



INTERNATIONAL STUDIES LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

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About

The Johns Hopkins University Foreign Affairs Review (JHU FAR) is the undergraduate research journal for the Johns Hopkins University International Studies Program and sponsored by the International Studies Leadership Council. The review is a forum for undergraduate students to publish work concerning International Relations and its interdisciplinary linkages to Political Science, Economics, History, Sociology, and other area-related studies.

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Russia's Lingering Shadow

A Post-Ukraine North Africa

Timothy Allen, May 2024

Russia's fingerprints in Africa remain despite the current war in Ukraine, with the rogue nation continuing to consolidate its economic and military ties in the region. In 2023, the Russia-Africa Summit proceeded on schedule and demonstrated to the world that Russian influence, built up since the early 2000s, was indeed here to stay. These ties have taken the form of both formal and informal partnerships. Some of Russia's largest arms purchasers came from the African Continent—specifically, Egypt and Algeria. Furthermore, Russian agricultural exports are essential to food security on the continent. Before the attempted Wagner Coup, Russia also maintained an extensive informal network of PMC (private military company) troops to support friendly regimes such as the Central African Republic, as well as juntas in Mali, Niger, and beyond.¹ Empirical evidence of Russia's sustained influence in North Africa counters the popular belief that Russia's diplomatic soft power is slipping away in the short term. Yet, it is unclear how much longer Russia can maintain its chokehold over the North African region.

The appeal of Russia as a partner stands out in comparison to its richer Western competitors for its promises of military assistance without the appearance of bending to imperialism that French or American assistance tends to produce. Many of the juntas in the “coup belt”—a North African region defined by its high risk of military coups and civil unrest—have stroked their legitimacy by kicking out French influence, especially in the face of significant security threats from insurgent groups that governments have failed to handle on their

¹ Droin, Mathieu and Dolbaia, Tina. *Russia is Still Progressing in Africa, What's the Limit?* (Center for Strategic and International Studies. August, 2023).

own. Despite Russia's smaller share of African trade than the United States and its Western allies (the difference being 64 billion in American trade to just 18 billion in trade for Russia), it has been able to build up local influence through social media campaigns and what the Council for Foreign Relations has dubbed "memory diplomacy." In short, "memory diplomacy" refers to Russia's co-opting of the anti-imperialist rhetoric it stoked while the Soviet Union existed—creating negative discursive ingroups that native North Africans were likely to buy into as a result of their colonial pasts.²

This strategy has paid dividends for Russia's clout on the international stage, which its struggle in Ukraine has weakened. Nearly every African country attended the Russia Africa Summit of 2023. The UN vote for a Russian withdrawal in 2022 saw 17 of 35 abstentions (effectively tacit neutrality in Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine) come from Africa. Russia has also managed to obtain military-technical cooperation agreements with nearly every African state and has done the same with energy cooperation to a lesser extent.³

This level of influence is impressive for a country that is supposed to be an international pariah. The relationships Russia built are particularly resilient because of the twin benefits of seeming anti-imperialist while keeping autocratic leaders in power. It is no coincidence that Russian aid has been most extensive to military juntas in Mali, and Sudan, both countries where military regimes play off of nationalistic rhetoric to justify their seizure of power from elected officials.

Despite these successes, Russia's shadow over Africa may be in danger. Trade volumes have declined since 2019. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has also failed to poll favorably with the African public, even within Russia's closest allies there. To make matters worse, the invasion of

² Ferragamo, Mariel. *Russia's Growing Footprint in Africa*. (Council for Foreign Relations, December 2023).

³ *Russia in Africa, an Atlas*. (Think Tank, European Parliament. February, 2024).

Ukraine has made Western powers more active in combating Russian economic and military influence. New scrutiny is being drawn to Russia's designs, meaning their previously uncontested expansion of influence is likely ending. The falling out of favor of Mr. Prigozhin, the founder and head of the Wagner army, has also likely harmed Russia's influence by depriving the country of one of its most useful assets in the region.⁴

As time moves on, Russia's commitment to Africa is certain to be tested, as the costs of war in Ukraine and insurgencies from Sudan to Mali take their toll on Russia's economic resources. However, one thing is certain: Russia cannot outbid the West, in terms of trade. By invading Ukraine Russia has directly confronted Western influence, and in time such a confrontation will likely take center stage in Africa, a continent with vast potential and resources that each great power bloc desires for itself. Time will tell if Russia succeeds in propping up the juntas favorable to it, or if it will fail to bring the stability it and its partners promised. Yet, it is more than likely that Russia's failure in Africa is only a matter of time. Russia is not a rich country, and thus cannot maintain influence at scale while prosecuting a war that becomes more costly by the minute. Putin in particular has staked his legitimacy on ensuring a return of Russian geopolitical clout. Yet, by investing his resources in too many regions at once he will see lackluster results in all of them. The gradual retreat of Russian influence will likely take years, due to the built-up sentiments and narratives it has promoted. Still, eventually, the West (particularly the United States) and China will move to the foreground of soft and hard power in Africa as it becomes ever more of notice to the leaders of both nations.

⁴ Zaytsev, Vadim. *Second Russia-Africa Summit Lays Bare Russia's Waning Influence*. (Carnegie Endowment, July 2023).

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Manufacturing Identity

Conspiratorial Thinking in Hungary and the United States

Anthony Cardinale, May 2024

While conspiratorial thinking has long had a history of influence in the political sphere, new virtual spaces have produced an environment in which conspiracy can proliferate and invade mainstream politics to an unprecedented degree. Conspiracy theory is historically instrumentalized as an elaborate narrative with regards to hidden manipulation by the societal elite, generally used for justifying hatred for a perceived other or manufacturing in-and out-group identities. Through empirical data, I argue that conspiratorial hate speech has gained traction under the backdrop of political tumult and crisis backdrops, and is utilized in the interests of in-group consolidation.

In his book, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, Jacques Ellul discusses the appeal of propaganda to his concept of the lonely crowd. Ellul claims that in modern society, people feel lost, confused, and isolated. This phenomenon, according to Ellul, is only magnified through the presence of technology. He claims that propaganda in its most base form is an answer to this inherent loneliness and atomization caused by our technological society.

Propaganda serves to give us meaning and identity in a world in which we feel lost.⁵

Similarly, Hannah Arendt writes on the potent combination of social atomization and propaganda in her book, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Her main argument is that totalitarian propaganda is most effective in a heavily atomized society after the breakdown of traditional societal norms.⁶ This breakdown of society could take the form of a severe economic crisis or a

⁵ Ellul, Jacques. 1962. *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*. Vintage Books, 39.

⁶ Arendt, Hannah. 1951. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Harcourt, Inc., 412.

change in political regime. She argues that “the truth is that the masses grew out of the fragments of a highly atomized society whose competitive structure and concomitant loneliness of the individual had been held in check only through membership in a class. The chief characteristic of the mass man is not brutality and backwardness, but his isolation and lack of normal social relationships.”⁷

Significant research has been conducted to gather empirical data on the recent global prominence of conspiracy theories. One such study that provides substantial data would be Peter Kreko’s sociological research of conspiratorial thinking in Hungary. For context, “the research took place during the third quarter of 2009, when the gross national product was 8 percent lower than it was one year earlier.”⁸ Hungary was in a moment of economic and political crisis with most Hungarians believing the country was moving in the wrong direction.

During this period, Kreko and his team polled the Hungarian population with a survey designed to measure levels of conspiratorial thinking. The study found that “eighty-eight percent of the respondents tended to agree with at least one item on the list of conspiracies, while 23 percent agreed with all of the items. Seventy-two percent of the sample was above the middle of the scale; that is, the overwhelming majority tended to agree with ideas reflecting a conspiratorial worldview.”⁹ This overwhelming tendency to align with a conspiratorial worldview during a tumultuous moment in time aligns with Arendt’s theory of susceptibility to propaganda. The empirical data shows a connection between a conspiratorial mindset and a period of crisis.

⁷ Ibid, 415.

⁸ Kreko, Peter. 2015. “Conspiracy Theory As Collective Motivated Cognition.” In *The Psychology of Conspiracy*. Routledge.

⁹ Ibid, 67.

The data from Kreko's research in Hungary also shows a troubling example of conspiracy serving as a justification for hatred of an othered group. Included in the survey questions were several statements to measure conspiratorial anti-Semitism. Disturbingly, 30% of participants agreed with the statement "Jews seek to rule the world" and only 40% disagreed.¹⁰ Anti-Semitic conspiratorial responses were not simply a deluded belief held by the uneducated of Hungary, thus implying that it is not a lack of education that causes one to subscribe to a discriminatory conspiracy theory. Accusing Jewish people of a grand plot to rule the world justifies hatred, discrimination, and violence performed upon them as a warped form of punishment for a perceived offense. The resulting discrimination of a marginalized group on the grounds of conspiracy reinforces the boundaries of the in- and out-groups and perpetuates a deadly cycle of oppression. In this sense, conspiracy theories satisfy a dark side of human nature by justifying prejudice with a facade of moral righteousness.

However, conspiracy can take root in environments more politically and economically stable than Hungary of 2009. The atomization and breakdown of societal norms can simply be a perceived state of being divorced from reality due to far-right rhetoric. The Trump campaign's promise of "make America great again" implies a fall from a period of historic perfection to a society riddled with strife and social instability. The perception of crisis, so long as it is authentically perceived, could prompt a desire for escape into a world of conspiracy. This manufacturing of crisis is a common tactic employed by Fox News anchors in American media. Peter Pomerantsev writes about the crafting of a narrative by Sean Hannity in which he styles himself the rugged individualist American standing up to cultural attacks by leftist elites. He

¹⁰ Ibid, 70.

writes that “the implied takeaway of the narrative is that being surrounded by such a mean world full of dark conspiracies, we need for a superior strong hand at the wheel.”¹¹

Several studies have been conducted to analyze these patterns of conspiratorial supply. The Institute of Strategic Dialogue conducted a study in which it analyzed the NaturalNews empire, a media organization notorious for spreading conspiratorial misinformation. The findings revealed a complex web of corporate entities with vested interest in popularizing misinformation on the internet. In total, NaturalNews had a staggering 496 domains, active and inactive, with the purpose of popularizing conspiracy theories.¹² Many of the conspiracy theories spread by the network were centered around the George Floyd protests or the pandemic, two social norm shattering events in the United States. One such theory proposes that COVID-19, the attacks on September 11, and the Fukushima disaster are all the work of the elites at the World Health Organization.¹³ Theories such as this present a danger to public well-being as they discredit advice of medical professionals and instead advocate for “alternative solutions” including restrictions on immigration to prevent international exposure. This study is powerful in that it serves as a reminder that conspiracy theories often have active agents perpetuating the spread of disinformation. In this case, the agent would be NaturalNews in association with foreign troll farms. The owner of NaturalNews, Mike Adams, creates distrust in the global elite through his use of conspiracy spread through NaturalNews domains.

It is the trend of conspiratorial thinking entering the mainstream that is most concerning for the future of global democracy. Malicious actors can use online conspiracy theories to construct an exclusionary group identity and, using new social media, push that identity into the mainstream. The establishment of digital spaces in which the spread of misinformation can be

¹¹ Pomerantsev, Peter. 2018. “Sean Hannity’s Learned Helplessness.” *The American Interest*.

¹² *Anatomy of a Disinformation Empire: Investigating NaturalNews*. 2020. Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 5.

¹³ *Ibid.*,

detected and contained should be of paramount priority to the United States as well as other democratic governments. Kreko perfectly captures the dangers of mainstream conspiracy by stating, “while it seems that people see the future in a brighter light than the past, this optimism in the future all but disappears among people with a strong conspiratorial worldview.”¹⁴ Mainstream conspiratorial thinking inherently erodes societal optimism and hinders the prospect of positive democratic reform.

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¹⁴ Kreko, *The Psychology of Conspiracy*, 67.

The Ideological (In)flexibility of North Korea

Eric Smith, May 2024

In Chapter Eight of Bruce Cumings' *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*, Cumings explains how a lack of reliable information regarding North Korea allows pundits to stereotype the country's government structure into a simplistic static category, whether that be "a socialist basket case" or "a renegade state."¹⁵ However, as can also be seen in the work of Darcie Draudt in her article, "The Changing Role of Entrepreneurs in Kim Jong Un's North Korea," to describe North Korea as static is a mistake. North Korea, while technically a Communist state, is ideologically flexible in several aspects, allowing for doctrinal syncretism and strategic economic shifts.¹⁶ This is observed through North Korea's unique governmental structure and ideology, which from its inception melded Neo-Confucianism with Marxism to the wary acceptance of informal capitalists in the present.¹⁷ ¹⁸ In spite of empirical cases where North Korea demonstrated its ideological flexibility, the extent of the DPRK's willingness to compromise goes as far as it directly benefits the Kim regime.

Cumings argues that North Korea's government did not merely copy Marxist ideology, but integrated it with Neo-Confucianism: strengthening and legitimizing the regime.¹⁹ North Korea's defining national ideology is known as Juche, generally described as "self-reliance and

¹⁵ Cumings, Bruce. 1997. *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, chapter 8: "Nation of the Sun King: North Korea, 1953-1996" (pp. 394- 433).

¹⁶ Ibid, 398.

¹⁷ Ibid, 404.

¹⁸ Draudt, Darcie. 2022. "Middle Class Entrepreneurs and Socioeconomic Development in Kim Jong Un's North Korea," Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and the National Committee on North Korea, https://ncnk.org/sites/default/files/issuebriefs/FINAL_NCNK-WWC-Draudt-Changing%20Role%20of%20Entrepreneurs.pdf.

¹⁹ Bruce Cumings, 407.

independence in politics, economics, defense, and ideology.”²⁰ However, Juche is not merely the action of self-reliance and independence, but also a mindset that informs and leads to that action.²¹ This mindset may even be more important than the action, due to the belief that if one cultivates a Juche mindset, Juche action will naturally follow.²² As Cumings explains, this focus on cultivating a proper mindset (combined with the nationalistic aspects of Juche) makes Juche significantly different from typical Marxist thought.²³ It is more in line with the thought of Neo-Confucian scholars like Chong To-jon, who believed that “Principle (li) is the virtue (te) endowed upon the mind (hsin) and is the cause by which material force (ch'i) comes into being.”²⁴ Substitute “Principle” with Juche and “material force” with Juche action, and the two concepts are almost identical.²⁵ Juche’s nationalist aspects also position North Korea at the world’s center, graciously sharing Juche with the rest of the world.²⁶ This central depiction is based on Neo-Confucianism and is similar to how leaders, especially Kim Il Sung, were represented in North Korean society.²⁷ Kim Il Sung’s cult of personality was highly influenced by the Neo-Confucian belief of the benevolent philosopher-king.²⁸ This king is the center of the kingdom, the sun around which the people unite.²⁹ Also similar to kings, this role is hereditary—therefore guaranteeing a safe transfer of power between generations of the Kim family.³⁰

²⁰ Ibid, 403.

²¹ Ibid.,

²² Ibid.,

²³ Ibid, 404.

²⁴ Ibid, 405.

²⁵ Ibid.,

²⁶ Ibid, 404.

²⁷ Ibid, 404, 408-409.

²⁸ Ibid, 408.

²⁹ Ibid, 409, 411-412.

³⁰ Ibid, 411.

Ideological mixture is also something Draudt touches upon in her article, which describes North Korean economic flexibility through the rise of the donju class during the reign of Kim Jong Un.³¹ The donju are an informal and technically illegal group of “smugglers, brokers, and financiers” who operate within North Korea and provide financial services.³² At first it seems difficult to imagine the donju would be allowed to survive, much less thrive in a North Korean context, where capitalists are “enemies of the state.”³³ The reason they have been allowed to do so is due to Kim Jong Un’s ideological flexibility, understanding the donju’s market activities can greatly benefit the North Korean economy and provide luxury goods to satiate North Korean elites.³⁴ This flexibility is reflected in unprecedented shifts from several previous aspects of Marxist economic policy: offering the donju bonds in exchange for foreign currency, publicly praising individual financiers for their contributions to building projects, and even declaring movement away from a centrally planned economy.³⁵

Cuming also touches upon North Korea’s economic flexibility—arguing that the isolationist state could develop metropolitan coastal cities by 2000, with greater economic integration that may draw the North and South toward reunification.³⁶ However, his case for reunification is lacking in details, especially with regards to the government structure of this new unified state. Certainly Cumings knows that, and as Draudt elucidates in her article “How do Unification Politics Thwart Ending the Korean War,” it is impossible for democracy to coexist with dictatorship, and that “one political system needs to fold and cede control to the other.”³⁷ North Korea’s regime, though ideologically flexible to a degree, engages in malleability only to

³¹ Darcie Draudt, 2022, 3.

³² Ibid, 6.

³³ Ibid.,

³⁴ Ibid, 7-9.

³⁵ Ibid, 7-8, 10.

³⁶ Bruce Cumings, 427.

³⁷ Draudt, Darcie. 2020. “How Do Unification Politics Thwart Ending the Korean War?” *The National Interest*, <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/korea-watch/how-do-unificationpolitics-thwart-ending-korean-war-164366>.

benefit itself. Incorporating Neo-Confucian ideals into governance allowed the Kim dynasty to create a cult of personality and ensure hereditary political power.³⁸ The donju class are only allowed to survive due to their benefits to the regime, and are excluded from official North Korean power structures.³⁹ As flexibility in North Korea only goes as far as sustaining the regime, reunification is impossible unless both Koreas adopt totalitarianism.

In the works of Cumings and Draudt, ideological flexibility of North Korea is shown as an important contributing factor to the state's power. The integration of Neo-Confucianism preserves the regime's power structures, while marginal market capitalism allows Kim Jong Un to keep North Korean elites satisfied.^{40 41} However, inherent to both changes is the centrality of the Kim regime, which, though flexible in some cases, is inflexible in shifting the Kim dynasty away from the forefront of these doctrinal adaptations.

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³⁸ Bruce Cumings, 407, 411.

³⁹ Darcie Draudt, 2022, 7-8.

⁴⁰ Bruce Cumings, 407.

⁴¹ Darcie Draudt, 2022, 7-9.

Somali Piracy

On Land and at Sea

Madelyn Kye, May 2024

From 2007 to 2012, piracy flourished off the coast of Somalia. The specifics and prevalence of piracy within this time were made exceedingly clear through Jatin Dua's work, *Captured at Sea: Piracy and Protection in the Indian Ocean*. Dua's work describes the intricacies of the khat market, diya groups, and ransom insurance, among other topics, explaining the connections between these structures and the piracy occurring off the coast of Somalia. Furthermore, the piece discusses how pirates reflect new logics of supply chains that extend beyond pre-existing networks, and how security and insurance groups work to combat piracy accordingly. Operating within pre-existing social circles, piracy succeeded in the twenty-first century because of how firmly it was anchored to land by way of modern supply chains, traditional and modern networks, and strong local ties that barred the Somalian government or international naval forces from truly eradicating piracy in the Indian Ocean.

It is important to note that many of the people who were pirates during this era were actually "ex-fisherman."⁴² Farah, a pirate who Dua spoke with in 2010, a time where piracy was extremely prevalent, stated that he grew up fishing and transitioned into piracy after realizing its potential to garner a large amount of wealth over a fairly short period of time. In Farah's case, he expressed that this interest in piracy was sparked by an occasion when a large fishing boat cut his group's nets. Farah's response was to demand \$1,000 from the captain as payment for fishing in their waters. From there, Farah, and others like him, moved on to attacking larger and larger

⁴² Jatin Dua, *Captured at Sea: Piracy and Protection in the Indian Ocean*, Oakland: University of California Press, 2019, 57.

boats in search of money.⁴³ The desire for vigilante justice is not the only driver of people turning to piracy, though it is a common narrative. Others report having worked as coastguards during the period where more formal licensing dealt with illegal fishing but found themselves unemployed once the coastguard initiative disappeared. As such, they too began to illegally demand payment from other boats, making the same transition as Farah to larger ships.⁴⁴ Even if the coastguards were not disgruntled by the marine system, they were turned away by the dissipation of those institutions and because they saw piracy as an opportunity to apply the skills they had from their previous jobs to yield greater rewards.

Still, piracy did not go unopposed. These people did not simply attack these ships without the threat of consequences. In response to heightened threats of piracy, maritime insurance groups effectively formed a new exchange economy surrounding counter-piracy.⁴⁵ Such groups connected various maritime networks to ensure the operation of counter-piracy programs. Thus, both counter-piracy and piracy surpassed the limits of old logistics and the geographically based networks of the past. Ship Safe, a maritime insurance company, offered different contracts to “counter-pirates” with different levels of protection. One of their packages, for example, provided a “comprehensive policy of protection.”⁴⁶ This specific policy relied on people across career fields coming together to determine the risks associated with different voyages. Each person within the group was paid a certain percentage of the share, depending on the success of the ship’s journey. Other packages offered measures of protection ranging from barbed wire and high-pitched sound guns to sending security teams alongside ships.⁴⁷

⁴³ Dua, *Captured at Sea*, 57.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 56.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 118.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*,

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 119.

However, where the authorities formally stepped in is where counter-piracy truly failed, allowing piracy to reign over the Indian Ocean while increasing profits for maritime insurance groups. According to Somalia’s Minister of Maritime Transport, Ports, and Counter-Piracy, the cost of having the navies patrol the seas for piracy was \$1 million a day.⁴⁸ Navies’ main failure was a result of their over-leniency. Navies would typically capture pirates, not know what to do with them, strip them of their weapons, give them enough resources to make it back to shore without any issues, and let them go on their way. It is easy to see why this response, formally termed “catch and release,” was ineffective. The Somali minister knew this too—expressing that, if properly utilized, a mere one-twentieth of the annual naval budget would be enough to completely eradicate the piracy problem in Somalia.⁴⁹ In his opinion, piracy could have been solved locally: people knew who the pirates were, where they lived, and were aware of what actions they would need to have taken to truly combat piracy.⁵⁰ All they needed was the capital to sufficiently deter them. This was a bold conclusion to come to on the part of the minister, but it is true that piracy is very much tied to local networks: meaning that counter-piracy would likely be more effective if it, too, were tied to those same networks.

However, Dua’s interview with the minister fails to address one of the crucial reasons as to why piracy has been so successful. Neither Dua nor the minister mentioned the fact that pirates were well respected within local Somali society. The idea that local citizens will turn on people who are their family members, customers, and neighbors radically underestimates how indifferent most people felt about their direct association with pirates. Pirates engage in local markets, they borrow money from diya groups, and most importantly, they are treated with the same level of respect that is given to other citizens. Somalian locals, unlike many Western locals,

⁴⁸ Ibid, 96.

⁴⁹ Ibid.,

⁵⁰ Ibid.,

speak of pirates the same way they would speak of any other individual. In the words of Sheikh Usman, a man who gave Dua a tour of a lighthouse and shared many stories of times out at sea, “they [pirates] are not just robbers, they have a reason for doing what they do.”⁵¹ For these reasons, it is clear that attempts at counter-piracy were not only ineffective because of the issue’s localized nature, but also due to widespread Somali ambivalence toward the pirates.

Furthermore, local ambivalence toward the pirates is further displayed by their inclusion in diya payment groups. Tied to other members through patrilineal lineages, diya groups “regulate a host of interactions” that mainly have to do with payments and compensation.⁵² In the part of Somalia Dua visited, car accidents were exceedingly common. Locals would joke with Dua that, if they were in an accident, their diya group would effectively serve as car insurance. This joke came to fruition during Dua’s trip when a Somalian friend of his rear-ended another car.⁵³ The incident was not serious, but rather than having a complicated conversation, calling one’s car insurance provider, and exchanging further contact information, Dua and his friend simply had to wait for an elder from his friend’s diya group to arrive, at which point negotiations were made and a payment was swiftly sorted.⁵⁴ Diya groups follow a set of customary laws within their personal group and when interacting with other diya groups.⁵⁵ As such, the fact that pirates are included in diya groups, rather than being excluded from such a tightly-knit, traditional structure, demonstrates that they are not ostracized nor idealized by the average Somalian. They are varied, they have a wide range of reasons for making the choices they do, and they are welcome and trusted in Somali society on the local level, despite the government’s efforts to quell piracy.

⁵¹ Ibid, 62.

⁵² Ibid, 69.

⁵³ Ibid, 70.

⁵⁴ Ibid.,

⁵⁵ Ibid, 69.

