LEVIATHAN

REVOLT & REFORM!

CONTENTS

DEAR READERS,

I am pleased to bring you our next issue of Leviathan: Revolt and Reform. It is not surprising to state that our world faces numerous challenges and crises: from the climate change to numerous conflicts across the globe, the world seems more inundated with disasters than ever before. Finding solutions to these emergencies will require wide reaching changes, sometimes destabilizing but absolutely necessary. As António Guterres, Secretary General of the UN, put it "the alternative to reform is not the status quo. The alternative to reform is further fragmentation. It's reform or rupture." This issue takes up these challenges and seeks to elevate the voice of students confronting disasters across all parts of the world.

Revolt and Reform is the result of the hard work of the Leviathan editing team, and the consistent support of the Edinburgh Political Union. Thanks to these groups, this issue features twelve articles of the highest quality and accompanying artwork. Our writers have taken on the challenge of working towards a better world in this issue of Leviathan. Their pieces represent a diverse range of perspectives on an equally diverse array of issues. The hope here at Leviathan is that this issue will leave readers with a greater understanding of the world's many issues, and maybe even some optimism for the future.
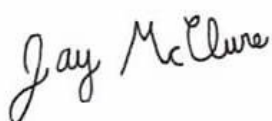
Our issue begins with Madeline Schwarz's piece on Queer Palestinian activism, which explores an intersectional lens through which to view the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Taking a similar intersectional approach, Gwynne Capiraso focuses on the AIDS epidemic and particularly forgotten voices from the era. Edie Fenton examines the history of UN peacekeeping operations, revealing their systemic failures and inability to guarantee peace in the contemporary world. In Finland, Maya Pearson provides an analysis of the recent rise of right-wing populism in one of Europe's historically most progressive political systems.

Recounting the historical development of the Turkish Constitution, Eda Naz Gezer and Azra Acar argue that the only solution for Turkey's political dysfunction is an entirely new Constitution. Following, Niamh Roberts brings attention back to Edinburgh in research that tests different lobbying tactics utilized on the University. Utilizing interviews from the region, Colleen Aparicio's insightful research uncovers the roots of conflict in the Niger Delta. Drawing on the Serbian Revolt, Ross Doran reveals an alternative form of nationalism centering on the peasantry rather than Western models that stress the involvement of the bourgeois class. Turning to the ongoing conflict in Myanmar, William Fieni-Thies explains the role of technology in the rebels fight and the potential to transform future conflicts. Emma Brealey follows with an article tracing the roots of Haiti's current instability to the unique post-colonial situation of the country. Finally, in a unique piece joining politics and art, Julia Bahadrian argues that art provides a powerful medium to approach the ongoing climate crisis and its effects.

Revolt and Reform has only been possible due to the hard work from the Leviathan team, our writers, and the Edinburgh Political Union. I would like to personally thank everyone who contributed not only to this issue of Leviathan, but to our previous issue as well. Thanks to their efforts, Levithan has been able to produce a high number of quality articles elevating the voices of everyday students. Continuing this effort, I am proud to pass on the torch to the new Editor-in-Chief Grace Hitchcock and the new Deputy Editor-in-Chief Eleanor Doyle. They have already begun on the next issue of Leviathan, Voices and Violence, which I know will not only meet the quality of this issue but surpass it. Submissions for Voices and Violence will be open through October 6th.

I hope that you enjoy reading these pieces and continue to support the work of Leviathan.

Sincerely,

Jay McClure

Grace Hitchcock

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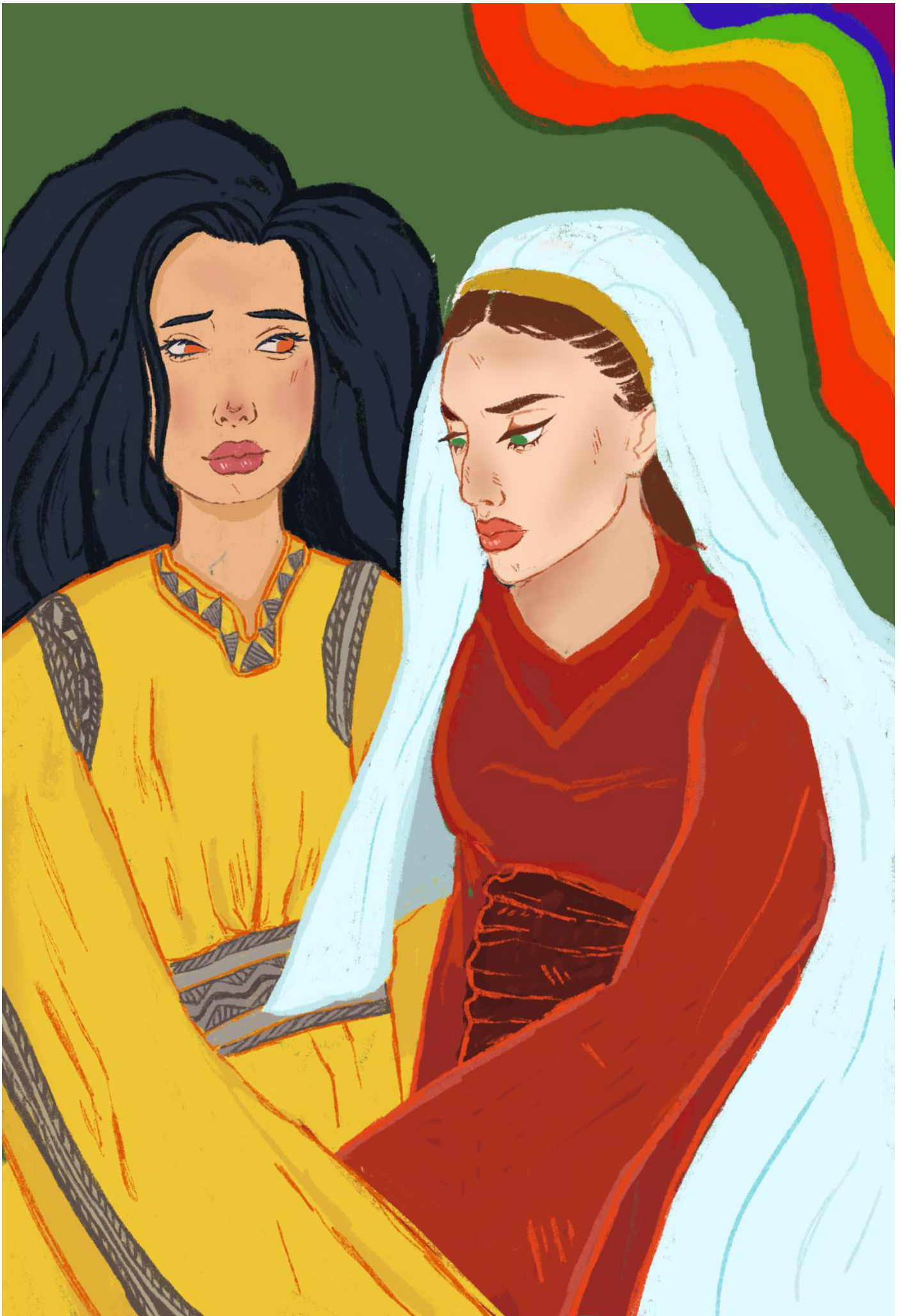
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HOW CAN THE CASE OF QUEER PALESTINIAN ACTIVISM BE UNDERSTOOD THROUGH TRANSNATIONAL FEMINIST SCHOLARSHIP?

by Madeline Schwarz

Queerness has often been situated in a Western context of pride and liberation—within celebrations of the bestowal of human rights to the LGBTQ+ bodies that have successfully emerged from 'the closet' (Ritchie 2010, 558). Yet, when Queerness is understood within the context of settler-colonialism, its undertones and implications change, due to its transnational and intersecting entanglements with oppression. The case of the Queer movement in Palestine has become a compelling discussion for activists and academics alike, especially amid the recent intensification of the Israel-Hamas war. Transnational feminist scholarship has been prominent in delineating the colonial construction of the Zionist regime through which Queer Palestinians experience an intersection of colonial, sexual, racial, and religious oppression (Massad 2006, 177; Ritchie 2015, 622). Thus, activists in Palestine and in the Global North have utilised transnational feminism to position their movements. Yet, the execution of transnational

feminist activism has also been challenged and reformulated within and around the movement. This essay will therefore discuss the interactions and exchanges between Queer Palestinian movements and supporting activism in the West, evaluating how they have been simultaneously sculpted and criticised by transnational feminist understandings of visibility, modernity, and freedom.

This essay will first explain the emergence of transnational feminism, as well as its definition and employability within the Queer Palestinian movement. It will then move to discuss visibility, evaluating the extent to which Western understandings of Queer liberation can be used in this transnational movement. This will continue in a discussion of modernity, considering the ways in which progressive politics have universalised standards of human rights alongside a debate regarding the generalising uses of 'homonationalism', through which states exaggerate their inclusivity of LGBTQ+ communities (Ritchie 2015, 621). Finally, the essay will move to discuss freedom, explicating a contextualised method through which Queer emancipation can be understood through processes of decoloniality and Queer futurity which deconstruct colonial epistemologies and re-imagine the social reproduction of heteronormativity (Alqaisiya 2018, 31; Muñoz 2009, 32). Ultimately, the opportunities and obstacles of transnational feminist activism will be unveiled, emphasising the fundamental importance of giving value to the lives that exist in non-western spaces.

Transnational feminist scholarship has been influential in disturbing and reassembling common conceptions and practices of 'global' feminism. Transnational feminist work rejects many traditional internationalist feminist applications, which have historically reinforced a dichotomous narrative that encourages the need for 'heroic' White western women to rescue victimised women in the 'barbaric' and 'backward' Global South (Tambe and Thayer 2021, 13). With transnational feminist scholarship having initially emerged in the United States, it has been transformative in self-reflectively critiquing Western feminism, which is notoriously limited by this missionary-style, salvationist approach (Tambe and Thayer 2021, 13). However, when practised, purported 'transnational feminist' activism often misrepresents the scholarship by perpetuating problematic traditional norms through a reliance on Western bodies and stories for progress (Schotten 2018, 19). While transnational feminist scholarship is determined to expose the constructed nature of borders and identities, which create a binary between the 'elsewhere' and the 'home' (Savci 2021, 242) it has been difficult for activist

movements to simultaneously accept the domination of this trope, but also challenge its hegemony and create new grounds for their activism. This struggle can be clearly identified through the Queer liberation movement occurring in Palestine, as the creation of the Israeli state on Palestinian land was pursued through Zionist settler-colonial methods which tether Palestinian bodies to the transnational (Stedler 2018, 443). Activist groups within Palestine, like Al-qaws (Darwich and Maikey 2014, 282), thus recognise that Queer Palestinians are positioned at the crossroads of multiple oppressions, due to their ongoing struggle against the colonially constituted state of Israel alongside a fight for sexual freedom. Thus, these groups are simultaneously resisting both imperialism and homophobia.

While Western groups like Queers for Palestine alongside academics have organised to support LGBTQ+ people in Palestine, they are often guilty of modes of allyship that are rooted in Western-centric goals of pride and visibilising Queerness (Alqaisiya 2018, 33). Western understandings emphasise that Queer emancipation can be achieved through explicit forms of 'coming out' (Ritchie 2010, 560; Farsakh, Kanaaneh, and Seikaly 2018, 10). However, within the Israeli state, Queer visibility does not exist with the same capacity to 'empower' as it does in the West. Jason Ritchie, an American Scholar, explains that for Queer Palestinians, visibility is limited by the checkpoints created by the Israeli state, which internally and externally limit freedoms of mobilisation and sociality for Palestinian bodies (Ritchie 2010, 560–561). He highlights that Queer Palestinians are specifically subject to these 'checkpoints' in Queer spaces, in which they are inspected or denied entry for being "excessively Arab or insufficiently gay" (Ritchie 2010, 561). Queer Palestinians are only 'acceptably visible' when they suppress their Palestinian identity or exaggerate their Queerness (Ritchie 2010, 563). Being 'out', in this context, means that they must confirm the dichotomous narrative of 'Israeli progress' in opposition to 'backward' and 'barbaric' Palestine (Ritchie 2010, 563). Thus, visibility, in settler-colonial Israel, defines Queer Palestinians through the Israeli-imposed victim-narrative, which labels them as helpless, subject to the backward laws of their culture, and in need of protection by the Israeli state. Hence, being seen as Queer cannot be understood through the same narrative as it exists for Queer Westerners who promote pride in 'coming out' and making oneself 'visible'. In recognizing that

> "…within the Israeli state, Queer visibility does not exist with the same capacity to 'empower' as it does in the West."

the Westerners' tools cannot, after all, "dismantle the master's house" (Lorde 1984, 110), Ritchie (2015, 632) encourages that rather than coming out of 'the closet,' Queer Palestinians are subject to coming out of 'the checkpoint.' This conceptualization facilitates a more contextual understanding of the multifaceted relationship with visibility that Queer Palestinians experience. Thus, the utilisation of transnational feminist scholarship to recognize visibility as a "burden of representation," which imposes upon colonised bodies, highlights that 'coming out' is not straightforward for Queer Palestinians (Hartman 2019, 23). Because Western priorities of visibility cannot be applied to the Palestinian experience, Western transnational allyship must therefore adapt and transform, to prioritise a multi-scalar understanding of Palestinian oppression.

Meanwhile, scholars and activists in the Global North are often persistent in internationalising this Western understanding of visibility, by articulating disdain for the restriction of human rights that Queer Palestinians endure through a trope of modernity (Schulman 2012, 115). While the intentions of these claims are often aimed at promoting liberation for Queer Palestinians, progressive language around 'human rights' can be harmful due to the universalizing narrative through which they have been created. Human rights, produced by the United Nations, are based heavily on Western "rights to liberty and property," and are often essentialized to all third-world contexts (Tamale 2020, 125). When human rights are advocated for by Western allies for Queer Palestinians, the rhetoric can often reinforce a narrative of reliance on a modernised Western mode of 'freedom.' Moreover, the United Nations did, after all, create the state of Israel and the declaration of human rights in the same year (United Nations, n.d.). Therefore, this Western activism that is speaking the language of human rights, is failing to address that both Israeli settler-colonial oppression and human rights are deeply entrenched in the same Western institution. This limits their attempts for solidarity by using language that is institutionally rooted in a system that homogeneously understands the inequalities of humans, without consideration for the imperialism that shapes the Queer Palestinian experience.

Additionally, the promotion of modernity, which is situated in contrast to backwardness further moulds this transnational movement. Israel perceives itself as a progressive, 'gay friendly', LGBTQ+ accepting

state, and in turn, creates an imaginary of Palestinian backwardness (Alqaisiya 2018, 31). Western and Palestinian activists have labelled this as 'pinkwashing.' Pinkwashing thus enforces a binary of modernity juxtaposed with backwardness, with Israel branding itself as a promoter of gay rights in contrast to the ostensibly homophobic nature of Palestine (Alqaisiya 2018, 32). Jasbir Puar, an American queer theorist, recognizes this Israeli pinkwashing as a facet of homonationalism: the way in which states, and the individuals within, boast modernity and progress through their legalisation of LGBTQ+ rights in institutions of marriage and military (Puar and Mikdashi 2012; Puar 2017, 2). Through this lens, she argues that Queer Palestinian activism needs to recognize homonationalism as a key element of their struggle, to resist the neoliberal standards of modernity, equality, and visibility which are rooted in Israeli pinkwashing.

While the transnational feminist lens that Puar stems from engages with the intersecting forms of oppression faced by Queer Palestinians, Jason Ritchie (2015, 621) refutes the academic language around homonationalism, claiming that it is unhelpful for Queer Palestinians at the forefront of their fight for liberation and, further detracts from the agentic resistance within their movements. In essence, while homonationalism has been an important tool that has elevated understandings of the way in which states parade gay rights, "it is severely limited in its capacity to shed light on the everyday experiences of Queers for whom the language of pinkwashing and homonationalism does not have the same currency" (Ritchie 2015, 621). This understanding that homonationalism better serves academics and activists in the West rather than the Queer Palestinians themselves, exposes a trope of modernity within the transnational feminist scholarship, itself. Ritchie's conceptualization reveals the limits to which a 'modern' Western academic tool can be applied to a movement, demonstrating how, while it may benefit the scholarship, it is insufficient for the activism.

This complex relationship of progression being criticised by but also inherently a part of transnational feminist scholarship evokes the question of how and what kind of freedom Westerners should advocate for without oversimplifying or westernising the oppression faced by Queer Palestinians. Perhaps, stepping away from normative definitions of emancipation might also mean avoiding the tendency of transnational feminist scholarship to be detached while theorising over bodies, and instead considering the value that they have beyond being a subject to academia. Following Ritchie's (2015,

632) method of avoiding terms that overgeneralize, and instead focusing on the localised violence that subjects human livelihoods to oppression, a recognition for the agency and ineffaceable value of the Queer lives in this non-western space is encouraged.

