] Rula Jurdi Abisaab and Malek Abisaab, *The Shi'ites of Lebanon: Modernism, Communism, and Hizbullah's Islamists* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2014) 163.

[83] Ibid., 156.

the process of contesting the state's amnesia with varying degrees of success and they did so in an attempt to clarify the reality of Lebanese civil society in its central role as a major actor in their civil war.

Conclusion

This paper demonstrates that the politics of remembrance and amnesty of the Lebanese political elite forged a debatable version of authenticity which, despite offering immunity to former warlords involved in war crimes and massacres, allowed them to continue the occupation of key positions in state institutions. The elite's trope of a "war of the Others" also refrained from holding any domestic actor accountable—substantially complicating the processes of reconciliation and war memory reconstruction. The postwar reconstruction project, hijacked by Rafiq al-Hariri and Solidère, remodeled the Beiruti urban landscape in line with a progressive direction of history—in terms of the effects of capitalist development on historically nostalgic sites. Thus, public spaces were transformed into transactional commodities in an attempt to attract foreign capital into the country. As a result of an inherent lack of state consultation with intellectuals, experts, and the masses in rehabilitating downtown Beirut, political debates sparked widespread reaction from civil society. Numerous intellectual and artistic circles criticized the reconstruction program through various mediums in the public sphere—such as public art installations, charity activities, or even cyberspace—as a way of addressing the absence of collective commemoration and managing legacies of the civil war which had only received state neglect.

Nevertheless, the fruitless deconstruction of the mythologization of war—based on the catch-all adages of "no victor, no vanquished" and "the war of the Others"—rendered the path to full reconciliation more difficult. For example, the 2005 Syrian-sponsored assassination of Rafiq al-Hariri by a car bomb—a method of terror often utilized during the civil war—triggered a new crisis in Lebanon and made Hariri the "Martyr Prime Minister."[84] He was laid to rest in Martyrs' Square, with the site of his burial acting as the scene of protests in opposition to the March 14, 2005 coalition against Syrian penetration into Lebanese politics.[85] While the March 14 movement—composed of Maronites, Sunni, and Druze groups—claimed to be the true heir of the Lebanese ideology of the National Pact, the March 08 coalition that united Hizbullah with Syrian and Iranian sympathizers grounded their politics of memory on the basis of resistance to Zionism. Thus, they sought to revive

[84] Volk, 161 and 170.

[85] Sawalha, 136.

the deep-rooted dynamics of power struggle mirroring the years of the civil war.[86] The July 2006 war between Hizbullah and Israel Defense Forces in southern Lebanon, as well as the 2007 takeover of West Beirut by the former, actualized memories of the civil war by raising the question of whether or not the war truly ended.[87]

Lastly, it is crucial to acknowledge the dearth of diverse scholarship concerning the Lebanese civil war and its aftermath. There remains an upsetting shortage of secondary sources, ranging from anti-Syrian understanding of Lebanese nationalism to pro-Syrian challenges of the anti-Syrian coalition's representation of the Lebanese "nation," in addition to other diverse perspectives emanating from class-based, sectarian, and social cleavages that characterize the Lebanese postwar narrative. This epistemic obstacle has indeed hindered this paper's examination of the processes responsible for reconstructing the memories of the period between 1990 and 2005. As it turns out, numerous secondary sources display a fierce nationalist or anti-Syrian stance, or openly endorse Rafiq al-Hariri's "economic revival" throughout the 1990s and early 2000s.[88] Finally, coupled with the anti-Syrian nationalist biases that characterize a large proportion of secondary source material, the perpetual trope of the instrumentalization of Lebanese domestic actors by external actors—notably Israel and Syria—only served to cause further bloodshed. Considering these constraints on the study of the Lebanese Civil War, any further research on the subject must embrace the multiplicity of perspectives to fill this epistemic gap in the future.

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[86] Volk, 163.

[87] Joseph Alagha, "A Tug of War: Hizbullah, Participation, and Contestation in the Lebanese Public Sphere," in Keteney Khalid Shami, ed., *Publics, Politics and Participation: Locating the Public Sphere in the Middle East and North Africa* (New York: Social Science Research Council, 2009) 473.

[88] Particularly evident in the works of Farid El-Khazen, Rola El-Husseini, Samir Kassir, Ghassan Tueni, and Samir Khalaf, along with many others.