Piracy is also closely linked to the khat market. Dua spoke with Aisha, a prominent khat seller, about the ties between piracy and khat.⁵⁶ Khat is a stimulant drug used socially in the Horn of Africa, a demarcated region in the continent that includes Somalia. Khat's effects resemble those of coffee, though it is said to be significantly stronger.⁵⁷ Khat and piracy operate within the same social circles. As Dua explains, khat is an "essential ingredient" for voyages out to sea, in the company of food, water, and fuel.⁵⁸ Moreover, khat is extremely popular in particular with pirate bosses.⁵⁹ The critical point of the interactions between pirates and khat is connected to the market; because pirates are welcome in diya groups, they are welcomed by wholesalers and the khat market in its entirety. This was explained by Aisha, who did not understand what Dua meant when he implied that pirates could not be trusted to pay. She simply stated, "Of course, they have to pay," and was shocked that Dua thought pirates unreliable.⁶⁰ This local presence and trust that sellers and regular citizens put into pirates greatly contributed to the success of piracy.

Piracy was successful off the coast of Somalia in the early 2000s because of its ties to local networks, predominantly those that existed on land. Despite the efforts of maritime insurance groups and international naval forces to quash the piracy problem, piracy prevailed because it took advantage of new and old networks, from the ever-expanding khat market to the traditional diya groups. Similarly, counter-piracy measures failed because they did not address piracy locally; however, even if Somalia had addressed piracy locally, the ambivalence of many Somalians would have rendered this approach ineffective. Thus, piracy was able to flourish off the coast of Somalia between 2007 and 2012 because they not only trusted local networks, but also the common folk responsible for maintaining their integrity.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 76.

⁵⁷ Cynthia Dizikes, "Khat - is it more coffee or cocaine?" *Los Angeles Times*, 2009, 2.

⁵⁸ Dua, *Captured at Sea*, 79.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 80.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 86.

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Temple-Mosque Conflicts in India's Electoral Calculus

Neelan Krishna, May 2024

In the world's largest democratic elections underway in India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist party, the BJP, is poised to win a third term. In January, Mr. Modi inaugurated a temple, a cause célèbre for the BJP, that replaced the Babri Masjid—a 16th century mosque in Ayodhya torn down in 1992 by a Hindu mob.⁶¹

Last June, I stood in the merciless Indian sun, adjacent to another contentious mosque site near the gilded sanctum of the Vishwanath temple in Kashi, a town crammed with Hindu temples on the banks of the Ganges. Looming next door were the rather out-of-place bluish-white plastered domes of a mosque. It was surrounded by a 20 ft high fence, seemingly caging it to protect it from its small golden neighbor. A large number of gun-toting soldiers in camouflage stood all around the courtyard of the temple.

The mosque, called Gyanvapi after a well inside it, was built by the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, by demolishing a temple in 1669. Over the course of history, a temple has been destroyed at the site thrice, in 1194, around the late 1400's and in 1669, and re-built twice, around 1250 and 1585.⁶² The present temple from 1780, was built adjacent to the mosque. Mr Modi, vying for re-election from Kashi, has lavished resources on the temple, installing a large Hindu nationalist sculpture near it.

⁶¹ Kumar, Hari. 2024. "Why India's New Ram Temple Is So Important." The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/01/22/world/asia/india-ram-temple-ayodhya.html>.

⁶² Sinha, Sahil. 2024. "Gyanvapi mosque-Kashi Vishwanath temple row: Unraveling historial tapestry of Gyanvapi and 800 years of war." India Today. <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/gyanvapi-mosque-kashi-vishwanath-temple-row-asi-survey-varanasi-2494955-2024-01-29>.

During Muslim rule in North India,⁶³ many Hindu temples were destroyed due to religious zealotry or for political reasons.⁶⁴ Contrary to the BJP's assertion, Muslim rulers also patronized temple-building.⁶⁵ Hindus drawn to worship in Kashi view the mosque as a symbol of conquest built to remind them of their impotence in the face of Islamic victory. I see a parallel between the symbolism of the Confederate statues pulled down a few years ago in the U.S. and the view of these mosques as reminders of a forgettable past that Hindus survived as a powerless majority.⁶⁶

A 1991 Indian law froze the status of contentious religious sites except the Babri Masjid, due to the latter's significance to Indian independence.⁶⁷ Yet, the Babri Masjid was demolished on December 6th 1992 by "tens of thousands of [independent Hindu nationalists]," resulting in Hindu-Muslim riots across the nation.⁶⁸ Religious riots following the 1992 Babri Masjid demolition caused over 2000 deaths. The right-wing BJP has exploited the Ayodhya temple-mosque issue in a successful divisive electoral strategy. A recent court decision to allow Hindu worship in the Gyanvapi mosque's cellar will allow them to exploit this too for political gain.⁶⁹ Dismissing the temple-mosque issue as a cynical political ploy merely because it has been co-opted by India's right-wing fails to take into account that many Hindus,⁷⁰ even secular ones

⁶³ "Soul of India: Timeline | Wide Angle." 2002. PBS.

<https://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/uncategorized/soul-of-india-timeline/2944/>.

⁶⁴ Sahil Sinha, "Gyanvapi mosque-Kashi Vishwanath temple row: Unraveling historial tapestry of Gyanvapi and 800 years of war."

⁶⁵ Asher, Catherine B. 2020. "Making Sense of Temples and Tirthas: Rajput Construction Under Mughal Rule." *The Medieval History Journal* 23, no. 1 (March). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0971945820905289>.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*,

⁶⁷ "The Place of Worship Special Provisions Act." n.d. Ministry of Home Affairs. Accessed May 26, 2024. <https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/2022-10/ThePlaceofWorshipSpecialProvisionsAct1991%5B1%5D.pdf>.

⁶⁸ "Babri mosque to Ram temple: A timeline from 1528 to 2024." 2024. Al Jazeera.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/1/22/babri-mosque-to-ram-temple-a-timeline-from-1528-to-2024>.

⁶⁹ Sharma, Saurabh, YP Rajesh, and Shivam Patel. 2024. "Indian court allows Hindus to pray in Varanasi mosque - lawyer." Reuters.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/indian-court-allows-hindus-pray-varanasi-mosque-lawyer-2024-01-31/>.

⁷⁰ Deb, Siddhartha. 2024. "Opinion | Modi's Hindu Utopia Is a Tawdry Mirage." *The New York Times*.

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who abhor destruction of mosques and Hindu chauvinism, favor the restoration of temples at major religious locations.⁷¹

The issue of major contentious mosque sites, such as those in Kashi and Mathura,⁷² should be addressed pragmatically to avoid a repeat of the Ayodhya fiasco. The 1.4 billion strong secular Indian democracy, with an 80% Hindu majority and a 200 million strong Muslim minority, should not devolve into Hindu hegemony over this issue. One model for a solution is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) from post-apartheid South Africa that allowed a nation to reckon with its past without vicious score-settling.⁷³ A non-partisan independent commission, guided by well-respected moral, but not necessarily religious, authority figures can help India confront these temple-mosque conflicts. While the undertaking sounds ambitious, the establishment of an apolitical, Indian TRC may lead to a more peaceful coexistence of Hindus and Muslims. The commission should arrive at a deal to relocate some of these contentious mosques. The relocation of the temple at Abu Simbel in Egypt can serve as a template for the relocation of mosques that sit at disputed locations of greatest significance to Hindus.⁷⁴ Technical challenges aside, this can allow Muslims to retain the mosque structures and the Hindus to expunge their inter-generational despair at conquest of their sacred spaces.

Without a creative solution to these temple-mosque conflicts, India's Muslim minority will be mined for divisive political advantage while feeding more human lives to the meat grinder of past grievances. It is difficult to imagine fences and a hefty security presence, backed by even a

⁷¹ Rawat, Mukesh. 2019. "69% Indians polled say mandir wahin banayenge: India Today-Karvy survey." India Today. <https://www.indiatoday.in/elections/story/69-indians-polled-says-mandir-wahin-banyenge-india-today-survey-1436708-2019-01-22>.

⁷² "Mathura's Shahi Idgah Mosque Case: A historical timeline of the dispute." 2024. India Today. <https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/gk-current-affairs/story/mathuras-shahi-idgah-mosque-case-a-historical-timeline-of-the-dispute-2489555-2024-01-16>.

⁷³ Tutu, Desmond. 2024. "Truth and Reconciliation Commission, South Africa (TRC)." Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Truth-and-Reconciliation-Commission-South-Africa>.

⁷⁴ "World Heritage Centre - Working Together: Abu Simbel." n.d. UNESCO World Heritage Centre. Accessed May 26, 2024. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/story-abu-simbel/>.

willing Indian government, being strong enough to hold back the desire to avenge long-wounded pride.

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Empowering India's Sustainable Development

The Crucial Role of Hemp

Khushi Maheshwari and Pratham Maheshwari, April 2024

The catastrophic havoc that the environment has wreaked upon humanity is horrifying. The world in 2023 was the warmest by far on record⁷⁵ and the Doomsday clock is set at just 90 seconds to midnight.⁷⁶ But with the persistent ‘*modus operandi*’ of humanity, the worst is yet to come. In such a distressing period, even a glimmering hope can prove to be a blessing. This hope can often be perceived in the world’s fundamental elements, and one of such elements is the possible adoption of a surprising commodity, hemp, in the world’s most populous country, India.

Hemp’s potential as a production catalyst in India’s consumption market lies in its capabilities to alleviate the nation’s imminent resource scarcity crisis. Beginning with its versatility, it is proven that hemp has 25,000 applications—ranging from textiles to food, reflecting its extraordinary utility.⁷⁷ It is also independent from the input of pesticides and fertilizers and requires relatively less care—rendering hemp usage a cost-effective proposition. Considering India's sustainable development dream, hemp could be considered as the ‘*messiah*’ of the process. It can yield 3-8 tones of fiber in a single acre, four times that of an average forest,

⁷⁵ “2023 was the world's warmest year on record, by far.” 2024. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. <https://www.noaa.gov/news/2023-was-worlds-warmest-year-on-record-by-far>.

⁷⁶ Mecklin, John. 2024. “A moment of historic danger: It is still 90 seconds to midnight.” Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. <https://thebulletin.org/doomsday-clock/current-time/>.

⁷⁷ Rupasinghe, H.P. V., Amy Davis, Shanthanu K. Kumar, Beth Murray, and Valtcho D. Zheljzkov. 2020. “Industrial Hemp (*Cannabis sativa* subsp. *sativa*) as an Emerging Source for Value-Added Functional Food Ingredients and Nutraceuticals.” *PubMed Central* 25, no. 18 (September). 10.3390/molecules25184078.

and also produces more oxygen than 25 acres of forests.⁷⁸ It is also a carbon-negative crop that absorbs carbon dioxide from the environment, with each kilogram of hemp absorbing 1.8-2 kilograms of carbon dioxide.⁷⁹ It requires less than half the amount of water required to produce cotton and, rather than absorbing nutrients from the soil, hemp returns 60-70% of nutrients to the soil and remediates the same for making it fertile for next season⁸⁰. It also has a relatively small crop cycle of approximately twelve weeks. One of the strongest natural fibers, hemp textile fiber is known to be biodegradable, hypoallergenic, antimicrobial, porous, durable, breathable, and comfortable and can also help in regulating body temperature.⁸¹

The global hemp fiber market is expected to reach 26 billion dollars by 2026 and the global medical hemp market to reach 82 billion dollars by 2027.⁸² Capturing even a slice of such a lucrative market could do wonders for India. For a country suffering from issues such as unemployment, water scarcity, and limited availability of land, hemp production is highly coveted.⁸³ It would boost the agriculture sector with increased productivity and restore damaged land through phytoremediation.⁸⁴

⁷⁸ Joshi, Pavitra. 2020. "Deconstructing the Taboo around the Use of Hemp and Marijuana in India." Kumaon Khand.

<https://www.kumaonkhand.com/post/deconstructing-the-taboo-around-the-use-of-hemp-and-marijuana-in-india>.

⁷⁹ "Empowering India's Sustainable Development: The Crucial Role of Hemp — St. Antony's International Review." 2024. St. Antony's International Review.

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⁸⁰ Khanna, Jasreen M. 2018. "Can hemp be the textile of the future?" Vogue India.

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⁸¹ Debnath, Chaitali. n.d. "High Cost of Hemp and its Potential to Transform the Fashion and Textile Industry." Fibre2Fashion. Accessed June 21, 2024.

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⁸² Sirupa, Harshavardhan R. 2023. "Why India is losing trillion-dollar hemp economy." Times of India.

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⁸³ Vivek, Vishal. 2023. "Missed Opportunities: The Economic Cost of India's Hemp Hesitation." Hemp Foundation.

<https://hempfoundation.net/can-india-continue-to-ignore-the-treasure-in-its-backyard/>.

⁸⁴ Placido, Dante F., and Charles C. Lee. 2022. "Potential of Industrial Hemp for Phytoremediation of Heavy Metals." NCBI. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8912475/>.

Hemp finds its roots embedded in the ancient Indian medical system, *Ayurveda*.⁸⁵ Hemp was also considered one of the five most sacred plants in *Atharvaveda*. It was widely used in ancient India due to its medicinal and nutritional attributes. Moreover, it was used for textile purposes and even as hempcrete to construct the famous Ellora Caves and to preserve them for over 1,500 years.^{86 87} However, the widespread use of Hemp was eventually met with government backlash. The regulation of hemp in India began during the colonial era,⁸⁸ where cannabis was restricted across British colonies. Colonial hemp regulation efforts were institutionalized through the Indian Hemp Drugs Commission (1894-1895), which suppressed and criminalized cannabis cultivation on both national and state levels. Hemp is currently regulated by the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act of 1985,⁸⁹ which was passed by the Rajiv Gandhi government under the influence of the USA's Reagan administration and sustained for over two decades.⁹⁰ The legal framework banned the production and sale of flowers and resin from cannabis due to its origin from the same family of cannabis or marijuana plants. A nationwide crackdown on hemp gave birth to taboos, myths, and misconceptions in society of hemp's relation to cannabis or marijuana, as well as its illicit usages.⁹¹ However, hemp simply

⁸⁵ Kaur, Chitwandeep. 2021. "India - - Hemp- A 'Wonder Crop': Development And Historical Analysis." Mondaq. <https://www.mondaq.com/india/cannabis--hemp/1143054/hemp--a-wonder-crop-development-and-historical-analysis>.

⁸⁶ Singh, M., Divija N. Mamania, and Vasant S. Shinde. 2018. "The scope of hemp (*Cannabis sativa* L.) use in Historical conservation in India." *Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge* 17, no. 2 (April).

⁸⁷ Rizwanullah, Syed. 2016. "Hemp shielding Ellora caves from decay for 1,500 years: Study | India News - Times of India." Times of India. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/hemp-shielding-ellora-caves-from-decay-for-1500-years-study/articleshow/51334725.cms>.

⁸⁸ Sahu, Shashwata. n.d. "History And Regulatory Landscape Of Hemp And Hemp Products." Legal Service India. Accessed June 21, 2024. <https://www.legalserviceindia.com/legal/article-7005-history-and-regulatory-landscape-of-hemp-and-hemp-products.html>.

⁸⁹ "Narcotic-Drugs-and-Psychotropic-Substances-Act-1985.pdf." n.d. Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue. Accessed June 21, 2024. <https://www.dor.gov.in/sites/default/files/Narcotic-Drugs-and-Psychotropic-Substances-Act-1985.pdf>.

⁹⁰ "India Joins US, EU; Votes For Removing Some Controls on Cannabis in UN Treaty." 2020. The Wire. <https://thewire.in/world/india-joins-us-eu-votes-for-removing-some-controls-on-cannabis-in-un-treaty>.

⁹¹ "The hemp hump." 2021. Deccan Herald. <https://www.deccanherald.com/features/the-hemp-hump-1006429.html>.

does not have the psychoactive effect that marijuana possesses. Marijuana arises from a female *Sativa* plant containing psychoactive tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) that is consumed for recreational purposes. But, hemp contains only less than 0.3% of THC and does not produce the same effect. Still, the narrative of suspicion has already formed in the minds of Indian consumers.

If Hemp could be considered as a ‘game-changer’ in India, why hasn't it changed the game yet?

The root of the problem is precisely the stigma that surrounds hemp and its criminal association. The narrative of suspicion cultivated in the minds of Indians during the country's early colonial era remains simply because of a lack of education and government efforts to rectify the narrative of public distrust. To demand people to accept what they have been taught, directed and trained to repudiate is a heavy ask.

One must understand the intensity of weight that a taboo holds in a society and system. If society decides to collectively reject hemp on ethical, stereotypical, or even influential grounds, the system is but a reflection of its people. Accordingly, it will codify these sentiments into law and ensure its implementation—painting an incomplete image of hemp and serving it in colors that society will whitewash itself in. This sociological process is exactly what happened in India.

On the same note, *bhang* (which is prepared from the seeds and leaves of the cannabis plant) is legal in India. Regulated by some states, it is used as a form of medicine and also enjoyed in festivals by the Indians. Its origins trace back to thousands of years where *Cannabis Indica* was used to worship Lord Shiva.⁹² The comparative acceptance of *bhang* naturally begs the question, why is there a disparity in the legal status of hemp and *bhang*, considering both

⁹² Godlaski, Theodore M. 2012. “Shiva, Lord of Bhang.” *Substance Use & Misuse* 47, no. 10 (August). 10.3109/10826084.2012.684308.

originate from the same plant? Unlike hemp, *bhang* escapes the whitewashed narrative as a result of its holy connotation.⁹³ In a country imbued with religious beliefs and sentiments, *bhang*'s sacred origins exempts it from the accusatory anti-hemp rhetoric that Indian institutions have adopted.

Multilateral institutions, too, are unaware of hemp's potential in the production market. COP 28 recognised significant achievements made by India so far—namely, a 33% reduction in emissions and achieving NDC targets 11 years before its time.⁹⁴ India has also increased its capacity for sustainable development, sourcing 80% of its electricity from non fossil fuel based sources.⁹⁵ However, COP 28 was awfully silent on hemp as a means to achieve sustainability. Knowing what hemp brings to the table, there is a lot of wasted potential we choose to let go of. Knowing it is still 90 seconds to midnight, our opportunity costs become glaringly unignorable.

India is in a unique position to benefit from hemp substitutes in traditional industry. Given India's place as one of the world's largest emitters of greenhouse gasses, hemp counteracts the excesses of local air pollution as a natural provider of carbon sink.⁹⁶ The most potent solution to achieve net zero or combat climate change is being ignored by India.

Hemp puts itself on the table with a lone ask: Is the cost of inaction worth it?

Standing at the cusp of an environmental fallout, we must dig our soles deep into the ground. India has the most potent solution to sustainability at its fingertips, and it would be unwise to ignore it. Only occasional frameworks and studies have considered the intricate relationship between economic development and environmental preservation. In such a desert of

⁹³ Kapur, Manavi. 2020. "Why are weed and hash illegal in India, but not bhang?" Scroll.in. <https://scroll.in/article/972852/why-are-weed-and-hash-illegal-in-india-but-not-bhang>.

⁹⁴ Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. 2023. "India at COP-28: Highlights of 28th Conference of Parties." Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

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⁹⁵ "COP 28 National Statement." n.d. UNFCCC. Accessed June 21, 2024.

⁹⁶ Prater, Tom, Rosamund Pearce, and Simon Evans. 2019. "The Carbon Brief Profile: India." Carbon Brief. <https://www.carbonbrief.org/the-carbon-brief-profile-india/>.

opportunities, hemp production could believably be the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow for implementing sustainable development—striking an unimaginable balance between economic development and environmental conservation.

Legalization, in its entirety, could be the first step toward the widespread acceptance of hemp: breaking barriers in policy and perception. Stereotypes must be lifted by educating the communities and spreading awareness. With widespread hemp cultivation, we would not only benefit from an environmental surplus but also achieve economies of scale in comparison to any other fiber. A rational approach to tackle the structural changes in the system must be adopted, and to do so we must first subvert a long-standing narrative that has impeded India's pathway to sustainable development for too long.

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Consumed by Competition

How Neoliberalism is Reshaping our Values and Creating a Mental Health Crisis

Andrew Zhang, May 2024

Modern capitalism, coinciding with the English Industrial Revolution, began in 1760.

Consequently, the Neoliberal philosophy and its free market strategy dominates economic policy in most developed nations. These policies cause great inequality with the majority of the wealth concentrated to a few individuals. Beyond economic development, neoliberalism socializes a mindset of competition and a materialism amongst the citizens of developing nations—resulting in the beginnings of a mental health crisis.

Each part of a capitalist economy, from resource markets to natural monopolies, has its own impacts and intersections with other parts of the economy. Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen highlights this when he notes that the richest countries today continue to have many disadvantaged groups which lack basic access to healthcare, education, and other opportunities. Yet, at the same time, Sen recognizes that free markets are the best way for workers to find a place of employment that is meaningful and that suits their skillset. Even Marx himself admits that individuals benefit overall when they gain the freedom to access labor markets and have the ability to choose the labor they take up. This piece will focus on a specific and recent shift in modern capitalism: the rise of neoliberal economics.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Menard, Louis. 2017. “The Rise and Fall of Neoliberalism.” *The New Yorker*.
<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2023/07/24/the-rise-and-fall-of-neoliberalism>.

Neoliberalism's core principle is that markets are the best solution to most problems; they are more efficient and effective at organizing production in an economy than any policymaker.⁹⁸ It became the dominant economic policies of many developed economies in the 1970s and 1980s with politicians like Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, resulting in an era of tax cuts for the wealthy; the deregulation of key industries like finance and utilities; the removal of social safety nets; and the weakening of collective bargaining protections.⁹⁹ This era of economic policy has been characterized by suppressed wages that fail to rise in accordance with neither corporate profits nor labor productivity.¹⁰⁰ These policies have resulted in increased working hours and a rise in income inequality. From 1977 to 2007, 60% of national income went to 1% of the U.S population.¹⁰¹

Many scholars argue that the recent trend of rapidly rising inequality in many developed nations has contributed to a mental health crisis in these countries. Statistics show that antidepressant use increased by 65% in the U.S. in the past 15 years, even prior to the onset of the COVID-19 crisis.¹⁰² Greece also experienced a mental health crisis after its economic collapse during the Eurozone crisis.¹⁰³ Academics are affected as well, with PhD researchers and graduate students reporting increased levels of anxiety due to the pressures to publish work. Researchers have connected these mental health stressors to the decrease in social safety nets and subsequent increase in income inequality that resulted from the adoption of neoliberal policies a

⁹⁸ Ibid.,

⁹⁹ Bivens, Josh, and Lawrence Mishel. "Identifying the Policy Levers Generating Wage Suppression and Wage Inequality." *Economic Policy Institute*, 13 May 2021, www.epi.org/unequalpower/publications/wage-suppression-inequality/.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.,

¹⁰¹ Kokorikou, Danae S et al. "Testing hypotheses about the harm that capitalism causes to the mind and brain: a theoretical framework for neuroscience research." *Frontiers in sociology* vol. 8. (2023). doi:10.3389/fsoc.2023.1030115

¹⁰² Zeira, Anna. "Mental Health Challenges Related to Neoliberal Capitalism in the United States." *Community mental health journal* vol. 58,2 (2022): 205-212. doi:10.1007/s10597-021-00840-7

¹⁰³ Danae S Kokorikou et al.,

few decades ago. The issue does not lie with the lack of wealth of some individuals either; many countries with the highest rates of mental disorders are developed nations such as Australia and the U.S.¹⁰⁴ Rather, it lies with today's do-or-die mentality. With rising living costs and a broken safety net, individuals must earn a wage or risk poverty and starvation.

However, neoliberalism is not just affecting our psychology and mental states by changing our material conditions. It socializes people into internalizing individualism and competitiveness beyond healthy boundaries, changing the way we think about our goals and aspirations in life.

The social structures that neoliberalism creates causes many to internalize a materialist drive to continue purchasing and consuming. For any given organized collection of individuals to coexist in peace, be it the Roman Empire or feudal France, individuals have to believe that the system they live within is legitimate. For that to happen, there must be a consensus regarding concepts like justice and the role individuals play in society. When individuals disagree on the core premises of their social structure, violence and chaos erupts. The French Revolution began because the Third Estate rejected the values that the French monarchy founded its legitimacy on.

While neoliberalism is not a political system, it is still a social institution at the end of the day. Individuals all share faith in a common currency, in the idea that individuals should be compensated for their work, and other basic assumptions. However, there are other more pernicious values that individuals internalize. As Stephen Butler of the University of Prince Edward Island argues, individuals are constantly exposed to consumer and capitalist culture today.¹⁰⁵ They take on the implicit assumptions in the messaging they are bombarded by, such as

¹⁰⁴ Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. "Mental Health." *IHME*, www.healthdata.org/research-analysis/health-risks-issues/mental-health#:~:text=Where%20are%20mental%20disorders%20most,includin%20the%20US%20and%20Brazil. Accessed 15 May 2024.

