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HISTORY IN THE MAKING

California State University,
San Bernardino
Journal of History

Volume Two
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**Alpha Delta Nu Chapter, Phi Alpha Theta National History
Honor Society**

History in the Making is an annual publication of the California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) Alpha Delta Nu Chapter of the Phi Alpha Theta National History Honor Society, and is sponsored by the History Department at CSUSB. Volumes are published at the end of the spring quarter of each academic year.

Phi Alpha Theta's mission is to promote the study of history through the encouragement of research, good teaching, publication and the exchange of learning and ideas among historians. The organization seeks to bring students, teachers and writers of history together for intellectual and social exchanges, and to promote and assist historical research and publication by our members in a variety of ways.

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Cover collage created by Christopher Brooks and Alicia Gutierrez.

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Introduction

Welcome to the second volume of California State University, San Bernardino's Journal of History: *History in the Making*. Under the guidance of history professors Dr. Cherstin Lyon and Dr. Tiffany F. Jones, the CSUSB history journal is peer reviewed and edited by undergraduate and graduate students at CSUSB. All articles in this volume are written by CSUSB undergraduate students. This volume features multimedia techniques to explore historical themes and to attract a broader interest in historical discovery.

For this volume our editors were particularly interested in exhibiting a variety of historical time periods. Our first article, "Slavery and the Search for Belonging in Modern Sudan," written by William Fant, explores the history and significance of the modern slave trade in Sudan. In "Pursuit of the Sixth Star: An Analysis of Literature and Tactics from the California Women's Suffrage Campaign," Sarah Promnitz makes a fascinating connection between modern campaign methods and those employed by the California women fighting for suffrage in 1911. Christina Perris explores the psychological motivations of a rescuer nearly forgotten to history in "Chiune Sugihara: A Psychological Analysis of a Rescuer of Jews During the Holocaust." In Matthew Fuller's fascinating and detailed study, "The Ideological Scalpel, Physician Perpetrators, Medicalized Killing and the Nazi Biocracy," he explores ironic act of medicalized killing and the reasons behind this perplexing phenomenon in Nazi Germany. Finally, Alicia Gutierrez's colorful and poetic writing in "Dead Fish in the Desert: A Brief Photo-History of the Salton Sea" unveils the mystery behind the Salton Sea in a photo historiography of local history.

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Also, as a special feature of this volume, available in the online edition at www.history.csbs.csusb.edu, is the multimedia piece that highlights the narrated, moving photo essay of “Dead Fish in the Desert.”

Please enjoy the 2009 edition of *History in the Making*.

Oceana Collins
Editor in Chief

Acknowledgements

A project such as this takes the dedication and cooperation of many people. I would like to thank our fearless leader, Dr. Lyon, whose strength, feedback, support and wonderful sense of humor was an invaluable part of moving the project forward, Dr. Jones, whose concise critiques and technological expertise brought the quality of the journal to another level, and the fabulous journal staff that woke up early many times to make it to 8 a.m. meetings and without whose commitment this project it would not have been possible. Special thanks go to Christopher Brooks and Alicia Gutierrez who are responsible for designing and creating our artistic photo mosaic cover. Finally, thanks to the History Department and Phi Alpha Theta whose sponsorship and support was an essential asset.

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History in the Making

Slavery and the Search for Belonging in Modern Sudan

BY WILLIAM FANT

For many Sudanese, the migration of Islamic society into Sudan has produced difficulties in identifying belonging. Centuries in the making, Sudan has become a split nation in which the south has retained much of its African identity, while the north has become increasingly Islamized. While no discernable traits separate the divided portions of Sudan, the division has allowed the dominant north to forcibly gain control of the entire nation. This phenomenon has led to increased discontent among the regions, resulting in civil war and the reintroduction of slavery. Although the physical division in Sudan is as blurred as the ethnic lines of its people, the conflict has now spread into the Darfur region with disastrous results. In response, the international community, led by China, has hesitated to get involved while the African identity of Sudan is systematically swept away.