The indigenous experience of settler-coloniality cannot ever be fully conceptualised by white Western bodies with histories of colonial power. Thus, the way in which 'modernity' has historically been imposed on indigenous bodies should be challenged as activists continue to advocate for Queer liberation in Palestine. An emphasis on the lived experiences of Queer Palestinians can enable activists—both within and outside Palestine—to reshape their discussions and debates, and redefine their conceptions of visibility, modernity, and freedom. Furthermore, the overarching trope of progress that has been central to transnational feminist scholarship's analysis of this Queer movement in Palestine should continue to be questioned. Subaltern feminist scholars often express that 'modernity' is not a linear nor teleological process for indigenous people, rather it exists through "continuous feedback from the past to the future," simultaneously discerning and realising decolonisation (Cusicanqui 2012, 96). Because historical oppression continues to generationally infringe upon settler-colonised bodies, indigenous movements towards the future—towards 'progress'—are entangled with an unrelenting confrontation with the past. Thus, with Queer Palestinian activists working to free themselves from more than just imperialism, but also sexual, racial, and gendered subjugation, their resistance cannot be conceptualised through linear terms.

José Muñoz (2009, 32), a Cuban-American queer theorist, similarly highlights how "straight time" can be interrupted by Queerness, explicating that Queerness, in itself, is in a constant state of rejecting the present. Thus, he insists on a 'Queer futurity,' through which heteronormative and neoliberal interpretations of freedom are withered (Muñoz 2009, 1). With Queerness being a hopeful project of the future, Queer modernity can be understood in terms of the interruption of the violence brought by homophobia and globalisation. For the Queer Palestinian movement, this concept can transcend Western ideas of progress and liberation and reorient activists' goals towards a 'Queer futurity,' which does not disavow, but pushes "beyond the impasse of the present" (Muñoz 2009, 31). Thus, freedom does not need to be found within the current dominant social reproduction of heteronormativity nor through the limits of neoliberal modes but can emerge through a constant rejection and interruption of the norm.

Ultimately, the time and scale through which transnational feminist scholarship evaluates the tropes of visibility, modernity, and freedom for the Queer Palestinian movement are pivotal to holistically understanding their entangled oppression. Moreover, the self-critical nature that has existed from the very foundations of transnational feminist scholarship enables a never-ending reconstruction of interpreting the struggle of Queer Palestinians. Yet, regardless of the academic theoretical conceptualisations that have and will continue to be produced, the dignity of the lives that are experiencing this multi-scalar oppression should remain central, alongside a constant interrogation of our own participation in perpetuating the hierarchies of power that enable its persistence.

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HAVE UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS WORKED SINCE THE END OF THE COLD WAR?

by Edie Fenton

Peacekeeping operations are the mechanism through which the UN maintains what is referred to by the UN Charter as 'international peace and security' (Denemark and Marlin-Bennett 2017, 367). The end of the Cold War in 1991 marked a new era for the peacekeeping missions of the United Nations, as the tensions between the USA and the Soviets no longer prevented UN intervention. It also created a shift in geopolitics commonly referred to as the New World Order, namely huge international support for the liberal principles of global governance and international justice (Heywood 2014, 326). Consequently, the following years have sometimes been termed the golden age of humanitarian intervention (Heywood 2014, 326). Between April 1991 and October 1993, the UN launched fifteen new peacekeeping operations, which was more than in the first 40 years of its history (Autesserre 2019, 103). UN peacekeeping operations operate under mandates authorised by the UN Security Council. These mandates outline the specific tasks, objectives, and rules of the mission. The troops for these missions are contributed by member states of the UN on a voluntary basis and are expected to adhere to strict rules concerning the respect of human rights and the principles of neutrality (Heywood 2014).

The success of the peacekeeping operations depends on several factors, including adequate resources, political will, and support from the international community. Scholars define the success of these missions differently, and therefore determining whether UN peacekeeping operations have been a success or a failure is best determined by analysing firstly, whether peacekeeping operations have ended conflict, and secondly, whether they create the conditions for lasting peace. These are apt criteria because they are included in the principles of the UN's Responsibility to Protect, enshrined in the UN Declaration of 2005 (UN General Assembly, 2005). Specifically, these principles are not only the 'responsibility to protect' but also the 'responsibility to rebuild' (Heywood 2014, 333). This essay will ultimately argue that whilst there are cases where the UN has had some success, most of their missions fail to prevent large scale conflict and take part in nation building to ensure long term peace.

Former US President Barack Obama commended UN peacekeeping as 'one of the world's most important tools to address armed conflict', highlighting the fact that some missions have been successful (Autesserre 2019, 101). One clear example of the UN achieving success in ending large scale conflict is in East Timor. Following an independence referendum in 1999, there was a violent backlash from Indonesian militias backed by the government in Jakarta. This violence caused over half a million East Timorese to be driven from their homes, which threatened a refugee crisis. Concerted international pressure led to UN Resolution 1264, which authorised a multinational force in East Timor, with a mandate to defeat and disarm militias (Rothert 2000, 260). The political turmoil ended with small armed engagements and a few casualties, producing the outcome that the international community desired (Dickens 2001, 229). The UN was instrumental in resolving this conflict and, critically speaking, its success was not an isolated incident. A recent study found that countries that receive peacekeeping missions experience less armed conflict and fewer deaths than those that do not (Walter et al 2021, 1706). This is particularly impressive given UN peacekeepers are typically sent to intervene in some of the most intense international conflicts. The ability of the UN peacekeepers to reduce and end conflict demonstrates the extent to which they are successful in their operations.

Furthermore, UN peacekeeping missions have on occasion created the conditions for lasting peace. Liberal intervention involves the longer-term goal of regime change and democratic promotion (Heywood 2014). This manifests itself in two main ways: firstly, the

creation of political structures necessary for sustainable peace, and secondly, the promotion of human rights in conflict zones. Peacekeeping missions have been successful in creating the conditions necessary for political reconciliation and restoration of civil authority. For example, in post-war Kosovo the UN served as a de facto transitional government that oversaw the functions of the new state (Autesserre 2019, 106). Additionally, the UN helped to build democratic institutions such as a parliament and a judiciary in East Timor, and in 2001 elections for the constituent assembly were held, with the country formally gaining independence in 2002 (Brandt 2005, 13).

Another example is in Mali, where the UN facilitated the holding of free and fair democratic elections in 2013 (Chiesa 2016, 29). The building of democratic institutions is necessary for the UN to create long term stability in these troubled nations, and their success in doing so suggests a degree of efficacy in the UN peacekeeping missions. Another way the UN has encouraged long lasting stability is through the promotion of human rights, which protects vulnerable populations. Peacekeeping forces are often deployed to areas where there are high levels of displacement, such as refugee camps. In these contexts, peacekeepers work to protect civilians from violence, providing them with food and shelter, and facilitating access to essential services including healthcare and education. In East Timor, the UN Security Council Resolution gave the Transitional Administrator authority for political consultation with the Timorese (Suhrke 2001, 12). This led to the UN worked in collaboration with the East Timorese government to provide all essential services and rebuild infrastructure (Suhrke 2001, 14). These measures help to rebuild nations, increasing the chances of prolonged periods of peace. This exemplifies how the UN is successful in some ways in creating the conditions for long term peace.

Whilst these arguments hold true, a holistic approach reveals that the post-Cold War UN peacekeeping operations have not been successful overall. UN peacekeeping operations are never complete successes as they often have failed to prevent or end conflict, such as in Somalia (Autesserre 2019). In 1992, the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) was launched, with the intention of restoring peace in a country destroyed by civil war for years (Malito

> "Without creating the conditions for political progress, conflict is likely to arise again, and with the revival of conflict comes the revival of threat to civilian life and human rights."

2016, 288). However, the UN failed to create a clear strategy for achieving its objectives and faced several logistical challenges such as a lack of resources and infrastructure. Conflict continued between various factions and violence plagued the country. By 1993, the US had withdrawn, and the UN had significantly reduced its forces (Malito 2016, 291).

Additionally, the failure of the UN to intervene in Rwanda in 1994, when there was a genocidal mass slaughter of the Tutsi ethnic group, led to the entirely avoidable deaths of almost one million people (Heywood 2014, 322). Failure to stop the initial conflict was due to the lack of resources and leadership from the UN (Autesserre 2019, 102). Member states are often reluctant to risk their troops' lives, meaning that it tends to take months before the UN gathers the force it requires. The UN peacekeeping budget is seven billion dollars annually, which may seem significant, but it equates to less than point five percent of global military spending, though the UN is expected to aid the resolution of more than 25 percent of all ongoing wars (Autesserre 2019, 107). Due to structural shortcomings, the UN lacks the ability to coordinate well-funded missions, which inevitably leads to unsuccessful missions (Autesserre 2019, 107). Consequently, the UN peacekeeping missions are often not successful in bringing conflict to an end.

Funding UN peacekeeping missions is crucial for promptly resolving conflicts (Baumann and Weinlich 2020). These military operations are funded through participating states which contribute to the operation, and then are reimbursed by the UN. While there are current mechanisms in place which theoretically should encourage states to contribute highly effective troops in a timely fashion, these mechanisms are rarely effective (Passmore et al 2023, 88). There are a number of flaws in the financial incentives system that explain why UN peacekeeping missions are chronically underfunded. Firstly, the reimbursement methods are problematic. The cost of reimbursement has not increased since 2002, which disincentivises states from contributing troops given that their deployment costs are rising (Coleman 2014, 1). The reimbursements are based on the quantity rather than the quality of troops, making states less inclined to provide their most highly skilled troops, who would be better able to deal with conflict (Coleman 2014, 16). Secondly, there are structural obstacles

which inhibit the UN from being able to incentivise states. States are only reimbursed for costs they face for a particular mission, which means there is no financial incentive for them to invest and prepare before missions (Coleman 2014, 17). This means the UN is unable to stop conflicts before they escalate, as demonstrated by the failure to intervene in Rwanda as referred to earlier.

Furthermore, peacekeeping operations rarely create lasting peace. This is the most important objective for peacekeeping missions. Without creating the conditions for political progress, conflict is likely to arise again, and with the revival of conflict comes the revival of threat to civilian life and human rights. If peacekeeping missions are unable to end conflict, they inevitably are unable to establish long term peace. If peacekeeping missions are able to end conflict, they still tend not to be unable to prevent the re-emergence of conflict (Autesserre 2019, 116). Very few peacekeeping missions are able to establish long lasting democratic institutions in conflict zones. In 2011, there was an uprising against President Muammar Gaddafi in Libya, which led to a civil war (Kuperman 2013, 105). The following intervention in Libya was made possible by the UN because they provided the legal basis for the intervention. The UN authorised the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973, which allowed the use of all necessary means to protect the citizens of Libya (UN Security Council 2011, 3). The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) took the leading role in implementing these measures outlined by the resolution, and experienced initial success by capturing and killing Gaddafi (Kuperman 2013, 108).

However, neither NATO nor the UN made sufficient efforts to help with nation building. Whilst a democratic election did take place in July 2012, the country's first democratically elected prime minister lasted less than one month. The new government failed to control the dozens of militias leading to deadly turf battles (Kuperman 2013, 125-126. As a result, centralised government broke down and armed gangs took control of large sections of the country, leading to the country becoming a failed state. (Kuperman 2013, 125). Failure to establish support structures makes it challenging to assert their success, as it risks a resurgence of conflict.

In conclusion, despite some successes, the UN peacekeeping operations often fail to achieve their objectives. In the short term, UN missions can occasionally put an end to conflict. But even if the UN is occasionally able to get some sides to call for a ceasefire, eventually violence tends to flare up again, demonstrating how these missions are unsuccessful both in the short and long term. For further evidence that UN peacekeeping operations are rarely successful, one only needs to point to the lack of intervention in recent years despite many human rights abuses and conflicts, such as in Myanmar and Ukraine. The UN no longer commissions peacekeeping operations because ultimately, they are not successful in achieving long lasting peace.

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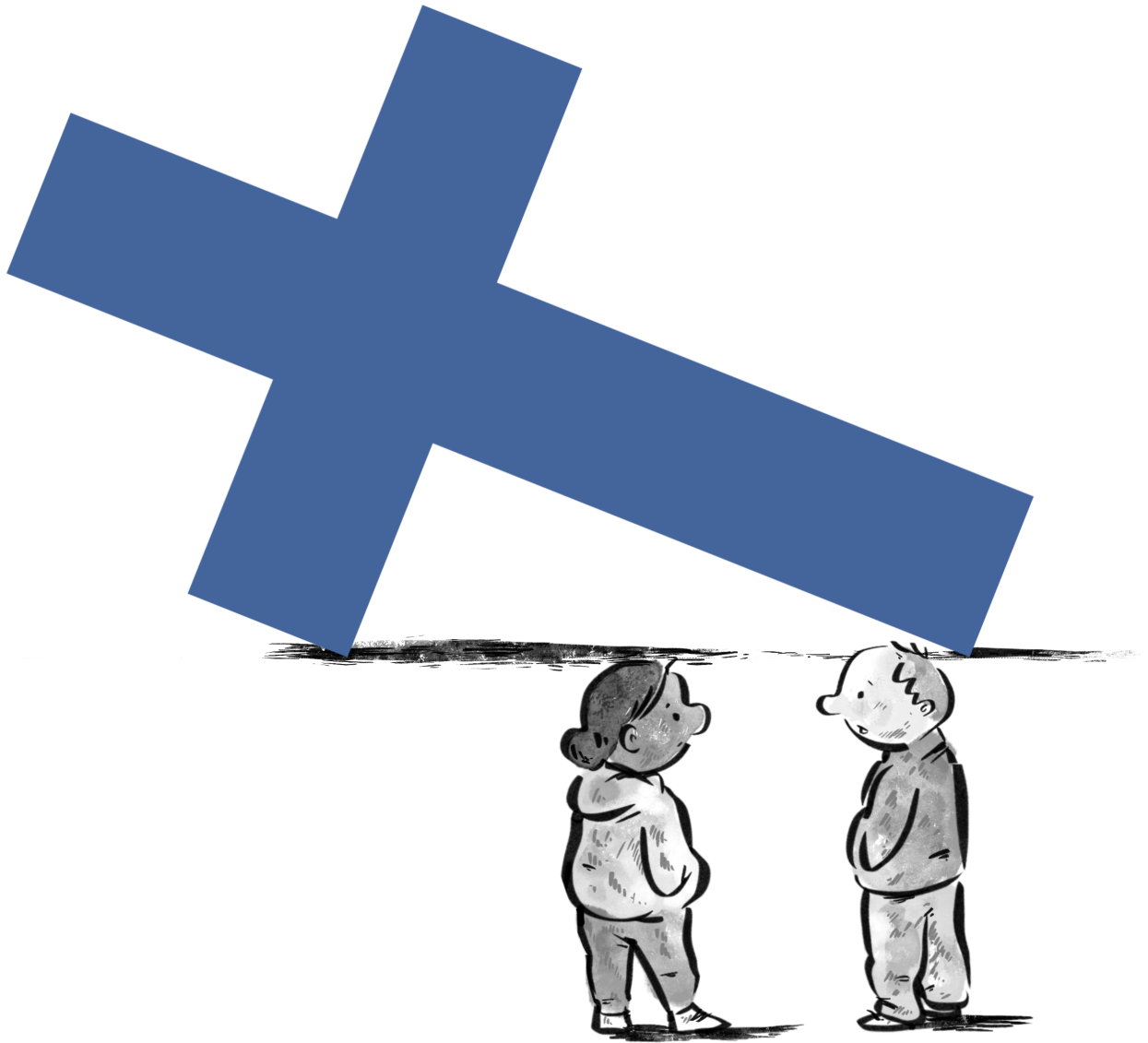
"Is it me, or is that leaning a bit to the right?"

Artwork by James Wake

DOES THE POLITICAL PENDULUM ALWAYS SWING? THE RISE OF RIGHT-WING POPULISM IN FINLAND.

by Maya Pearson

Has the dawn set for Finland's progressive left-leaning image? And why? Finland, previously commended for its progressive ideologies and welfare state, may not get to keep this title for much longer. Early this year, centre-right politician Alexander Stubb, a member of the National Coalition Party "(A centre-right wing party)", narrowly won the Finnish Presidential election. This electoral victory came only a year after Petteri Orpo, former chairman of the same party, assumed the role of Prime Minister and took control of the Government after beating ex-Prime Minister Sanna Marin (a member of The Social Democratic Party – a centre-left wing party). The administration formed under Orpo's control is stated to be 'arguably the most rightwing administration in Finland's history' (Henley, 2023). As of March 1st, when Stubb was sworn into office, both positions of Prime Minister and President are now held by the centre-right party. This change marks a significant swing in Finland's political ideologies.

The forthcoming article will detail influential factors that have acted as catalysts to the repositioning of the political voting patterns and beliefs, illuminating the geo-economic political tensions that have contributed towards the mainstreaming of a populist and right-wing shift. A detailed understanding of the mainstreaming of centre-right and populist parties within Finland can illuminate the nature of the political pendulum. Ascertaining how changing geo-political, economic, and security dynamics influence the political stage can give greater insight into the trajectory of Finnish and European politics in broader terms.

THE DE-POLARISATION OF NATO MEMBERSHIP & THE END OF FINLANDISATION

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, vying for Ukrainian subsumption and hegemonic Russian power, acted as a catalyst for the unification of the previously dichotomised political stances regarding NATO membership (Xia et al., 2024). Petteri Orpo, Leader of the centre-right National Coalition Party, took a firm view on the ending of Finlandisation, a stance sui generis, in which Finland preserved its political and militarist non-alignment between Russian and Western ideologies (Engelbrecht, 2022). Electoral support has been secured through their strong policy promises on re-securing Finnish economic prosperity and security. Through Orpo's assertion that Finlandisation was a 'naïve belief in Finland that Russia would democratise and stabilise', he stated that under his leadership, The National Coalition Party would 'take the European defence industry to the next level' (2023; Arter, 2022, 172). Alexander Stubb, a member of the same party, and the newly elected Finnish President, explained his favourability of allowing NATO nuclear weapons into Finnish territory, which highlights 'his slightly more positive line towards NATO integration and the United States' than his opposing centre-left parties, as quoted by Teivo Teivainenm, professor of world politics at the University of Helsinki, in an interview with Euronews (2024).