¹⁰⁵ Butler, S. "The Impact of Advanced Capitalism on Well-being: an Evidence-Informed Model." *Human Arenas* vol. 2, pp. 200–227 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42087-018-0034-6>

an obsession with materialism, or that individuals should pursue money and fame. Marketing efforts remind people that there is always some fascinating new product that they are missing out on. This culture of consumption always existed, but in recent years it expanded with the explosion of digital spaces in which advertisers can further penetrate the private lives of individuals to continue selling them products. In order for individuals to be able to consume, though, they must continue to earn. Satiating the never-ending hunger for luxury and wealth requires never-ending toil.

Neoliberalism additionally fosters a mindset of competition and a desire for individual accomplishment. As Julia Becker argues in the *British Psychological Society*, “Neoliberal systems build on and reinforce specific psychological tendencies of liberal individualism—for instance, an imperative for personal growth and fulfillment.”¹⁰⁶ Similar to how the economy must keep growing, individuals should never be satisfied with themselves and ought constantly improve their material conditions. Influential policymakers and company executives, from Jamie Dimon to Elon Musk, preach of a culture of workaholism, where individuals are supposed to put their everything, and more, into achieving corporate success. On a broader level, the corporations that are flourishing today under neoliberal policies propagate a culture that is focused on success in the workplace. Employees fight to receive promotions, with those who are the best at out-working their peers finding themselves in positions of power. This means that individuals who have their own qualms about this culture find themselves unable to enact change or speak out, given their comparative lack of influence in the workplace.

¹⁰⁶ Becker, Julia C., et al. “Neoliberalism Can Reduce Well-Being by Promoting a Sense of Social Disconnection, Competition, and Loneliness.” *British Journal of Social Psychology*, vol. 60, no. 3, Wiley-Blackwell, (2021), pp. 947–65, <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12438>.

The more individuals adopt neoliberal tendencies, the worse off their mental health becomes. People who adopt a mindset of individual responsibility feel that they must shoulder their burden themselves, leading to higher stress levels.¹⁰⁷ Taking responsibility can be good, but that does not necessarily preclude sharing our problems with others. In fact, taking responsibility can materialize itself in the form of sharing our burdens, whether asking for help on a project at work or communicating with loved ones about our emotional troubles. Further, adopting a competitive mindset drives people to avoid social interaction and makes them less happy when they focus on what they lack compared to others, be it wealth or status.¹⁰⁸ Neoliberalism's core assumptions are that individuals act as purely rational agents competing for wealth and success. Thus, to succeed in this system, people have to personify such principles. This ultimately does not account for one's holistic emotional and mental needs.

Wealth and success are not meaningful in and of themselves. They are means to an ultimate end of satisfaction with oneself. Amartya Sen emphasizes that the ultimate goal of economic development is to provide more freedoms for people to pursue what makes them happy. But if individuals sacrifice their emotional well-being and their relationships with others in order to accomplish this self-defined success, they will lose what they sought out to gain.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.,

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.,

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The Birth of the CCP State Narrative

Shayna Faul, January 2024

Introduction

The May Fourth Movement has come to be regarded as a watershed event representing the appropriation of Western concepts that propelled both the liberal and Marxist efforts in the construction of modern Chinese statehood. A review of the thinking of Hu Shih and Guo Moruo offers insight into the cultural and political undercurrents of this explosive reaction to imperialism, sparked by the Treaty of Versailles and the weak response of China's new government contemporaneous leaders. This paper will probe how opposing cultural-political views, as represented by these two prominent thinkers, shaped the narratives coming out of the anti-imperialist May Fourth Movement into nationalist, democratic, and communist critiques and how ultimately the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) successfully co-opted the May Fourth Movement into its state narrative.

The May Fourth Movement

The eponymous May Fourth Movement came about in the aftermath of the First World War in 1919 when the expectations of Chinese nationalists met with the realization that their emergent nation's leaders lacked the will and capacity to stand up against the hegemonic external powers thwarting their national destiny. This gap between expectations and reality boiled over into outrage at the unfair terms of the Treaty of Versailles, which ignored China's claims over its original territories. Jerome Grieder called the May Fourth Movement a "Chinese Renaissance" as

it challenged traditional Confucian values and advocated for the rebirth of a modern China.¹⁰⁹ Students led calls in the streets against the nation's weak government, marking their disillusionment with the Chinese state when for the first time in the modern era they grew aware of their voice as a catalyst for social change and its power to incite revolution: "In the course of the ensuing protests the students realized for the first time their power as a political force."¹¹⁰ Later, Jonathan Spence also described "[t]he term 'May Fourth movement' [as...] both limited and broad, depending on whether it is applied to the demonstrations that took place on that particular day or to the complex emotional, cultural, and political developments that followed."¹¹¹ Thus, as an accident of history, May Fourth represents an explosive and spontaneous reaction on that day against the inequities of imperialist power and as a contingent event representing the inception of a renaissance in China's views on cultural and political society brought about by the contingency of a world war that unilaterally redrew borders, revealing the nation's subordinate position in relation to the West. According to Marie-Claire Bergère, "[i]t was only from the time of the May Fourth Movement in 1919 that some Chinese intellectuals began to welcome innovations from the West for what they were, no longer bothering about national precedents."¹¹² Most scholars have come to a consensus that the May Fourth Movement represented an event that gave rise to many cultural and political leaders, and included among these individuals were Hu Shih and Guo Moruo.

Two Prominent Thinkers

¹⁰⁹ Grieder, Jerome B. *Hu Shih and the Chinese Renaissance: Liberalism in the Chinese Revolution, 1917-1937*. Harvard University Press, 1970.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 176.

¹¹¹ Spence, Jonathan D. *The Search for Modern China*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2012.

¹¹² Bergère, Marie-Claire. *Sun Yat-Sen*. Stanford University Press, 2000.

Hu Shih and Guo Moruo came to prominence partly through their contributions to the May Fourth Movement. Hu's successful advocacy and writings of the *baihua* vernacular movement, and Guo's criticisms of certain Confucian traditions and his amalgamation of others on the May Fourth Movement, made them key shapers of cultural development and government policy. Both individuals started with stable familial backgrounds and went on to become leading scholars and a couple of the most influential writers in twentieth-century Chinese society. Their writings exemplify two vastly different perspectives on the movement.

Hu Shih

Hu Shih was born in Shanghai in December of 1891 and died in Taiwan in the year of 1962. He was educated under the traditional Confucian system and tutored in the Confucian Classics with the aim of passing the civil service examinations. During this process, he became aware of how this rigid educational system, which placed emphasis more on strict conformity through rote learning as opposed to individual intellectual growth, was one of the direct causes of widespread illiteracy across China.

In 1904, his modern educational journey began in Shanghai, which kickstarted his Western intellectual career. He went abroad to study in the U.S. in 1910 after winning a scholarship under the Boxer indemnity money. He then received his Bachelor of Arts from Cornell University in 1914 and proceeded to study under John Dewey at Columbia University. Dewey's philosophy of rationality and liberalism "was to him [Hu] a means of helping his country free itself from blind submission to ancient tradition."¹¹³ He returned to China in 1917 with a Ph.D. and "found a China not radically changed from the nation he had left seven years

¹¹³ Lien, Chan. "Hu Shih." Encyclopedia Britannica, 20 Feb. 2023, www.britannica.com/biography/Hu-Shih.

earlier.”¹¹⁴ China had remained weak both politically and economically, overrun by warlords with a population largely illiterate. This backwardness in its development, thus, inspired his quest for socio-cultural change.

Guo Moruo

Guo Moruo was born into a wealthy Sichuan merchant family in November 1892 and passed away nearly a century later in Beijing in 1978. As part of a Confucian household, he was originally arranged into marriage with a Chinese wife but renounced this affront to modern individuality and abandoned this engagement to pursue his education at Kyushu Imperial University’s School of Medicine in Japan in 1913. There, he married a Japanese woman, Tomiko Sato, and also started his studies in foreign languages and literature. While in Japan he also published a great body of his own Romanticist poetry and fiction. Later, after becoming invested in Marxist ideology, his works became laced with Marxist critiques of the deficiencies in ancient Chinese society and traditional values but did not wholly abandon Confucian ideals, seeking to find associations to communism in Chinese philosophical concepts.

His experience with the Communist Revolution began “by participating in the Northern Expedition” in 1926, which was instrumental in his decision to fully commit to the CCP during the Nanchang Uprising in 1927 as he witnessed the purge of the communists from the Kuomintang Nationalist Party and became disillusioned by Chiang Kai-shek’s regime.¹¹⁵ When the First United Front came undone with the breaking of the alliance “between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party, he sided with the latter.”¹¹⁶ As part of the People’s Republic

¹¹⁴ Ibid.,

¹¹⁵ Chen, Xiaoming. *From the May Fourth Movement to Communist Revolution: Guo Moruo and the Chinese Path to Communism*. State University of New York Press, 2007.

¹¹⁶ Roy, David Tod. *Kuo Mo-Jo: The Early Years*. Harvard University Press, 1971.

of China, he held many important governmental official positions and was later one of the first leaders to be denounced after the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

Ideological Differences

Hu Shih

Hu Shih advocated for a more progressive and liberal approach during the May Fourth Movement. This encompassed the promotion of democratic ideals and challenges to traditional Confucian values as a means to encourage a shift towards a more liberal society in China. He also believed in reason and science. According to Jonathan Spence, Hu “clung to his belief in the advantages of Western methodology, and rejected Buddhist fatalism as he had rejected the Christianity he had briefly espoused in 1911.”¹¹⁷

An overriding aim of Hu Shih’s was to get away from the wrong thinking of Liang Qichao and others, who differentiated the East as intuitive and the West as rationalist. For Hu, this binary did not exist, and Chinese thinking was as capable of material rationality as the West. He believed that essential characteristics such as race (i.e. being Eastern or Western) were not responsible for the lack of material advancement in Eastern societies. Rather, he thought of this in the vein of historical contingency, such as an early and enduring dynastic system of empire that encouraged tolerance for inequities versus the fractured kingdoms of Europe, which encouraged critique and dissatisfaction with social systems in the pursuit of constant improvement to the material condition. Jerome Grieder notes how Hu believed that a tradition of rationalism and secularism in China, starting with Confucius, had been corrupted by Qin Shi Huang’s superstitious book burning and the “superstition-ridden faith of scanty intellectual

¹¹⁷ Spence, 292.

content” of Buddhist religious influence.¹¹⁸ Secularism and rationalism reemerged with Song Neo-Confucianists, but it was still not able to fully develop. While, in the West, secularization and the foregrounding of reason during the Enlightenment encouraged a subsequent period of rapid industrialization throughout Europe.

Guo Moruo

Guo Moruo started off his philosophical journey as a romantic and ended up a Marxist-Leninist. Between 1918 and 1923, he immersed himself in romantic literature, and per David Roy, “[H]e was a romantic as early as the summer of 1918, and [...] can be legitimately so characterized from that time on until at least the summer of 1923.”¹¹⁹ In the preface of his translated version of Goethe’s *Sorrows of Young Werther*, Guo expounds on the sway that Goethe held over him. In 1932, he described his own political outlook of this time as “inclined toward revolution [...] I [Guo Moruo] thought that once China’s evildoers had been entirely rooted out a good state of affairs would naturally ensue [...that would be] in no way different from the ‘government by good men’ that Hu Shih was advocating.”¹²⁰ This quote shows not only Guo’s awareness of his own political awakening but also the intersection of his early thinking with Hu Shih, who he would later excoriate after the communists had ensconced themselves as the ruling government. This early idealism also reveals Guo’s lack of hostility toward the West in his earlier romantic period; in fact, it was only in late 1922 that his writings indicated some anti-Western sentiment. Interestingly, this reference to Hu Shih also disparages Hu by suggesting he was stuck in a quixotic view of a “government by good men” whereas Guo had matured beyond this early political naivete.

¹¹⁸ Grieder, 17.

¹¹⁹ Roy, 137.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 144-5.

Not long after his initial commitment to the ideals of Western romanticism, Guo eventually came to repudiate it. In 1922, he published “The Two Princes of Ku-chu,” which ended up being one of his last poems influenced by Goethe. By 1932, Guo had become completely disillusioned with the romantic idealism of Goethe, repudiating his early romantic hero as “not even worthy of veneration” any longer.¹²¹ Already, in 1923 his writings had begun to show a shift from romantic phrasings toward Marxist-Leninist jargon with his use of jingoistic terminology like “demon of capitalism” and “spirit of the proletariat” in his manifesto “Our New Literary Movement.”¹²² In the same year, he published an essay, “My Views on Tagore’s Visit to China,” in which he states “I [Guo Moruo] believe that the materialist interpretation of history offers the only clue to the solution of the world situation,” thereby indicating his understanding and belief in Marxist historical materialism, and also showing his first public declaration of China’s need for economic reform.¹²³

The year 1924 marks Guo Moruo’s full conversion to Marxist-Leninist thought. In a letter to Cheng Fangwu, he announces his total acceptance of the ideology by stating that “I [Guo Moruo] have now become a thoroughgoing believer in Marxism [and] Marxism provides the only solution.”¹²⁴ Roy states that what attracted Guo to Marxist-Leninist ideology was its emphasis on “the ends rather than the means.”¹²⁵ Despite his full-throated espousal of Marxist-Leninist thought though, he never fully surrendered his traditionalist tendencies and romantic convictions as he had outwardly proclaimed. All he had done was suppress his

¹²¹ Ibid, 139.

¹²² Ibid, 148.

¹²³ Ibid, 155.

¹²⁴ Ibid, 159.

¹²⁵ Ibid, 167.

romanticism, and “project it into the future, where its realization was to be an indication of the perfection of the Communist utopia.”¹²⁶

Political Activism

Hu Shih

Hu Shih, throughout his lifetime, projected an apolitical and liberal democratic persona. He concentrated on social, cultural, and intellectual change and swore off politics because “[t]o him, ‘participation in politics’ meant dealing with those corrupt regimes on their own terms, and a ‘political solution’ meant a settlement reached by accommodation with rascals.”¹²⁷ He wanted to change the social and cultural attributes of society before going after political change because otherwise these forces of change would be co-opted by the corrupt power brokers in the military and political spheres, such as warlords and faction leaders.

Hu Shih focused more on social, as opposed to political, change. Perhaps the advocacy for which he is best known is the vernacularization of literature. Spence describes how “[b]ack in China, Hu became a strong backer of the movement to write in the vernacular cadences of ordinary speech.”¹²⁸ Considering Hu’s eminence in the vernacular movement that had enabled Guo to come to literary stature as a poet of the vernacular, there is a stinging irony to Guo’s later attacks on Hu Shih. He also championed democratic values but refused to do so as a political agitator. In line with his avoidance of political activism, Hu Shih published “Problems and Isms” in the summer of 1919, which was an attack on how other Chinese intellectuals generalized many of China’s problems. It was in the same year that his “intellectual disagreement with

¹²⁶ Ibid, 160.

¹²⁷ Grieder, 178.

¹²⁸ Spence, 291.

Marxist doctrine as he heard it applied to the Chinese situation had crystallized by 1919 and remained constant thereafter.”¹²⁹

Hu believed that Marxism was only a temporary dressing to the deep wound of long-standing complex issues intertwined with the Chinese socio-political system. As a result, it was, therefore, merely an illusory and impermanent solution to the socio-cultural problems inflicting the nation. To him, “China’s fundamental problems were not political but social and intellectual [...] therefore cultural regeneration must take precedence over political reconstruction.”¹³⁰ As a celebrated intellectual, Hu had a large following and deep influence in academic circles. This was a threat to the new CCP state, which, thus, attacked him in the 1950s and 1960s. As indicated earlier, Guo Moruo was a leading voice in these attacks that sought (successfully in the PRC) to cancel Hu’s voice completely out of the origin myth of a constructed modern Chinese nation-state. For the CCP in mainland China during the 1950s, “Hu was the object of a campaign of renunciation and defamation conducted under the sponsorship of the Peking government.”¹³¹ Hu’s growing influence made him the “most dangerous” of the critical intellectuals that merited attention from the communists, and “at least ten million young people had read Hu’s works and fallen under his spell.”¹³² They believed that he was a “docile tool of the imperialists” and his ideals encouraged cultural aggression across China.¹³³ Hu’s threat to the new regime’s legitimacy can be evidenced by the sheer extent of the effort to erase him from the national narrative and associate him with the defeated enemy through ad-hominem attacks, such as “Kuo Mo-jo [going] so far as to set Hu up as ‘the civil counterpart of Chiang Kai-shek’.”¹³⁴

¹²⁹ Grieder, 125.

¹³⁰ Ibid, 169.

¹³¹ Ibid, 358.

¹³² Ibid, 360.

¹³³ Ibid, 361.

¹³⁴ Ibid, 365.

Guo was also amongst those setting up a “Committee for the Investigation and Criticism of Hu Shih’s Ideology” in 1954 that launched many attacks on his ideologies, and even “subjected [his whole personal life] to close and critical scrutiny.”¹³⁵

Guo Moruo

Guo Moruo, as opposed to Hu Shih, saw the May Fourth Movement as the antecedent to the Chinese Communist Revolution. He was also very much an advocate for the primacy of political activism and political revolution, unlike Hu. He championed Marxist ideas on proletariat revolution and emphasized the May Fourth Movement’s anti-imperialist stance. Thus, Guo Moruo leaned towards first changing the political system with a focus on class struggle and anti-imperialism.

Ironically, Guo championed a strain of traditionalist Confucian thinking to justify communist ideology as being rooted foremost in Confucian thinking, and his lived experience exemplifies how Confucian thought was mixed into the thinking of China’s Marxist intellectuals. Most other May Fourth contemporaries like Hu Shih attacked traditional Chinese thinking, but for Guo at the time, the best of both worlds was a synthesis centered on major features of “Confucianism (minus *lijiao*), Taoism, modern Western science, and Goetheanism,” and this was his solution to “China’s intellectual crisis.”¹³⁶ Guo’s personal struggles with traditional Confucian arranged marriage seem at first to have led him to partly break with the Confucian concept of *lijiao* and turn toward modernist Western concepts of emancipatory individualism. However, in this he rejects only the filial piety structures around arranged marriage, keeping the other three Confucian values of *xiushen*, *zhiguo*, and *ping tianxia* (the basis of *datong*, and what

¹³⁵ Ibid, 364.

¹³⁶ Chen, 92.

Guo equates with the cosmopolitanism of Marxist collective emancipation of the global individual). Guo was obsessed with the Confucian ideal of *datong*, and “[one] of the major attractions Guo found in Marxism was the Marxist cosmopolitanist ideal, [...] the ultimate correction of the modern world’s problem of capitalism and imperialism [...] the modern Communist paradise that Marx had promised seemed identical to the traditional Confucian ideal of *datong* (Great Harmony).”¹³⁷ He was, however, also aware of the friction between Confucianism and Marxism as he was never able to “escape the tension between the two” and the “gap between Confucian moralism and Marxist historical materialism [...] was too real and too wide for Guo to bridge.”¹³⁸

Guo, as opposed to Hu, was much more active politically. Guo even took to setting Hu up as “the civil counterpart of Chiang Kai-shek” — conversely, Guo Moruo himself can be seen as a civil counterpart to Mao Zedong.¹³⁹ As mentioned above, in 1954, a “Committee for the Investigation and Criticism of Hu Shih’s Ideology” was established to scrutinize Hu Shih, and Guo Moruo was one of its members.¹⁴⁰ Ironically, though, without the vernacular movement, spearheaded by Hu Shih, Guo Moruo’s romantic poetry would not have flourished, and “without the May Fourth vernacular movement, there might never have been the modern poet Guo Moruo.”¹⁴¹ His writings mostly echoed the Chinese people’s sentiments and disillusionment after the Treaty of Versailles and advocated for a China free from the influences of foreign powers. For Guo, China had missed the opportunity to grow a capitalist industrial economy and was now at the mercy of capital imperialist powers. Guo, in one of his first writings after his conversion to Marxism-Leninism in 1925 says, “Regrettably [...] our China has started too late in its

¹³⁷ Ibid, 86.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 10.

¹³⁹ Grieder, 365.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, 364.

¹⁴¹ Chen, 28.

development and those Europeans have ceased fire too early in their fighting for [the world] market!”¹⁴²

The Communist State Narrative

Hu Shih, arguably China’s most iconic liberal, was present at the May Fourth Movement, which celebrated the two liberal personifications of Mr. Science (S) and Mr. Democracy (D). Dan Xin Huang notes how “[f]or China’s vocal liberal wing, calls for ‘Mr. Science’ and ‘Mr. Democracy’ emerged as a rallying cry, becoming for many synonymous with the movement itself.”¹⁴³ While Hu managed to cultivate Mr. S, Mr. D never materialized; and, the Kuomintang (KMT) party founded by Sun Yat-sen in 1911 and repurposed by him in 1919, though under Chiang Kai-shek nationalistic and autocratic, has held a lasting association with Hu Shih and the liberals. In the meantime, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) would not be founded until two years after the 1919 May Fourth Movement. Marxist-Leninist thinkers, such as Chen Duxiu, however, had been present at this seminal student protest movement and represented the counter view to liberalism in the strains of culturalist development theories running through modern China: “They [cultural developmentists] have had an immense impact on the political and intellectual elites, from Hu Shih, Chen Duxiu, and their May Fourth generation to the ‘River Elegy’ (He Shang) and neo authoritarian list reformers, and to the 4 June Tiananmen pro-democracy generation as well.”¹⁴⁴ Chen went on to found the CCP and Hu Shih spear-headed the Liberal cause and the May Fourth vernacular movement: “Chen Duxiu and Hu

¹⁴² Ibid, 62.

¹⁴³ Huang, Dan Xin. “The Chinese Enlightenment at 100: How the Communist Party Seized the Legacy of May Fourth.” *Foreign Affairs*, 03 May 2019, www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-05-03/chinese-enlightenment-100.

¹⁴⁴ Chiou, C.L. *Democratizing Oriental Despotism China from 4 May 1919 to 4 June 1989 and Taiwan from 28 February 1947 to 28 June 1990*. St. Martin’s Press, 1995.

Shi, played key roles in shaping China as we know today.”¹⁴⁵ Guo Moruo, while not physically present at the May Fourth protests, took on the cultural mantle of Chen Duxiu and played a significant role in shaping the ideas and resentments born out of the May Fourth Movement into a Marxist communist critique.

During the Chinese Civil War period, the CCP skillfully assimilated the May Fourth Movement into its state narrative. They framed the movement as an antecedent, like Guo Moruo championed, for the Chinese revolutionary struggle against imperialism and feudalism: “From the perspective of Chinese history, the beginning of the Chinese Communist movement took place during the May Fourth period, which was a climax in China's struggle to cope with the impact of the modern West since the Opium War of 1839 to 1842.”¹⁴⁶ Through the May Fourth Movement, they were able to legitimize their party’s authority. Per the official narrative promoted by the CCP today, the May Fourth Movement represented the awakening of modern Chinese patriotism:

Ever since, the Chinese Communist Party has rooted its origin story in the romance and defiance of May 4. The party’s official history books trace a direct line from its founding back to the movement, which is credited with “wakening the Chinese national consciousness” and “preparing the fundamental conditions of the founding of the CCP.” Mao hailed the movement [..., and a]ccording to party lore, the spirit of May 4 was finally realized in 1949, when the communists declared victory in the nation's civil war, announcing the establishment of the People’s Republic of China.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ Pankaj, Eerishika. “The May Fourth Movement in Xi Jinping’s China.” *The Diplomat*, 09 May 2023, thediplomat.com/2023/05/the-may-fourth-movement-in-xi-jinpings-china/.

¹⁴⁶ Chen, 109.

¹⁴⁷ Huang, 4.

This provided the intellectual ferment that gave birth to the Communist Party, which was itself to become the institutional mechanism that saved China from backwardness and foreign imperialism.