The Islamic slave trade has its roots in the convergence of African and Arabic societies based largely in the southern region of the Sahara desert. The traditional Arabic slave raids on African villages was substantially complicated by the spread of Islam into Africa and the intermarriage of African women and Arabic men, which created a mixed Sudanese society searching for an identity. The continued enslavement of African villagers by those who identified themselves as Arabic further perpetuated the idea that the individuals identified as having African ancestry were inferior to those to who claimed Arabic roots. Although slavery in Sudan was abolished under Anglo-Egyptian rule in the early twentieth century, the self identification of those in Sudan continued to be polarized by the people claiming Arabic ancestry and those who were defined as African, creating a division of the country between

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the predominantly Arabic north and the African south. The reintroduction of slavery in modern day Sudan is the direct result of the continued dominance of the country's political and economical systems by the Arabic north, their view of the inferiority of Africans, and the need for labor in northern Sudan. However, despite numerous narratives of slave experiences, the government of Sudan continues to deny the existence of slavery in their country by hiding behind the complicated nature of the subject of slavery itself, as well as the so-called traditional problem of tribal identification. The conflict raging in Darfur, the denials by Khartoum government, and the international protection provided by China has continued to stall intervention on behalf of those who have been enslaved.

Arab versus African

The current problem of slavery in Sudan is rooted in the historic division of the country between the Arabic North and the African south, and the understanding of this situation is crucial in order to clarify why slavery in Sudan still exists. While the division of Sudan upon the line of ethnicity is not absolute, it is more distinguishable by an examination of the geographical division of the country. As Peter McLoughlin points out, “[t]he northern two-thirds of the Republic of the Sudan encompasses the eastern end of the Sudan geographic zone, a belt of savannah grassland...which borders the southern edge of the Sahara and Libyan deserts.”¹ The northern portion of Sudan thus provided the land necessary to sustain the traditional nomadic herding lifestyle of those who claimed Arabian ancestry. Over time these nomadic herders began to settle the region now known as Sudan aided largely by the existence of the upper Nile River, further encroaching on the traditional African villages of sub-Saharan Africa.² By contrast, the

¹ Peter F. M. McLoughlin, “Economic Development and the Heritage of Slavery in the Sudan Republic,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 32, no. 4 (1962): 355-391.

² This is an over simplification of the north/south division which is largely used as the division between Arabic and African cultures. There also existed the presence of African nomads in the region, which led to the cross culturalization

southern portion of Sudan receives the rainfall necessary to develop consistent agriculture and a traditional African sedentary population.³

The largest country in Africa, Sudan has maintained the longstanding racial separation between those claiming Arabic ancestry and those who consider themselves African. These ideals of ancestry carried over to slavery in which the “nineteenth-century slaving frontier was defined by the actors in terms of Islamic versus non-Islamic pedigree, brown versus black colour, Arab versus non-Arab descent.”⁴ This was further perpetuated by the colonial government, who from the beginning “classified the population of the country into natives or Arabs and Sudanese.”⁵ It became evident that there was a distinct difference between what it meant to be called either an Arab or African, but what was missing was an exact definition of what the two categories encompassed. Over time the idea of an Arabic identity became interchangeable with those who are Islamized, while to be African meant that one was not Arabic. The distinct unifier of northern Sudan was, and remains today, the Moslem faith, which allows “groups which are not racially pure Arabs” to be Islamized.⁶ This punctuated the separation between the Islamic north centered on the capital of Khartoum, and the highly africanized south.

While the separation of ancestral lineage in Sudan can easily be construed as being a product of traditional racism, Robert O. Collins describes that the separation into differing groups is a direct result of “cultural racism”.⁷ Under his definition of cultural racism, Collins disregards the belief that slavery in Sudan is a

of Arabic and African culture within the northern region, as well as the Western portion of Sudan better known as Darfur.

³ This division is consistent with the traditional scholarly view that sub-Saharan Africa is the true Africa.

⁴G. P. Makris, “Slavery, Possession and History: The Construction of the Self Among Slave Descendants in the Sudan,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 66, no. 2 (1996): 159-182.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 163.

⁶ McLaughlin, *Economic Development*, 358.

⁷ Robert O. Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 8.