'The Russian threat', which seeks to undermine the geopolitical structure of Europe, is acutely distinctive to Russia's neighbour, Finland. According to the 2023 research, these drastically heightened fears over Finnish state security (Chatterjee) has resulted in support for NATO involvement in Finland rising to an unprecedented 76 percent of the population in 2022 (Nisch, 2023). The de-polarisation of NATO membership in Finland was already an inevitable byproduct of this increasing geopolitical threat, as seen by their involvement in the Partnership for Peace Programme in 1994 and NATO's Alliance's Crisis-Management Operations (Pesu,

2023). The hardline stance taken by right-wing parties such as The National Coalition Party, of complete integration and utilisation of NATO military capabilities, gave much-needed security to the Finnish electorate, and greatly sped along this process. Stubb's support for the utilisation of NATO weapons set him apart from his left-wing competitors, and guaranteed support from an electorate which saught to have their fears quelled. In the climate of a fearful electorate and a looming threat to national sovereignty, the promises of bolstered security through change in military alignment have acted in the favour of centre-right wing parties.

ECONOMIC CONCERNS & AUSTERITY IMPLEMENTATION

The current leadership secured electoral support through their strong policy commitments to re-establish Finnish economic prosperity. Finland's current recession, in which public debt to GDP ratio has risen by 133 percent from levels in 2020 (Lotta, 2021), demonstrates the downturn in Finland's economic stability, and shows a crucial area for political influence within the Finnish Electorate. This, in conjunction with Finland having the 3rd highest proportional population over the age of 65 among OECD countries and its declining birth rate, unfavourable shifts in Finnish macroeconomic dynamics have already taken place (Marois et al., 2022; Vanttinen, 2022; Vaittinen and Venne, 2020). The growing concerns over the rapidly ageing population, decreasing labour force dependency ratio and a long-lasting recession are causing increasing and undeniable concern in the Finnish Electorate (Valkama et al., 2021). The National Coalition Party's promises to implement a radical austerity programme to combat increasing state debt (Henley, 2023) mirror a policy response set to counteract the negative economic impacts of an ageing workforce and increased social welfare demands and spending (Lee, 2016).

The myriad of factors influencing Finnish economic health has been a catalyst for 'right-leaning' parties such as The Finns Party and The National Coalition Party to prevail on Finland's political stage. Deputy Prime Minister of Finland, and leader of the right-wing The Finns Party, Riikka Purra promised that under the control of the government, 'the reckless indebtedness of the state [which occurred while under the control of the last centre-left wing government]

> "The myriad of factors influencing Finnish economic health has been a catalyst for 'right-leaning' parties such as The Finns Party and The National Coalition Party to prevail on Finland's political stage."

must be brought to an end.' (Rasmussen, 2023). This hardline approach to drastic economic change reflects the primary concerns and focus of right-wing Finnish leadership. These promises of radical change welcomed opposition to the previous leadership, in which debt growth was called into question in relation to the previous leader Sanna Marin's competence in economic handling (Kiew, 2023). Although parties such as the previously elected Social Democrats of Finland promised debt reduction through economic growth and tax increases (Kauranen, 2023), the political right strategically promised reform in the areas of fear and contention for the nation, and 'leaned into concerns about Finland's growing national debt' (Bland, 2023). In the face of economic tensions and uncertainty, The Finns Party and The National Coalition's policies for the prioritising of economic re-securitisation and health have attracted voters for whom economic prosperity is a primary concern. This focus underscores the interplay between the economic concerns within voters and the resulting voting patterns. Through promises of austerity implementation, and their fervency in the promises to take drastic action, has played into calming economic anxieties, assuring voters of regained economic stability in uncertain times.

THE RISE OF POPULIST IDEOLOGIES AND EUROSCEPTICISM

Perussuomalaist, also known as The Finns party, and other right leaning parties such as The National Coalition Party, have effectively captured the political milieu of the upward trend of Euroscepticism within Europe (Statica Research Department, 2024). The high levels of Eurosceptic Members of the European Parliament elected in recent years, outlined in the European Journal of Political Research (Hix et al., 2023), illuminates how 'the Finns Party has shifted in just a few decades from the margins of the political mise-en-scène to its centre.' (Walton, 2019). Although not in support of complete European Union dissociation, Prime Minister, Petteri Orpo and his right-wing coalition cabinet have indicated their wishes for a decrease of EU economic interference (Winberg and Moyer, 2023). After the economic disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, concerns that the EU's fiscal focus remains on recovery, rather than a direct focus on stable long-

term economic growth (Tamma, 2024), has fuelled the flame for Euroscepticism and wishes for decreased EU interference. Increasing public concern of economic fluidity, and the Government's fears of EU budget funding becoming "an asymmetric income transfer union" (Vanttinen, 2023), gives understanding to the rejection of supranational control. This has been a key component to these party's manifestos and has reinforced right-wing political support in Finland. The growing disillusionment of EU interference within Finnish internal affairs and the palpable growth of Euroscepticism reflect the shifting alignment of the electorate. Thus, explaining their convergence with the current centre-right leadership's wishes for the dealignment of supranational control and increased sovereign autonomy. Promises of a recalibrated dynamic of power and an increase of control between the national and supranational, underscores how the current leadership effectively encapsulated the already shifting political ideologies.

CONCLUSION

The upsurge of populist and nationalist ideological support within voting patterns are inexorably correlated to times of crisis. As Thorleifsson underlined, there is a correlation between upsurges in populist voting when crises within a country are perceived. When fears are high, populist parties 'find quite simple solutions to these very complicated problems' (Koutsokosta 2023). With a fully-fledged Russo-Ukrainian war, increasing debt concerns, and the trend of rising Euroscepticism, it is therefore hardly a surprise that parties such as the National Coalition Party and the Finns Party have seen an upward trend in the polling stations.

Drastic political change can be attributed to a myriad of converging factors which reflect the heterogeneous interplay between micro and macro political dynamics. While the rise of populist parties such as the Finns Party and The National Coalition Party has not been an effusive welcome by the Finnish electorate, only holding 51.6 percent of electoral support (Duxbury 2024), their authoritative views on the separation of EU and Finnish relations, strong utilisation of NATO security and radical proposals for debt reductions have been effective in capturing and soothing the fears of the electorate.

As for the political pendulum? Finnish politics returning to favour left wing parties remains contingent on the performance of the current leadership and global influences. Although the promises of tackling major Finnish concerns like high-level debt and increased protection against the Russian threat through strong NATO involvement are enticing, they remain only that—promises. The current right-wing leadership in Finland remains in its infancy, and the fragility of global politics and its interconnection to national politics and voting patterns, shows the impossible nature of predicting the trajectory of the political pendulum. What is known is the correlation between these global disruptions and shifts in domestic priorities, which often see increases in populist and national sentiments. Whether the current government can effectively follow through on their promises, and how the occurrence of influential geopolitical dynamics can shift the pendulum, and in which direction, remains unknown.

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TURKISH UNCON-STITUTIONALITY: CAN A NEW CONSTITUTION BE THE SOLUTION?

by Eda Naz Gezer & Azra Acar

Constitutions can be seen as the reflection of the state they evolved through, how the text itself is perceived by its people, and how its enforcers shape it into action. Thus, the validity of the document stems from its relation to the people it serves. In a speech given after an enactment from the president where he learnt he was dismissed from his position at Ankara University, Murat Sevinç stated that constitutions are not born fully developed (Yılmaz 2020, 269). Rather, they evolve to be the products of the political system they emerge from (Yılmaz 2020, 269). Therefore, the fact that they die is not the fault of their own, but the change of relation between the powers which are midwives to it. We will analyse the Turkish Constitution to since it provides a prosperous case study in this discussion. The Turkish Constitution has been rewritten twice since the 1924 Constitution after the declaration of the Republic a year prior—both times as a result of military juntas suspending the existing constitution during coups d'état. This paper will scrutinise the Turkish case using Ackerman's approach, which provides an innovative perspective to the existing literature on types of constitutional change that are hitherto accepted as either legal or political (Ackerman 1998, 161–169). This approach focuses on how constitutional change occurs following the impulse of political parties. This paper argues that constitutional reform or a new constitution cannot solve the existing problems in the Turkish political system. This paper will prove this thesis by expanding on the relationship between the Turkish citizens and the Constitution, which will help to understand the perception of the legal system by both the political elites and the citizens. We will also explain the role of the military on the constitutional processes in Turkey stemming from this relationship, as evidenced by certain key events that hold importance for the current constitutional debates. Lastly, we will focus on the main legitimisers that make the constitution a scapegoat, and the effects of public opinion being weaponised by the current political elites to push this debate while concealing the actual problems the country faces.

The unique characteristic of the Turkish constitution lies in its reciprocal relationship with the citizens it governs, therefore leading to the blame of the constitution in times of political disfunction. As the Gellinerian argument has proposed, Turkish constitutional culture carries the influence of being top-down-oriented as a part of the wider pattern of revolutionary state-building tradition (Gellner 1997, 42–45). The top-down-oriented nature of the constitution differs from the Western constitutional culture because of the perception of the norms hierarchy—a theory where legal systems have a certain hierarchy which can place the constitution as the framework establisher when legal action is decided to be taken (Kelsen 1967, 243–244). The top-down nature of the Turkish Constitution makes it a symbolic entity which can be evaded depending on the understanding of the written text by politicians, almost making it a game of trying to find the loophole. This political manipulation can translate the democratic language into tools to the demise of the rule of law. In its nature, the top-down constitution distinguishes it from evolved constitutional tradition, which raises the problem of legitimacy. This constitutional relationship diminishes the position of the founding fathers to others', while the elected body presents itself as the bannerman to the will of the people. This relationship can be observed in the Can Atalay case in Turkey, where the Constitutional Court's (AYM) decisions were found "unlawful" by Turkey's top appeals court (Şerafettin Can Atalay (2), B. No: 2023/53898, Anayasa Mahkemesi, 2023). The court refused to comply with an argument that depends on the dangers of having an unchallengeable Constitutional Court vested with boundless authority, which could potentially be "politically motivated." Therefore, the elected body uses this factor of legitimacy coming from the ballot box to object to the Constitutional Court, which structure-wise should not be possible.

The current constitutional culture has also been fed over the years by the militarised constitution-writing process that has been followed by the coups d'état. In 1960, the existing constitution (written in 1924) was found as the problem by the political elites that let the Democrat Party government acquire powers that dented democracy. After the Democrat Party ruled from 1950 until the coup d'état of 1960 toppled their government, the constitution was rewritten under the control of the junta. Similarly, in 1980, the instability of the former decade was thought of as the fault of the liberal structure of the 1961 constitution, which was then rewritten in 1982. The impact of these events on Turkish citizens led to the habit of blaming the Constitution when the political sphere encountered problems, a constitutional culture which continues today. The role of the Turkish military in the Constitution provides an important background to understand how the coups d'état or the failed attempts thereat shape the constitutional writing process. Due to a historical evolution influenced by the Ottoman Empire, characteristics of an Islamic state, and the militaristic nature of the Kemalist revolution declaring the Republic (1919–1924), the Turkish military was given the responsibility to guard the secularist vision of the Constitution. The Turkish military as the protector of nationalism and secularism is demonstrated by the unamendable clauses of the Turkish Constitutions rewritten after the 1960 and 1980 coups. In both cases, these unamendable clauses decided by the juntas include the non-changeable structure of the Turkish republican regime, which transformed the nature of the Constitution to be rigid to prevent additional damage to that which it underwent during the pre-coup periods. Thus, even though the role of the military is not directly recognised in the text itself, the Turkish military's role as a defining constitutional actor is undeniable. The military's influence on the Constitution is heavily recognized by Turkish citizens themselves, where a coup d'état might be expected in response to an unconstitutional move.

Understanding the influence of the Turkish military over citizens and the political elite helps to look at the failed coup d'état attempt in 2016 in a different light, where the image of a strong guardian was dented. The new line of constitutional amendments which immediately followed in the 2017 package entirely transformed the character of the current constitution, making it a president-oriented regime. Furthermore, since 2002, the

Justice and Development Party (AKP) government has used a language that villainises the military's position as a tutelage of democracy. This rhetoric is assimilated by public opinion and then reflected in subsequent constitutional referenda. In 2017, Erdoğan's government used this trend in public opinion to legitimise the regime they have established (Yılmaz 2020). Turkish citizens faced a "take it or leave it" scenario when voting on an incompatible amendment package. The voted text was a combination of separate subjects, including regulations aimed at strengthening political authority, but citizens needed to accept or reject the amendments in their entirety, forcing the citizens to sacrifice some working parts of the system for the possible solution of the pressing issues (Act No. 6771, Official Gazette, 30050, April 27, 2017). Thus, while the required democratic legitimacy was achieved on the shell, in spirit, it failed to fulfil its mission. This occasion has been interpreted by scholars, including Mudde and Kaltwasser, as the AKP's preference for denying public contestation while insisting on popular participation to boost their legitimacy. This constitutional amendment package sculpted the Turkish political structure to into a presidential regime alla Turca. Within this new form, Turkish politics took the final step towards "absolutist presidentialism" (Göztepe 2021, 413-443), where one leader becomes the power holder of the entire executive branch. Therefore, the amendments have been understood as a tool to institutionalise and legalise excessive power concentration by removing checks and balances within the system. It is important to note that the workings of the new system that went into action after the 2017 amendments were designed to follow the "ideological line of the president"; namely, they did not consider a possible government change. With the centralisation of political power in the hands of the president and the relatively small circle surrounding them, it is clear how the constitutional agenda serves as a shield to the government's rule.

Political power holders have grounded their criticism of the Constitution in the perception that has emerged in society whenever the system fails to function. This strategy of using the Constitution as a scapegoat mainly reveals itself as a way of evading responsibility. Thus, when political corruption manifests as restricted rights and freedoms, it originates from the idea of the Constitution being the guardian of said rights and freedoms. Therefore, we tend to blame the Constitution when they

> "… the amendments have been understood as a tool to institutionalise and legalise excessive power concentration by removing checks and balances within the system."

are not granted (Bayar 2016, 727). The crucial point that is being overlooked in these cases is that constitution is not meant to be a magic wand that cures all problems. However, the interpretation of the Constitution is as vital as the written text itself. It is also important to note that the implementation of the Constitution is directly related to its acceptance by its people (Sevinç 2017, 3). In the case of Turkey, the relationship between the people and the Constitution has been damaged from the start; its prospects for acceptance were challenged by the perception of the 1982 Constitution as a coup d'etat constitution (Çakıcı 2023). As a result, both civil society and politicians view the constitution as an outsider and disregard its spirit at the core. The 1982 Constitution was rewritten to increase its legitimacy by no longer being a military constitution with the serious attempt to execute this vision dominating the political sphere during 2011–2013 (Olcay 2023, 10). The goal was to create a new civil constitution with a focus on human rights. In this period, no single party secured the majority of the seats in the parliament; therefore, popular constitution-making was enacted. The process started with the creation of a Reconciliation Committee for Constitution where every political party has equal members and chairman of the Turkish Parliament was accepted as the head of the commission (Barın 2016, 9). However, this attempt failed by opening a new line of constitutional amendments that gradually transformed it into an authoritarian constitution far from the anticipated liberal one (Olcay 2023, 10–11). That is why the failed attempt proves an important critical juncture to the present constitutional debate. Thus, the tendency to blame the military constitution is still a present debate which is used to shift the blame by dominating the agenda.

To provide a full circle analysis, we return to Murat Sevinç's speech, where he also states that notions of the political-constitutional system are developed by the ones that interpret, oppose, and adapt them. Within this ecosystem, the enablers of the system evolve with the system itself, with or without their consent (Sevinç 2017, 3). The constitutional tradition heavily leans on the power-holding elites in the constitution-drafting process throughout the coups d'état and amendment processes between 2011 and 2017. In every political period, this tendency contributed to the democratic backsliding in the country (Petersen and Yanaşmayan 2020, 24–28). As another outcome of the tradition, the AKP government utilised "constitutional populism" to solidify its position in the political sphere and legitimise concentrating all executive powers into the hands of the president. Blaming the constitution by clearing the government's name translates into huge support in public opinion,

and the slogan "Yetmez ama EVET! / YES, but not enough!" shows their support for constitutional change. The constitutional agenda dominates the political sphere without real progress and distracts debate away from the real problem of political dysfunction proves dangerous to a democratic regime. Thus, we believe that a new constitution and the repeated debate of constitutional reform cannot prove efficient. Our analysis of the Turkish case originates from this approach, as the current government tends to blame the constitution for dysfunctional governance in Turkey. This tendency to blame the constitution is also promoted by the political elites with a series of constitutional reforms, which misreads the real problem of bypassing political dysfunction by declaring the constitution as the bleeding wound. The main reason behind the dysfunction of the constitutional reforms is the malfunctioning constitutional culture that has been accepted by Turkish society, which has been causing the numbness of people to react against the unconstitutional actions of the government. As a result, the reforms have yet to solve the current problems in Turkish politics, further expanding the political instability and undemocratic environment in the political sphere.