Conclusion

The May Fourth movement channeled disillusionment by the Chinese people with their nation's perceived position in the world order and the regard of Western nations for its leaders. This event marked the first awakening of China's students to their power to affect change and nurtured a slate of young leaders. Hu Shih rose to prominence as the voice of China's vernacular movement and an advocate of the liberal ideas he had mastered as a university and graduate student in America. Unlike Guo Moruo, he shunned political change with a preference to first revolutionize China's intellectual and cultural society before attempting the political change that had failed so many times before. After shunning his early infatuation with Western romanticism, Guo committed himself to Marxist revolutionary ideology and the modernization of China through political transformation. The Chinese Communist Party had been formed in 1921 after the 1919 May Fourth movement, but its focus on the primacy of political revolution, disciplined activism, and dogged efforts to co-opt China's seminal anti-imperialist-modernizing mass movement allowed it to withstand efforts at its extermination; and, eventually, lead to its place as the ruling successor to China's efforts in the construction of a modern nation-state. Now, fully ensconced in power the CCP aggressively guards its appropriation of the May Fourth movement as "modern China's most potent symbol of national expression," but one that by it "has been stripped of its aspirations and sanitized into a reliable party talking point."¹⁴⁸ The revolutionaries

¹⁴⁸ Huang, 11.

of yesterday have been replaced by the establishment of today, which ironically justifies its legitimacy with appropriated symbols, such as the May Fourth Movement, and makes sure that they can never be used in the same way by tomorrow's revolutionaries to threaten its political power and position of cultural dominance.

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Decision Making in U.K. Public Policy Through the Lens of Brexit

Nicholas Probst, Charissa Luk, Sonia Fonlupt and Rowan Liu, May 2024

In the eight years since the British referendum that called for Britain’s exit (Brexit) from the European Union (EU) and the four years since its implementation in 2020, British policy towards immigration has seen many fluctuations. To be sure, UK immigration is fundamentally connected to Brexit. Nearly 4 out of 10 Leave voters were primarily concerned with wresting the UK immigration system from the regulations of the EU system of free movement,¹⁴⁹ an EU law which allows citizens of EU member states to freely travel to and reside in other member states. Furthermore, Remain voters overestimated the importance of immigration for Leave voters’ decision to leave the EU at over 50%,¹⁵⁰ confirming once again the salience of EU immigration in the context of the 2016 Brexit referendum. As such, Brexit was most certainly a vote on immigration.

Our research builds upon this relationship between immigration and Brexit by looking at how UK migration trends and the labor market have changed over time as a result of Brexit. In doing so, our paper seeks to identify the extent to which public opinion influences UK immigration and economic policy. By dividing our research into four distinct time periods—two preceding and two following Brexit—we are thus able to see the changes and continuities in such policy vis à vis the referendum. Ultimately, our research leads us to conclude that the uninformed

¹⁴⁹ Carl, Noah. CSI Brexit 4 Reasons why people voted leave or remain. Centre for Social Investigation (2018), 3.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.,

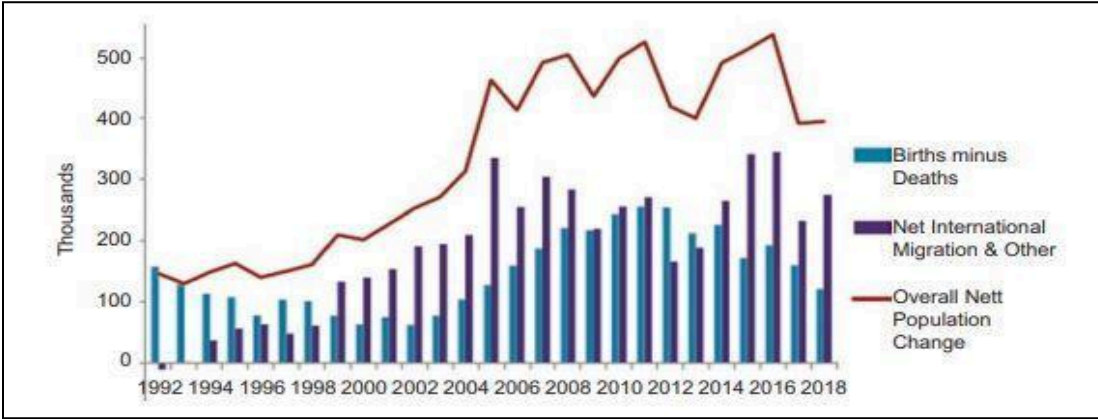
and often contradictory UK public opinion continues to play a disproportionate role in determining the outcome of major national economic decisions just as it did in 2016.

Pre-2008 Financial Crisis Labor Market and Migration Trends

Before Brexit, the UK was dependent on the EU regarding trade, as the EU represented 50 to 55% of UK exports between 1999 and 2007. The UK also relied on the EU regarding labor migration.¹⁵¹ During this period, the influx of EU migrants increased, and the UK especially welcomed low skilled EU immigrants. They were employed in lower skills sectors, such as cleaning, food processing, and service industries like waiting tables.

Immigrants were, on average, more educated than their UK-born counterparts. While more than half of the UK-born workforce left school at 16 or earlier, fewer than one in six new immigrants finished their education by the age of 16.¹⁵²

In 1985, the top three senders of immigrants in the UK were Ireland, Pakistan and India, and with Ireland being progressively replaced by Poland. Unlike in the United States, where the skill composition of immigrants is tilted toward the unskilled, the skill composition of immigrants to the UK was more biased toward skilled workers.



¹⁵¹ Ward, Matthew and Dominic Webb, Statistics on the EU-UK trade, House of Commons Library (May 11, 2023).

¹⁵² Wadsworth, Jonathan, Immigration and the UK Labour Market: The latest evidence from economic research, Centre for economic performance - London School of Economics & Political Science, (June 2012).

Figure 1. Overall population changes presented alongside net international migration and natural population changes

Since the late 1990s, net migration has been one of the main driving factors of population increase in the UK.¹⁵³ EU migrants had a positive impact on the UK labor market.¹⁵⁴ The net fiscal contribution (taxes and contributions paid less benefits and public services consumed) has been found to be overall positive for migrants assessed via a static analysis (one year 1999–2000) and is valued at £2.5b.¹⁵⁵

Newer EU member state migrants often found themselves in lower-skilled roles, which allowed them to fill immediate labor shortages. Those from the EU, in general, were more likely to occupy high-skilled positions than their UK-born counterparts, which stimulated an educational drive among the local population as they aimed to elevate their own qualifications in response to the high skill levels of some migrants.¹⁵⁶ The arrival of migrants made it easier to fill job positions that required specific skills, gave employers more options for hiring lower skilled workers and addressed the challenges of an aging workforce.¹⁵⁷

Migration Trends (2008-2016)

At the start of the 2008 financial crisis, the UK immigrant population was a diverse group with 30% from EU member states, 20% from South Asia, and 20% from African countries. By 2016, migration patterns to the UK had rapidly shifted. The 2008 financial crisis almost halved the number of immigrants from Eastern Europe between 2007 and 2009.¹⁵⁸ However, by 2012,

¹⁵³ Whyman, P.B, *The Economics of Brexit* (2020), p 206

¹⁵⁴ Howard Reed and Maria Latorre, *Economic Impacts of Migration on the UK Labour Market*, February 2009

¹⁵⁵ P.B Whyman, 212.,

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*,

¹⁵⁷ Alessio Cangiano, *The impact of migration on UK population growth*, Migration Observatory, (Feb 27 2023).

¹⁵⁸ Demetrios G. Papademetriou G. et al., “Migration and Immigrants Two Years After the Financial Collapse: Where Do We Stand?,” *Migration Policy Institute* (Migration Policy Institute, 2010), 47-48.

net migration of EU nationals (Figure 2) reached levels higher than that before the financial crisis, reaching a peak of about 3.2 million in 2016. Conversely, net migration of non-EU nationals (Figure 3), which only decreased slightly during the financial crisis but returned to pre-crisis levels in 2010-2011, had dropped drastically in 2012 and never regained pre-crisis levels.¹⁵⁹

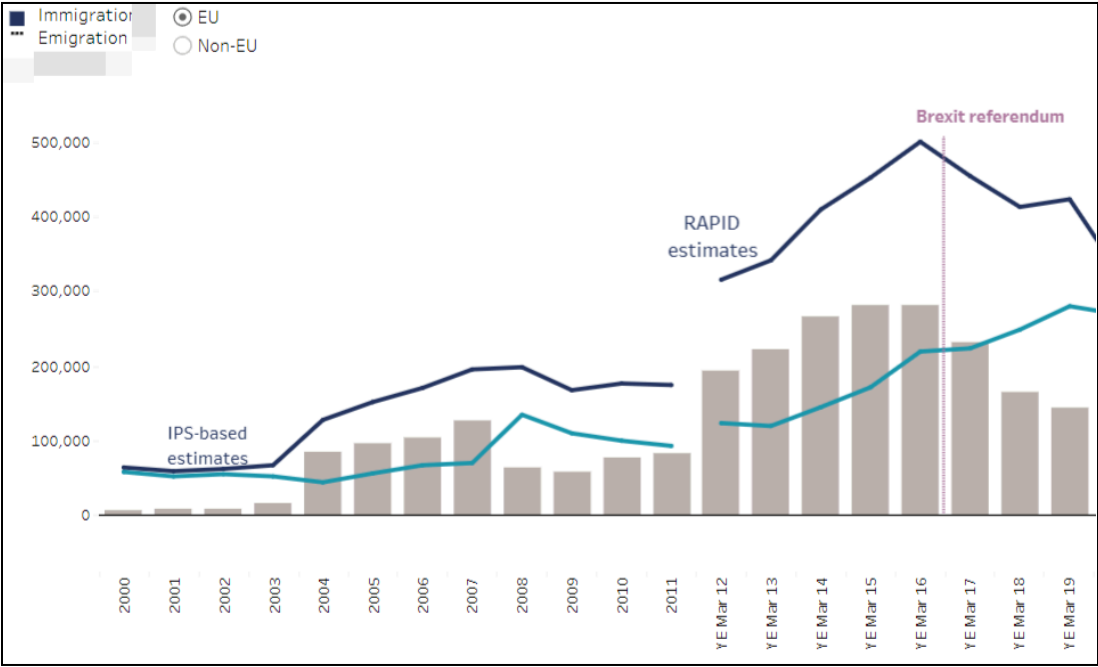


Figure 2. Estimated long-term net migration of EU migrants to the UK pre-2020.

The rapid increase in net migration levels from 2012 to 2016 was mainly spurred on by new migrants coming from Eastern Europe, namely Romania and Bulgaria (EU-2).¹⁶⁰ Romania and Bulgaria joined the EU in 2007, whereafter a transitional restriction on free movement was placed on the workers of these countries. This free movement restriction delayed EU-2 citizens from seeking work in other EU member states for up to seven years in order to protect existing

¹⁵⁹“EU Migration to and From the UK,” Migration Observatory, November 20, 2023.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.,

member states from labor market disruptions.¹⁶¹ All member states were required to lift this restriction by 2013, which is incidentally the period when we see the sudden jump in net migration levels (Figure 2). The EU migration system could thus be directly associated with the sudden large influx of EU immigrants, particularly Eastern Europeans, to the UK.

These were all unprecedented migration patterns in the UK. Indeed, the decade of 2011-2021 was the highest estimated net migration to the UK in the past 100 years.¹⁶² While migrants empirically benefited the UK labor market, public perception of these dramatic changes in migrant groups and migration numbers also presented a political issue.

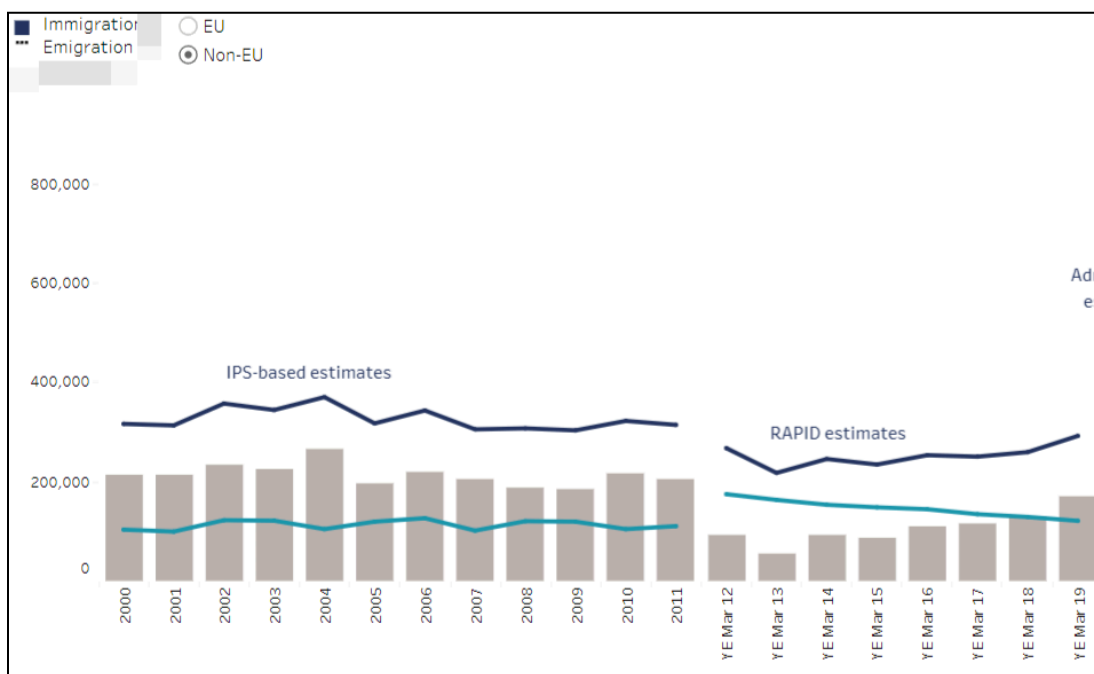


Figure 3. Estimated long-term net migration of non-EU migrants to the UK pre-2020.

¹⁶¹ Melanie Gower and Oliver Hawkins, “Ending of Transitional Restrictions for Bulgarian and Romanian Workers,” House of Commons Library, Accessed April 30, 2024.

¹⁶² Georgia Sturge, “Migration Statistics,” *House of Commons Library*, vol. CBP06077 (London: House of Commons Library, March 26, 2024), 15.

Post-Brexit Migration and Labor Market Trends (2016-2020)

Although the UK-EU divorce did not take effect until 2021, significant changes in the UK labor market and migration patterns emerged immediately following the referendum (June 2016) and were sustained until the Covid-19 pandemic (December 2019). Figure 3 shows how EU immigration fell by 58% from 2012 to 2020, with net migration from the EU-8 falling by as much as 126%. This is contrasted by a relatively mild drop of 42% for Western Europe and 40% for Bulgaria and Romania.¹⁶³ Curiously enough, despite experiencing a very different migratory effect due to Brexit, the role of EU-8 and EU-2 migrants in the UK labor market is surprisingly similar. Compared to EU-14 migrants and UK natives, EU-8 and EU-2 migrants experience some of the highest levels of employment in the UK economy and are both significantly overrepresented in low-skill labor such as in Construction, Transport and Storage, Manufacturing, and Retail.¹⁶⁴ Thus, the contrasting effect of Brexit on EU-8 and EU-2 migration highlights the complexities of the decision to migrate to the UK beyond an oversimplified, unnuanced “low-skill/high-skill” approach to understanding such migration patterns.

¹⁶³ Cuibus, Mihnea, “EU migration to and from the UK”, *Migration Observatory analysis of ONS RAPID Data*, (Nov 20 2023).

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*,

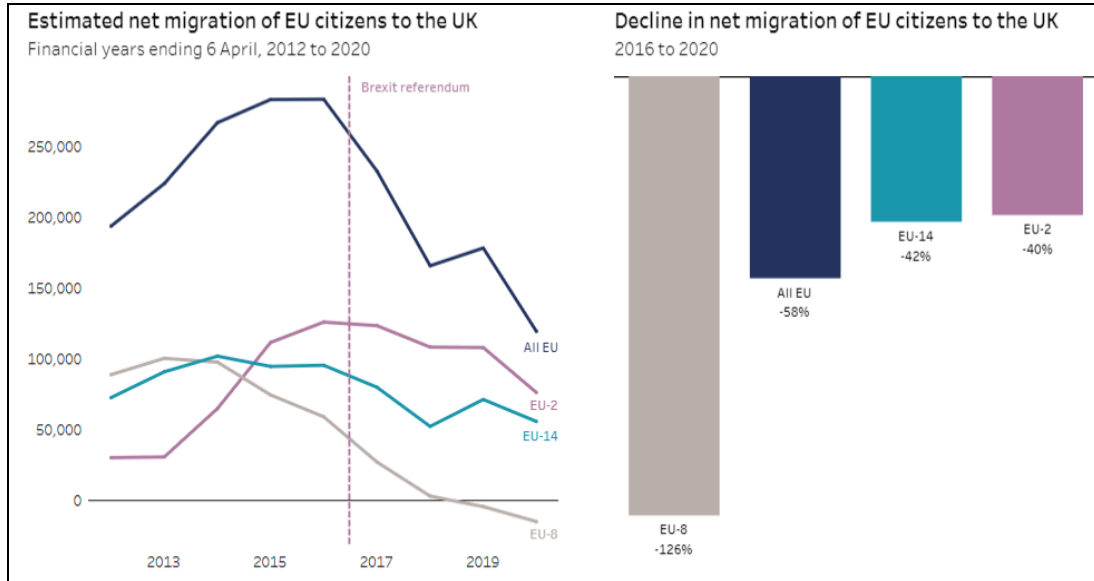


Figure 4. EU migration to the UK began to drop immediately following the referendum. The majority of this was from Eastern European EU members (EU-8).

As for public opinion, public support for Brexit steadily declined from 2016 until late 2019.¹⁶⁵ However, during the same period, the salience of immigration, which had consistently increased since 2012, plummeted from 48% in June 2016 to 14% in December 2019 (Figure 4). Meanwhile, the salience of the EU-UK economic market spiked from 10% in 2016 to over 60% by mid-2019 despite having remained relatively dormant leading up to the referendum. In fact, immigration was *the* most salient issue in the UK for nearly all of 2015 and 2016 but became nearly the least salient by the end of 2019.¹⁶⁶ Such data sheds light on the important, albeit myopic role of the British media in controlling the immigration narrative both before and after the referendum. To this extent, we can see how public opinion, however removed from the

¹⁶⁵ Smith, Matthew, “Most Britons say Brexit has been ‘more of a failure’”, *YouGov*, (May 22, 2023).

¹⁶⁶ Richards, Lindsay and Scott Blinder, “UK public opinion toward immigration : overall attitudes and levels of concerns”, *Migration Observatory*, (Sep 28, 2023).

economic reality of the decision to leave the EU, does in fact play a substantial role in determining the outcome of such monumental national decisions.

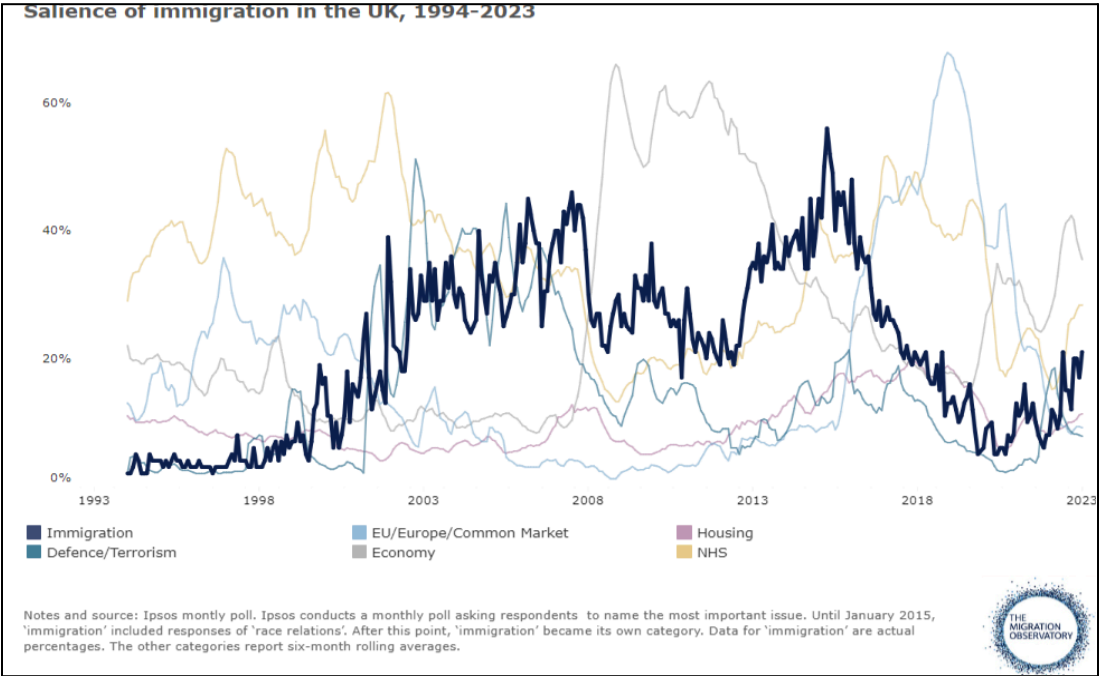


Figure 5. The salience of immigration, a major issue behind Brexit, plummeted from 48% in June 2016 to 14% in December 2019.¹⁶⁷

Post-Covid Labor Market and Migration Trends (2021-Present)

Net migration numbers rebounded in the years after 2020 due to the liberalization of post-Brexit migration policy.¹⁶⁸ UK Immigration data shows diverging migration trends for EU migrants versus non-EU migrants. The net number of EU migrants reached its peak in 2015 with 287,000 migrants, but has steadily decreased since then. Since the pandemic in 2021, net numbers from the EU have fallen into the negatives, with a net of -62,000 in 2021 and -123,000

¹⁶⁷ Richards, Lindsay and Scott Blinder, “UK public opinion toward immigration : overall attitudes and levels of concerns”, *Migration Observatory*, (Sep 28, 2023).
¹⁶⁸ “Migration-Statistics-over-Time | Migration Watch UK,” accessed April 30, 2024, <https://www.migrationwatchuk.org/migration-statistics-over-time>.

in 2022, a trend that is likely to continue. On the other hand, the number of non-EU migrants has steadily risen since 2015, and since the pandemic, has significantly increased to 496,000 in 2021 and 873,000 in 2022. These large migrant inflows can be attributed to the UK’s points based system implemented in January of 2021, which favors middle to high skill workers, workers with a graduate education level, and implements a minimum salary threshold.¹⁶⁹

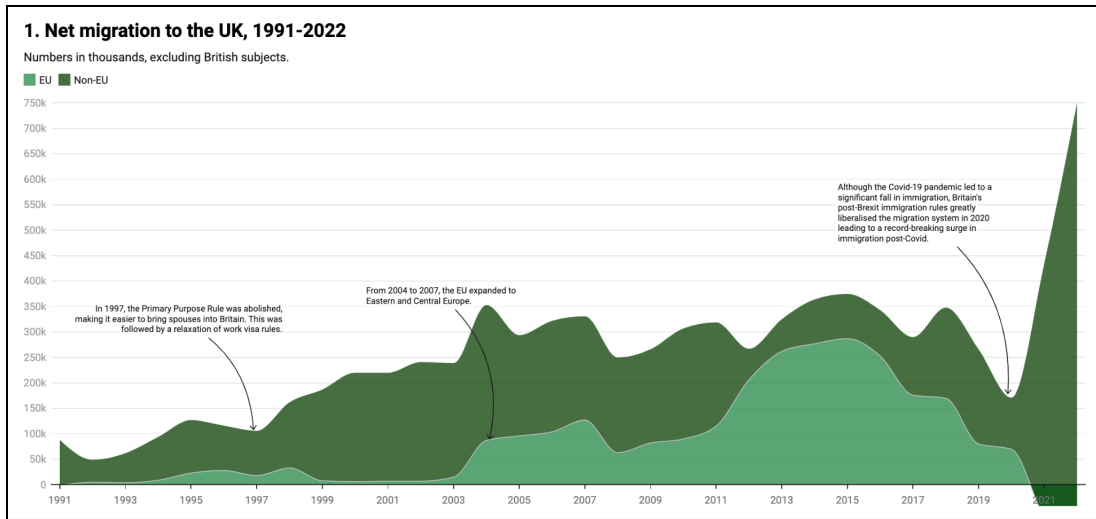


Figure 6. Net Migration numbers to the UK.¹⁷⁰ The light green shows the numbers of EU migrants, which has dropped steadily since the referendum. The dark green shows the numbers of non-EU migrants, which has risen sharply in the years following 2020.