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product of ethnic superiority, but is instead “more historical and cultural than based on color, and more individual and institutional than ideological.”⁸ While this may be true when rooted in the idea that all Sudanese may be considered black by an outsider, there remains a definitive social construction of race between the Arabic North Sudanese, and the predominantly African South Sudanese.⁹ And while there is a lack of the exact cause for such racial distinctions, what is central to the discussion of Sudanese slavery is that those who consider themselves to be of Arabic descent consider those of African heritage to be inferior to their own group, and that idealism is the historic basis of slavery in Sudan.

While the division among the Sudanese is apparent, it is the product of a combination of factors including self identification, religion, and geography which is the cause of polarization. However, this division of the north and southern portion of Sudan is never static, but is instead a separation which is ever-changing. And although the distinction of the imagined border is evident when considering the natural differences of the two regions, it is the ideologies of the peoples of these two regions which provided the basis for the existence of slavery. Thus, according to G. P. Markis, “[i]n actual practice this ostensibly absolute distinction between the two imagined communities was subject to the process of constant negotiation that governed the shifting of their boundary.”¹⁰ As the variables change and are rearranged, the Sudanese identity evolves and the basis of slavery becomes harder to identify.

History of Slavery in Sudan

The historic era of slavery in Sudan was at its height prior to the Anglo-Egyptian conquest in 1898, which found the country devastated by both the Turco-Egyptian occupation (1821-85) and a “harsh Islamic state under the Mahdists (1889-98).”¹¹ It is during

⁸ Robert O. Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan*, 8.

⁹ Jok Madut Jok, *War and Slavery in Sudan* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 7.

¹⁰ Markis, *Possession*, 162.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 161.

this period that the historical view of northern Arabs versus southern Africans became the central theme. “Central to both [the Turco-Egyptian and Mahdist] regimes was the enslavement of pagan Africans from the Southern and Western Sudan by Northern Sudanese slave traders, with direct or indirect assistance of the authorities.”¹² During this period hundreds of thousand Sudanese were enslaved from the non-Arabic population and enslaved in both Sudan and neighboring countries.¹³ However, to complicate Sudanese slavery further, “northern Sudanese obtained slaves from non-Moslem and non-Arab groups, some in the northern Sudan itself.”¹⁴

During the nineteenth century, slavery in Sudan became a large part of the Sudanese economy in the northern region. Although prior to the Turkish conquest, slaves were allocated to more influential occupations such as in the bureaucracy and the military, as well as concubines for noblemen, slavery began to become associated with more menial jobs within society.¹⁵ Gradually slaves were used primarily in activities such as herding, household chores, and cultivation, many times left to their own devices while their master moved to areas with more reliable water supplies.¹⁶ This change represents the economic transition of the region as well as a growing view of the slave holding class seeing themselves as far superior to those whom they enslave.

The discriminatory classification of slaves during this transition is evident in both the way they were treated as well as their monetary worth. By the end of the nineteenth century, “slaves were legally classified as livestock along with sheep, cattle, horses, and camels, or occasionally as ‘talking animals’ (*hayawan al-natiq*).”¹⁷ Due largely to the reduction in importance of slave duties, the prices demanded for slaves had been reduced from an

¹² Ibid., 161.

¹³ McLoughlin, *Economic Development*, 361.

¹⁴ Ibid., 360.

¹⁵ Jay Spaulding, “Slavery, Land Tenure and Social Class in the Northern Turkish Sudan,” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 15, no. 1 (1982): 1-20.

¹⁶ McLoughlin, *Economic Development*, 364.

¹⁷ Spaulding, *Land Tenure*, 12.

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average value of approximately twelve Spanish dollars to less than one Spanish dollar between 1814 and 1895.¹⁸ The reduction of the price of slave ownership allowed for even those with modest means to own a share in slavery, creating a society which became heavily reliant on slaves for the growth of the economy.¹⁹ As McLaughlin points out, “[b]y the end of the nineteenth century it could be said that throughout the northern Sudan all the agricultural work was done by slaves, who were then said to account for almost a third of the population.”²⁰

When discussing slavery in Sudan, the Anglo-Egyptian colonization has been largely accredited with ending the country’s tradition of slavery. Beginning in 1898, the newly established Anglo-Egyptian “administrators abolished slavery in a gradual manner” in order to prevent economic devastation and uprisings by the slaveholding class.²¹ The declaration of slavery as being illegal was received with mixed results, with those of the North angered and those of the South believing that it was long overdue.²² However, it is difficult to believe that with the resentment of the northern Sudanese and the economy of the country in the balance, that slavery was ever completely abolished under English rule. According to Jok Madut Jok, “the British colonial administration did not completely abolish the slave trade and slavery, but rather opted for a “modern” form of slavery,” meaning slavery moved underground rather than operating in a more visible way as had the traditional Islamic slave trade.²³