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CALLING FOR REFORM:
APPLYING THEORIES OF SUCCESSFUL LOBBYING TACTICS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH AND STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

by Niamh Roberts

The 1944 Education Act mandates higher education institutions (HEIs) to establish student unions, ensuring student interests are represented. It is primarily through the Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) that students are represented, through elected 'Sabbatical Officers.' These representatives gain membership to various boards within the University structure, tasked with conveying the interests of the student population to senior leadership. However, the University of Edinburgh's 49,000-strong student population is not monolithic in its interests, and therefore pluralistic campaigning by other student groups is frequent, often but not always

in conjunction with Sabbatical Officers. While there is extensive literature on lobbying in public and private sectors, there is a notable scarcity regarding universities as lobbying subjects.

This analysis applies concepts from wider studies of lobbying, acknowledging clear gaps when applying these to the HEI context. Two comparable cases reveal differing policy outcomes, likely influenced by the University's reputational considerations. Further research into student lobbying dynamics within HEIs is recommended to better understand this phenomenon.

THEORY AND BACKGROUND

There is a pervasive assumption that 'outsider' tactics, (directed to the public to influence the conversation on a given issue) such as protesting and media campaigning, are typical of disenfranchised and under-resourced lobbyists, such as NGOs, and are less effective in creating policy change. This has been challenged in both public and private institutional arenas (see Chalmers 2013).

The updated understanding is that a tactical variety provides different services to a campaign. Binderkrantz (2005, 710) supports this through her exploration of Danish interest groups accessing their state government and finds that an 'action repertoire' of 'insider' (directed at decision makers within their formal spaces) and 'outsider' is used by groups with and without said privileged access. In fact, these can be complementary with public-facing lobbying activities mobilising those who are 'outsiders' to the development of a campaign or policy. Hanegraaff et al. (2016, 571) develop this, suggesting that this engages the self-efficacy of participating individuals even if the specific actions are not in the interest of achieving the ultimate goal, thereby maintaining the movement's momentum. While insider techniques allow the provision of technical information and incremental policy negotiation, the theory that this is inherently more valuable in lobbying has been debunked. Chalmers (2013, 45) argues that at the EU level, information tactics are more important than the type of information provided, because tactics are a greater determinant of issue salience. He supports the notion that the most successful campaigns use a variety of tactics, in part because this can convey a greater sense of urgency to achieve an interest group's goals. This can include information provision as well as the aforementioned 'outsider' awareness raising.

Potters and van Winden (1992, 267) suggest that

lobbyists who assume the role of a 'critical friend' have an increased likelihood of information acceptance. While those employing outsider strategies could be considered disruptive, those engaging in the technical and policy-specific lobbying remain distinct from this disruption. Therefore, they benefit from the media attention, public accountability and increased issue salience while also gaining access to the institution: willing to sit at the table and talk the issue through the official channels.

Hond et al. (2013; 801) provide interesting insights into reputational effects with their study of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and corporate political activity (CPA; in the HEI context, internal policy change), identifying that misalignment of an institution's CSR and CPA reduces integrity and damages the trust which stakeholders hold in that institution to deliver on targets (ibid; 810). Love and Kraatz (2009, 326) find that an institution's positive reputation is maintained if they are seen to perform in accordance with their institutional character and to conform to relevant "cultural symbols'' through their communications and strategy. Therefore, we see reputation maintenance both as something which relates an institution's policy behaviour both to the character of its past, but also as an indicator of how the institution will behave in the future. There has been little study into these concepts in higher education, though case studies of the sector have identified reputation as an 'intangible asset' for universities (Miotto et. al. 2020, 343). The University of Edinburgh faces this bi-directional commitment to the prestige of its past and the excellence of its future, and according to the literature will be expected to behave in ways which are symbolic of its character to ensure reputational maintenance. I suggest that this is even when there is a trade-off between these symbolic actions and impact on the quality-of-service provision felt by those within the University.

To test these concepts, I will reflect upon their applicability to the chosen case studies.

FOSSIL-FUEL DIVESTMENT

The People and Planet's 'Fossil Free' campaign began in 2013 at the University of Edinburgh, led by Edinburgh students but supported with resource and capacity by the umbrella organisation. Students advocated for divesting the investment portfolio, emphasising the University's influence in the sector as well as their substantial endowment fund, the third largest of UK HEIs.

In 2015, students occupied the finance director's office for ten days, gaining access via the Sabbatical Officers under the guise of a regular meeting with the director (Hubbard, interview). This gained significant media attention, with 300 alumni publicly signing an open letter withholding any possible donations to the University until both endowment and treasury funds were fully divested (see Appendix A). The University responded in late 2015 with a commitment to divest from coal and tar sands but were otherwise unwilling to negotiate. Dissatisfied with this, occupiers again filled the finance director's office in 2016, and later in the year camped out in the public quad of Old College building. It was during this year that the University's climate strategy was published, outlining a commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2016. The campaign strategy was subsequently refreshed; while previous Sabbatical Officers had taken part in the occupations, the new role of Vice-President Community (VPC) in the officer team offered an opportunity to diversify tactics.

The newly elected VPC coordinated a strategy with his fellow officers that he, and the President, would remain publicly separate from the campaign group—though they remained discreetly coordinated. Both the VPC and President held regular meetings with members of the investment committee, often spending whole afternoons negotiating details of a divestment policy (Hubbard, interview), referencing technical financial arguments provided by the central campaign coordinators at People and Planet. The University's strategy was criticised by EUSA and protestors for the misalignment of their ambition and their willingness to take any financial loss to achieve this.

The communications from the University following the decision essentially erased any evidence of interest group input. The timeline of divestment, available on their website, makes no mention of students, occupations, or People and Planet (see Appendix B).

> "The University of Edinburgh faces this bi-directional commitment to the prestige of its past and the excellence of its future, and according to the literature will be expected to behave in ways which are symbolic of its character to ensure reputational maintenance."

There was a trend moving toward divestment in the sector, and the People and Planet campaign had already been successful at the University of Glasgow in 2014 (People and Planet, n.d.). When the University fully divested in 2018, fifteen other HEIs had either partly or fully divested from fossil fuels (People and Planet, n.d.). However, given the University's large endowment, their targets were far more ambitious than many other HEIs, most of whom were ring-fencing smaller sums to divest, or not divesting at all. From the campaign's inception in 2013 to its ultimate success in 2018, reputable news agencies from the Financial Times to the BBC had covered the story (see Appendix C).

STUDENT HOUSING CRISIS

High rent costs are one of the most commonly cited challenges for students, and this has resulted in contention between students and their HEIs. This is particularly pertinent in Edinburgh, having been identified as the most expensive UK city to rent outside of London (Appendix C), and the publishing of this data has made the issue all the more salient in student discourse. Externally, the University of Edinburgh was particularly under fire for fuelling the increasing 'town versus gown' division, increasing housing demand with their high student intake in an already competitive market. Internally, students felt the University was inactive in responding to the housing crisis, failing to lobby on students' behalf with the government while charging high rents in their own managed accommodations.

When the National Union of Students (NUS) Scotland started their 'Fix Student Housing' campaign, Sabbatical Officers attended rallies at the Scottish parliament, and responded to frequent press enquiries. A local housing justice group, Slurp Edinburgh, created a report specifically surveying the experiences of University of Edinburgh students. This presented an even greater opportunity to provide novel information to the University, which had not tracked student homelessness or housing issues (Hubbard, interview).

The newly-formed Russell Group Student Union also produced national research on student cost-of-living issues, and the accessibility of this and the aforementioned reports meant that lobbying groups could pin their demands to statistics, while the network which EUSA representatives had with all three organisations provided opportunity to strategise. Filing multiple Freedom of Information requests, publicly posing scrutinising questions to University leadership

and conducting outreach to mobilise a greater pool of students, SLURP applied public pressure to the University while the NUS focused on a national campaign. The University was under public scrutiny in the media, was consistently called out in public forums, and received detailed complaints about the state of housing. The culmination of this was that Sabbatical Officers, as in the divestment case, chose for the Sabbatical Officers to remain separate from the campaigns and instead focus on policy demands within the University. They met bi-weekly with University leadership to discuss technical aspects of their upcoming rent review, ultimately proposing a rent freeze, or a marginal increase rather than the proposed 5.95 percent (Hubbard, interview).

The University's response was that the issue was larger than the institution - indeed, other universities were increasing their rent fees by 10% and scrapping accommodation guarantees for first-year students, while the Scottish government had yet to resolve issues with its upcoming housing legislation (Hubbard, interview).

The campaign to freeze the rent increase concluded in February 2023, during a meeting of the University Executive. The EUSA President presented a case collating data from aforementioned research with testimonies provided by students, urging the senior leadership to take the reduction in surplus from accommodation feed, given the positive financial outlook and unexpectedly large surpluses going back multiple financial years. The University Executive chose to maintain the originally proposed 5.95 percent increase. Though the discussion was substantive, the were brief and omitted the cost-of-living data which had been presented (see Appendix C).

FURTHER ANALYSIS

A summary of both cases' key features is presented below.

The tactics and information provision, according to theoretical perspectives, would indicate campaign success. Engagement with external groups allowed for the information conveyed to the University to have greater legitimacy and was supplementary to the University's existing knowledge. Potters and van Winden's (1992; 275) concept of a lobbyist 'friend' was present in both cases, putting EUSA at an advantage to further interests through policy negotiation while outside actors increased the issue salience.

The greatest resource cost was, arguably, the time in

which representatives spent focusing on a given issue, particularly as time with University policy-makers is rare and therefore valuable. Using their communications platforms, though not financially costly, exemplifies that they would use their limited online presence to call out for change. This has the added benefit of getting more members mobilised around an issue by signing an open letter or attending an event relevant to the policy issue. Therefore, though at the cost of other issues which are not platformed, continuously amplifying policy and campaign goals is a good investment if it causes more students to engage with future lobbying. Finally, both cases asked the University to accept a similarly reduced return on the respective commercial activities.

support and public-private partnerships.

There remains an anomaly in this research as to why the University appears unmotivated to improve student satisfaction despite this pulling down its place in multiple national rankings, most notably the National Student Survey. Even the national discussion of student satisfaction ratings does not seem to drive the University of Edinburgh to adopt policy which is in the student interest. Our literature review would suggest that to have misalignment between their commitment to excellence and the reality of their reputation amongst students would be of great concern to the University, and they would be expected to bridge this discrepancy. Further

	Tactics	Issue Salience	Sector Context	Campaign Success
Fossil Fuel Divestment	'Insider': Frequent meetings with University stakeholders; provision of technical information; policy co-development 'Outsider': Occupations of University space, protest of careers fairs	High with student activists; sector-wide interest; consistent national news coverage	Sector movement toward divestment; competing institutions also transitioning but still opportunity to be sector-leading	Successful, achieved in increments, student input removed from future communications
Student Housing Crisis	'Insider': Frequent meetings with University stakeholders; provision of technical information; policy co-development 'Outsider': Publishing FOI findings, student rallies, public scrutiny of senior leadership	High with general student population; national issue at government level; consistent news coverage though of city rather than institutional scope	Sector criticised as a whole; peers and competitors passing similar or more severe increases	Unsuccessful

The discerning factor appears to be the sector context within which these campaigns occurred. The University's communications around divestment focused on the excellence of the senior leadership team, and their bold choice to fully divest which was still uncommon in the sector at the time. Comparatively, the University continually framed the issue of housing as national, or Edinburgh-wide, and claimed to have little autonomy. This is despite that the decision to freeze or reduce rent increases would have had an absolute positive effect on student renters. Simply, there was an opportunity to be seen as an environmental champion and a changemaker – a common reputational motif of universities given the great historical impact which universities have had on culture, health, and so on. This same opportunity was not possible when setting rent costs, and instead the University was to be seen as a victim of the government's lack of action, a narrative which is ultimately beneficial in the University's goal of gaining greater funding,

exploration of this phenomenon cannot be achieved in the scope of this paper. However, one could suggest that not all stakeholders carry equal power and therefore the value of reputation is relative. As den Hond et al. (2013, 794) posit, reputations are an aggregate of the view of many stakeholders, but our analysis here suggests that students, despite being closely linked to the University and vast in number, are not the key stakeholder when it comes to the University's own sense of managing their reputation. Students, indebted to the University and increasingly expected to earn a degree to remain competitive in the job market, are not in a position of power to leverage their negative view of the University in a way which would threaten the University. Therefore, students' and EUSA's main power lies in sullying the University's reputation with other stakeholders, who have more financial power or influence over the University and its network of allies.

CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that in the study of lobbying, HEIs share broad conceptual similarities with - but are unique from - public and private institutions. I have suggested that literature regarding methods of information transfer and issue salience raising have supported the understanding of these campaigns but did not adequately account for reputational effects in the HEI context. Lobbying HEIs is an under-researched field, and to assume that they behave like other public institutions would be to ignore the increasing commercialisation of the University sector, and the number of stakeholders who both makeup and externally influence the senior leadership of these institutions.

I have identified that symbolic behaviour and reputational risk have been the key elements of success or failure in the case studies presented. The findings of the analysis are indicative rather than prescriptive. A consistent finding of all lobbying studies is the need for multi-factor alignment to achieve campaign success, and not all possible variables were explored or controlled here. However, this research suggests that students' associations—particularly across Russell Group institutions—should exploit reputational costs and benefits when strategising a campaign. Additionally, the supplemental value of combining 'insider' and 'outsider' strategies is demonstrated by the technical information provision becoming of more value to the University as the salience of either given issues increased, thereby increasing pressure on them to act—or at least be seen to act.

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APPENDIX A: ALUMNI PETITION FOR FULL FOSSIL-FUEL DIVESTMENT

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WHY HAVE MILITANCY GROUPS REEMERGED IN THE NIGER DELTA?

INVESTIGATING PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF MILITANCY'S PAST AND FUTURE.

by Colleen Aparicio

Since crude oil was discovered in 1966, Nigeria has become a mono-economy dependent on oil for over 80 percent of government revenue. The local economies of the eight oil producing states within the Niger Delta region are minimally impacted by this vast resource wealth, instead enduring widespread "ecological catastrophe, social deprivation and political marginalisation" (Chikwem and Duru 2018, 46). From 2003 to 2009, armed insurgencies raged through Nigeria's South-South region at unprecedented rates, forcing the government to rapidly de-escalate militant confrontation and oil vandalism (Adesanya et al. 2023, 2).

In 2009, the late former-president Umaru Musa Yar'Adua created the Presidential Amnesty Agreement (PAP), where militants could trade in their weapons in exchange for immunity and reintegration in their communities. After almost a decade of instability, most militants put down their arms and committed to social reintegration. Oil output in Nigeria subsequently reached an all-time high of an average over two-point-five million barrels a day, twice as high as during the peak of the conflict (Chikwem and Duru 2018, 46). However, the success of the program was short-lived, as in 2016, a 'new' generation of militant groups emerged. Why did the Amnesty program ultimately fail? Why did militants reemerge after nine years of relative peace? This research seeks to understand why such militancy groups arose and resumed their insurgency against the Nigerian government through an examination of existing corruption-based theoretical literature and public perceptions via interviews.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Past literature and research on militancy in the Niger Delta has centred on debates surrounding either the resource curse theory or ethnic disputes. Since 1997, over 95 percent of violent conflicts in Nigeria have been resource-related (Ajodo-Adebanjoko 2017, 15). This is chiefly attributed to corrupt governmental practices, as following a sudden influx of commodity revenues to an institutionally weak government, discrepancies between the 'mass' public and the socio-economic elite widen (Ross 2008, 36). Insurgent groups then emerge aiming to close such gaps (Ross 2008, 36). The Ogomudia Committee Report (2007) on security within the oil-producing states encompasses a large range of discourse and develops extensive research, however, governmental bias is evident in its reporting of the issues affecting the Delta region.

Ibaba et. al. (2011), identified that the disempowerment of natives through corrupt policies has benefitted oil conglomerates and federal government elites. Understanding these historical practices and the fluid dynamics of socioeconomic relations within Nigeria is essential when formulating current theories, but due to being published twelve years ago, it does not encompass current drivers of militancy post-amnesty. Ukoha Ukiwo (2007, 592) describes the Ijaw and Itsekiri ethnic divide in the region as the main driver of militancy, but disregards confounding social issues and consequently fails to establish a conclusive theory or identify future practices.

Therefore, prior research suggests that militancy groups within the Delta are inherently connected to corruption and oil and are exacerbated through ethnic disputes in a balkanised region. My research attempts to build on these conceptual assertions and provide further commentary on the issue through an investigation as to why amnesty projects are ineffective, and to illustrate the future of militancy within the Niger Delta.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of my research is to understand how people native to the Niger Delta perceive militancy groups and their connection to oil-based corruption and to investigate why such insurgencies are still active within Nigeria. To do this, I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews, allowing for personal and in-depth discussion for higher quality qualitative data. Interviews were conducted over the phone and by email for convenience due to considerable distance. If given greater resources, time, and freedoms, I would have chosen to conduct these interviews in person and with more participants to gain a better understanding of the people and the region.

SAMPLING

Participants were acquired using the non-probability sampling snowball method. I contacted a friendly connection from the Niger Delta region who put me in touch with two willing locals, who then introduced me to other interested individuals. This method was most beneficial to my research due to convenience and trustworthiness. Thanks to our mutual connection, it was easier to establish trust and rapport with my interviewees, allowing for more open conversation. However, the snowball method often results in a similar demographic of people interviewed as they connected me with people similar to them and those with interest on the topic.