The trend of a decreasing number of EU migrants and correspondingly increasing number of non-EU migrants can also be seen in student enrollment data. The proportion of international students from the EU dropped by 53% (nature paper). Pre-brexit, EU students had the same tuition fees as UK citizens and could access special student loans. The post-brexit and

¹⁶⁹ “The UK’s Points-Based Immigration System: Policy Statement,” GOV.UK, accessed April 30, 2024, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uks-points-based-immigration-system-policy-statement/the-uks-points-based-immigration-system-policy-statement>.

¹⁷⁰ “Migration-Statistics-over-Time | Migration Watch UK.”

post-transition period, which ended in 2021, saw EU students face higher tuition like all other international students. Instead, UK universities saw a large increase in international students from South Asia and East Asia, in part due to the introduction of visas allowing students to stay for up to 3 years post graduation.

The demographics of migrants to the UK has changed as well, which can be calculated based on visa issuance data. There has been an increase in visas granted to non-EU nationalities. The largest group of visa recipients are South Asians, with 442,000 visas in 2022 and 412,000 visas in 2023, which accounts for 33.3% and 38% of total visas granted in those years respectively. This represents a 4-fold growth in visas granted to South Asians from 2016 to 2023. Another growing demographic based on visa issuance is Sub-Saharan Africans. 35,000 visas were issued to Sub-Saharan Africans in 2016 to 230,000 in 2023, which accounts for 6% and 22% of total visas granted in those years, respectively, a 7-fold increase in visas. The large increase in South Asian and Sub-Saharan African immigrants could be due in part to the number of dependents each student brings. Students from South Asia brought 36 dependents per 100 students and students from sub-Saharan Africa brought 103 dependents for every 100 students.

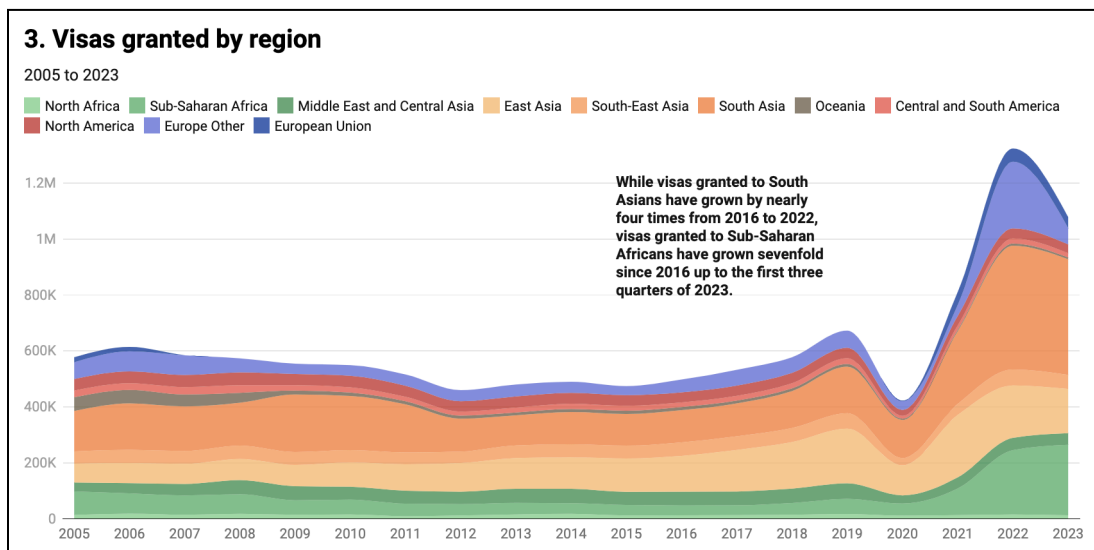


Figure 7. Visas granted by region. Out of 1.3 million visas granted in 2022, only 47,000, or around 3.6% of visas, went to EU nationals. There has been a noticeable increase in migrants from East and South Asia, as well as Sub-Saharan Africa. Note that the data excludes other temporary visas, visitor visas, and temporary worker visas.¹⁷¹

More recently, in March 2024, the UK raised the baseline minimum salary for a skilled worker visa from £26,200 to £38,700. The partner visa minimum income rose to £29,000 in phase 1 of the new plan, and will be increased to £34,500 in phase 2 during 2024, and finally to £38,700 by phase 3 in 2025. The UK also banned care workers from bringing dependents.¹⁷² These new restrictions will likely cause a shift in demographics of immigrants to the UK in the coming years and may cause family separation. It is estimated that about 50% of UK citizens and permanent residents would not meet the phase 1 minimum of £29,000, 60% would fail to meet the phase 2 minimum of £34,500, and 74% would be unable to sponsor dependent visas based on the phase 3 threshold.¹⁷³ These strict income thresholds are more likely to disproportionately affect lower earners, such as women and young people. In the coming years, it will be possible to observe how changes in immigration policy continue to shape the landscape of immigration in the UK.

Public opinion and concern about immigration in the UK has decreased since the 2016 referendum, but a 2023 poll suggests that concern about immigration is on the rise once again. From the introduction of the referendum in 2015 to seven years after in 2022, the percentage of

¹⁷¹ Ibid.,

¹⁷² C. J. McKinney and Melanie Gower, “Changes to Legal Migration Rules for Family and Work Visas in 2024,” April 30, 2024, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9920/>.

¹⁷³ “Family Fortunes: The UK’s New Income Requirement for Partner Visas,” Migration Observatory, accessed April 30, 2024, <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/commentaries/family-fortunes-the-uks-new-income-requirement-for-partner-visas/>.

UK citizens that believed immigration numbers should be reduced fell from 65% to 42%. However, in 2023, 52% of UK citizens believed immigration levels should be reduced, which is a 10% increase from the prior year. As mentioned in figure 5, the salience of immigration has risen since the pandemic, perhaps due to increased news coverage regarding lack of housing for asylum seekers and headlines featuring irregular migration.¹⁷⁴

Conclusions

Brexit has resulted in a significant shift in migration levels and patterns, though instead of reducing it as Leave voters had hoped, the UK has actually seen a net increase in overall migration levels. Likewise, Brexit also entailed a significant decrease in the salience of immigration in the years immediately following the referendum—only to see this trend reverse since 2023. What then does this say about the relationship between public opinion and migration and the labor market in the UK?

Such data shows that when it comes to public support for migration in the UK, it is neither a matter of skill nor origin. This is observed in the radically different migration response to Brexit by similarly low-skilled, Eastern European migrants from the EU-8 and EU-2 countries. Furthermore, immediately following the referendum, the UK government was initially willing to decrease migration barriers in order to brace the British economy for labor market shortages due to Brexit, which has caused a change in migrant origins. However, the UK's recent increase in immigration barriers for high-skilled migrants from non-EU countries once again confirms that the British public cares little about who is coming and where they are coming from. The primary issue seems to lie in immigration itself.

¹⁷⁴ “UK Public Opinion toward Immigration: Overall Attitudes and Level of Concern,” Migration Observatory, accessed April 30, 2024, <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/uk-public-opinion-toward-immigration-overall-attitudes-and-level-of-concern/>.

Thus, we can see that although the UK government's immigration policy is based on the needs of the British labor market, it is public opinion that ultimately takes over the decision making process. This was the case not only in 2016, but is also the case today as rising public concerns over immigration and increased migration barriers make abundantly clear. As British policymakers search for a cure for a struggling British economy, this is one lesson they should keep in mind.

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Double Jeopardy

Undocumented Chinese Migrants' Access to Psychiatric Services in the United States

Jiahuan Lin, April 2024

Introduction

Life in the United States has long been perceived as the “American Dream” for migrants. Many immigrants, in various ways, travel to the United States for a better life. Immigration accounted for 36% of the total population increase from 2000 to 2008 in the United States.¹⁷⁵ Among the immigration population, undocumented populations from Asian and Pacific Islanders have steadily increased.¹⁷⁶ Specifically, undocumented Chinese migrants quadrupled between 1990 and 2020.¹⁷⁷ Due to their occupations and lifestyles, mental health issues pose a unique set of challenges to undocumented Chinese migrants. Yet, their legal status and cultural background have substantially limited their access to psychiatric services. Despite extensive scholarly research on how legal status and mental health intersect with Latinx migrants, little research has been conducted on undocumented Chinese migrants, despite their increasing population over time. Understanding the impact of legal status on mental health across different national origins, races/ethnicities, and social classes is crucial.

¹⁷⁵ Frederick Leong & Yong S. Park. (2013). Disentangling Immigrant Status in Mental Health: Psychological Protective and Risk Factors Among Latino and Asian American Immigrants. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 83(2pt3), 361–371. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajop.12020>

¹⁷⁶ Lachica Buenavista, T. (2018). Model (undocumented) minorities and “illegal” immigrants: Centering Asian Americans and US carcerality in undocumented student discourse. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 21(1), 78–91. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2016.1248823>

¹⁷⁷ Amy Hsin & Sofya Aptekar. (2021). Violence of Asylum: The Case of Undocumented Chinese Migration to the United States. *Social Forces*, 100(3), 1195–1217. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soab032>

The case of undocumented Chinese migrants (hereafter referred to as UCM) allows us to examine how legal status constructs the pathway to access mental healthcare and analyze the unique economic, cultural, and structural factors that could impact the utilization of mental health care. In this paper, I will draw on the concept of social exclusion by Kabeer to illustrate how institutions create social exclusion, which limits access to benefits, and the behavioral model by Andersen to examine how the utilization of healthcare can differ based on individual behavior and how legal status and Chinese cultural background could impact such utilization. Informal interviews with undocumented migrants have been conducted and are utilized throughout the paper. The article is organized into two sections. The first section discusses how legal status impacts access to mental health support. The second section illustrates the unique barriers that UCM encounters when seeking mental health support. The paper highlights how legal status impacts access, while Chinese cultural background presents a unique barrier to accessing mental health care, creating double jeopardy for UCM.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this paper is informed by social economist Naila Kabeer's theory of social exclusion, as well as a behavioral model behind medical care utilization in the United States from researchers Ronald Anderson and John F. Newman. The theory of social exclusion offers insight into how institutions determine membership access and how access performs a social exclusion. Membership principles imply distinctions in access between those "who can enjoy the benefits of belonging and those who cannot."¹⁷⁸ Ultimately, it "systematically differentiates their access to other resources" and "their ability to improve on their situations in the course of their lives."¹⁷⁹ US immigration laws and foreign policies strongly influence social

¹⁷⁸ Kabeer, N. (2000). Social Exclusion, Poverty and Discrimination Towards an Analytical Framework. *IDS Bulletin*, 31, 83–97. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1759-5436.2000.mp31004009.x>

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*,

hierarchies related to race/ethnicity, country of origin, and class among immigrants.¹⁸⁰ Legal status also structures immigrants' experiences and opportunities in the United States. For instance, the 1986 Immigration and Reform and Control Act (IRCA) discouraged employers from hiring undocumented workers, pushing them into underground work. Consequently, undocumented workers found themselves in vulnerable positions, lacking legal protections. The perception of undocumented migrants has gradually become associated with illegality. The 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) further restricted migrants' welfare by limiting "qualified aliens" from participating in means-tested aid programs such as Medicaid. Additionally, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) of 1996 broadened grounds for deportation, including for certain criminal offenses. This increased consideration of undocumented migrants as "economic and social problems" has made them a focal point of political discourse, often used to attract voters with strong "anti-immigration" sentiments.¹⁸¹ In this context, various institutions in the United States exhibit strong biases that incentivize them to exclude those who might threaten their vested interests.

On the other hand, the behavioral model developed by Andersen highlights that healthcare utilization can be viewed as individual behavior, driven by predisposing, enabling, and need factors.¹⁸² For this paper, predisposing and enabling factors are the focus. Predisposing factors include characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, and education. As Chen &

¹⁸⁰ Nakphong, M. K., De Trinidad Young, M.-E., Morales, B., Guzman-Ruiz, I. Y., Chen, L., & Kietzman, K. G. (2022). Social exclusion at the intersections of immigration, employment, and healthcare policy: A qualitative study of Mexican and Chinese immigrants in California. *Social Science & Medicine*, 298, 114833. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2022.114833>

¹⁸¹ Martinez, O., Wu, E., Sandfort, T., Dodge, B., Carballo-Dieiguez, A., Pinto, R., Rhodes, S., Moya, E., & Chavez-Baray, S. (2015). Evaluating the Impact of Immigration Policies on Health Status Among Undocumented Immigrants: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*, 17(3), 947–970. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10903-013-9968-4>

¹⁸² Andersen, R., & Newman, J. F. (1973). Societal and Individual Determinants of Medical Care Utilization in the United States. *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly. Health and Society*, 51(1), 95–124. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3349613>

Vargas-Bustamante elaborate, individuals who are less proficient in English may feel uncomfortable communicating with healthcare providers.¹⁸³ The enabling factor refers to an individual's ability to secure services through family or community. Social exclusion resulting from legal status, along with characteristics specific to Chinese undocumented migrants, directly influences their ability and likelihood of seeking mental health support.

Access to Psychiatric Services

Employment

The undocumented status of Chinese immigrants significantly limits and marginalizes their accessibility to psychiatric services. In the United States, the healthcare system consists of a mix of public and private providers, and many Americans receive their health insurance coverage through their employers. Among Asian non-citizens, 9.4% were uninsured compared to 2.7% of US-born whites.¹⁸⁴ Many Chinese immigrants engage in under-the-table jobs and settle for lower-paying and worse working conditions to make a living. Oftentimes, Chinese immigrants work more than 60 hours per week, 6 days a week, 12 hours per day with no overtime pay.^{185 186}

¹⁸⁷ Most under-the-table jobs include restaurant work, nail styling, home aids, etc. These occupations are often considered low-skilled and require minimal English-speaking skills with

¹⁸³ Chen, J., & Vargas-Bustamante, A. (2011). Estimating the Effects of Immigration Status on Mental Health Care Utilizations in the United States. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health, 13*(4), 671–680. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10903-011-9445-x>

¹⁸⁴ M.K. Nakphong, et al.

¹⁸⁵ Liang, Z., & Zhou, B. (2016). The Effects of Legal Status on Employment and Health Outcomes among Low-Skilled Chinese Immigrants in New York City—Zai Liang, Bo Zhou, 2016. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 666*(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716216650632>

¹⁸⁶ Tu, M.-C., Zhou, S., Wang, S., & Okazaki, S. (2019). Realities of the American dream: Vocational experiences and intersecting invisibility of low-income Chinese immigrant laborers—ScienceDirect. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 113*, 88–102. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.10.009>

¹⁸⁷ Ying-Chi Lai, G., Lo, G., Ngo, H., Chou, Y., & Yang, L. (2013). Migration, sociocultural factors, and local cultural worlds among Fuzhounese Chinese immigrants: Implications for mental health interventions. *International Journal of Culture and Mental Health, 6*(2), 141–155. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17542863.2012.674785>

no potential upward mobility in the future. These occupations not only limited their opportunities but also prevented their access to healthcare coverage.

According to Nakphong, “the gap in employer-sponsored insurance coverage between non-citizens and native-born populations is 14.2%, compared to 3.8% between naturalized citizens and native-born, after adjusting for human capital and employment characteristics,”¹⁸⁸ indicating a strong correlation between lack of legal status and healthcare exclusions. In a conversation with Jia, a twenty-year-old restaurant worker, she explained that she could not apply for government insurance because she only had an expired student visa. Individuals can only apply for government insurance if they have a social security number. Although some undocumented immigrants may be granted Medicaid (a government-funded insurance program) while they are applying for asylum, the usage is limited to emergency care. Psychiatric services are far from being included as affordable healthcare services and emergency care. Medical discontinuation among Medicaid holders is common. About 29% of patients with Medicaid had medication discontinued because “drug coverage, administrative or management issues, or patients copayments.”¹⁸⁹ Therefore, having access to government insurance is not a safe valve despite it being hard to obtain for undocumented immigrants anyway.

Despite healthcare exclusions, work also physically prevents UCM from seeking treatment. Job termination is a common threat by employers when undocumented immigrants request time off, even for medical purposes.^{190 191} Due to the fear of losing their job, many UCM will continue to overwork themselves until they can't anymore. Even for those managers who

¹⁸⁸ MK Nakphong, et al.

¹⁸⁹ West, J. C., Rae, D. S., Huskamp, H. A., Rubio-Stipec, M., & Regier, D. A. (2010). Medicaid medication access problems and increased psychiatric hospital and emergency care. *General Hospital Psychiatry*, 32(6), 615–622. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.genhosppsych.2010.07.005>

¹⁹⁰ MK Nakphong, et al.

¹⁹¹ M. Tu, et al.

allow for a day off to seek medical needs, many immigrants often find it infeasible to maintain treatment. Since most undocumented immigrants have limited English-speaking skills, they often travel to cities like New York City that provide Chinese-speaking services. Many mental health care treatments require multiple sessions and visits, and long-distance travel has become one of the challenges for these immigrants to continue seeking treatment. Once they are discharged from treatment, they are compelled to return to paid work.¹⁹² Li, an interviewee who currently works at a sushi restaurant, also explained that one of the reasons she does not wish to seek medical support is because it is inconvenient for her since she has to work. Jia, on the other hand, would seek treatment if she had to. However, she also expressed difficulties in requesting days off. Normally, it requires a minimum of two weeks to a month prior notice to request medical leave.

Fear of Deportation

Criminalizing undocumented status has significantly heightened fear and mistrust among undocumented immigrants, directly resulting in the underutilization of psychiatric services. Undocumented immigrants are often stigmatized as undesirable and viewed as a burden on the United States economy. States like California, Indiana, and North Carolina have erected barriers that prevent immigrants from accessing vital healthcare services by implementing measures such as requiring documentation status and utilizing police checkpoints.¹⁹³ Consequently, undocumented immigrants refrain from seeking healthcare support until they reach a point of burnout. The pervasive fear of jeopardizing their status is a prevalent theme among UCMs,

¹⁹² Ying-Chi Lai et al.

¹⁹³ O. Martinez, et al.

dissuading them from seeking treatment.¹⁹⁴ ¹⁹⁵ ¹⁹⁶ They learn and find the need to hide their status because they either experience or know someone who has been deported due to illegal status.¹⁹⁷ Consequently, as immigration policies become stricter, the apprehension surrounding utilizing medical care intensifies. Other sentiments, such as anxiety or fear that medical providers will inquire about their status, also contribute to delaying their decision to seek help.¹⁹⁸ Li recounted feeling uneasy when asked to present her asylum documents during a visit, especially when lacking state identification. While this may not deter her from seeking medical support, it undeniably exacerbates her anxiety.

Barriers to Psychiatric Service

Cultural Factor

Stigma and norms surrounding mental health within immigrant communities, specifically within Chinese immigrant communities, play a significant role in seeking mental health treatment. Mental illness and instances of suicide have traditionally been perceived as signs of individual "weakness" in China. Moreover, many individuals who acknowledge their mental health challenges perceive themselves as failures.¹⁹⁹ Particularly, the concepts of filial piety and preserving 'face' present additional barriers. Filial piety holds great moral importance within Chinese communities, with individuals expected to reciprocate their parents' early care by

¹⁹⁴ Cha, B. S., Enriquez, L. E., & Ro, A. (2019). Beyond access: Psychosocial barriers to undocumented students' use of mental health services. *Social Science & Medicine*, 233, 193–200. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2019.06.003>

¹⁹⁵ Fear and Mistrust of the Health Care System among Undocumented Residents of North Carolina: Does Fear of Deportation Contribute to Underutilization of Care? An Investigative Study (2019). https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/concern/honors_theses/vm40xw511

¹⁹⁶ Lachica Buenavista, T. (2018). Model (undocumented) minorities and "illegal" immigrants: Centering Asian Americans and US carcerality in undocumented student discourse. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 21(1), 78–91. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2016.1248823>

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.,

¹⁹⁸ Derr, A. (2015). Mental Health Service Use Among Immigrants in the United States: A Systematic Review | Psychiatric Services. *Psychiatric Services*, 67(3), 265–274. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.201500004>

¹⁹⁹ Chung, I. (2009). Changes in the Sociocultural Reality of Chinese Immigrants: Challenges and Opportunities in Help-Seeking Behaviour. *Sage Publication*, 56(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764009105647>

providing for them and continuing the family lineage.^{200 201} Preserving one's face typically involves maintaining one's reputation through certain actions. For Chinese migrants, this can entail displaying wealth by sending money back home and avoiding behaviors that could be seen as "shameful." Filial piety and preserving face are closely intertwined when Chinese migrants make decisions. Social stigma surrounding mental health issues often dissuades migrants from seeking help, as they feel compelled to save face.^{202 203}

However, such prevention is more prevalent among UCM. Many UCM come to the United States alone. In contrast to migrants with legal status, they live "under the shadows" and their mental health issues often go unnoticed by their families and friends as they are far away. When asked how she would address her mental health issues, Jia mentioned that "she would deal with them herself first." She further explained that she did not wish to inform her family in China because they would worry about her. Other common explanations for the reluctance to seek emotional support from their families include sentiments such as "there's no point in telling my family... They cannot help" and "I do not want them to be sad."²⁰⁴ In the fight against depression, strong support from family and friends proves effective, leading to lower odds of fair/poor mental health in the Asian community.^{205 206} Undocumented immigrant communities often have limited access to such support due to their unique circumstances. Even for those with relatives or friends in the United States, support is restricted due to the nature of migrant occupations.

²⁰⁰ Ikels, C. (Ed.). (2004). *Filial Piety: Practice and Discourse in Contemporary East Asia*. Stanford University Press.

²⁰¹ Ying-Chi Lai, et al.

²⁰² I. Chung.

²⁰³ Ying-Chi Lai, et al.

²⁰⁴ I. Chung.

²⁰⁵ John, D. A., de Castro, A. B., Martin, D. P., Duran, B., & Takeuchi, D. T. (2012). Does an immigrant health paradox exist among Asian Americans? Associations of nativity and occupational class with self-rated health and mental disorders. *Social Science & Medicine*, 75(12), 2085–2098. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2012.01.035>

²⁰⁶ Law, S., Hutton, M., & Chan, D. (2003). Clinical, Social, and Service Use Characteristics of Fuzhouese Undocumented Immigrant Patients | Psychiatric Services. *Psychiatric Services*, 54(7), 1034–1037. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.54.7.1034>

Economic Factor

The expense of doctor visits and future treatments is a significant and valid concern for many UCMs. As mentioned earlier, a considerable portion of them lack insurance or only possess government-sponsored insurance, which typically does not cover mental health visits. According to Jia, as an uninsured individual, she can only visit clinics in New York City, which costs her \$80 per visit, and an additional \$120 if the visit requires additional physical exams. Mental health treatment is also perceived as costly, and the substantial visit fees are worrying for many migrants.^{207 208 209} Medical return, returning to one's country of origin for medical care, is one strategy to overcome barriers to healthcare in the United States.²¹⁰ Many immigrants who are concerned with cost and other structural factors may pursue medical return. Interviews with undocumented Chinese workers who hold insurance in the United States revealed that visiting doctors here is more complicated. For instance, Jia describes her medical experiences in NYC as problematic due to the referral systems, often requiring her to stay for more than two days if there is a medical exam. Li also commented that medical procedures in the United States are much harder to navigate compared to China. Furthermore, all the interviewees expressed that medical expenses are relatively cheaper in China, and they would prefer to seek treatment there. However, a crucial prerequisite for medical return is legal status, making this strategy unavailable for undocumented workers.

Similar to other undocumented migrants, Chinese migrants are victims of human smuggling. However, the fee of smuggling is historically higher compared to others. Chinese

²⁰⁷ A. Derr.

²⁰⁸ S. Law, et al.

²⁰⁹ Ying-Chi Lai, et al.

²¹⁰ MK Nakphong, et al.

migrants often pay \$30,000 - \$80,000 or more to be illegally transported to another country.^{211 212}

²¹³ Typically, Chinese migrants will borrow money from relatives, friends, and snakeheads with higher interest rates. If the fee is not being paid back on time, threats, harm, or violence are possible to themselves or family members at home. Therefore, many Chinese migrants have higher financial pressure to put their heads down to pay back the debt as soon as possible. For others who were able to pay back the debt, they either saved the money for dowry or children.²¹⁴ Therefore, many Chinese migrants would rather save the visit fee and treatment fee until they have to see a doctor.