Effects of Colonization

As Robert Collins suggests, “[t]he historiography of Sudan is complex and long, spanning from the Kingdom of Kush (760 BCE-350 CE) to the present day, but the history of independent Sudan begins with the withdrawal of the British and Egyptian

¹⁸ Ibid.,10.

¹⁹ Ibid., 12.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Makris, *Possession*, 163.

²² Jok, *War and Slavery*, 76.

²³ Ibid., 76.

rulers on 1 January 1956.”²⁴ However, there remains an underlying amount of negative effect that the Anglo-Egyptian government had on the ideas of the elite class in the newly formed Republic of the Sudan. The effects of the government’s pretense of the abolition of slavery provided those claiming Arabic ancestry with an increased amount of animosity toward those who were African. British officials also introduced “the Western notion of nationalism” to the Islamic elite, producing an increased search for self identity.²⁵ The advent of black slavery dominated by Islamic slavers, and the subsequent new ruling class of independent Sudan, had a lasting effect on the nationalistic idea of a Sudanese identity. Added to that is the idea that those claiming Arabic ancestry were not seen as authentic by the rest of the Arab world, and would largely be considered to be black in the Western world.²⁶ Thus the canyon between those who claimed to be Arabic and those categorized as African was furthered by the government under the British, creating a lasting animosity between the two groups.

In 1956, the authority of a newly independent Sudan was placed “directly into the hands of these Arabs, bringing to power the same populations who sixty years earlier had been engaged in the slave trade.”²⁷ This vaulted back into control the Arabic population of the north, who under the British received more and better education, and retained the lion’s share of the economy of the country. Those who were associated with the Southern portion of the country were faced with the problem of having a great deal of their population Islamized under the centuries of slavery, the lack of education among those who remained, and the lack of infrastructure to build from. These were among the contributing factors which led to the beginning of a national identity that was completely dominated by the Arabic population.

Following independence in 1956, the newly established government was again dominated by the Arabic elite in and surrounding Khartoum. The newly formed nation of Sudan began a

²⁴ Collins, *Modern Sudan*, 1.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Makris, *Possession*, 163.

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quest for identity, which those of the Arabic north considered to be an Islamic nationalism. This was contrasted by the ideas of the South, who sensing their inferior position, requested either to become a separate state, or to remain under colonial rule until the two sides were more even.²⁸ Because the Northern elites were victorious, they followed their own traditional view of superiority over the south, and that perpetuated by the Anglo-Egyptian rule of previous decades, and began to assert their will on those of African origin to the South and West. In 1983 the government of Sudan, under then president Jaafar Nimeiri, proclaimed *shari'a* law in which all citizens were expected to live under the rules of Islam. This act undermined the religious diversity of Sudan and a brutal civil war erupted throughout the county.²⁹

The resultant civil war in Sudan led to the increase of slave raiding and trading throughout the region, usually encouraged by the government. As Jok points out, “[t]he successive Khartoum regimes since the start of the current civil war between the North and South in 1983 have been notorious for encouraging enslavement of southern blacks, and increasingly Christian Sudanese, by northern Arab Muslims.”³⁰ This was originally the way in which the Sudanese government rewarded “Arab militias fighting on the government side of Sudan’s civil war.”³¹ The preference of female and young slaves led to the systematic killing of male African men in order to prevent resistance, and the capture and enslavement of the remaining women and children.³² The bloody civil war continued for two decades resulting in the displacement of millions of southern Sudanese to refugee camps in Chad and Kenya, as well as 40,000 southerners enslaved in Northern Sudan.³³

²⁸ Jok, *War and Slavery*, 15.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.

³¹ Nicholas D. Kristof, “A Slave’s Journey in Sudan,” *The New York Times*, 23 April 2002, A23.

³² Richard Lobban, “Slavery in the Sudan Since 1989,” *Arab Studies Quarterly* 23, no.2 (2001): 31-39.