All of those interviewed were adult men from 20 to 55, most had a form of higher education, were involved in oil or local governance, were from the Delta State (only one of the eight oil-producing states in the greater delta region), and were Ijaw (Izon) or Urhobo. Thus, the scope of this research is restricted to interviews with educated men of the Delta State. Ideally, I would have compiled a more socially representative sample group, especially one that includes women, younger people, and the less-educated from across all the oil-producing states.

INTERVIEW DESIGN

I conducted six semi-structured interviews with ten standardised open-ended questions, augmented with probing questions related to what had been discussed. Interviewees were first asked to introduce themselves with regards to their job, education level, ethnic association, and location to establish simple distinguishing identifiers between participants and to observe external validity. Due to internet issues, I was unable to conduct all of my interviews over voice calls, and occasionally had to use quasi-questionnaires through emails. Overall, interviews conducted via email produced more detailed, clear responses than those done over the phone due to the allowance of more time for the respondent to think. However, while I was still able to ask follow-up questions, they were limited and lacked a more personal connection offered by an in-person or phone-based discussion.

Interviews as a method of data collection utilise interpretivist practices of rejecting the positivist construction of one objective truth. Instead of generalising a false neutrality, post-positivist theory seeks understanding. When researching public perceptions, it is erroneous to conduct research attempting to produce a universal experience, even among one demographic due to the distinct positionality of individuals. My positionality as a white, western woman may have affected the way participants chose to speak with me and in how I interpreted the results of the interviews. While doing research on social issues and dynamics, my position as a privileged American who has no lived experience in Nigeria is inevitably manifested in my research.

ETHICAL ISSUES

I was careful to comply with the university's ethical standards and minimise potential harm elsewhere within the research process. Prior to the interviews, each participant read and signed an approved ethics form that outlined the purpose of the research, how their data would be used and stored, and their right to withdraw or refuse to answer any question at any time. This was repeated before the interviews to ensure informed consent.

Vulnerable groups were avoided, and no interviews were conducted with those involved in militancy groups for safety. I did not hold a position of power over participants; many were more educated and occupied higher positions than myself. They wanted to speak with me to bring awareness to their experiences of the realities in the Delta – not because they thought I would provide any compensation or residual benefits.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This research has revealed the varied, complex, and incredibly intertwined issues that drive and sustain militancy groups in the Niger Delta. Public opinions, even within similar demographics vary, reflecting a complex causal web between oil, corruption, and

militancy. Crude oil production has resulted in corruption, environmental degradation, lack of autonomy, and has elevated ethnic tensions. Corrupt practices have allowed for an unequal distribution of profit that has resulted in the crippling poverty of the many, inciting militant groups and instability. In order to decrease militancy, stronger social welfare must be established, creating a better standard of living in the region, whilst increasing oil sovereignty and wealth in the Niger Delta.

ORIGINS OF MILITANCY

All participants cited poverty as the underlying issue behind militancy. As claimed by an environmental consultant (Interviewee 3 2023), "petroleum, on its own, never played any part in corruption and militancy. It is the uncontrolled greed and unethical conduct [of government actors] that causes poverty, this is the main cause of militancy." Inhabitants in these territories have continuously lacked basic infrastructure and amenities, such as electricity, roads, schools, hospitals, and potable water. Despite being the most economically profitable region in the country, the oil producing states are still some of the poorest.

> "Militancy persists despite government and NGO efforts against it because its root causes remain unaddressed. "

Unlike in other regions, with direct control of their natural resources, the oil-producing states are only allocated thirteen percent of oil revenue and have no input on oil rents (Essien et al. 2020, 155). Whereas development projects elsewhere are funded by oil profits, projects within the Delta are few and often sit incomplete. Young people identify this discrepancy, and it enrages them, making them susceptible to militant rhetoric to try and reclaim power.

Poverty is aggravated through petroleum's environmental degradation effects and the lack of accountability for the actions of multinational oil companies operating in the Delta. Between 2014 and 2015, the Nigerian National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) reported 1,879 oil spills in the Niger Delta, with only 64 of the spills cleaned up (Nwozor 2019, 883). Not only have farming and fishing – the main occupations of the mostly riverine locals – been decimated, but gas flares and toxic run-off have had serious health ramifications.

Despite peaceful protests calling for sustainable mining and reparations, oil companies continue their harmful practices with little regard to the well-being of the host communities in which they operate. Oil is observed as an "unnecessary evil," within the government as

it is not inherently to blame (Interviewee 5 2023). Yet, it is not innocent as it fuels corruption, economic overdependence, and marginalisation: all catalysts for insurgencies.

Ethnic tensions are often cited in literature on the Niger Delta as a strong, or main, motivator of militancy. This is reflected by Ukiwo's (2007, 594) claim that the Ijaw community had an increase in militant groups as a result of political marginalisation that had been exacerbated by oil. However, oppositional disputes did not escalate until the polarisation of the groups for oil-based land rights. I interviewed members of the Ijaw and Urhobo communities, and while few directly acknowledged ethnic tensions, they were identified as historical issues common with neighbouring groups and are manipulated by external powers to destabilise the region. Rather, participants claimed that dominant ethnic groups within the central government (Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa) have historically practised suppression through ill-will policies and the deliberate under-development of the Delta states. This research concludes that the citing of inter-ethnic tensions as the driving force of militancy is used to deflect from the societal issues and causes of poverty caused by the government. Structural issues in resource allocation and persistently low-quality, underfunded public services and goods are hence seen as a central causal factor for conflict.

WHY AMNESTY FAILED

Militancy persists despite government and NGO efforts against it because its root causes remain unaddressed. Poverty drives much of the dissatisfaction and violence within the Delta, and stopgap measures like the PAP failed to account for this, explaining the return of violence in 2016. To many in the Nigerian central government, the instability created by militancy groups benefits them, establishing the need for political involvement or through direct economic gain from kleptocracy. Several interviewees identified the political arming of groups to enable personal ambitions in the Delta to elevate their election platforms and undermine their opponent. Others did so to promote socio-political disorder that weakens the region, allowing for the perpetual external control of oil resources. An unstable country is an easy one to exploit; some governors directly benefit from the activities of militant groups through increased security spendings that allow them to enable illegal oil mining practices.

FUTURE OF MILITANCY

While initial intentions are benevolent, insurgencies are just as susceptible to corruption and ill-will as the central government. As a respondent noted, militants are neither innocent nor righteous:

"The people felt marginalised and relegated and decided to fight back. The fight for equity and justice spiralled out of control and rapidly metamorphosed into that of [a] fight for financial benefit. Power corrupts absolutely. They get a taste of the power that the government has, and they want more" (Interviewee 2 2023).

Militancy starts due to peaceful protests being unheard but becomes insatiable once militants perceive an economic benefit behind their actions, causing them to escalate their actions towards kidnappings and oil vandalism. All respondents, to an extent, had a negative view on the future resolution of militancy groups in the Delta. Many had identified that the future of insurgencies lay at the hands of the government. Those who were pessimistic on the outlook cited the systematic political and economic deprivation of the region by the central government as unlikely to change, as many elites benefit from the chaos and insecurity militants bring, as well as the prior failures to prioritise people over monetary gain.

Interventionist organisations created to ensure oil money is used by and for the community are systematically underfunded and ignored by the government. The Ijaw National Congress (INC) rules out interventionist organisations as a viable conflict solution in its current formulation due to lack of funds, insufficient scope of practice, and increased vulnerability to manipulation (Ibaba et al. 2011, 11). A member of one of these organisations claimed that they conduct research and identify problems, but little is done to prevent them. The problems, causes, and solutions are known, they are simply not appealing to those with the power to create change. This is why militant groups form and persist. They see the disparity between what they should have and what they do, and they see the reasons why and how to solve it, but the government and oil companies do nothing. One respondent (Interviewee 1 2023) declared "we are not violent people, no one wants to cause trouble, but a hungry man is an angry man." Without adapting these solutions into completed and functional welfare programs that alleviate poverty, there is little hope for an effective amnesty in the near future.

CONCLUSION

Discussing with those most affected by corruption and militancy and explaining their stories is important to understand the true reasons behind discontent to create viable solutions. "Until the lions have their historian's tales of hunting, it will always glorify the hunter" (Achebe 1994). Research that is only conducted using government reports and oil statistics uses only the oppressors' story while impersonal theoretical conceptions maintain the Western dominance over this literature, lacking deeper understanding.

This research contributes to the literature on this topic by reporting on lived experience and first-hand accounts of the driving force of armed insurgencies, explaining how the failure to address structural neglect and systematic underdevelopment of the oil-producing states leads to non-function peace programs that remain unsuccessful. With more time and proper clearance, this field of research would greatly benefit from an ethnographic study in a militancy group to better understand motivations. Overall, it is clear that the amnesty project, and other forms of demilitarisation attempts, have failed due to a lack of sustainable change. Without oil and government accountability and effective development, militancy will continue to thrive due to chronic poverty in the oil-producing states of the Niger Delta in Nigeria. peacekeepers are typically sent to intervene in some of the most intense international conflicts. The ability of the UN peacekeepers to reduce and end conflict demonstrates the extent to which they are successful in their operations.

Furthermore, UN peacekeeping missions have on occasion created the conditions for lasting peace. Liberal intervention involves the longer-term goal of regime change and democratic promotion (Heywood 2014). This manifests itself in two main ways: firstly, the creation of political structures necessary for sustainable

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SERBIAN REVOLT AND OTTOMAN REFORM: CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS, NATIONAL IDENTITY AND VIOLENCE AS A MEANS OF REFORM

by Ross Doran

The First Serbian Uprising (1804–13) marked a turning point in the history of the Serbian nation and the Ottoman Empire (Meriage 1978, 421–2). In this essay, I will argue that revolution in a Serbian context can only be explained through an analysis of how national identity and class consciousness were mutually reinforcing, thereby challenging a reductionist Marxist analysis of nationalism which understands national aspiration as a form of class consciousness. Building on a historical understanding of popular violence, this article will focus on class consciousness and how this was mediated by understandings of the state's role in prompting Serbians to take up arms (Desan 1989, 56). Serbian violence against the Ottoman Empire was used not only to resume the legitimate functioning of the state but to fundamentally change it (Glenny 2012, 3-6). This analysis will depend on an account of Serbian nationalism that runs contrary to conventional historical scholarship, viewing Serbian nationalism as emergent from the experience of class solidarity rather than from an intellectual elite. This article will conclude that the first Serbian Uprising was a product of a distinctly peasant nationalism that existed before its 'intellectualisation.' Combined with an understanding of the state's function to legitimise violence, this nationalism served as a means of reforming Ottoman rule.

To understand violence as a means of reforming the Ottoman state, one must first understand the nature of Ottoman provincial government and the changing power relations between the Ottoman state and its subjects. In the late eighteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was embroiled in a power struggle between the predominant military class, the Janissaries, and the Sultan (Zens 2012, 129). The Janissaries had become a corrupt and ineffective military elite and a counterweight to the Sultan's authority, which Selim III sought to check through his New Order decree (Glenny 2012, 1–4). This reform established a modern army which Selim himself could control, independent of the Janissaries. The Janissaries reacted by expanding their ranks and by shoring up their power in the Empire's territories. In the Balkans, they allied with Pasavanoglu Osman, a rebellious provincial leader, and conducted border raids against the governor of the Belgrade Pashlik, who was loyal to the Ottoman state (Zens 2012, 130). This meant that at the time of the First Serbian Uprising, the Sultan and Janissaries were divided over the Ottoman Empire's future, a conflict that the Sultan would capitalise on during the First Serbian Uprising as a means of forcing through reform (Glenny 2012, 3–6).

The Janissaries' relation with the imperial core had significant implications for Serbian land relations, which were vitally important for Serbian peasants and would form a significant contributing factor behind the Uprising. The ciftliks 1 established by the Janissaries breached traditional Serbian landholding practices, rendering the peasants' economic situation untenable (Lukovic 2011, 295). Serbian agrarian practices were left largely intact under the Ottoman government, from the late fourteenth to late eighteenth century, evolving to retain the Serbian peasants' hereditary ties to the land (Lukovic 2011, 281-305). Janissaries ruptured this centuries-old equilibrium by increasing the peasantry's tax burden and seizing land by force (Lukovic 2011, 292–4). The peasant Serbians' means of existence and historical familial ties to the land were broken, sowing further discontent amongst them. This analysis rejects the arguments posited by Anscombe, who argued that class did not feature prominently in the Serbian uprising (Anscombe

2012, 603). Yet he does not account for how these nationalist understandings of Serbia were compounded by the peasants' understanding of their material suffering (Anscombe 2012, 572–606). Anscombe does not appreciate how significant a sense of destitution was to Serbian nationalism, and how this pain was intimately tied to the peasant, a distinctly 'classed' identity and a product of the Serbians' economic repression within the Ottoman Empire.

Thus, significant economic pressures sowed the seeds for discontent towards the Janissaries among the Serbian peasantry. However, this can only be understood through a broader class analysis where Serbians situated themselves in a national history uniquely defined by class. The economic hardship and oppression of Serbian life were interpreted within the framework of the enduring plight of the Serbian peasantry, woven deeply into the fabric of Serbian epic poetry, which, when the Uprising broke out, explained why such a large proportion of Serbians took up arms against the Ottoman state (Glenny 2012, 7-9). Individual rebels were not motivated by grand enlightenment notions of freedom, but simply a sense of collective suffering that, as will now be demonstrated, came to fruition because of economic hardship and familial ties (Ranke 2012, 55).

First, Serbian nationalism was the product of epic poetry which romanticised a long history of suffering. We might distinguish this from the middle-class intellectual movements which drove revolutions in Western Europe by 'manufacturing' the nation and imposing it on all classes (Anscombe 2012, 572-606). Serbian nationalism stemmed from a collective experience of material deprivation, necessitating revolt. It was not manufactured and imposed by an intellectual elite but was directly rooted in the experience of individual peasants, who universalised their oppression to other peasants in constructing the Serbian nation. Pavlovic, Atanasovski and Corovic have all argued for the importance of the intellectual efforts of Vuk Karadzic, the so-called 'Father of Serbian Literature', in creating a national identity (Corovic 1938, 671; Pavlovic and Atanasovski 2016, 357). Although Karadzic helped standardise the Serbian language and record the oral tradition of the Serbians, these analyses deprive the peasants of their collective consciousness by arguing that there was little shared conception of the Serbian nation before Karadzic (Corovic 1938, 668). In reality, Karadzic was deeply indebted to the experience of the Serbian peasantry and their own understanding of national consciousness.

That shared consciousness was only made possible through an ancient, oral tradition. The Serbians' defeat in the 1389 Battle of Kosovo has been mythologised through Serbian epics. The Kosovo Epic describes how Prince Lazar laid down his life in defence of the Serbian nation, prior to several centuries of oppression at the hands of the Ottoman Empire (Judah 1997, 26–7). Although a glorified retelling of history, this myth would form a centrepiece of the Serbian national experience, an experience defined by the Serbians' imperial oppression. Alongside countless Serbian epics, Uros Predic's painting, the Kosovo Maiden evokes a striking melancholy and longing for a distant past of freedom and nationhood, superseded by the imposition of Ottoman rule (Judah 1997, 31–2; Noyes and Bacon, 1913). The Kosovo myth embedded the Serbian nation within a unique experience of suffering, which could then be universalised to the peasant's own context of suffering. This poetry evoked a shared experience of loss, common amongst most Serbians. This sense of common grief resulted in the rapid spread of the uprising, which erupted spontaneously across Serbia and involved 20-30,000 men, a significant proportion of Serbia's total population (Glenny 2012, 12). Serbians took up a common cause with their fellow Serbians when they decided to revolt, recognising a common enemy in the Janissaries. Therefore, Serbians recognised at least to some degree that the repressive forces acting on other Serbians were very similar to those acting on them while the Uprising itself compounded peasant solidarity and collective struggle.

Given the tight familial structure of Serbian society, one can understand how this conception of the Serbian nation infused itself within family ties. Eighteenth-century Serbia was a peasant society, defined by intimate connections to the local (Von Ranke 2012, 53). As the peasant's existence was confined to the village, it has been argued by historians that a sense of local identity superseded a sense of national identity (Pavlovic and Atanovoski 2016, 365). However, the administration of the Serbian lands was specifically rooted in the family, which merged into the conception of the nation. Von Ranke details how Serbian society was intimately based on the family with entire streets composed of one household (Von Ranke 2012, 55). With little social mobility, the peasant's experience of society was rooted in an extensive family unit, which depended upon each family member to carry out key domestic and economic functions. This unit also formed the basis of local government. Each extended family unit, or zadruga, selected a representative to the district council,

the Knezina, which then elected a chief Knez for that district who dealt directly with Ottoman administration governing Serbia (Glenny 2012, 7). Thus, peasant society and representation were intimately tied to the family, with most families somewhat embedded in the administrative structure of the state. The local constituted the national and the national the local. This meant that social mobility was limited largely to being a Kneze which, as has been demonstrated, was still tied to the peasant village community. As documented by Glenny, the Serbian middle class was tiny and repeatedly torn apart by numerous economic shocks due to the turbulence of border wars and shifting relations with the Austro-Hungarian state (Glenny 2012, 7; Zens 2012, 130). Thus, in terms of a Serbian class structure before the Uprising, there was only a minimal administrative class which retained strong ties to their peasant identity.

In this way, peasants were not only tied to the idea of Serbia through economic interest but through the personal bond of family, while a broader sense of solidarity was established through the influence of Serbian epic poetry which meant that to be a Serbian meant being a peasant. Thus, when the Janissaries systematically executed 150 to 300 Knezes in 1804, they not only undermined the economic and social relations that had formed a vital part of peasant society for hundreds of years, but killed many peasants' extended family members (Zens 2012, 129-135; Glenny 2012, 2). This was the final trigger for peasants taking up arms against the Janissaries, which was only possible through the collective solidarity established by the Serbian's conception of nation, rooted in the historical suffering of the peasants (Glenny 2012, 2).