Structural Factors

Language serves as one of the structural barriers preventing undocumented migrants from seeking psychiatric services. Language barriers instill fear in them due to the potential for unclear communication when seeking psychiatric services.²¹⁵ Many UCM have limited proficiency in English. While some may manage daily communications, communicating in a medical setting remains a concern. Li expressed worry that she couldn't adequately convey her issues to the doctor due to her English-speaking ability. Although some clinics may offer translation services, the translations could be inaccurate, and these services may not always be available.²¹⁶ Additionally, migrants often prefer doctors who share similar backgrounds, speak the same language, or have similar experiences. Common concerns include worries that the doctor may not comprehend immigrant-related issues and, therefore, may not understand their

²¹¹ S. Law, et al.

²¹² M. Tu, et al.

²¹³ Ying-Chi Lai et al.

²¹⁴ Ibid.,

²¹⁵ Cheng, Z. H., Tu, M.-C., Li, V. A., Chang, R. W., & Yang, L. H. (2015). Experiences of Social and Structural Forms of Stigma Among Chinese Immigrant Consumers with Psychosis. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*, 17(6), 1723–1731. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10903-015-0167-3>

²¹⁶ Ibid.,

emotions.²¹⁷ Li in her interview noted,

I would prefer to have a psychiatric doctor who is Asian. Because I think that they would understand my issues better than Western doctors.

Furthermore, the lack of information and knowledge about psychiatric services among UCMs is also concerning. In Derr's study, "fewer than 25% of all respondents indicated knowledge of mental health resources, and another study reported,"²¹⁸ while more than two-thirds of participants did not know the existence of community medical care support until much later in Chung's research.²¹⁹ Many participants in my interviews also confirmed having little or no knowledge about it. Most expressed a lack of understanding of the procedures or available community/government services. Due to the stigma surrounding psychiatric issues among Chinese individuals, many migrants tend to possess limited knowledge about mental health issues. Wong's study suggested that older individuals and those with a shorter duration of stay in Western countries among Chinese migrants are less acculturated, have stronger adherence to traditional values, and possess low mental health literacy.²²⁰ Thus, Chinese traditional values strongly influence Chinese migrants' knowledge and perception of mental health.

The quality of treatment is also adversely affected by legal status. The association between documentation and criminalization pervades public discourse, including within medical services. Many immigrants, regardless of their status, have reported experiencing unfair treatment and discrimination in clinical settings.²²¹ Institutional prejudice and discrimination

²¹⁷ B.S. Cha, et al.

²¹⁸ A. Derr.

²¹⁹ I. Chung.

²²⁰ Wong, D. F. K., Lam, A. Y. K., Poon, A., & Chow, A. Y. M. (2012). Gender differences in mental health literacy among Chinese-speaking Australians in Melbourne, Australia. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 58(2), 178–185. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764010390431>

²²¹ Cleaveland, C., & Ihara, E. S. (2012). "They Treat us Like Pests:" Undocumented Immigrant Experiences Obtaining Health Care in the Wake of a "Crackdown" Ordinance. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 22(7), 771–788. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2012.704781>

among healthcare providers have limited the adequate treatment that migrants should receive. As undocumented immigrants are increasingly associated with being "illegal," it significantly impacts the quality of treatment they receive. This rhetoric influences the attitudes and behaviors of healthcare providers when addressing the health needs of new immigrants.^{222 223} For UCMs, anti-Chinese rhetoric can potentially compound the factors influencing their quality of treatment. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic brought a wave of anti-Chinese/anti-Asian sentiments. During the pandemic, around 8.7% of respondents reported experiencing racial discrimination, with East/Southeast Asians accounting for 20.3%.²²⁴ Thus, UCMs may be particularly vulnerable to double prejudice.

Limitation and Discussion

This paper focuses on how legal status and unique migrant characteristics combine to impact mental health care utilization. Institutions narrow the mobility of migrants, performing acts of social exclusion that dampen UCM's access to mental health support. Being considered illegal, UCM often faces occupations with limited upward mobility, which restricts their access to mental health care through insurance coverage and occupational limitations. The increasing criminalization of undocumented migrants also instills fear, significantly decreasing medical care utilization. Furthermore, UCM's cultural background, economic concerns, and structural factors create unique barriers specific to this group.

There are several limitations to the present study. First, age and gender differences play important roles in the underutilization of mental healthcare. During interviews, younger

²²² Heffner, S. (2015). *Exploring Health-Care Practices of Chinese Railroad Workers in North America* | SpringerLink. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/BF03376964>

²²³ Martinez et al.

²²⁴ Zhang, D., Li, G., Shi, L., Martin, E., Chen, Z., Li, J., Chen, L., Li, Y., Wen, M., Chen, B., Li, H., Su, D., & Han, X. (2022). Association between racial discrimination and delayed or forgone care amid the COVID-19 pandemic. *Preventive Medicine*, 162, 107153. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2022.107153>

participants exhibit lower stigmatization and higher acceptance of mental health concepts.

Wong's study also illustrates how gender differences among the Chinese population could impact stigma towards mental health. Second, Chinese culture varies by region. For example, the concept of dowry is not common in northern China, potentially resulting in less economic burden in that regard. Finally, the emerging concept of urban citizenship, where local cities provide citizenship to UCM, is nuanced and could significantly impact UCM's utilization behavior and provide a form of membership access.

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Protesting is Just One Click Away

How Social Media Catalyzes Modern Protests

Catherine Chen, May 2024

Communication is one of the most fundamental tenets of modern society, and humans have strived throughout history to continuously improve our means of communication. From the humble beginnings of the postal service that took weeks or even months to deliver a simple letter to a nearby town, society has now evolved to communicate with people around the globe in mere seconds through social media, emails, text messages, and more. Such efficient and speedy communication methods are indispensable for quick organization, mobilization, education, and more during crises and social unrest. I examine the use of social media in three recent protests and how those protests reflect the nature of social media itself. I conclude that modern protestors rely heavily on social media to communicate, reinforcing the borderlessness of modern coalition movements. Due to social media's effectiveness in facilitating quick and easy communication, modern protestors can mobilize efficiently and in large numbers—explaining an empirical increase in the size and frequency of recent protests.

Recent Protests and Social Media

Mass protests in recent years reflect a noticeable increase in global social unrest. These mass protests encompass a myriad of grievances and occur on a large scale across six continents and under both autocracies and democracies.^{225 226} As a result, news headlines calling recent years “A

²²⁵ Hallock, Jeffrey. “Here’s Why the World’s Current Wave of Protests Is Different.” *Context*, Context, 12 Jan.2023, www.context.news/rethinking-the-economy/opinion/heres-why-the-worlds-current-wave-of-protests-is-different.

²²⁶ Wright, Robin. “The Story of 2019: Protests in Every Corner of the Globe.” *The New Yorker*, 30 Dec. 2019, www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/the-story-of-2019-protests-in-every-corner-of-the-globe.

Global Year of Protest” or “The Year of the Street Protestor” have become popular.^{227 228}

Moreover, these protests occurred in quick succession, popping up one after the other across the globe like a pandemic.^{229 230} Another notable feature of these modern protests is the increased use of technology and social media. Many have attributed the mass occurrence of and the speed at which these recent protests occur to the failure of the government to adequately address the COVID-19 pandemic and its lingering effects. Some suggest that growing globalization is the cause; globalization causes countries’ markets and economic systems to be increasingly interdependent, and thus, when one country’s system fails or enters a decline, other countries face negative repercussions as well. For example, protestors in Ecuador and Kazakhstan cite the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine as the reason for the increase in energy prices for which they are protesting. Some have also cited the speeding up of social history as the cause, as periods of stable world hegemony have become shorter and shorter over history. Upon analyzing various protests from around the globe, Turkish sociologist and New York Times columnist Zeynep Tufekci found that social media allows protestors to develop new capabilities and tactics.²³¹ Social media’s borderless nature allows for movements to garner attention quickly, and for accessible forums to facilitate brainstorming, organization, and the coordination of protests. The diversity of people who congregate in social media spaces, as well as the option for anonymity, allows protestors to sidestep government censorship and surveillance even under repressive regimes. Another example includes Yale law professor Ray Brescia, who found that the way protestors communicate with each other reflect and shape the protests themselves after

²²⁷ Silver, Beverly, and Corey Payne. “Crises of World Hegemony and the Speeding Up of Social History.” *Hegemony and World Order*, 2020, Pp. 17-31.

²²⁸ Robin Wright.

²²⁹ Andersen, Kurt. “Person of the Year 2011: The Protester.” *Time*, Time Inc., 14 Dec. 2011, content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,2101745_2102132_2102373,00.html.

²³⁰ Jeffrey Hallock.

²³¹ Tufekci, Zeynep. *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest*. Yale University Press, 2021, Pp. xxi-xxxix

analyzing movements—from the American Revolution to the Civil Rights movement—that occurred across US History.²³² Social media not only has the ability to facilitate the organization of protests and to amass attention, but its chaotic and accessible nature also drives the increase and speed of recent protests. In order to investigate my thesis, I will be examining the 2019 Hong Kong protests, the 2022 Iranian protests, and the 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike.

A Comparative Analysis of Global Protest Movements

The 2019 Hong Kong protests, the 2022 Iranian protests and the 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike provide drastically different cases to demonstrate how social media serves as a tool for effective organization. The 2019 Hong Kong protests occurred in Hong Kong, where 92% of the population are ethnically Chinese, a majority of the population speak Cantonese, and over half of the population do not have a religious affiliation.²³³ The 2019 Hong Kong protests started as a response against the Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation and were exacerbated by police violence and the oppressive nature of their government. Although the media primarily spotlighted young people, the 2019 Hong Kong protestors encompassed people of all ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and religions in Hong Kong.²³⁴ The 2022 Iranian protests occurred in Iran, where the population is 98.5% Muslim, is ethnically composed of Persian, Azeri, Kurd, Lur, Baloch, Arab, Turkmen, and Turkic tribes, and mainly speak Persian Farsi.²³⁵ The death of Mahsa Amini at the hands of the morality police sparked the 2022 Iranian protests over concerns about women’s rights, and the protests were exacerbated by police brutality.²³⁶ The 2022 Iranian protestors consisted mainly of young and

²³² Brescia, Ray. “Chapter 1: Medium.” *The Future of Change: How Technology Shapes Social Revolutions*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2020, pp. 13–36.

²³³ “Hong Kong.” *The World Factbook*, Central Intelligence Agency, 26 Mar. 2024. *CIA.gov*, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/hong-kong/#people-and-society>.

²³⁴ Chen, Catherine. “The 2019-2020 Hong Kong Protests.” 8 Mar. 2024.

²³⁵ “Iran.” *The World Factbook*, Central Intelligence Agency, 26 Mar. 2024. *CIA.gov*, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/iran/>.

²³⁶ Hector, Beyoncé. “Women, Life, Freedom: The 2022 Iranian Protests.” 8 Mar. 2024.

middle-aged women in Iran.²³⁷ The 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike occurred in New York City, where the population's ethnicity is mixed and diverse.²³⁸ Although over half of the population of NYC speak English and practice some denominations of Christianity, languages spoken and religions practiced throughout New York City are still extremely varied.²³⁹ Climate change activist Greta Thunberg's speeches and "Fridays for Future" protests inspired the 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike.²⁴⁰ The 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike occurred during the UN Climate Action Summit to pressure the US government to enter the New Green Deal and take further action to address climate change.²⁴¹ The 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike consisted mainly of young people and students, as Thunberg's "Fridays for Future" protest centered around skipping school.²⁴² Thus, all three of these recent protests occurred in vastly different corners of the Earth—geographically and culturally—and had vastly different demands, origins, and demographics. Furthermore, while the 2019 Hong Kong protests and 2022 Iranian protests occurred under oppressive regimes, the 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike occurred under a democratic regime. Moreover, even though the 2019 Hong Kong protests and 2022 Iranian protests both occurred under repressive regimes, the nature of each country's government is vastly different; Iran's government is a theocracy, while Hong Kong is a special region with limited democratic freedoms underneath China's Communist government. Moreover, the 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike differs significantly from the 2019 Hong Kong protests and 2022 Iranian protests because it was completely peaceful, whereas the 2019 Hong Kong protests and

²³⁷ Ibid.,

²³⁸ *Census Bureau Tables*.

<https://data.census.gov/table?t=Language%20Spoken%20at%20Home&g=160XX00US3651000>. Accessed 2 Apr. 2024.

²³⁹ NW, 1615 L. St, et al. "Religious Landscape Study." *Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project*, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/religious-landscape-study/>. Accessed 2 Apr. 2024.

²⁴⁰ Taneja, Tanisha. "Global Climate Strikes in New York City (2019)." 8 Mar. 2024.

²⁴¹ Beyoncé Hector.

²⁴² Ibid.,

2022 Iranian protests involved violence. In spite of unalienable differences between the three protests, the common use of social media as an organizing force proves the argument can be applied more broadly to protests that vary in context.

How the Protests Used Social Media

All three protests efficiently utilized social media to communicate with the outside world and other protestors to garner attention and mobilize. The 2019 Hong Kong protestors often used Telegram, QQ Zone, Reddit, Twitter, and LIKHG to communicate, coordinate, brainstorm, and vote on ideas for protests.^{243 244 245} Coordinators of the multiple district marches, in which different districts across Hong Kong held simultaneous protests, used social media to organize these nationwide protests.²⁴⁶ Moreover, the anonymous nature of these platforms and the diversity of available social media apps allowed protestors to avoid increasing government censorship and persecution.^{247 248} Famously, the 2022 Iranian protestors posted pictures of themselves without their hijabs or cutting their hair as a form of protest on Instagram, garnering worldwide attention and support.²⁴⁹ The 2022 Iranian protestors also used platforms such as WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, and more to communicate about and organize protests. Similarly, the 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike coordinators used social media and technology to spread awareness about their cause and share the time and location of protests.^{250 251} Moreover, the 2019

²⁴³ Catherine Chen.

²⁴⁴ Panwar, Kanika, and Vikas Sihag. "Protest Movements, Social Media, and the Role of Law Enforcement." *International Journal of Information Systems and Social Change*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2023, pp. 1–13. *ProQuest*, <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJISSC.314590>.

²⁴⁵ Tai, Zixue. "Social Media and Contentious Action: The Use and Users of QQ Groups in China." *Media and Communication*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2022, pp. 66–76. *ProQuest*, <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v10i4.5894>.

²⁴⁶ Catherine Chen.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*,

²⁴⁸ Zixue Tai

²⁴⁹ Beyoncé Hector.

²⁵⁰ Boulianne, Shelley, et al. "'School Strike 4 Climate': Social Media and the International Youth Protest on Climate Change." *Media and Communication*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2020, pp. 208–18. *ProQuest*, <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v8i2.2768>.

²⁵¹ Tanisha Taneja.

NYC Global Climate Strike protestors utilized Twitter to garner global support and attention even after the strike to show its success and continue spreading its message.²⁵² In this way, protestors in all three protests relied heavily on social media to communicate. Because of social media's effectiveness in doing so, all three protests gained worldwide attention and coordinated protests efficiently.

How the Protests Reflected the Nature of Social Media

In line with Bresica's findings, because the three protests utilized social media effectively to communicate, they also leveraged the platforms' disruptive capabilities.²⁵³ Reflecting the chaos-inducing nature of social media, the 2019 Hong Kong protestors propagated memes, GIFs, and hashtags to garner worldwide attention, coordinated protests on video game platforms, and used violent and provocative protest tactics such as online doxing of law enforcement agencies and shooting police officers with bows and arrows.^{254 255} The 2022 Iranian protestors also employed similar chaotic and provocative protest tactics, such as openly disobeying hijab laws and setting head scarves on fire.^{256 257} Although the 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike protestors did not utilize violent or destructive tactics, their heavy use of hashtags and memes reflects the movement's capacity to condense its messages into comedic bits that capitalize on buzzword-wired social media algorithms.^{258 259} Moreover, the 2019 Hong Kong protests and 2022 Iranian protests were leaderless and largely decentralized, allowing for equal participation

²⁵² Ibid.,

²⁵³ Ray Bresica.

²⁵⁴ Catherine Chen.

²⁵⁵ Kanika Panwar and Vikas Sihag.

²⁵⁶ Ray Bresica.

²⁵⁷ Kanika Panwar and Vikas Sihag.

²⁵⁸ Herrmann, Christoph, et al. "#fridaysforfuture – What Does Instagram Tell Us about a Social Movement?" *Journal of Information Science*, vol. 49, no. 6, Dec. 2023, pp. 1570–86. *SAGE Journals*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/01655515211063620>.

²⁵⁹ Johann, Michael, et al. "Fridays for Future and Mondays for Memes: How Climate Crisis Memes Mobilize Social Media Users." *Media and Communication*, vol. 11, no. 3, 2023, pp. 226–37. *ProQuest*, <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v11i3.6658>.

in protests among protestors—mirroring social media’s accessibility. The viral protest pictures and videos that the 2022 Iranian protestors posted on Instagram sparked people worldwide to protest in solidarity.²⁶⁰ The 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike went further to coordinate virtual protests, allowing those who could not physically participate in the strike to also take part in the protests.²⁶¹ Famously, the 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike protestors held a virtual protest on Twitter by having protestors change their profile pictures to a black circle.²⁶² In this way, how the protestors in all three protests used social media to communicate amongst themselves and with the world reflects the protests’ chaotic and accessible nature.

How the Nature of Social Media Catalyzes Protests

The 2019 Hong Kong protests, the 2022 Iranian protests, and the 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike heavily relied on social media as an effective tool to mobilize and garner attention quickly. Moreover, because protestors used social media as their primary communication method, the protests themselves began to resemble the chaotic and accessible nature of social media. Because the protests themselves began to resemble social media, the process of mobilization and garnering attention only quickened, which is why I argue there has been such an increase in the number and speed of protests around the world today. This is not to say that social media is the root cause of the increase in the number and speed of protests. Instead, I argue that social media allows protestors to mobilize more quickly and efficiently, increasing the number and speed of protests; I do not argue that social media causes more grievances that encourage protest.

The usage of whimsical social media quirks between the 2019 Hong Kong protests, the 2022 Iranian protests, and the 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike catalyzed the protests by expanding the respective movements’ reach. Memes are easy to understand, allowing for

²⁶⁰ Beyoncé Hector.

²⁶¹ Tanisha Taneja.

²⁶² Ibid.,

complicated political issues to become easily digestible to the average social media user. Users, through social media, can thus easily digest complicated political issues, form their own opinions, and take action.²⁶³ ²⁶⁴ ²⁶⁵ Moreover, memes spark strong feelings through their humor, incentivizing more people to take action. The humorous tone of memes and other playful forms of virtual protest is starkly different from the often confrontational tone of traditional news media, further incentivizing the average social media user to engage in politics and participate in protests.²⁶⁶ Moreover, because making and sharing memes can act as a nonviolent, nonconfrontational form of protest and are highly personalizable to the individual user, the average person is further incentivized to take part in ongoing protests through memes as well. Through sharing and making memes, users often find solidarity and support networks as well, only further incentivizing protest action as communities form around these strong feelings. In sum, the increase in participation that the chaotic nature of social media facilitates only quickens the rate at which protestors mobilize and garner attention through easy virality, increased political awareness, the sparking of strong and provocative feelings, increase in protest methods, and increase in interconnectedness through online communities.

The accessible nature of social media, reflected in the 2019 Hong Kong protests, the 2022 Iranian protests, and the 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike, also catalyzed these protests. Social media is free and accessible to nearly everyone with an internet connection, allowing more people to learn about and participate in protests.²⁶⁷ Moreover, the option of Internet anonymity

²⁶³ Dynel, Marta, and Fabio Indio Massimo Poppi. "Caveat Emptor: Boycott through Digital Humour on the Wave of the 2019 Hong Kong Protests." *Information, Communication & Society*, vol. 24, no. 15, Nov. 2021, pp. 2323–41. *Taylor and Francis+NEJM*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2020.1757134>.

²⁶⁴ Michael Johann, et al.

²⁶⁵ Lukács, Gabriella. "Internet Memes as Protest Media in Populist Hungary." *Visual Anthropology Review*, vol. 37, no. 1, 2021, pp. 52–76. *Wiley Online Library*, <https://doi.org/10.1111/var.12232>.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*,

²⁶⁷ Rouhi, Mahsa. "Woman, Life, Freedom in Iran." *Survival*, vol. 64, no. 6, Nov. 2022, pp. 189–96. *Taylor and Francis+NEJM*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2022.2150441>.

allows people living in repressive regimes to finally express their grievances and find like-minded communities without the fear of government persecution.^{268 269 270} Furthermore, because social media-based movements are a novel phenomenon, oppressive regimes often struggle to control social media and crack encryption codes to reveal the identity of those expressing their grievances on the platform before mobilization occurs.²⁷¹ As a result, because more people finally have a more accessible and safer avenue to mobilize via social media, it naturally follows that there is an increase in the number and speed of protests worldwide. Thus, when oppressive government regimes finally find a way to censor and block social media, protests in repressive countries taper out, as proven in the 2019 Hong Kong protests and the 2022 Iranian protests. This fact further highlights social media's indispensable role in modern protests today. Thirdly, the accessible nature of social media allows people to witness international and domestic protests play out in real time, incentivizing them to join and protest alongside their fellow citizens in solidarity. In this way, the accessible nature of social media has allowed more people to know about the world around them and have a safer way to mobilize, thus increasing the number and speed of protests.

Social Media and the Future of Protests

Social media is an invaluable tool for efficient mobilization in modern protests because of its unprecedented ability to communicate with anyone around the globe in mere seconds. Protestors in the 2019 Hong Kong protests, the 2022 Iranian protests, and the 2019 NYC Global Climate Strike heavily relied on social media for communication with the outside world and other

²⁶⁸ Alterman, Jon B. *Protest, Social Media, and Censorship in Iran*. Oct. 2022. www.csis.org, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/protest-social-media-and-censorship-iran>.

²⁶⁹ Arant, Regina, et al. "The Role of Media Use in Political Mobilization: A Comparison of Free and Restrictive Countries: *International Journal of Communication (19328036)*." *International Journal of Communication (19328036)*, vol. 17, Jan. 2023, pp. 1530–50.

²⁷⁰ Mahsa Rouhi.

²⁷¹ John B Alterman.

protestors to amass attention and mobilize. Over time, all three protests began to mirror the nature of social media itself in its chaoticness and accessibility. Given the applicability of social-media based protests in widely different contexts, my findings can be applied universally to the increasing frequency of protests in the modern age. However, I only examined three protests, and examining more would reveal more information. Moreover, although global disasters such as the COVID-19 pandemic may have also played a role in the increase in the number and speed of protests recently as it exposed the systemic failings of governments across the globe, the role of social media in modern social movements rests in facilitating the gathering of more protestors and catalyzing the formation and mobilization of protests, as opposed to causing grievances. In my paper, I only examined how protestors used social media to communicate to garner attention and mobilize protests and how the chaotic and accessible natures of social media resembled the protests. However, protests could have utilized social media to communicate in many more ways and reflect many other qualities of social media, which may also play a factor in social media's role in increasing the number and speed of recent protests. Because widespread social media usage in protests is a recent phenomenon, how social media affects the success of protests is an important topic to study further. As methods of communication evolve to become even more efficient, they undeniably affect how protests unfold, as effective communication is critical to amassing supporters and mobilizing. Although social media is the most recent advancement in communication methods, society will undeniably continue to produce more efficient methods, and how protests evolve in tandem is yet to be seen.

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Global Inequalities in the Extraction of Renewables

Molly Gahagen, March 2024

The urgent need for decarbonization has resulted in increased demand for renewable energy, producing unique challenges globally. Renewable energy sources differ from traditional energy sources by typically relying on critical minerals, and since 2010, the average amount of minerals needed per new unit of power generation capacity has risen by 50% .²⁷² Part of this transition includes increasing the number of electric vehicles (EVs) on the road, and demand for EVs has surged in recent years—with a global sales record set in 2021 and continued increases in sales volumes in 2022, particularly in China, Europe, and the United States.²⁷³

Lithium and cobalt are important components of EV batteries. These minerals are defined as “high-impact” by the World Bank and their future demand is expected to exceed current production levels, despite only being used in a concentrated sector of technology.²⁷⁴ The increased demand for these materials requires the expansion of mining, which is largely concentrated in a small number of countries, primarily in the Global South. This exposes new locations and communities to the traumas of extractive industries, and there have been widespread reports of environmental degradation and unsafe working conditions for those in close proximity to mineral mines.²⁷⁵

²⁷² IEA (2021), *The Role of Critical Minerals in Clean Energy Transitions*, IEA, Paris

<https://www.iea.org/reports/the-role-of-critical-minerals-in-clean-energy-transitions>, License: CC BY 4.0.