³³ This is an estimate provided by the Commission for the Eradication of Abduction of Women and Children (CEAWC). This is an organization began by the Sudanese government in 1999 in response to international outcry of slavery

Modern Slavery

Throughout all of the blood, tears, and oppression of the previous decades in war-torn Sudan, the Khartoum government has held strong in denying that any practice of enslavement exists in their nation. Although in more recent times the government has begun cracking down on what is called “tribal raiding,” they still deny that slavery exists in Sudan.³⁴ The government at Khartoum instead deflects any blame for slavery in Sudan stating that what are being construed as slave raids are ancient tribal fights for resources. Recent discussions involving the definition of slavery have also contributed to the problem of defining if what is currently occurring in Sudan is in reality slavery. Through denying the existence of slavery in Sudan and the continued argument of what constitutes slavery, the government of Khartoum is allowed to support the slave trade in Sudan while deflecting any blame to be placed on them. However, the evidence provided by the captives themselves, have provided substantial amount of accounts to combat the claims of the Sudanese government.

Abuk Bak’s personal account of her capture and subsequent enslavement provides insight into what those of Southern Sudan were subjected to at the hands of the raiding militia. According to Bak, “the militiamen, wrapped in their white robes and turbans, were shooting every man who crossed their path and setting fire to our houses.”³⁵ Those who remained alive were then rounded up,

in Sudan. Of the 40,000 southerner estimated to be enslaved in the North, 20,000 are thought to have been abducted, and 20,000 are thought to have been born to women who are enslaved. However, according to Christian Solidarity International, southern community experts estimate that 200,000 southerners have been enslaved. The actual numbers may never be known.

Robyn Dixon, “For Sudan Slaves, Freedom at a Cost,” *Los Angeles Times*, 29 March 2005, A1.

³⁴ Kristof, *Slave’s Journey*, 1.

³⁵ Jesse Sage and Liora Kasten, eds. *Enslaved: True Stories of Modern Day Slavery* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 43.

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placed into corrals, and whipped.³⁶ At twelve years old, Abuk Bak was taken from her family, sold into slavery, and forced to live outside. As a slave, she was forced to tend to the herds and provide household support, while being beaten by both the master and his children.³⁷ Central to Bak's account of her enslavement was her loss of personal identity to which she somberly proclaims that "To them I was just *abeeda*."³⁸ Bak continually uses the term *abeeda* to describe her relationship with her captives and defines the word as meaning black slave.³⁹

The account provided by Gabriel Muong Deng provides a similar depiction of slavery to that of Abuk Bak. Taken from his home at nine years old, Deng was transported to the Darfur region, a trek which took about a month to complete.⁴⁰ Put in charge of about 30 grazing cows, Deng was also provided with a gun which was intended to protect the cows from wild animals.⁴¹ Renamed Mohamed, and taught to pray, Deng was also beaten by his owner.⁴² Fortunately for Deng, he was able to escape his enslavement after about five years as a captive.⁴³

"Abuk Achian was 6 years old when Arab raiders rampaged through her village in southern Sudan, carried her off on horseback and turned her into a slave."⁴⁴ In her account, Achian complained of the difficult transition to life in slavery, including her inability to understand her captor's language.⁴⁵ However, Achian eventually became a Muslim, learned the Arabic language, and was forced to marry a young man.⁴⁶ Her husband was killed when he was raiding for more slaves, and Achian was a widow at

³⁶ ³⁶ Jesse Sage and Liora Kasten, eds. *Enslaved: True Stories of Modern Day Slavery* ., 44-46.

³⁷ Ibid., 48-50.

³⁸ Ibid., 47.

³⁹ Ibid., 47-50.

⁴⁰ "Is there Slavery in Sudan?" *Antislavery.org*, (March 2001) 9.

⁴¹ Ibid., 9.

⁴² "Is there Slavery in Sudan?" *Antislavery.org*, (March 2001) 9, 10.

⁴³ Ibid., 9-10.