However, when the Serbians revolted, the aim was not to overthrow Ottoman rule but rather to reform the state. E.P. Thompson and Natalie Davis' analyses of subaltern classes in other historical contexts are useful in understanding the conditions in which the subaltern may resort to violence as a means of reform, analyses which can be applied to the Serbian peasantry who attempted to reform the Ottoman state rather than break free of it (Desan 1989, 56). In their work, Thompson and Davis reject the traditional psychological framework that typified previous understandings of popular

violence (Thompson 1971, 76–7; Davis 2012, 57). Both emphasise the role of the community and how cultural practices legitimised violence. They argue that violence was justified through the perceived failures of authority figures. Thompson (1971, 76-136) argues that magistrates were supposed to provide grain to the common man and thus, when they failed, violent means were used to compensate for the failures of the state. Meanwhile, Davis argues that religious violence occurred when religious authorities failed to rid the community of 'pollution' (Davis 2012, 8-29; Thompson 1971, 79). Thus, Thompson and Davis examine how cultural norms have been used to legitimise violence and to correct for the perceived failures of the state's core functions. These analyses are particularly illuminating when applied to the Serbian context.

The Serbians, barred from the political process after the slaughter of their representatives, attempted to reform the state through the only means left available to them by taking up arms. Their general acceptance of Ottoman rule can be demonstrated in how the Uprising was acted out. The Serbians regarded the agent of Sultan rule, Mustafa Pasha, as their 'Serb mother', safeguarding their interests against the abuses of Janissary rule (Zens 2012, 135). This loyalty to the Sultan and the intention to reform the worst excesses of the Ottoman state were reflected in the petitioning of the Sultan by the leaders of the uprising between 1804 and 1806, who declared their unquestioning loyalty to the state (Glenny 2012, 8). Thus, the Serbian uprising sought to reform the worst excesses of the state, resorting to violence in response to the Janissaries' breach of the state's role without throwing off Ottoman rule completely. Echoing the analysis of Thompson and Davis, violence was used to 'correct' the state's silences and resume its proper and legitimate function when all other political options were exhausted. Because national identity was predicated on peasant suffering, the Serbians encountered difficulties in conceptualising themselves as sovereign, demonstrating the extent of internalised class-based suffering in shaping the nature of the Serbian revolution. In response to growing repression and the extra-judicial killing of the Knezes by the Janissaries, the peasantry resorted to violence as a means of political reform.

> "Because national identity was predicated on peasant suffering, the Serbians encountered difficulties in conceptualising themselves as sovereign, demonstrating the extent of internalised class-based suffering in shaping the nature of the Serbian revolution."

Sultans Selim III and later Mustafa IV used the Uprising opportunistically, using the Serbian population as a counterweight to the power of the Janissaries to enforce his New Order legislation and justify the creation a stronger army dependent on his leadership (Glenny 2012, 3–6). Both the Serbians and the Sultan used the Uprising as a means of reforming the state, playing one actor off another to achieve their political ends. This Uprising would also lead to calls for a significant restructuring of the Ottoman state to become a more restrained form of authoritarian government—calls that would come to fruition during the Tanzimat era of reform (Anscombe 2012, 574).

The First Serbian Uprising demonstrates how Serbian peasants used revolt as a means of reform. It questions the conventional, Western European understanding of national identity as formed by middle-class intellectuals, arguing instead that, in the Serbian case, nationalism was a product of the peasantry's class consciousness. The myth of the Serbian nation rested on the experience of peasant life and the oral poetry that romanticised it and, therefore, there could be no Serbian national consciousness without the peasant. Thus, we can synthesise the historical primacy of class consciousness and the nationalist sentiments shown to underpin it. This argument offers interesting alternative ways to understand nationalism through a neo-Marxist picture of history, problematising certain accounts of nationalism that reduce it to a purely misleading force for subaltern classes. The peasants' conception of nationhood was vital in driving the Serbians to revolution; the Ottoman state had broken its 'contract' with the peasants and thus class and national consciousness united in provoking widespread revolt. Yet, because of the constraints of Serbian national aspiration, rebels merely sought to reform their relationship with the Sultan outside of conventional political means. Therefore, a shared experience of Serbian suffering as inherent to the peasant identity prompted an uprising which did not try to destroy the state, but instead reform it.

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SOCIAL MEDIA, CRYPTOCURRENCY AND MYANMAR'S FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

by William Fieni-Thies

Over the course of its political history, Myanmar has found itself embroiled in a relentless struggle for freedom and self-governance. The fragile democratic progress achieved under Aung San Suu Kyi's leadership in the 2010s suffered a severe setback with the military coup of 2021, which saw the reassertion of military control and the detention of key political figures, including Kyi herself. Since then, Myanmar has plunged into a state of political turmoil and civil unrest, with the emergence of the National Unity Government (NUG) as the de facto opposition to the military junta. The NUG and pro-democracy forces have utilised technology as a powerful tool to mobilize support, raise funds, and sustain their struggle against the military regime. Leveraging social media platforms, online auctions, and innovative financial technologies such as cryptocurrency, the NUG has sought to circumvent the military's control over traditional financial institutions and harness the power of digital networks to finance their resistance efforts. First, this essay will provide a brief background of Myanmar's political history and the current civil war. Second, this essay will explore the role of technology in Myanmar's resistance movement, focusing on the NUG's use of digital platforms and innovative fundraising strategies to sustain its struggle for democracy.

POLITICAL CONTEXT

Since it achieved independence in 1948 from British colonial rule, Myanmar has persistently struggled to establish democracy. After a decade of semi-democratic rule, the country fell victim to a military coup in 1962 and has been under military control since (Christian 2023, 22). This period has been characterized by economic struggle, with Myanmar becoming one of the world's most impoverished countries (United Nations 2024). Amid the unrest, Aung San Suu Kyi rose to prominence as the founder of the National League for Democracy (NLD), a pro-democracy political party. Suu Kyi quickly became an international figurehead for pro-democracy movements as leader of the NLD as her resistance movement pushed the military junta to cede to democratic reform (Lubina 2021, 130). Following increasing international pressure and domestic protests, military leaders set out a roadmap to democracy. A key step to the junta's roadmap was a 2008 national referendum that sought to codify a new "democratic" constitution. Although, the new constitution reserved a quarter of seats in parliament for the military and left control of the Ministry of Home Affairs (Ministries of Defense, police, and border) to military leaders. A last provision was added to disqualify the opposition party's extremely popular leader, Aung San Suu Kyi from running for president.

Due to these anti-democratic stipulations, Kyi and the NLD boycotted the 2008 referendum and the 2010 election. In 2015, fair and transparent elections were held, resulting in a landslide NLD victory and giving them majorities in both Myanmar's legislative bodies. While reforms introduced by Kyi improved economic conditions, Kyi's lack of leadership experience paired with a military that acted outside democratic control led to poor governance. Persistent mismanagement of ethnic conflict, highlighted by her denial of the Rohingya genocide, further tarnished her rule (Barany 2018, 12). While this incident would ruin Kyi's reputation internationally, domestically she remained extremely popular and performed even better in the 2020 election than in the previous election (Christian 2023, 120).

Fearing Kyi's popularity and the loyalty of her supporters, the military ended its brief experiment with democracy, declaring the elections fraudulent and detaining Kyi. Since the 2021 coup, the military has acted as the de facto leaders of the country as the State Administration Council (SAC). Despite an acceptance of the new status quo in Myanmar by ASEAN states, and direct financial support from China and India, the SAC's poor economic policy continues to deteriorate living conditions. Myanmar's inflation has increased drastically (Abuza, 2022), GDP has plummeted (World Bank, 2024), extreme poverty has risen rapidly (World

Bank, 2023) and government expenditures have been directed away from public health and education in favour of military spending (World Bank, 2023).

While Kyi and other senior NLD leadership remain under arrest, a younger generation plays an increasingly vital role in leading the NLD's successor, the National Unity Government (NUG), in its fight for democracy. The NUG currently wages a civil war against the SAC through its military branch, the People's Defence Force (PDF). Additionally, various Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs) defend their territories from the SAC through periodic coordination with the PDF. Widespread support of revolutionary forces has made the SAC's control over Myanmar unstable. Reports indicate that the SAC controls less than half of the country, the remainder under the control of the NUG or NUG allies (Special Advisory Council for Myanmar, 2022). Deteriorating conditions and heightened desertion rates have led to a string of military defeats as the SAC continues to struggle with low morale (Council on Foreign Relations, 2024).

Morale amongst anti-junta forces remains strong. Resistance forces maintain extremely high domestic and international support (Institute for Peace, 2024), as NUG allied governments begin to form interim governments to administer the regions under their control (CSIS, 2023). Despite strong domestic support, the civil war has significantly impacted Myanmar's citizenry. A 2023 United Nations report estimated that since the 2021 coup, 17.6 million people require humanitarian assistance, 1.6 million have been internally displaced, thousands have been killed and tens of thousands arrested (United Nations, 2023).

THE NUG'S USE OF TECHNOLOGY

While the SAC lacks basic governance proficiency, it is still a formidable regime with a significant $2.7 billion military budget (The Irrawaddy, 2023), which is over 45 times the size of the NUG's Ministry of Defense's annual budget of $60 million (Abuza, 2023). To combat this impressive military apparatus, the NUG and the PDF's youths have leveraged technology to spread awareness of their cause and gather donations (both domestically and internationally) to fund the war effort. The following section will argue that technology has played a key role in the NUG's guerilla fighting tactics.

DIGITAL FUNDRAISING

The NUG has established various alternative means of raising funds. The first, and most significant, is its sale of digital bonds. In its initial offering in November of 2021, the bonds raised $6.3 million in one day (Abuza 2022). To circumvent the SAC's crackdown on financial services related to resistance forces, the sales and revenue from the bonds go through accounts in the Czech Republic (Abuza 2023). Unlike traditional bonds which provide the investor with interest on the principal they pay for the bond, the NUG bonds are zero interest. Over the first year of sales, the bonds raised a total of $45 million (Abuza 2023).

Second, the NUG holds auctions on real estate currently owned by the military. Following the 2021 coup, the military illegally re-appropriated acres of land throughout Myanmar. These auctions are held on the promise that once the NUG gains power, the buyers will receive the purchased asset. Since 2021, the NUG has sold 60 separate military plots in Yangon (Myanmar's largest and most prosperous city) for a total of $42 million (The Irrawaddy 2022). Further, they have sold over 700 condominium units (which are yet to be built) on military-owned land in downtown Yangon and an additional 10,000 plots of land in the Yangon area (Abuza 2023).

Third, drawing on its successes in real estate, the NUG has auctioned mining rights throughout the country. In February 2023, NUG finalized its inaugural sale: a $5 million lease agreement for mining operations in Mogok Township. Structured as a 51-49 joint venture between the NUG and a private entity, the agreement will begin after the SAC's defeat (The Irrawaddy 2023). The NUG has identified an additional 44 mining sites slated for auction. The NUG gains significant funding through the sale of digital bonds and auctions of military-controlled land and infrastructure. These fundraising efforts have been essential to the NUG's revenue-raising strategy. Without the mobilization of diaspora funds, it is unlikely that the NUG could procure weapons and resources to combat the SAC. The NUG's revenue-raising strategies could likely become influential as revolutionary groups across the world look to raise funds through unconventional means in the face of repressive regimes.

CRYPTOCURRENCY AND ONLINE BANKING

To facilitate anonymous online transactions, the NUG uses Tether, a blockchain cryptocurrency as its official currency (Jha 2021). Unlike other cryptocurrencies, Tether is pegged to the US dollar, limiting any fluctuations in the currency's value on digital asset markets. Following early crowdfunding by the NUG, the SAC quickly struck down various efforts by the resistance

forces through traditional banks operating in the region. As a result, donations grew dangerous as the SAC could track a paper trail to the individual who donated (Abuza, 2022). Given the SAC's efforts to limit the NUG's financial resources, Tether allows an encrypted anonymous means through which to collect funding. Tether particularly supports donations by Myanmar's large diaspora, many of whom support the NUG from across Asian countries, Europe, the US, and the Middle East (Bangkok Post 2023). These international donors make up a substantial portion of the NUG's budget and would not be able to make donations without technology like Tether. Furthermore, the adoption of Tether has empowered the NUG to develop its mobile banking app, NUGPay.

The NUG's current initiative is the development of NUGPay, a mobile money application using "digital kyat" to facilitate the future exchange of goods and services (Frontier Myanmar 2023). Users exchange foreign currency for the digital kyat, described by the NUG as a blockchain-based "Central Bank digital currency." The use of Tether is set to be phased out as the NUG increasingly promotes the use of NUGPay. Despite the innovation of NUGPay, key factors prevent it from gaining significant traction. A lack of compatibility with other banking services forces prospective users through a cumbersome depositing process. In addition, the app's currency cannot currently be used to purchase many goods and services in Myanmar. While it is unlikely that NUGPay's current iteration will revolutionize financial transactions in Myanmar, it is the first step towards developing institutions outside of SAC control to facilitate the pro-democracy resistance. As the NUG Deputy Minister for Planning, Finance, and Investment, Min Zayar Oo, explains, NUGPay "was implemented as the first step in making the financial mechanism of the revolution work. We have plans to go national in the future" (Abuza 2022).

The Spring Development Bank represents the NUG's long-term financial technology goal (Frontier Myanmar 2023). The bank system is set to run on the blockchain and will use self-issued stablecoins, like Tether, to back transactions across the blockchain. The Spring Development Bank is set to provide a range of financial services including foreign exchanges, remittances, fixed deposits, and online payments via Visa and Mastercard.

The Bank's app will integrate further auctioned assets including land, apartments, and bonds, and its e-lottery, which was terminated by the SAC.

LEVERAGING SOCIAL MEDIA

The NUG and resistance forces use social media to appeal to donors and demonstrate how they use donations. These groups often post photos of successful ambushes of SAC security forces and homemade weapons as displays of resistance to attract further donations (International Crisis Group 2022). These messages are promoted by media outlets, activists, and individual Myanma citizens to further increase awareness. One example is US-based Myanma Facebook user "Pencilo," who supported the NUG by directing millions of followers towards fundraising campaigns. Pencilo alone is said to have raised over $2 million for pro-resistance movements and is one of many Myanma social media activists assisting fundraising efforts for the NUG (International Crisis Group 2022). Social media use has also allowed for the widespread boycotts of SAC state-owned enterprises. For instance, the producer of the country's most popular beer, Myanmar Brewery Limited, saw a 60% market share collapse in the days following a widespread social media campaign calling to boycott the beer (International Crisis Group 2022). To further cripple state revenue, pro-democracy Myanma forces have also called for citizens to stop paying their utility bills on social media. These boycotts have played a key role in decreasing the SAC's capacity to wage war.

THE SAC FIGHTS BACK

The military junta in Myanmar has been utilizing social media platforms as a tool to arrest and silence dissenters and journalists. Zaw, a photojournalist, was arrested in Mandalay in April 2022 and later charged with incitement for a Facebook post criticizing the military regime (MyanmarNow 2022). This case is emblematic of a broader trend, with hundreds of internet users arrested for posting content supporting opposition and resistance groups. Facebook, being the dominant media platform in Myanmar, plays a significant role in shaping political discourse, despite its controversial history of facilitating the spread of disinformation and

"While it is unlikely that NUGPay's current iteration will revolutionize financial transactions in Myanmar, it is the first step towards developing institutions outside of SAC control to facilitate the pro-democracy resistance."

hate speech. In response to the military's efforts to control online narratives, Facebook has intensified efforts to remove harmful content linked to the military regime. However, the junta has attempted to counter these measures by exploring the creation of alternative social media platforms, such as OKPar and MTube, to suppress dissent and control information flow.

CONCLUSION

In the face of adversity and repression, Myanmar's resistance movement has demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability, harnessing the power of technology to sustain its struggle for democracy and freedom. In an age where technology increasingly deteriorates democratic institutions through the proliferation of misinformation and the facilitation of echo chambers, the NUG's use of technology serves as a reminder that technology can play a vital role in democratic movements. The NUG's innovative use of social media platforms, online fundraising campaigns, and cryptocurrency technologies exemplifies the transformative potential of digital networks in shaping contemporary anti-authoritarian resistance movements. By circumventing traditional barriers to fundraising and communication imposed by the military regime, the NUG has mobilized domestic and international support, empowering them to fight for democracy against a daunting military.

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Artwork by Rebeca Sterner

THE LONG SHADOW OF REVOLUTION: TRACING BACK HAITI'S MODERN STRUGGLES TO ITS REVOLUTIONARY PAST

by Emma Brealey

Haiti is consistently regarded as one of the poorest nations in the world and the poorest in Latin America and the Caribbean (Bunning 2021). The situation in Haiti is visibly dire, with over half its population living below the poverty line and no parliamentary elections since 2019 (Centre for Preventative Action (CPA 2024). In addition, more than $13 billion in international aid has been allocated by the UN since 2010 (Labrador 2023). Yet in the 19th century, Haiti (then Saint Domingue) was the wealthiest colony in the Americas, providing 60% of all coffee and 40% of all sugar in Europe, more than all of Britain's West Indian colonies combined (Henley 2010). Haiti also underwent the first successful revolt of Afro-Caribbean slaves in 1791, an unprecedented act of self-determination against French colonial rule. This action created the world's first black-led republic and initiated a new era of liberty for the newly declared nation of 'Haiti' (CPA 2024). The question is thus: how did Haiti transform from the wealthiest colony in the Americas, undergoing a revolution to give its citizens an improved quality of life, to its current state of political turmoil, economic depression and social upheaval?