²⁷³ IEA (2022), *Global EV Outlook 2022*, IEA, Paris <https://www.iea.org/reports/global-ev-outlook-2022>, License: CC BY 4.0

²⁷⁴ World Bank, *Minerals for Climate Action: The Mineral Intensity of the Clean Energy Transition*. (2020). Retrieved from

<https://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/961711588875536384/Minerals-for-Climate-Action-The-Mineral-Intensity-of-the-Clean-Energy-Transition.pdf>

²⁷⁵ IEA, 2021, 226–238.

An increase in resource extraction to meet rising EV demands is a relatively recent phenomenon and its long-term consequences are uncertain. However, there is well-documented evidence that this process is exacerbating existing inequities between the Global North and Global South. This paper presents two case studies of mining for the extraction of minerals needed for renewable energy: lithium mining in Chile and cobalt mining in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Chile is the world's second-largest lithium producer as part of South America's "lithium triangle," which also includes Argentina and Bolivia.²⁷⁶ Lithium mining in Chile has been tied to water scarcity in surrounding communities, which include Indigenous and rural populations, prompting national advocacy efforts to increase accountability for mining companies.^{277 278} The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the world's largest producer of cobalt and is responsible for almost 70% of the global production of mined cobalt.²⁷⁹ Mining takes place in both industrial and artisanal small-scale mining (ASM) settings in the DRC, and ASM has been criticized for unsafe working conditions and the use of child labor in artisanal mines. Such problems have led to calls for formal regulations and the implementation of greater protections for workers.²⁸⁰

In this paper, I situate the issue of extraction for renewables within a larger debate between frameworks for climate change mitigation. I question the presence of evidence that extraction for renewables can be accomplished in a just manner that takes social considerations

²⁷⁶ U.S. Agency for International Development. (2021). *Mining and the Green Energy Transition Review of International Development Challenges and Opportunities*. Retrieved from https://www.land-links.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Green-Energy-Minerals-Report_FINAL.pdf

²⁷⁷ Jerez, B., Garcés, I., & Torres, R. (2021). Lithium extractivism and water injustices in the Salar de Atacama, Chile: The Colonial Shadow of Green electromobility. *Political Geography*, 87, 102382. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2021.102382>.

²⁷⁸ Liu, W., & Agusdinata, D. B. (2020). Interdependencies of lithium mining and communities sustainability in Salar de Atacama, Chile. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 260, 120838. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2020.120838>

²⁷⁹ USAID, 59.,

²⁸⁰ Frankel, T. C., & Whoriskey, P. (2016, December 19). *Companies are making billions in lithium mining. but these indigenous people are being left out*. The Washington Post. Retrieved December 11, 2022, from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/business/batteries/tossed-aside-in-the-lithium-rush/>

into account. Ecomodernism, the belief that modern technology could be harnessed to provide alternative energy sources, fails to reckon with preexisting social injustices.²⁸¹ The Degrowth framework supports increases in renewable energy but argues that it is essential to reduce energy demand due to the social and environmental unsustainability of the current global demand, calling for an overall reduction of the size of the global economy.²⁸² However, this theory lacks specificity in how broad-ranging reforms will be implemented and by whom.

The current model of extraction resembles a strictly technologically driven vision of Ecomodernism, which fails to consider the social and ethical implications for frontline communities impacted by mining practices. I argue that the inevitability of climate change necessitates striving toward just extraction, and there is a need for more inclusive mitigation policies that recognize these concerns. In this paper, I start by providing a review of the Ecomodernist and Degrowth frameworks, followed by presenting case studies of lithium mining in Chile and cobalt mining in the DRC informed by non-profit and governmental reports, academic research, and journalism, and conclude with a broader discussion evaluating measures needed to ensure extraction is just.

Literature Review

In the following section, I will present the theoretical frameworks of Ecomodernism and Degrowth and evaluate their implications for the global economy and social equality, illustrating how neither represents a comprehensive just and pragmatic approach. Subsequently, I will discuss how the Green New Deal (GND), despite its limits as a domestic policy and questionable feasibility, is a model that combines values of both Ecomodernism and Degrowth to yield a path by which both of these frameworks can inform climate change policies.

²⁸¹ Asafu-Adjaye, J. et al. 2015. "An Ecomodernist Manifesto." *The Breakthrough Institute*.

²⁸² Hickel, J. (2022). *Less is More: How Degrowth Will Save the World*. Penguin Random House UK.

Overview of Frameworks

Ecomodernism, as described by Asafu-Adjaye et al. in “An Ecomodernist Manifesto,” is a framework for climate change mitigation that seeks to utilize modern technology to lessen the adverse effects of human activities on the planet, thus “decoupling human development from environmental impacts.”²⁸³ Ecomodernism promotes the transition to renewable energy, with a primary focus on the use of solar energy and nuclear technologies, emphasizing the need to “transition as rapidly as possible to energy sources that are cheap, clean, dense, and abundant.”²⁸⁴ From this perspective, EVs provide a pragmatic option for the general public to decrease their carbon footprint and an opportunity for continued economic growth involving green innovation.

Modernization has fundamentally improved conditions of life for broad portions of humanity and allowed greater economic and political possibilities, informing its premise that continued economic growth is essential.²⁸⁵ This theory fails to consider pre existing social inequities, such as the uneven development that has stemmed from modernization, and the social and ecological consequences of green technology.

The Degrowth framework offers an alternative perspective, pushing back on Ecomodernism’s insistence on continued development. Seeking to address the contradiction between capitalism’s “growth imperative” and the need to reduce human consumption to ensure sustainable and ethical production, Degrowth advocates argue that insisting on economic growth will further increase energy demand and thus be unsustainable in the long term, regardless of the expansion of renewable energy and technological developments.²⁸⁶ Degrowth recognizes developmental inequities between the Global North and South and cites the hegemony of the

²⁸³ Asafu-Adjaye, J. et al, 7.

²⁸⁴ Ibid, 22-24.

²⁸⁵ Ibid, 8-10.

²⁸⁶ J. Hickel, 139-141, 157-165.

Global North in the current global economic system which will continue under the “green growth” program.²⁸⁷

Following this logic, environmentalists deem it essential to reevaluate global capitalism to halt these processes occurring, address social concerns, and turn toward “distributing income and resources more fairly, liberating people from needless work, and investing in the public goods that people need to thrive.”²⁸⁸ Regarding the extraction of minerals necessary for renewables, Degrowth holds that there is a “new scramble for resources” in the Global South, which results in patterns mimicking exploitation under colonialism, leading to the conclusion that renewable energy capacity cannot be increased infinitely.²⁸⁹

While Degrowth provides an inclusive vision of the future, it also lacks specificity in policy prescriptions and dictating what institutions will guide changes. The main proposition of Degrowth—reducing the scale of the global economy—would require international coordination and domestic policies that allow for individuals to lead low-carbon lifestyles, and it is questionable whether global elites would consent to forsaking economic growth for the environment and a utopian vision of social equality.²⁹⁰ Similarly, blue-collared workers voice concerns that contracting the global economy will have the immediate impacts of high unemployment and a decline in living standards for the working poor, exacerbating poverty without sufficient proposals for corrective measures.²⁹¹

The Green New Deal

²⁸⁷ Ibid, 191-196.

²⁸⁸ Ibid, 206.

²⁸⁹ Ibid, 144.

²⁹⁰ Mann, G. (2022, August 18). Reversing the Freight Train. *London Review of Books*, 44(16). Retrieved from <https://www-lrb-co-uk.proxy1.library.jhu.edu/the-paper/v44/n16/geoff-mann/reversing-the-freight-train>

²⁹¹ Pollin, R. (2018). De-Growth vs a Green New Deal. *New Left Review*, (112). Retrieved from <https://newleftreview-org.proxy1.library.jhu.edu/issues/ii112/articles/robert-pollin-de-growth-vs-a-green-new-deal>

Somewhere between Degrowth and Ecomodernization approaches exists the Green New Deal (GND), a resolution introduced in the House of Representatives in 2019, which seeks to meld the concept of green growth while recognizing the need to promote social equality. The GND cites the government's responsibility to address the existential risks of climate change by facilitating the transition to renewable energy sources to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions, as well as promote lower-carbon means of living by increasing public transportation and by promoting EVs (Recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal, 2019). The bill also contains provisions for the economic security of citizens by calling for the creation of high-wage jobs, labor protections, enhancing clean manufacturing, sustainable agricultural practices, and promoting equity in climate change mitigation approaches.²⁹²

Although the GND is a domestic policy, it contains recommendations for international actions, with the mission of “promoting the international exchange of technology, expertise, products, funding, and services, with the aim of making the United States the international leader on climate action, and to help other countries achieve a Green New Deal.”²⁹³ Potential actions to achieve this include promoting equity and democracy in supply chains to “remake global power structures” and ensuring that nations in the Global South are not taken advantage of through the process of securing materials for renewable energy.²⁹⁴

While the GND may sound like a moonshot, the feasibility of this goal rests on two assumptions: one, that the GND is passed in the United States, and two, that its enactment can translate into results beyond American borders. The GND was introduced to Congress over three years ago and has subsequently been referred to various subcommittees, but there has been no

²⁹² Text - H.Res.109 - 116th Congress (2019-2020): Recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal. (2019, February 12). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-resolution/109/text>

²⁹³ Ibid.,

²⁹⁴ Aronoff, K., Battistoni, A., Cohen, D.A., & Riofrancos, T. (2019). *A Planet to Win: Why We Need a Green New Deal*. Verso.

action on it since.²⁹⁵ Meanwhile, Congress passed the Inflation Reduction Act in 2022, which includes tax credits for emissions reductions and funds for investment in green technology, but contributes little to environmental justice efforts and makes concessions to oil companies by granting new drilling permits.²⁹⁶ Based on this trajectory, the mass appeal and political feasibility of such an expansive program is called into question. Secondly, it is essential to recognize that for change to occur, cooperation between other nations and international bodies is necessary to result in trade agreements, accountability structures, and labor and environmental standards. The United States cannot successfully act alone in this endeavor and must work towards being part of a sustainable network of nations working toward a common goal.

Findings

Lithium Mining in Chile

Lithium mining in Chile takes place in the northern region of Antofagasta and the Atacama desert, one of the driest locations on the planet.²⁹⁷ Chile's lithium is primarily extracted from brine found in the salt pans, which is a water-intensive process.²⁹⁸ In 2021, Chile provided over a quarter of world's lithium production, outpacing output in Argentina and Bolivia due to environmental conditions that make mining more feasible.²⁹⁹

As a legacy of the Pinochet era, lithium is deemed a “strategic mineral” where production lines are nationalized. The state controls licenses for lithium extraction, allowing it to benefit

²⁹⁵ 116th Congress.,

²⁹⁶ Aronoff, K. (2022, August 3). The Manchin Climate Deal Is Both a Big Win and a Deal With the Devil - The Inflation Reduction Act doesn't curb fossil fuels. In fact, it boosts them.. *New Republic, The: Web Edition Articles*. Available from NewsBank: Access World News – Historical and Current: <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.proxy1.library.jhu.edu/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/18BAD795176E1BA0>.

²⁹⁷ USAID, 31.

²⁹⁸ Ibid, 31, 82.

²⁹⁹ Graham, T. (2022, October 17). *Can South America take advantage of the lithium boom?* Foreign Policy. Retrieved December 11, 2022, from <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/10/17/lithium-triangle-mining-prices-electric-batteries-south-america-economy/#:~:text=Start%20with%20Chile%2C%20the%20world's,a%20quarter%20of%20global%20production.>

from royalties.³⁰⁰ Only two private companies have been granted licenses for lithium extraction: Albermarle Corporation, a company based in the United States, and Sociedad Quimica y Minera de Chile, a former state company that was privatized in 1987 and is listed in the United States.³⁰¹ In addition to production, Lithium is also processed in Chile before being exported for manufacturing into finished products.³⁰²

Water justice has been a cause of conflict since former Chilean President Augusto Pinochet privatized water sourcing in 1981, resulting in the concentration of water rights among corporations and unequal water access throughout the country, which has been a particular concern for rural areas.³⁰³ Brine, water which contains lithium and other minerals, is legally recognized as mining property rather than water due to its composition, creating barriers to water rights for local communities.³⁰⁴ In extracting lithium from brine located on the salt flats, already limited water resources are further used up, limiting available supplies for those living nearby and requiring them to depend on deliveries for reliable water access.³⁰⁵

As reported in field research by Jerez et al., one of the key locations for lithium extraction is the Salar de Atacama salt pan in the Atacama Desert, an ancestral territory of the Indigenous Atacameño people. Water use in lithium mining has led to a decrease in agriculture and livestock farming in the region as a result of water scarcity, altering the lifestyles and economic structures of Atacameño communities in the area.³⁰⁶ Concurrently, they found that the mining companies have provided monetary compensation to surrounding residents to cover their

³⁰⁰ Kingsbury, D. V. (2022). Energy transitions in the shadow of a dictator: Decarbonizing neoliberalism and lithium extraction in Chile. *The Anthropocene Review*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/20530196221087790>

³⁰¹ USAID, 31, 82.

³⁰² IEA, 2021, 138.

³⁰³ Jerez et al., 3.

³⁰⁴ Greenfield, N. (2022, April 26). *Lithium mining is leaving Chile's indigenous communities high and dry (literally)*. Natural Resources Defense Council. Retrieved December 11, 2022, from <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/lithium-mining-leaving-chiles-indigenous-communities-high-and-dry-literally>

³⁰⁵ Ibid.,

³⁰⁶ Jerez et al., 8.

needs while the state has largely remained uninvolved, leading to division among locals competing for funding.³⁰⁷ This has contributed to a loss of community due to “de-ethnification, deepening the commodification of daily life itself and a neocolonial production of Indigenous communities as recipients of the mining companies’ resources.”³⁰⁸ Similarly, research by Liu and Agusdinata in the San Pedro de Atacama commune, with a majority Indigenous population, has indicated that water consumption used by the mining industry has increased continuously over time and has greatly overtaken usage by locals and tourists.³⁰⁹ Despite the number of mining jobs rising overall in the region, the number of local laborers employed in the mining sector has decreased, being replaced by commuting laborers who contribute little to the local economy.³¹⁰

Concerns over the lithium mining industry’s environmental impacts have inspired local activism in support of blocking new lithium mines from being developed, which has included tactics such as blocking roads and access points to mining sites and filing legal complaints against mining companies.^{311 312 313} Campaigns against mining were raised to a national level in 2019, in conjunction with citizens’ dissatisfaction with various other government policies, and

³⁰⁷ Ibid, 8-9.

³⁰⁸ Ibid, 8.

³⁰⁹ W. Liu & D.B. Agusdinata, 6.

³¹⁰ Ibid, 6-9, 12.

³¹¹ T.C. Frankel & P. Whoriskey.,

³¹² Sherwood, D. (2019, October 25). *Chile protesters block access to lithium operations: Local leader*. Reuters. Retrieved October 31, 2022, from

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-chile-protests-lithium/chile-protesters-block-access-to-lithium-operations-local-leader-idUSKBN1X42B9>

³¹³ Sherwood, D. (2021, September 13). *Chile indigenous group asks regulators to suspend lithium miner SQM's permits*. Reuters. Retrieved December 11, 2022, from <https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/chile-indigenous-group-asks-regulators-suspend-lithium-miner-sqms-permits-2021-09-13/>

culminated in violent protests that motivated the drafting of a new state constitution to reevaluate the neoliberal policies enshrined in the current constitution.^{314 315 316}

The draft of the new constitution was written by a body elected by popular vote and contained changes to the state's political system, laws, and greater self-governance for Indigenous groups.³¹⁷ 23 articles were dedicated to the environment, including articles upholding that "nature has rights" that the state has a duty to protect, calling for water and all minerals to be controlled by the state, and establishing that a plan must be made to ensure mining is environmentally and socially responsible.³¹⁸ The constitution was rejected with almost 62% of voters voting against it, many voicing complaints that the proposals were not representative of the population as a whole and sought to further a leftist agenda, leaving the country to begin a second draft.^{319 320 321} While it is unclear how effective the implementation of the constitution would have been, it offered an inclusive vision to protect natural resources, make them accessible to the public, and regulate mining. Although the proposed constitutional amendments

³¹⁴ British Broadcasting Corporation. (2020, October 26). *Jubilation as Chile votes to rewrite constitution*. BBC News. Retrieved December 11, 2022, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-54687090>

³¹⁵ Reeves, P. (2020, October 24). *'historic opportunity': Chile holds vote to replace dictatorship-era constitution*. NPR. Retrieved December 11, 2022, from <https://www.npr.org/2020/10/24/927253655/historic-opportunity-chile-holds-vote-to-replace-dictatorship-era-constitution>

³¹⁶ Zialcita, P. (2019, October 31). *As protests persist, Chile's president cancels 2 major international summits*. NPR. Retrieved December 11, 2022, from <https://www.npr.org/2019/10/31/774862059/as-protests-persist-chiles-president-cancels-two-major-international-summits>

³¹⁷ "Chile's Draft Constitution of 2022." Constitute Project. (2022) https://constituteproject.org/constitution/Chile_2022D.pdf?lang=en.

³¹⁸ Ibid, 38-42.

³¹⁹ Fuentes, V. (2022, December 13). *Chile will try to write a new constitution for a second time*. Bloomberg.com. Retrieved December 14, 2022, from

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-12-13/chile-will-try-to-write-a-new-constitution-for-a-second-time>

³²⁰ Nicas, J. (2022, September 4). *Chile says 'no' to left-leaning constitution after 3 years of debate*. The New York Times. Retrieved November 2, 2022, from

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/04/world/americas/chile-constitution-no.html?searchResultPosition=3>

³²¹ Otis, J. (2022, September 5). *Chileans have rejected a new, progressive constitution*. NPR. Retrieved December 11, 2022, from <https://www.npr.org/2022/09/04/1121065756/chile-constitution-referendum>

were scrapped, it sets an international precedence for future regulatory policy on resource extraction processes.

Cobalt Mining in the DRC

Cobalt mining in the DRC takes place in both ASM and industrial mining settings. ASM is defined as mining using artisanal tools and methods. Approximately 15-30% of cobalt mined in the DRC comes from ASM, which employs approximately 150,000–200,000 miners.^{322 323} ASM arose in the DRC in the 1990s after the state-run mining company collapsed and could not be reinstated due to political and economic instability³²⁴ It has continued since, and in 2002 the government established Artisanal Mining Zones where ASM may take place.³²⁵

ASM mining has resulted in well-documented examples of human rights violations as workers often lack basic personal protective equipment (PPE), such as gloves and masks, and come in regular contact with cobalt, which is known to cause potentially fatal lung disease.³²⁶ Unsafe conditions in the mines have led to deaths in mine collapses, landslides, and fires, although these incidents are poorly recorded.³²⁷ Additionally, women face being subjected to sexual violence, forced to participate in prostitution, and often experience greater illness and injury due to being “forced to undertake the most strenuous or poorly paid activities.”³²⁸ Children as young as seven years old have been documented working in ASM, and are primarily responsible for sorting cobalt from mining waste and washing and sorting the ore.³²⁹ They are

³²² Amnesty International. (2016) “*This Is What We Die For: Human Rights Abuses in the Democratic Republic Of The Congo Power the Global Trade in Cobalt*.” Amnesty International.
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/AFR6231832016ENGLISH.pdf>

³²³ USAID, 59.

³²⁴ Amnesty International, 5.

³²⁵ Ibid.,

³²⁶ Ibid, 22-23.,

³²⁷ T.C. Frankel & P. Whoriskey.,

³²⁸ Sovacool, B. K. (2021). When subterranean slavery supports sustainability transitions? power, patriarchy, and child labor in Artisanal Congolese cobalt mining. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, 8(1), 271–293.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.exis.2020.11.018>

³²⁹ Amnesty International, 5.

typically paid for the weight of cobalt that they turn in, and without access to weighing scales they are unable to verify the amount they have collected, rendering children vulnerable to financial exploitation.³³⁰ Congolese officials have acknowledged child labor occurring, but they have stated that the lack of resources and schools inhibits them from addressing the issue.³³¹

Cobalt from ASM flows from the mines to licensed buying houses, where it is sold to companies that process the ore prior to its exportation for manufacturing into finished battery components and eventually finished batteries.³³² These supply chains are complex due to the numerous steps involved in creating finished batteries, but companies known or suspected to have purchased finished batteries from ASM-originating supply chains include Mercedes Benz, BMW, Volkswagen, and General Motors.^{333 334} The adoption of such labor practices by multinational companies has made it harder to call out labor violations, where exploitation is shrouded by legal loopholes and corporate lobbying.

In spite of this, international criticism of human rights violations has led to calls for the formalization of labor and responsible sourcing of cobalt. As recorded by Calvão et al., the DRC has pursued standardized corporate labor regulations. The standardized policies, albeit minor variations in financial conditions and due diligence standards, generally involve hiring artisanal miners and compensating them based on their output.³³⁵ Yet, research from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, Switzerland, finds that artisanal miners face financial insecurity as a result of formalization schemes—earning lower wages than others working on the same sites, lower job flexibility, and often being barred from work sites by police

³³⁰ Ibid.,

³³¹ T.C. Frankel & P. Whoriskey.,

³³² Amnesty International, 47-55.

³³³ T.C. Frankel & P. Whoriskey.,

³³⁴ Amnesty International, 55-58.

³³⁵ Calvão, F., McDonald, C. E., & Bolay, M. (2021). Cobalt mining and the corporate outsourcing of responsibility in the Democratic Republic of Congo. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, 8(4), 100884.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.exis.2021.02.004>

or military officers unless they are paid a bribe.³³⁶ Overall, corporate-led formalization has shifted the “risk of price fluctuations and reputational damage to artisanal miners” and intensified the “repressive action of states and private stakeholders,” further enabling corruption.³³⁷

The state has responded to criticism by moving to establish the Enterprise Generale du Cobalt (EGC), a state monopoly for responsibly sourced artisanal cobalt, in 2018.³³⁸ Key stakeholders have voiced complaints over a lack of transparency and communication about the EGC’s operating methods, as well as the nature of its regulation of ASM.³³⁹ Overall, limited information has been released about the EGC and although the monopoly aimed to start purchasing cobalt in January 2022, it was reported in May 2022 that no purchases had yet been made.³⁴⁰ ³⁴¹ Also in May 2022, the DRC’s Mines Minister, Antoinette N'Samba Kalambayi, called for the EGC’s legal monopoly to be canceled due to being “a violation of the laws of the Republic” while still advocating for ASM formalization.³⁴² Lack of transparency regarding the EGC’s operational methods and political conflict over its establishment results in ambiguity over whether it will prove to be an effective mechanism of regulation, or even if its efforts will come to fruition.

Broader Implications

³³⁶ Ibid, 5-7.

³³⁷ Ibid, 7.

³³⁸ Deberdt, R. (2022). Land Access Rights in Minerals’ responsible sourcing. The case of cobalt in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. *Resources Policy*, 75, 102534. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resourpol.2021.102534>

³³⁹ Ibid, 7.

³⁴⁰ Reid, H. (2021, December 2). *Congo State Cobalt Monopoly aims to start buying in January*. Reuters. Retrieved December 12, 2022, from <https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/congo-state-cobalt-monopoly-aims-start-buying-january-2021-12-02/>

³⁴¹ Reid, H. (2022, May 11). *Congo mines minister seeks to cancel artisanal cobalt monopoly*. Reuters. Retrieved December 12, 2022, from

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/congo-mines-minister-seeks-cancel-artisanal-cobalt-monopoly-2022-05-11/>

³⁴² Ibid.,

The extraction of minerals for renewable energy represents the sustained inequity between the Global North and Global South, in which the Global North outsources extractive processes and receives most of the finished products. The majority of EV sales are concentrated in the United States, Europe, and China.³⁴³ This results in the environmental benefits of EV deployment, as well as sales profits, to be shared by those in the Global North while those in the Global South experience environmental degradation and human rights violations due to unsafe working conditions.