⁴⁴ Kristof, *Slave's Journey*, 1.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

the age of sixteen.⁴⁷ The son she had bore to her husband was taken from her by his parents, and Achian was forced to flee.⁴⁸

While it is important to understand that the plight faced by slaves is primarily an individual event, there exists a significant amount of similarities among the slave narratives. Perhaps most alarming is the attempts of the enslavers to steal the self identity of those who they enslave. The slave owners continue to insist upon the assimilation of their slaves into the Arabic dominated Muslim culture of their masters. According to Michael Coren, “Survivors report being called ‘*Abeed*’ (black slave), enduring daily beatings, and receiving awful food. Masters also strip slaves of their religious and cultural identities, giving them Arabic names and forcing them to pray as Muslims.”⁴⁹ The assimilation of the slaves furthers the problems of definitively distinguishing the line upon which modern slavery in Sudan is based.

What is Slavery?

To further problematize the institution of slavery as a whole, much discussion has taken place over the past few decades of what exactly is the definition of slavery. Perhaps one of the most noted arguments is that of Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff which presents a view of African “slavery” as being distinct from that of the Westernized notion of chattel slavery as most clearly exhibited in the United States.⁵⁰ According to Miers and Kopytoff, the Westernized notion of chattel slavery as demonstrated by the plantation system in the United States propagates the Western idea that “the antithesis of ‘slavery’ is ‘freedom’, and ‘freedom’ means

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Michael Coren, “Sudan’s Slaves,” *Sun Media*, 25 November 2003, 1. <http://www.frontpagemag.com/articles/Printable.aspx?GUID=5F424171-CB25-4811-AD7> (accessed March 22, 2009).

⁵⁰ Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff, *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977), 254.

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autonomy and a lack of social bonds.”⁵¹ The contention then becomes that “In most African societies...the antithesis of ‘slavery’ is not ‘freedom’ qua autonomy but rather ‘belonging’.”⁵² Under such newly defined parameters, the “slaves” ability to partake in “social mobility” creates a reduction of marginality which allows the African slave to become a member of the owner’s tribe.⁵³ For Miers and Kopytoff “‘slavery’ is neither a single idea invented in some particular place from which it spread nor is it a single, clear-cut institution.”⁵⁴

In response to Miers and Kopytoff, Frederick Cooper states that “[m]any Africanists hesitate to use the term ‘slavery’ for fear of conjuring up the entire bundle of traits commonly associated with [chattel slavery].”⁵⁵ Cooper contends that the Africanist’s definition of a separate “African slavery” is a direct attempt to separate the slavery in Africa from the nasty connotations carried by the traditional word “slavery”.⁵⁶ In his view, slavery in Africa may differ from American slavery in that it “was not mainly an economic institution” but it is slavery nonetheless.⁵⁷ And to Miers and Kopytoff’s idea of the reduction of marginality of the slave in Africa, Cooper contends that although the slave may be integrated into a foreign society, “his foreign origin still made him distinct.”⁵⁸ Thus, the person enslaved never fully become a part of the society which enslaved them regardless of how much they are able to assimilate into their culture.⁵⁹

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Frederick Cooper, “Review Article: The Problem of Slavery in African Studies,” *The Journal of African History* 20, no. 1 (1979): 103-125.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 105.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 106.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 107.

⁵⁹ While such discussions are necessary to distinguish the varying forms of slavery plaguing the world at any given moment, it is not the purpose of this article to get into arguments of semantics, but instead to provide a better understanding of the challenges of slavery still being faced today. By ignoring the implications behind the fundamental differences in defining slavery as a whole or a particular institution, the focus of this article regarding the existent slavery in Sudan can better be directed toward the atrocities which are

With regards to slavery in Sudan, the assimilation of the slave into the society in which they are enslaved creates a parallel with the “slavery” described by Miers and Kopytoff. A large part of slaves’ experiences in Sudan is a direct result of their own ability to assimilate into the Islamized culture which dominates the North. The fact that the assimilation of the slave was largely by the forcefulness of the host society, and does not extend past the Islamicization of the slave, the assimilation of the slave cannot be truly conceived as social mobility. Thus the result of the slave’s assimilation is more in accordance with what Cooper described as the slave becoming only part of the foreign society. However, such an argument must not be allowed to detract from the atrocity of what is occurring, and that each form of slavery is unique to its people, culture, economy, and geography.