The root of Haiti's present situation lies in the revolution itself. Contemporary corruption, lack of established infrastructure, and foreign economic dependency all stem from the legacy of 1791. The immediate power vacuum enabled political exploitation to grow, with authoritarian style government becoming the precedent in the nascent nation. At the same time, the movement away from colonial plantation policies, compounded by reparation payments to France, heavily impeded the economy by diverting funds from possible investment or development. Furthermore, foreign powers saw a space in which they could gain influence, which facilitated foreign involvement and created a culture of dependency that has remained true for present-day Haiti. While the revolution was meritorious in its aims, its long-term outcomes have proved less so, as Haiti still struggles to find its footing and become the nation its founding fathers intended.

HAITI'S TROUBLED STATE

Haiti in the present day is in a state of disrepair across all fields of economic, social, and political life. The UN estimates that food insecurity affects more than four million people, with nearly 60% of Haitians estimated to be living in poverty in 2024 (CPA 2024). Quality of life is low: over a third of the population lacks access to clean water, and two-thirds have limited sanitation services (Human Rights Watch 2022). Politically, corruption is rife - a Haitian Senate investigation alleges that almost $2 billion was mismanaged by government officials between 2008 and 2016, and most of Haiti's elected positions are vacant (Congressional Research Service 2020). Presidential elections have been continuously postponed since 2016, the most recent being delayed following the assassination of President Moise in 2021 (Sanon 2023). In the meantime, gang violence has grown, with gangs controlling more than 80% of Haiti's capital (CPA 2024). A recent movement, known as Bwa Kale, has emerged to counter insurgents, killing at least 264 suspected gang members, demonstrating the powerlessness of Haiti's state institutions as they fail to stop both gang violence itself and the counteracting vigilantism it creates (CPA 2024).

Despite both Haiti and the Dominican Republic sharing the island of Hispaniola, the Dominican Republic has a GDP nearly ten times larger, and infrastructure including a subway, healthcare coverage, and public schools

(The Economist 2016; Porter 2022). By contrast, 85% of Haitian schools are private, and thus 41% of primary-school-age children are out of school — mostly those from lower-income families who cannot afford to pay the required fees (USAID 2024; HRW World Report 2022).

THE LASTING LEGACY OF THE REVOLUTION

Haiti's current challenges are numerous, but many of them can be traced back to the Revolution of 1791 and its subsequent impact. Immediately after the revolution, when Saint Domingue's formerly enslaved declared independence creating the nation-state of Haiti, the questions arose of who would lead and how they would govern. Here begins the patterns of despotism and political corruption that have continued seen in present-day Haiti. Toussaint Louverture, the leader of the Revolution, became governor of Haiti 'for the rest of his glorious life', giving himself the power to create laws and appoint military personnel (Fatton 2011, 159). Despite greater limits on political power in subsequent Haitian constitutions, Louverture's absolutist precedent has shaped political customs and expectations of what a ruler should be. This has furthered a perception of unbroken governance and exemption from exterior checks, legitimising personalist dictatorships (Fatton 2011, 164; Dubois 2004, 302).

As political power was withheld from those enslaved before the revolution, in the years after it developed into an entrepreneurial enterprise, pursued by many as the route to wealth and influence (Dupuy 1989, 211). Thus, those who were in power sought to retain power as a means of wealth accumulation. The Duvalier regime in the mid-20th century represented this viewpoint to the extreme - in 1964, Duvalier declared himself 'President for life' echoing the rule of Louverture (Porter 2022). It was not until 2003 that Haitians elected their first democratically chosen President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, 200 years after their nation declared its independence (Porter 2022). Until then, Haitian power struggles impeded a crucial element of any newly established nation's growth: state-building. The development of institutions and strong democratic traditions were neglected. This is now reflected in the modern state, which lacks entrenched constitutional systems, such as checks and balances or a functioning judiciary. The present-day Haitian state is now susceptible to corruption, with

a longstanding culture of despotic rule and a lack of judicial independence, as political leaders act without accountability, focusing on short term gain, rather than long term development.

Haiti was further hindered in the immediate aftermath of the revolution by the attitude of condemnation pursued by other nations refusing to acknowledge Haiti as an independent state. This was largely due to the fear that the successful slave revolt in Haiti could be replicated across other colonies (Baur 1970, 408). Great powers such as the US and Britain chose to ignore the independent Haiti, to disincentivise their enslaved populations to act in the same manner (Porter 2022). The effect on Haiti was extreme — it could not establish diplomatic relationships, treaties, or trade agreements. This was particularly detrimental for the developing state, whose growth relied on foreign assistance. Colonial powers also initiated a largescale boycott and embargo, which undermined the plantation economy that relied on exports (McKey 2016, 37). Coinciding with this economic loss, Haiti began a movement away from the plantation economy. Although Louverture advocated for its maintenance as the prevalent economic system, he faced widespread opposition because, for the former slaves, it represented the domination and restriction emblematic of the colonial period. Haitians sought the freedom of possessing their own land, to farm for subsistence instead of cash crops (Fick 2000, 15). The impact of this embargo was profound— by 1842, sugar production had declined by 99.96%, and coffee production by 54%. Haiti's economic system turned inwards, completely transforming from large-scale plantation agriculture focused on export, to small scale subsistence farming, contributing much less to economic growth and development (Mckey 2016, 59). As Haiti's population has grown, the small subsistence plots have been continuously divided, resulting in the current state in which landholdings are small and economically unproductive (Corbett 1986). Haiti now imports considerably more than it exports, with an estimated trade deficit of $3.4 billion in 2021 (World Trade Organisation 2023). Increased dependence on food imports has expanded vulnerability as Haitian people are at risk of rising prices, shortages and livelihood erosion, as agriculture as an industry continues to decline (ACAPS 2023).

Additional economic devastation came in the form of

> "Haiti was further hindered in the immediate aftermath of the revolution by the attitude of condemnation pursued by other nations refusing to acknowledge Haiti as an independent state."

the Independence Debt of 1825. The French government sought reparations for their purported 'loss of income' post-Haitian independence, amounting to 150 million francs, an estimated $21 billion today (Porter 2022). Rather than facing war with France and hoping to re-establish trade, Haiti's government accepted the terms, initiating a 'double debt' as they were forced to borrow from French banks — the first instalment of the reparations was six times the government's income for that year (Porter 2022).

The debt was reduced to 90 million francs in 1837 and finally paid off in 1888. However, state payments continued, as the loans taken to cover the debt required settling. By 1911, $2.53 out of every $3 that Haiti received from taxes on coffee went to debts held by French investors (Porter 2022). The impact this had on the economy was drastic. Instead of investing in developing infrastructure or building the necessary institutions for an emerging nation-state, Haiti was spending up to 80% of its national budget in some years on loan repayments (Henley 2010). A New York Times article suggests that the Haitian economy at present could have been eight times larger, with per capita income six times larger, if France had never demanded reparations (Porter 2022). In an interview, Haiti's former President Aristide stated, 'Why after two hundred years, is Haiti this impoverished? We are condemned to live in poverty - not just poverty, but misery, an abject misery tied to 1825' (quoted in Porter 2022). In these ways, the modern-day poverty of Haiti can be directly traced to these French reparation payments rather than natural economic forces.

As a result of the power vacuum and authoritative nature of political organisation created post-revolution, Haiti has been subject to extended periods of foreign interference. In 1915, the US initiated a military intervention in Haiti, due to fears the state would default on its loans, taken out in US banks to pay back French debts (Henley 2010). The US assumed control of Haitian national security and finances and imposed racial segregation, forced labour, and press censorship. An estimated 15,000 Haitians were killed during the period of US administration (Labrador 2023). Although US troops officially withdrew in 1934, the US retained control of Haiti's finances until 1947 (Danticat 2015). In some years of US occupation, more of Haiti's national budget was spent on the expenses of American officials than on providing services such as healthcare to the Haitian people (Porter 2022). Following US governance, the Duvalier regime began, which for 29 years saw widespread human rights violations and gross economic mismanagement, including, at times,

embezzlement of up to 80% of Haiti's international aid (Henley 2010). However, the US supported this regime due to Duvalier's anti-communist stance (Bunning 2021). US intervention continued throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, with the removal of President Aristide in 2004, and the election of Michel Martelly in 2011, both being linked to US interference (Labrador 2023). Foreign involvement has transformed into intervention by NGOs and supranational bodies such as the UN, contributing to the state's delegitimisation and lack of development, as its agency is handed to external actors, furthering a global perception of Haitian dependency (Gros 2011). The Haitian people now turn outward in seeking solutions to problems, not due to support for outside interference, but a belief that there are no other options available. Yet, the cycle of aid intervention and foreign relief provides deeper issues still, as Haiti continues to struggle to become the actor that it itself needs to be.

ECOLOGICAL MISMANAGEMENT

Haiti is situated on a fault line between America and the Caribbean and has thus consequently been the victim of huge environmental catastrophes, including major earthquakes and hurricane. The most recent earthquake in 2021 killed over 2,000 people, affecting up to 1.2 million overall (UNICEF 2021). Following the earthquake in 2010, total damage was estimated at just under $8 billion, representing a further drain on the Haitian economy (Fatton 2011, 164). Although these catastrophes themselves pose a challenge for economic development, several factors have amplified the effect of these ecological disasters, again with roots dating back to the revolutionary period: a lack of urban planning, weak infrastructure, and a dependence on subsistence farming (Labrador 2023).

Subsistence, a legacy of foreign embargoes, has had a particular impact as the division of land into small plots, accompanied by increased deforestation, has meant the country's soil fails to hold together and is more susceptible to the impact of storms and earthquakes. When comparing Haiti to its neighbour, the Dominican Republic, which experiences similar natural hazards, the latter is much better equipped to cope with and respond more effectively to ecological disasters, with stronger constructions and a more stable government (Henley 2010). Haiti, due to its weak infrastructure, a detached state, and economic fallibility, cannot cope adequately when faced with such obstacles, furthering their destructive effect, and enabling a cycle of hardship to incur. The ecological impact on Haiti is visibly severe

and enhances its debilitated position. Nonetheless, this devastation has also exposed the inherent fragilities of the Haitian state, dating from the revolutionary period, marking yet again how its legacies remain prevalent.

CONCLUSIONS

The world's current perception of Haiti is of a country in devastation, where political instability prevails, economic weakness is engrained, and poverty and low quality of life are dominant. This was not the aspiration of the enslaved who sought self-determination in the 18th century, inciting a revolution that was the first of its kind and establishing a black-led republic that aimed to inspire liberty and opportunity for all. Yet, it is precisely from this revolution that we find the roots of Haiti's current malaise. The failure to state build, the crippling economic debt, and the damage of foreign intervention, have served to build Haiti into the state it is today. Present day Haiti now struggles with ineffective and exploitative political actors, with a state that is further delegitimised by sustained reliance on foreign aid and worsened by the ecological destruction that it incurs. Haiti's potential for change is also limited — gang violence and division are growing, as the cycles of mismanagement foster rising poverty, increasing foreign aid, and continuous movement away from state development or internally produced solutions to problems. The revolution was a momentous success in its inception, but its longer-term consequences have been, in a sense, detrimental to the future and present of Haiti.

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Artwork by Chiara Watt

ECOLOGICAL EXISTENTIALISM AND EXTREMISM: APATHY AND ACT

by Julia Bahadrian

Chronic fear of environmental doom is rising dramatically. The shrinking margin for effective climate intervention, the issue's magnitude, and accelerating rates of ecological destruction have cumulatively created a sense of 'climate anxiety' (Budziszewska 2021, 2). General climate malaise often elicits feelings of powerlessness, meaninglessness and eco-guilt (Budziszewska 2021, 3). Clinical disorders have been found to be directly correlated to this eco- anxiety, accompanied by serious comorbid psychosocial ill-effects. (Whitmore-Williams et al. 2017, 40). This sense of existential distress caused by climate change, or 'solastalgia' (from Latin sōlācium, meaning comfort, and Greek -algia, meaning grief), has fostered a culture of climate apathy and political passivity (Albrecht 2007, 97). Intergenerational environmental damage threatens the loss of myriad ways of life, cultures, and communities, especially among vulnerable indigenous populations (Cianconi et al. 2020, 10). Global climate inequality has exacerbated the situation, with no help from the lethargic Climate Change Conferences creating shallow measures and ineffective policies. In order to cope with a lack of autonomy, loss of meaning, and the seeming inevitability of climate destruction and extinction, individuals have disassociated and anaesthetised themselves from climate issues. (Dodds 2012, 222-226). Instead, a purveying climate nihilism, or bystander existentialism towards the state of the climate has settled

We can apply Giroux's concept of 'zombie politics' to

this apathetic approach towards environmental issues (Giroux 2011, 3-190). He argues that neoliberal under-regulation and mass commodification has eroded one's sense of meaning as the environment and the 'self' become a target of elimination and degradation (Giroux 2011, 3-190). 'Zombification' causes a nihilistic sense of detachment from individuals' political consciousnesses, weakening self-agency and political will. This enables the perpetuation of status-quo systems which, in this case, facilitate prolonged climate change (Giroux 2011, 3-190). Climate apathy is now seen as a larger threat to the movement against climate change than climate denial (Barasi 2018). Thus, rebuilding a successful vision for the future requires breaking public apathy, and revitalising individual agency within the movement and politics (Barasi 2018). A significant portion of climate change activists are attempting this through increasingly radical environmental action.

CLIMATE 'WAR' AND DIRECT ACTION

Climate revolt and activism can be conceived of as both a symbolic and literal form of war, often reflected in the rhetoric, methods, and tactics activists use to fight against climate change and the institutions they see as exacerbating it. On a small scale, activists participate in 'guerilla gardening', and throw seed bomb packages, like grenades, into underdeveloped patches of land, re-pollinating public gardens and developing soil biodiversity (Rasbash 2021).

These 'weapons' of the climate movement ironically function as tools of growth and development. On a larger political scale, green anarchism, direct violence, and even ecological terrorism take a more militaristic approach and use real weapons to further their causes.

Direct action through civil disobedience, protests, and violence can be perceived as 'transformational action', achieving eco-social revolution by disrupting public apathy while attempting to funnel climate anxiety into stimulative action (Sovacool and Dunlap 2022, 1-17). Extinction Rebellion typifies this approach by rallying disenfranchised youth into mass disruption campaigns aiming for systematic action on climate change (Sovacool and Dunlap 2022, 1-17). Climate protests create concentrated 'spaces of resistance' that aim to change status-quo climate paradigms by pressing for institutional and governmental reform (Sovacool and Dunlap 2022, 1-17).

Recently, there has been a notable escalation in more extreme and destructive direct action. Disillusioned

environmentalists have grown a 'radical flank' of activists, who use civil disobedience and militant strategies to achieve more extreme demands (Sovacool and Dunlap 2022, 1-17; Fisher 2023b). Radicals adopt 'eco-sabotage' tactics, attempting to destroy and destabilise critical fossil fuel infrastructure. For example, eco-anarchist Earth First advocates for monkeywrenching, encouraging arson and property damage of industrial and construction equipment. (Jarboe 2002) Their land occupation campaigns also intend to physically cordon off logging companies access to forests and main roads. Just Stop Oil and Insulate Britain similarly blockades major roads, and additionally performs publicity stunts such as attacks on famous artworks and private jets. Extremely radical militant environmental action can also use paramilitary actions, bombing, assassinations and lethal violence to disrupt hegemonic structures (Sovacool and Dunlap 2022, 1-17).

This growing extremism, or the radical flank effect (RFE), reflects a growing perception that conventional political solutions and incremental reforms are unproductive, bureaucratic and hampering real reform (Fisher 2023b). Many activists lack access to political power and 'climate pathways' or feasible routes to take transformative action to reduce emissions through existing systems, creating frustration (Fisher 2023b). This inaction predicates violent and radical methods when juxtaposed with the acute nature of the ecological crisis (Sovacool and Dunlap 2022, 1-17).

The adoption of more extreme, extra-parliamentary tactics aims to change the system in multiple ways. Shocking, radical, and disruptive tactics attract greater media coverage and public attention than peaceful moderate climate movements (Haines 2013). This increased attention introduces apathetic bystanders to the movement's aims and increases the temporal immediacy of climate change's impacts at an individual level. (Fisher 2023b). Radical movements' use of extreme tactics helps to differentiate radical and moderate actors' relative extremism. Moderate

'Eyes and Storms' (2012) Simryn Gill, taken in the RE/SISTERS Barbican exhibit (2023)

climate activists and ecological groups can then portray themselves as more reasonable actors within the larger movement, in contrast to extremists (Fisher 2023b). This tends to enhance their reputation and therefore generate

support and funding within the public and governmental sphere that was previously limited (Fisher 2023b).

However, for all the benefits of this radical flank of climate activists, these tactics can risk isolating moderate members of the public who associate violence with the eco-movement, leading to the general movement's loss of appeal (Fisher 2023b). Political polarisation between those who conceive of climate change as a political issue and those who rebuke

Authorities can also scapegoat extremist actions as a pretext to disregard and suppress both moderate and radical eco-activities. Therefore, before extreme methods can be successful, in order to avoid anti-rhetoric and public frustration, a personal level of climate change understanding has to be generated within the wider public to engender real engagement with extreme tactics. Activists can partially bridge the gap between members of the apathetic public and engagement with their movements through artistic revolt.