These two case studies present examples of countries with vastly different political systems: Chile has had a stable democracy since 1990, ranks low in corruption, and the right to assemble is generally protected bar the violent 2019 protests.³⁴⁴ In the DRC, basic democratic features such as free and fair elections and freedom of political expression are not upheld, corruption is widespread with limited institutional safeguards, and repression of protest is common despite constitutional guarantees of the right to assembly.³⁴⁵ Moreover, greater freedoms of political expression have allowed the Chilean people to organize and advocate for greater environmental protections, advancing the cause onto the national political agenda. Although these measures did not successfully pass, Chile's protest movement illustrates the impact of popular activism on bringing issues to the forefront and initiating governmental responses. The Congolese have not had the same opportunity, as limited attempts to organize have been violently suppressed by the state, producing a weak civil society.³⁴⁶ International pressures, however, have resulted in increased publicity of Congolese human rights violations—eliciting a

³⁴³ IEA, 2022, 20.,

³⁴⁴ Freedom House. (2022a). *Chile: Freedom in the world 2022 country report*. Freedom House. Retrieved December 13, 2022, from <https://freedomhouse.org/country/chile/freedom-world/2022>

³⁴⁵ Freedom House. (2022b). *Democratic Republic of the Congo: Freedom in the world 2022 country report*. Freedom House. Retrieved December 13, 2022, from <https://freedomhouse.org/country/democratic-republic-congo/freedom-world/2022>

³⁴⁶ Ibid.,

response by corporate actors and the DRC's government, albeit one which is questionably effective.

Globalization has enabled free trade, causing companies in the Global North to rely on supply chains that profit off extraction and manufacturing exploits in the Global South. As seen in the examples described above, this often results in uneven distributions of human costs and profits. There is a need to rectify this injustice. American sociologist Peter Evans theorizes that the formation of transnational networks multiplies the power of localized movements and presents the opportunity for workers to use their “political leverage” to “affect decisions in hegemonic global networks” and demand better standards and rights.³⁴⁷ Applying this logic to the issue of extraction, popular activism in Chile and international pressure in Congo have placed mining-related injustices on the political agenda. Although neither of these countries have seen adequate reforms, movements have driven the few changes that have been put forward. Connecting those exploited under these mining processes globally would amplify national campaigns and help drive the implementation of effective international guidelines addressing these issues.

Ultimately, one thing is evident: the strict Ecomodernist approach pursued by Western environmentalists is not just. This framework does not attempt to provide reasonable ethical standards and does not account for pre-existing inequities in the Global South, which are only worsened by mining. Meanwhile, Degrowth centers on emphasizing justice and equality, but is dismissive of the possibility of just extraction under capitalism. While there are no successful large-scale projects to draw on to contradict this view, denouncing society's structures draws

³⁴⁷ Evans, P. (2000). Fighting Marginalization with Transnational Networks: Counter-Hegemonic Globalization. *Contemporary Sociology*, 29(1), 230–241. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2654947>

attention to significant weaknesses in current projects, but is ineffectual without contributing plausible reform suggestions.

With the time-sensitive climate crisis and the need to rapidly decarbonize, increasing renewable energy capacity is already underway and represents a more feasible option than seeking to reduce the scale of the global economy. EV sales are surging, and there is no evidence that they will decline in the near future. An approach considering social issues and laying out an actionable path toward just mineral extraction for renewable energy is essential. Voluntary frameworks, such as the World Bank's Climate-Smart Mining Initiative, offer recommended actions for governments and supply chain stakeholders to take, but this places the onus on these actors to take these steps of their volition. GND advocates have pointed toward the establishment of global trade agreements and standards, and while these solutions will not be a simple feat, bottom-up transnational movements provide a potential means to exert demands.

Conclusion

The analysis of the extraction of materials for renewable energy illustrates the continuity of inequities between the Global North and South, which are exacerbated by globalization. This has led to mining being outsourced to the Global South, causing environmental degradation and the loss of local communities' ways of life, subjecting laborers to dangerous, unregulated working conditions. The case studies I presented have regional differences but are representative of the varied negative impacts that occur as a result of these processes.

These issues come as part of Ecomodernism's premise of green capitalism, which promotes the rapid development of renewable energy while failing to account for ethical concerns and inequities. Alternatively, Degrowth argues that just mining will not occur under the unjust structures of society, but given the urgency of decarbonization and the current trajectory of

renewable energy, abandoning these projects is simply not a reality. There is a need for the incorporation of these issues into climate change mitigation policies, as well as obligatory international agreements and standards that uphold just environmental and labor standards, as proposed by GND advocates. It is unlikely that global elites will seek to pass these regulations on their own, and transnational networks pose as a potential mechanism to pressure them into action. Future research should explore potential policies to remedy the issues described here, as well as inclusive pathways to policy making.

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Poets and Poetry as Politicians and Politics in the Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal Empires

Yana Mulani, May 2024

The Islamic empires of the Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals each appreciated and valued poetry similarly, with some emperors writing and reciting poetry themselves. Poetry at the time, as it is today, was not simply an art form or an aesthetic affair; poetry was intrinsically political, often carrying propagandistic undertones on religion and state. The authors of such works utilized their talents to further their own political authority, appealing to court members, viziers and eventually (hopefully) the emperor for patronage. As a form of literary expression, poetry represented shared culture, community and developed civilisation—all three of which were seen as values to strive toward. This paper will first examine the role of literary spaces in developing a shared cultural identity. Then, I will observe the connections, networks and relationships of poets and their patrons in political spheres; finally, I will conduct a short literary analysis of a poem from the Safavid and Mughal empires respectively and determine how they were intended to influence their audiences.

Literary Culture and Literary Spaces

In the Mughal and Ottoman empires,^{348 349} poetry was a form of political communication and participation among elites. And yet, that is not to say that the common man did not interact with poetry. As early as the 18th century, biographical dictionaries recorded 1,322 poets³⁵⁰ in the Ottoman empire—suggesting that although it was the elite and most well-known poets who received courtly approval and benefits, the composition and recitation of poems was an admired and coveted activity and skill throughout the empire.³⁵¹ In the late 15th and early 16th centuries, all social levels welcomed poetry as an expected part of their gatherings that provided meaning, but also “templates” for following activities and conversation.³⁵² With the emergence of coffee houses and tobacco shops, the Ottoman state saw for the first time the co-mingling of ordinary townsfolk with the literate upper-echelons of society. As these groups “played games, recited poetry, and discussed literature” together for the first time, the space of the coffee house and tobacco shop functioned as a breeding ground for political change and societal upheaval.³⁵³

By the late 16th century, the state grew concerned about the rise of dissenting opinion, individual thought and growing distance from the empire. As social mobility became a

³⁴⁸ Kaicker, Abhishek. “The Promises and Perils of Courtly Poetry; The Case of Mir ‘Abd Al-Jalil Bilgrami (1660-1725) in the Late Mughal Empire,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 61, 61, no. 3 (2018): 327–60. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26572307>.

³⁴⁹ Aguirre-Mandujano, Oscar. “The Social and Intellectual World of a Fifteenth-Century Poem,” *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 7, 7, no. 2 (December 1, 2020): 55–79. <https://doi.org/10.2979/jotturstuass.7.2.05>.

³⁵⁰ Faroqhi, Suraiya. *Approaching Ottoman History*. 1st ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511605710>.

³⁵¹ Woodhead, Christine. “Ottoman Languages.” in *The Ottoman World*, edited by Christine Woodhead, 143-157. Abingdon: Routledge, 2012. From Durham University Online.

³⁵² Aguirre-Mandujano, Oscar, and Walter G Andrews. “The Poetics of Istanbul: The City of Cities.” BRILL, October 21, 2021. doi.org/10.1163/9789004468566_027.

³⁵³ Grehan, James. “Smoking and ‘Early Modern’ Sociability: The Great Tobacco Debate in the Ottoman Middle East (Seventeenth to Eighteenth Centuries),” *The American historical review* 111, 111, no. 5 (December 1, 2006):

possibility and hierarchy and rank started to blur, moralists and statisticians became increasingly fearful of the exuberant transformations that these literary spaces began to nurture.³⁵⁴ In 1633, the state issued regulations to dampen the heightening social reform from taking place.³⁵⁵

These alarmist tendencies are no better seen than in Kātib Chelebi's (b.1609, d.1657) account on coffee. Chelebi describes the coffee house as a place where "story-tellers and musicians diverted people from their employments" and "the people, from prince to beggar, amused themselves with knifing one another."³⁵⁶ He explains Sultan Murad IV's (r. 1623–1640) closure of coffee houses as an action of "regard and compassion for the people."³⁵⁷ Chelebi's account provides insight into the empire's perception of the spillover of poets and poetry from the privileged elite to the common people. Prior to the introduction of the literary space, poetry had always been practiced by the wider population as a means to express ideas, communicate, or "demonstrate cultural sophistication."³⁵⁸ Murad IV himself wrote poetry, under the pen name "Muradi," so evidently, it was not the literary form of the poem that he was out to abolish; instead, it was the gathering of townsmen to hear the poetry of the elite, which served as a platform to air grievances against the Sultan and his regime, that the state needed to quash. As the coffee house served as a literary salon, it facilitated the spread of political poetry and induced conversation between those unaccustomed to meeting. The state faced no choice but to forbid them.

³⁵⁴ Ibid.,

³⁵⁵ Chelebi, Kātib. *The Balance of Truth*. Translated by G. L. Lewis. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1957.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.,

³⁵⁷ Ibid.,

³⁵⁸ Dale, Stephen F. *The Muslim Empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Prior to the 16th century's emergence of social literary space, poetry had already permeated the imperial palace. Starting with Bayezid I (r. 1389–1403), Ottoman sultans received patronized poets and writers at court, and from Mehmed I (r. 1403/1413–1421) to Süleyman I (r. 1520–1566), it was customary for certain favored poets to receive stipends, rewards and benefits from the sultans.³⁵⁹ The remainder of this essay will examine the roles of poets and their poems in the imperial courts of the Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals.

Poets as Politicians

The rulers and aristocratic elites of the Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal empires patronized the arts in general and did not limit themselves to poetry. For all three empires, building and developing the arts was based on a conscious intent to partake in the shared culture of Islamic empire while simultaneously promoting their distinctive and notable traits.³⁶⁰ We can look, especially, to the Ottoman Turkish language for evidence of this.

Ottoman Turkish grew from the informal Turkish used in Anatolia to a literary language, and even culture, heavily influenced by Persian and Arabic.³⁶¹ The Persian language and literature had been established early on as the “Great Tradition” of the Islamic empires; notably, its poetic practice carried soft, melodious sounds and rich, flowing expressions.³⁶² Sultans from Mehmed II (r. 1451–1481) worked to associate this admired and honored poetic language with the developing Ottoman Turkish language: Persian poets were invited to the Ottoman courts (Mehmed II provided great attention to the arts, establishing a literary circle that provided

³⁵⁹ Kim, Sooyong. “A Poet in Istanbul.” in *The Last of an Age*, chap. 2. London : Taylor and Francis, 2018.

³⁶⁰ Stephen F. Dale, 192.

³⁶¹ Christine Woodhead, 2.

³⁶² Stephen F. Dale, 207.

stipends for at least 30 court poets)³⁶³ and Ottoman literature's reception was supported by the inclusion and influence of Persian techniques.³⁶⁴ Used in court literature and to foster literary culture in the empire, the development of Ottoman Turkish was consciously achieved in order to "project ottoman values and self-image among those who mattered."³⁶⁵

Having established the appeal of aligning the Ottoman empire with Persian poetic culture, and thereby inviting poets to the court, we can now look to the appeal for the poets themselves. If a poet's work pleased the sultan, it was likely that he (rarely, but not never, she) would be granted monetary benefits and sometimes even positions within the imperial administration. In terms of the former, poets associated with the court or household of a sultan or advisor were paid either an *ulufe* (regular monthly regular salary) or a *salyane* (regular annual salary).³⁶⁶ During the reign of Bayezid II (r. 1481–1512), upwards of 30 poets received a regular *salyane* from his court. Other financial benefits of being a poet held in high esteem by the sultan or his advisors included *caizes* (rewards) such as valuable jewelry or clothes.³⁶⁷ A poet need not officially be a part of the sultan's court through patronage; often, poets sent copies of their work to the sultan, receiving in return similarly valuable *caizes* if the work pleased.³⁶⁸

Some particularly lucky poets received a *timar* or a *zeamet*, a small and large fief, respectively.³⁶⁹ This meant that land revenue made up a significant portion or all of their income. From Aşık Çelebi's (b. 1520, d.1572) "Assemblies of Poets," we learn of the poet Hayali Bey,

³⁶³ Sooyong Kim. 9.

³⁶⁴ Inan, Murat Umut. "Imperial Patronage of Literature in the Ottoman World." in *The Empires of the Near East and India*, edited by Hani Khafipour, 493-504. New York: Columbia University Press, 2019., page 495.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*,

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*,

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*,

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*,

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*,

who was so esteemed by Sultan Suleiman I (r. 1520-1566) that he was first granted an ulufe, then a timar and then a zeamet, with the latter's value reaching more than 100,000 akçes.³⁷⁰

Other poets were granted administrative or secretarial positions within the empire. Aşık Çelebi earned a judgeship in Skopje, the combined result of “Assemblies of Poets” mentioned above and a second biographical work.³⁷¹ Another poet, Sehi Bey (d. 1548), was appointed to a position in the department responsible for the maintenance of the imperial army, after his *tezkire* (biography of poets) praised the poetry and benevolence of Suleiman.³⁷²

To secure these benefits, poets would need to ensure the success of their work. Many wrote *kasides* (panegyrics) that celebrated the achievements of the Sultan, his predecessor, or the house of Osman generally. Dale contextualizes these as “employment applications or a form of insurance in a brutally uncertain world.”³⁷³ If a poet's work was specially skillful, he may be commissioned by the court to write for royal occasions.³⁷⁴

As a result of the benefits surrounding imperial patronage, these kinds of relationships were highly coveted. As the imperial capital, Istanbul was “the center of literary patronage,” drawing hundreds of poets to the empire and inviting them to engage in literary circles and network for a chance for an audience with the Sultan.³⁷⁵ Celebrations, ceremonies and festivals in Istanbul provided an opportunity for poets seeking patronage to mingle with potential patrons. Within the network, poets had to climb the ladder: a young poet would hope to be noticed by an established literary elite or a member of the court, after which he'd be endorsed for a reception

³⁷⁰ Ibid, 501.

³⁷¹ Ibid, 497.

³⁷² Ibid, 496.

³⁷³ Stephen F. Dale, 208.

³⁷⁴ Ibid, 207.

³⁷⁵ Murat Umut Inan, 494.

with a local politician.³⁷⁶ It is here that the patron-client relationship begins, and, thus, the inclusion of the poet in politics. The relationship between the poet and his patron was a mutually beneficial one. The members of the Sultan's court were eager to patronize a rising poet, as while the latter enjoyed social and financial benefits alongside literary acclaim, the former hoped to capitalize on the poet's budding personal relationship with the Sultan to merit promotion within the courts.³⁷⁷

For example, the highly acclaimed poet Zati started composing poems in Balıkesir, and they were impressive enough that he was able to present them to a local governor.³⁷⁸ In 1500, Zati moved to Istanbul, hoping to develop his talents and gain recognition.³⁷⁹ Returning to Aşık Çelebi's "Assemblies of Poets," we learn that Zati described the reign of Bayezid II as "a time of generosity and *expectations* [italics added]."³⁸⁰ By presenting a laudatory composition of Hadım Ali Pasha (d. 1511), Zati managed to gain his attention. Named Grand Vizier twice, Ali Pasha had an established rapport with Bayezid II, and with his involvement, was able to place Zati in view of the Sultan.³⁸¹ Zati went on to compose three kasides a year for Bayezid II: "one for the New Year festival and one for each of the [two] feasts," he tells Aşık Çelebi, with the latter in reference to Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.³⁸² Through gaining the favor of Ali Pasha, Zati made connections with the Sultan and other aristocratic officials, from whose caizes he funded his life.³⁸³

³⁷⁶ Ibid, 495.

³⁷⁷ Ibid, 496–497.

³⁷⁸ Sooyong Kim, 32.

³⁷⁹ Ibid.,

³⁸⁰ Murat Umut Inan, 501.

³⁸¹ Sooyong Kim, 32.

³⁸² Murat Umut Inan, 501.

³⁸³ Sooyong Kim, 32.

This is not to assume that every poet who appealed to the Sultan received a significant reward. The Sultan's attention and favor was desirable and rare; of the 185 poets that Mehmed II allegedly kept in his retinue, few would have been allowed the privilege of the private ear of the Sultan.³⁸⁴ Poets under different patrons would often compete with each other, both for the sake of their own and their patron's careers.³⁸⁵

To conclude this section, let us return to what we opened with: the Sultan's own motivation in inviting learned men to court. Ottoman Turkish was developed to further Ottoman values, so how did poets contribute to this? According to Inan, the poets who received imperial patronage were expected to compose work in Ottoman Turkish "that would match and even excel those produced by the Arabic and Persian masters of literature" to become "the new patron of the Islamic world."³⁸⁶ Whether Ottoman Turkish ever did achieve the grandeur of Persian poetry is not the goal of this paper; however, we can say with certainty that the Ottoman state's creation of a sprawling network of poets eager to climb the hierarchical and political ladder left its mark on literary history.

Poetry as Political Propaganda: Shah Isma'il

It is interesting to note that the founder of the Safavid Empire, Shah Isma'il I (r. 1501–1524), wrote poetry almost exclusively in Turkish, while the leader of the Ottoman Empire, Sultan Selim I (r. 1512–1520), wrote poetry almost exclusively in Persian.³⁸⁷ There is a simple answer offered by Minorsky for the latter: he contends that the preference for Persian by Selim I was

³⁸⁴ Kim, page 29.

³⁸⁵ Murat Umut Inan, 501.

³⁸⁶ Ibid, 494.

³⁸⁷ Minorsky, V., and I. Shāh Ismā'il. "The Poetry of Shāh Ismā'il I," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 10, 10, no. 4 (1942): 1006a-1053a. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/609140>.

simply due to the renowned reputation of the language as a vessel of poetic expression.³⁸⁸ We can corroborate this by what we've learnt about Ottoman Turkish, which was still developing its literary culture.

Shah Isma'il I, on the other hand, as the founder of the empire, was still justifying his legitimacy and claim to the throne over a vast region; his poetry didn't need to be beautiful and flowing, invoking the Persian traditions, but it needed to serve a political purpose.³⁸⁹ Dale maintains that the Isma'il needed to appeal to the tribes of eastern Anatolia and northern and northwestern Iran, including the Oghuz tribes of Afshar and Qajar,³⁹⁰ for whom the native tongue was Turkish.³⁹¹ The Oghuz tribes rallied around Isma'il and formed his military, becoming known as the Qizilbash.³⁹² Turkish was so widely used in the Safavid court, due to dependency on the aristocratic Qizilbash warriors, that it was difficult for poets writing in Persian to obtain patronage.³⁹³

Let us look at Khatā'ī's divan. Isma'il refers to himself as "God's mystery," "the living Khidr," "Jesus, son of Mary," "the Alexander of [his] contemporaries."³⁹⁴ Through likening himself to established leaders, Isma'il invokes their reputations. He also preached his divinity: "In me is Prophethood"; "Come to meet (me), prostrate yourselves"; "Know for certain that Khatā'ī is of divine nature."³⁹⁵ The imperative verbs "come" and "prostrate yourselves" demand a semi-divine usually reserved for God. According to Dale, this was repugnant to Sunni Muslims

³⁸⁸ Ibid.,

³⁸⁹ Ibid.,

³⁹⁰ Stephen F. Dale, 102–103.

³⁹¹ Ibid, 212.

³⁹² Ibid, 103.

³⁹³ Ibid, 212.

³⁹⁴ V. Minorsky and I. Shāh Ismā'īl., 1042a.

³⁹⁵ Ibid, 1042a–1043a.

but fitting for Sufi pirs and Shi'a Imams.³⁹⁶ Isma'il's turn of phrase conveys his confidence in his preaching: "Should the ghāzis put on their swords and arms, fear of danger will invade the soil of hypocrites."³⁹⁷ Here, Isma'il invites Muslims to fight for him and his empire, assuring them of their victory through his divinity.

As the founder of his empire, and therefore being unable to rely on the authorities of nonexistent past leaders, Shah Isma'il needed to create a charismatic, authoritative figure to attract and retain his followers. Consequently, he focuses his divan along two aspects: (1) Shi'a and Sufi allure to legitimize his position as emperor and (2) Turkish language to appeal to the warrior tribes of the region rather than the civilian populations.

Poetry as Political Propaganda: Shah Jahan

Shah Jahan's reign (r. 1628–1658) followed that of his father, Jahangir (r. 1605–1627) and grandfather, Emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605). Jahangir and Akbar's religious proclivities brought Shah Jahan's Sunni Muslim identity, and therefore royal sovereignty, into question. Jahangir's practice of praying to the sun (the origin of the Mughal dynasty, according to legend) was at odds with Sunni worship, which allows the reverence of no being or object other than God Himself.³⁹⁸ Furthermore, Akbar's sacred title as a Lord of Conjunction elevated him above religion as a societal concept, from which he pronounced a policy of Universal Peace, "according to which all

³⁹⁶ Stephen F. Dale, 103.

³⁹⁷ V. Minorsky and I. Shāh Ismā'il, 1042a.

³⁹⁸ Moin, Azfar. "The Millennial and Saintly Sovereignty of Emperor Shah Jahan According to a Court Sufi." In *The Empires of the Near East and India*, edited by Hani Khafipour, 205-218. New York: Columbia University Press, 2019.

religious and sectarian communities were given equal protection as long as they swore loyalty to the empire.”³⁹⁹

Despite the tainting of the line of Mughal emperors due to Akbar’s and Jahangir’s religious policies, a court Sufi poet Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman Chishti (d. 1683) set out to praise Shah Jahan in his work *Mir’at al- Asrar* (Mirror of Secrets). According to Moin, by supporting the empire rather than criticizing it, ‘Abd al-Rahman was able to encourage the public understanding of Shah Jahan’s policy of religious tolerance, inspired by his grandfather, and thereby aid the Chisti Sufi cause.⁴⁰⁰

In *Mir’at al- Asrar*, ‘Abd al-Rahman is explicit: “Avoid the path of *taqlid* and bigotry,”⁴⁰¹ with *taqlid* roughly translating to the “imitation of tradition.”⁴⁰² In this line, ‘Abd al-Rahman effectively equates tradition with religious discrimination. He defines *taqlid* as “the way of destruction” that “brings disgrace to humanity” and argues that “Bigotry is an obstacle on the path of the seeker.”⁴⁰³ The poem then calls on God for help to “destroy the rebellious self,” the one that continues to follow the path of bigotry.⁴⁰⁴ For the super religious, this may have served as an effective argument to understand Shah Jahan’s policy of religious tolerance, due to the reminder that the rejection of bigotry was the duty of God’s devotees. The excerpt of *Mir’at al- Asrar* in Khafipour’s edition ends with “Guide me to a realisation (*tahqiq*) of unity (*tawhid*), / Release me from the prison of *taqlid*.”⁴⁰⁵ ‘Abd al-Rahman places *tahqiq* as “the pursuit of divine

³⁹⁹ Ibid, 207.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid, 207–209.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid, 209.

⁴⁰² Ibid, 207.

⁴⁰³ Ibid, 209.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.,

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.,

truth” over taqlid (tradition). There is a clear call for the subjects of the empire to forgo the tradition of blindly following orders of religious segregation.

Conclusion

A study on the poet Chandar Bhan argues that “the language of poetry *was* the language of politics” within the context of the Mughal empire.⁴⁰⁶ I contend that this declaration be extended to the other two empires examined in this paper. In the empires of the Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals, poets and poems were intrinsically political. Poets themselves were a willing pawn in the courtly games of climbing the hierarchical ladder, while their poems were used both for the emperor’s pleasure and his political gain. Poets clambered over each other for a chance to secure a courtly patron and present their work to the sultan; in turn, patrons fought to present their latest catch to the Sultan, in hopes of a promotion. The emperor, too, used poets and poems to his advantage; though he may have been a poet himself and a willing and enjoyable patron of the arts, the poems and poets that received the most attention were, more often than not, the ones that sang his praises or that of the empire. Spreading and consolidating the propaganda of the state was of the utmost importance, easily observable in the poetry of Shah Isma’il.

This paper has so far established the inherent political tendencies of poetry as literary expression in the Islamic empires. A further area of research would be to examine the prevalence of poetry and literature amongst the unlearned, non-elite townfolk. We know from the presence of literary spaces like salons, coffee houses and tobacco shops that the recitation and discussion of poetry was enjoyed by the common people, but it would be interesting to research the role of poetry within non-aristocratic households prior to the emergence of the literary space. To what

⁴⁰⁶ Abhishek Kaicker, 329.

extent was poetry, either the verbal recitation or the written creation, enjoyed amongst commoners? In what languages and to what gain—religious, political or amusement?

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