ART AS REVOLT: PROVOCATION, PEDAGOGY, AND 'POST' FUTURE

AESTHETIC INSURRECTION

Art can function as a weapon of aesthetic insurrection (Leavey 2021, 1-4). As a micropolitical node, climate art utilised through an activist lens can provide space for emotional expression outside of traditional 'capitalist subsumption' or the categorisation of productivity and utility (Fisher 2023b).

'Eyes and Storms' (2012) by Simryn Gill is a compilation of 23 aerial photographs and prints of open pit mines that, through its scale, presents massive 'open wounds', scars, and ruptures on the unassuming landscape and texture of Western Australia.

The striking imagery and large size of the installation relative to the viewer provoke personal reflection on the massive scale of human environmental damage. It also makes the viewer self-conscious of their role as a beneficiary of chains of industrial demand, extractive capitalism and larger climate change economics. This creates a personal causal link between climate destruction and

the individual viewer and therefore an increased sense of responsibility towards climate justice.

Climate art can also improve comprehension of climate issues and their severity to non-experts and therefore serves an educational role in the climate struggle (Li et al. 2023, 3). This can be seen through Diane Burko's 'Summer Heat' (2020), which creates the impression of melting glaciers clashing, beside a striking red visualisation of the rising carbon dioxide levels, almost resembling a world map on fire (Li et al. 2023, 5). Burko artfully links rising CO2 levels via a

Summer Heat (2020) Diane Burko. Graphics from Nan Li, Isabel I. Villanueva, Thomas Jilk, Brianna Rae Van Matre and Dominique Brossard. Edited art piece displayed with the detailed Keeling curve graph.

Keeling curve and correlated sea levels. The memorable presentation of climate data allows participants to overcome 'imaginative deficits' by associating the visual image with facts. This association and the conveying of data via evocative imagery was found to resonate more effectively with observers, causing better memory recall. (Li et al. 2023, 5). Furthermore, Burko's artistic representations of climate change data functioned as an ideological bridge, cutting through political divisions, climate scepticism and the politicisation of climate science, as they created mutual agreement on the relevance of climate issues (Voon 2023; Li et al. 2023, 5).

Art can contribute to the epistemological history of the climate resistance movement, recording its landmarks, being used at protests and being centred

Photography by Melanie Friend from the Barbican RE/Sisters Exhibit (2023)

in public debate around climate change. The Greenham Women's Protest was a women's only eco-feminist protest camp that spanned two decades and aimed to blockade the transportation of nuclear weapons to Greenham's RAF base. Photography of the Greenham Women's Protest and the art produced aimed to inspire "joyful militancy" among eco-activists and continues to inspire contemporary participation in the ecofeminist movement (Barbican 2023). This helps break apathy around participation in eco-movements as it portrays historical success within the general movement and the camaraderie it offers.

Ecological art has the capacity to create an optimistic shared vision of a post-climate change future (Leavey 2021, 2). This can thaw apathy towards climate change by creating a shared hope and vision for effective climate intervention, thereby mitigating existential dread. Furthermore, the visual memorability of art and its capacity to be reproduced as a snappy visual motif or symbol on social media allows for the effective online dissemination of ecological messages.

CONCLUSION

Apathy resulting from climate anxiety is a key obstacle to a politically active public. Ecological extremism attempts to invoke a civilisational shift or 'war' on climate change, the system, and apathy itself through radical action. Eco-movements are increasingly adopting more shocking, militant tactics to increase public attention, break apathy, and sabotage industrial production in order to upheave the current social order around climate change. (Fisher 2023b). There is potential for climate art to act as a bridge between an apathetic public and ecological activist movements, ensuring there is no loss of sympathy towards more radical climate movements' causes. This is due to art's transformative capacity to educate, empower, provoke personal reflection, and work to unify a shared view regarding the severity of climate change over differing political isles. It is also a potential tool for engendering participation across the general climate change movement. To further understand how to tackle climate apathy and existentialism, it is imperative to build knowledge on the varying ways that art can be used in tandem as a form of climate revolt, reigniting social and political interests and participation in the wider climate change movement.

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THE UNIFYING AND DIVISIVE NATURE OF AIDS MEDICAL ADVOCACY WITHIN MARGINALISED SECTORS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY:

THE HIDDEN NARRATIVES OF QUEER WOMEN AND PEOPLE OF COLOUR AFFECTED BY THE EPIDEMIC

by Gwynne Capiraso

When confronted with the subject of AIDS, it is near impossible for most of the younger generation not to picture a pandemic of the past, a tableau collaged with homophobic headlines, ACT UP posters, and grainy photographs of impossibly frail men in hospital beds. As Gossett and Hayward (2020, 532) point out, this image, likely 'populated by white gay men,' fails to acknowledge additional marginalised populations affected by the virus, effectively 'ensuing the homophobia of AIDS to never remember the racism and sexism of the pandemic.' Though symptoms of

deficient immune systems were initially flagged among intravenous drug users in the late 1970s in New York City, scientists began to take notice when white, middle-class gay men who were otherwise healthy began to develop similar symptoms (Harris 2010, 23). Therefore, early reports of HIV/AIDS characterized it as a 'gay disease' transmitted primarily by white homosexual men (Diedrich 2007, 28). Media representations of the political advocacy movement that evolved in its wake point out its notable 'homage' to the women's rights and racial justice movements of decades prior (Brier 2007, 240). However, this groundbreaking 'gay liberationist rhetoric of unity' against AIDS did not seem to account for racial, gender, and class disparities in those affected by the epidemic (Brier 2007, 240). Therefore, this paper will unravel the process of marginalisation faced by different sub-groups of those affected by the AIDS epidemic. The analysis will focus on how the exclusion of minority patients from the AIDS political movement not only warped current perceptions of the epidemic to overlook many of those affected but also prevented women and people of colour affected by the virus from receiving suitable and affordable healthcare.

Though gay men became the face of the virus in media depictions, other sexual minorities also faced 'stigma by association' surrounding AIDS (Vincent, Peterson and Parrott 2016, 543). In reviewing the prominent literature on AIDS responses by queer women and communities of colour, it becomes apparent that these groups were not perceived to be fully integrated into the mainstream AIDS movement. However, a closer look into AIDS organising among lesbian and Black groups reveals that they have been highly underrepresented in depictions of major healthcare victories during the epidemic—in which they played a crucial role. To completely understand the gravity of AIDS, it is imperative to view the fight for medical justice through an intersectional lens, taking into account the added barriers to healthcare experienced by women and people of colour.

Most notably, queer women and lesbians, who were at a very low risk of contracting the virus, were accused of being 'asleep' in the AIDS crisis due to its limited relevance in their health concerns (Diedrich 2007, 25). In reality, lesbian activists such as Cindy Patton were already 'acutely aware' of the 'failing' healthcare system in the United States due to the ongoing fight for reproductive justice. This understanding, along with a desire to end 'all forms' of homophobic oppression, made lesbians key actors in caring for AIDS patients, promoting practices of safe sex, and protesting for

lifesaving treatment (Brier 2007, 244).

Any existing literature on lesbians and AIDS is described by Tallis (1992, 69) as 'both contradictory and confusing.' He reasoned that they 'harboured an unrealistic feeling of safety' due to a lack of information about AIDS infection in female homosexuals, leading to an underestimation of risk (Tallis 1992, 69). Consequently, many theorists claim that there was a lack of 'political desirability' for lesbians to 'take on AIDS' alongside the feminist struggle and fight for queer liberation (Patton and O'Sullivan 1990, 121). However, Sarah Schulman and Maxine Wolfe, radical feminists and leading activists in the second-wave feminist movement, found themselves 'estranged, as lesbians' from the ongoing reproductive rights campaign in New York City, choosing to employ their skills of political organising elsewhere (Diedrich 2007, 32). Schulman (2018, 120) also points out that while gay men in the 1980s had made efforts to stay generally apolitical, lesbians had long since been thrust onto the scene of anti-institutionalist political advocacy; she describes this 'coming together' of 'feminist political perspectives' with the gay-spearheaded ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, est. 1987) movement in New York City as a 'historically transforming event.' Feminist author Ann Cvetkovich (2003, 158) similarly criticizes the mass forgetting of the role of queer women in the ACT UP movement, urging people away from remembering only a group of privileged gay white men. Many lesbian feminist writers argued that misogyny was to blame not only for their struggle but also for the stigma faced by gay men who have AIDS (Brier 2007, 243). This sentiment runs contrary to literature that describes lesbians as largely absent from discourse and political organising in the early stages of AIDS.

Boston quickly became a hub for AIDS organising among both gay men and lesbians, likely due to the existence of the Fenway, a queer health clinic established in the 1970s, and its rich history of feminist and queer politics. There, lesbians began organising blood drives when many gay men were banned from donating blood, rallying behind the agenda of creating a more just healthcare system for all marginalised people (Brier 2007, 235). As explained by lesbian activist Patton, medical injustice had been 'acted out on our [women's]

> "As explained by lesbian activist Patton, medical injustice had been 'acted out on our [women's] bodies since we were born,' so deciding to fight for AIDS care was 'not purely defensive' but also to the mutual benefit of women campaigning for reproductive rights (Brier 2007, 244)."

bodies since we were born,' so deciding to fight for AIDS care was 'not purely defensive' but also to the mutual benefit of women campaigning for reproductive rights (Brier 2007, 244). Lesbians and queer women, forming the Women's Caucus in ACT UP, also played a significant role in pushing for the 1993 reclassification of HIV/AIDS by the CDC (Shotwell 2014, 518). Until then, the U.S. Social Security Administration denied disability benefits to many female AIDS patients because they did not fit the current definition, which was, according to Shotwell (2014, 518), unfairly 'skewed toward the male model' and did not include symptoms experienced by HIV-positive women including pelvic inflammatory disease, yeast infections, and cervical cancer. The changed definition, however, only included cervical cancer in its new criteria (Shotwell 2014, 520). Katrina Haslip, an AIDS educator and activist, is a prime example of the way that the medical neglect of the epidemic harmed women. A prominent voice in advocating for the expansion of government AIDS classification, she died of AIDS-related complications just days before the CDC announced the changed definition (Shotwell 2014 522). Her death, along with that of many other women, was not counted as a result of AIDS — an unfortunate symbolism depicting the dangerous nature of exclusion within the movement.

Diedrich (2007, 38) describes the 'coming together' of the health feminism and AIDS activism of the 1980s in urban hubs like New York City as a 'remarkable' phenomenon. This overlap is even more significant as many lesbians in the AIDS movement experienced the widespread death of their gay comrades, creating a responsibility for them to serve as witnesses to the gravity of the crisis for years following (Diedrich 2007, 42). Their unique perspective on healthcare-based activism and prior experience in political organising helped shape the AIDS movement into the global sensation it soon became, threading together a broader community that would only grow stronger under the overarching goal of queer liberation. Unfortunately, many of their efforts went unrecognised due to media stereotyping around AIDS and underrepresentation in reporting on the epidemic.

Another group that is conspicuously absent in modern depictions of AIDS is people of colour, raising further

questions about the movement's intersectionality. Despite the current understanding that the virus 'disproportionately' affects Black Americans, people of colour were highly under-recognised during the epidemic's peak infection period. The CDC took over five years from the virus's induction to emphasise that race, along with homosexuality, was an essential factor in AIDS contraction (Moseby 2017, 1068). In the 1980s, 26% of all reported AIDS patients in the United States were Black (57% White, 14% Hispanic, and 3% unknown), though Black Americans only constituted 12% of the population (CDC 1983). However, it was widely believed that Black and Hispanic AIDS patients had contracted the virus through intravenous drug use or heterosexual sex, further isolating people of colour from the AIDS movement pioneered by gay and lesbian activists (Moseby 2017, 1076). Neglecting to acknowledge AIDS by many Black churches, coupled with exclusion from the primarily white LGBTQ+ community, meant that AIDS patients of colour were omitted from many of the prominent healthcare victories and media representations at the virus's peak.

Quimby and Friedman (1989, 403) point out that there was 'little mobilisation' around AIDS in the Black community, highlighting the notion that many Black activist groups felt like they were already unfairly associated with racist stereotypes around the virus. Many of them criticised the CDC and the media for naming Haitians as a 'risk group' for AIDS infection alongside gay men, reasoning that it would lead to further discrimination against them (Quimby and Friedman 1989, 406). As emphasized by Patton (1990, 121), 'safe sex issues tend to intensify racism and classism,' referring to early reporting on AIDS perpetuating harmful ideas about the sexual practices of Black, gay, and poor populations. Callen and Berkowitz (1982, 25) similarly criticize media implication that AIDS came from Haiti, calling it a manifestation of 'the Western tradition of blaming calamity on the Third World.' This widespread acknowledgement that Haitians were also at risk for contracting AIDS was often used in queer communities to argue that AIDS was not a 'gay disease,' creating a more significant divide between the racial and sexual minorities that were marginalized by the epidemic.

Another explanation for the limited Black mobilization around AIDS is the 'ideological paralysis' of the Black Church, which was, as described by Quimby (1989, 403), 'confronted by an epidemic spread by risk behaviours [it] oppose[d].' Harris (2010, 22) calls the Black Church the 'most influential' institution in the Black community; therefore, New York City, with

the highest concentration of AIDS cases as well as Black churches in the U.S., is an interesting case study for this hypothesis. Barnes (2013, 104) cites 'sexual conservatism' and 'emphasis on a traditional definition of family' as reasons why many Black churches in New York City initially struggled to confront AIDS in their community. Homophobia unmistakably infiltrated most conversations surrounding AIDS, prompting the black church to deny that AIDS was a problem; Gil Gerald, Minority Affairs Director of the National AIDS Network in the 1980s, highlighted the dominant view at the time that 'we don't have gays' in the Black religious community (Quimby and Friedman 1989, 405).

Though the Black Church has successfully spearheaded other healthcare programs such as cancer screenings, diabetes treatment, and Alzheimer's care, it did not act similarly in the early stages of the AIDS crisis, creating a worrying 'absence' of national and local AIDS programs directed towards Black patients (Barnes 2013, 102). This absence was also primarily caused by the hostility towards Black AIDS victims that still existed within the gay community; Patton (1990, 130) highlights that, at the time of the first outbreak, 'gay' was 'not a stable and meaningful category in communities of colour' as they regularly experienced exclusion from community institutions and gay bars. The Spring AIDS Action of 1988, which comprised nine days of nationwide AIDS protesting, was not endorsed by any Black politicians or organisations (Quimby and Friedman 1989, 410). Moseby (2017, 1078) attributes this lack of participation to a 'regime of Black American exclusion' in both the sociopolitical and medical sectors of the AIDS movement at the time. Though the epidemic was groundbreakingly successful in uniting a new-age queer community through political organizing, it further marginalized patients of colour due to a lack of intersectionality within LGBTQ+ circles.

Along with female AIDS patients, the CDC's new AIDS classification in 1993 marked a landmark victory for Black AIDS activists. The revised criteria included three additional conditions: pulmonary tuberculosis, recurrent pneumonia, and cervical cancer, all of which appeared at higher rates among patients of colour (CDC 1992). Soon after its publication, the number of AIDS cases reported among racial and ethnic minorities increased 135 percent from the previous year (Moseby 2017, 1078). The same year, Congress passed the NIH Revitalization Act, mandating that women and racial and ethnic minorities must be included as subjects in the National Institutes of Health's research studies (Moseby 2017, 1078).

Employing an intersectional lens is paramount in understanding the full extent of the impact of sexual, gender, and racial inequality on the government and media response to the AIDS epidemic. The virus, given the specific groups it was known to infect, is a very relevant study of how multiple interlocking systems of oppression—including but not limited to homophobia, classism, racism, and misogyny—can massively increase vulnerability to the disease due to harmful stereotypes and medical neglect (Smith et al. 2022, 340). Now, though AIDS treatment is readily available and preventative measures are more widely promoted, HIV rates are still extremely high in incarcerated people, people of colour, and transgender people. There is an alarming 'lack of scholarship' on the clear linkage between transphobic medical discrimination and AIDS diagnoses in transgender people, which were three times the national average in 2017, with half of all new infections appearing in Black transgender women (Gossett and Hayward 2020, 533–535). This information suggests that the fight for medical justice surrounding AIDS is far from over. Even now, we remain at risk of letting systemic barriers of power and privilege hinder access to effective interventions and treatment for the marginalised populations who have been thus far obscured in their tireless, decades-long fight for AIDS alongside countless sister struggles for medical justice.

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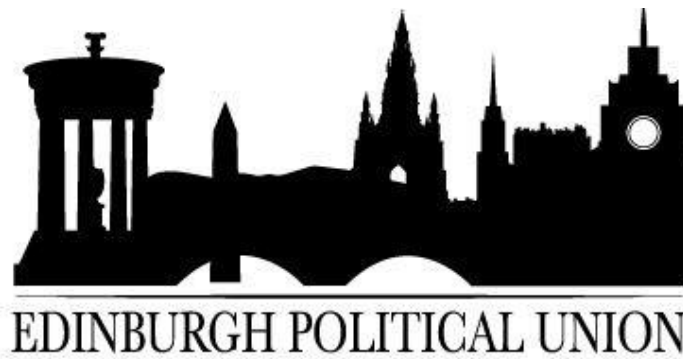
REVOLT & REFORM

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VOICES & VIOLENCE

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