While this assimilation process is limited for the slave, the patrilineal society of the Arabic society of the North allows the subsequent generations fathered by Arabic men to become a part of the Arabic society. The traditional male dominated structure of Arabic tribal society, combined with the acceptance of concubines and their children, allows the relatively easy assimilation of slave children. Further assisting the assimilation of subsequent generations born in the North is the existence of racial mixture between Arabs and Africans already prevalent in the North. This allows for children born to Arabic fathers and slave women to avoid the process of assimilation into the new society, although they may continue to be looked down upon by the others within their father’s household.

Distractions

The problems Sudan is facing with the conflict plaguing the Darfur region of the country have provided a distraction capable of

occurring. In order to deflect such discussions which may further problematize the purposes of analyzing the current state of Sudanese slavery today, I will agree with Jok Madut Jok who simplifies the definition of slavery by defining a slave as “a person in the condition or status of being owned.” Jok, *War and Slavery*, 3.

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overshadowing the slavery engulfing the entire country.⁶⁰ Prior to the ceasefire between the North and South in 2005, the issue of slavery was overshadowed and hidden by the civil war plaguing Sudan. Since the signing of the ceasefire, the conflict in Sudan has been transferred to the Darfur region in western Sudan. The conflicts in Darfur have been the subject of international intrigue, especially centered on allegations of genocidal actions sanctioned by the Khartoum government. The discussion of slavery in Sudan is along the same lines as the discussion of genocide in the Darfur region. This is not to say that the two instances are on par with one another, but the lack of interest by other nations in attempting to curb either of the problems are similar situations. Therefore, the reasoning behind the lack of international response to either event is essentially the same, and thus interchangeable. Although the Darfur conflict has commanded substantial attention from the international community, the lack of intervention in what is being called genocide leaves little hope for the dissolution of slavery in Sudan.

In discussing the situation in Darfur, Morton Abramowitz and Jonathan Kolieb have suggested that “only a top-level, sustained, and aggressive multilateral mediation effort backed by the United States, the European Union, and African, Arab, and Chinese governments can stop the violence and reverse the massive displacement of people.”⁶¹ Such a response is a clear indication that there is no easy solution when dealing with the problems in Sudan, but that a multilevel global effort must be the basis for correcting both the genocide and slavery problems plaguing the country. This “multilateral mediation effort” allows for the leadership of global superpowers such as the United States and China, and the economically powerful European Union, while still eliciting participation from the neighboring Arabic and African nations.⁶² The modern history of Sudan has allowed for

⁶⁰ For a more comprehensive view into the problems of Sudan, see an interesting documentary “The Devil Came on Horseback.” Directed by Ricki Stern and Anne Sundberg, (Break Thru Films, 2007).

⁶¹ Morton Abramowitz and Jonathan Kolieb, “Why China Won’t Save Darfur.” http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=3847&print=1 (accessed February 23, 2009).

⁶² Ibid.

participation from both the United States and China. The international community seems to be waiting for their leadership, while neither seems to want a leadership role.

While the leadership of the United States and China are essential, cooperation of the European Union, and African and Arab governments are also considered to be important parts of any solution regarding Sudan. Participation of the European Union in a Sudanese solution plan would be imperative in attempting to apply sanctions on Sudan, assuring that other economically strong entities would not simply fill the void left by the China. As for the neighboring African and Arab governments, the history of ethnic troubles in the region would be more easily avoided in the future if both sides were properly represented and supported internationally. However, the international community's lack of response to the slavery crisis in Sudan has not only failed to provide the Sudanese government with an incentive to end slavery, but has also perpetuated an atmosphere which provides an umbrella of protection for the Khartoum government.

Although the United States is usually relied upon to provide some means to end the wrongs of the world, and to provide protection for the oppressed, they have been visibly absent from the crises in Sudan. This is not to say that the United States is unaware of the situation in Sudan, but instead seems either unwilling or unable to interfere with the Sudanese government. David C. Kang suggests that the United States' international involvement is many times based on strategic interests, leaving the United States to be "highly selective about who we're moral about."⁶³ While this is true in many instances, and can be applied in the case of Sudan, suggestions that the United States has done nothing to deter the Khartoum government are more a testament to the expectations of US intervention in humanitarian affairs than their lack of participation.

It is more plausible that the lack of interest by the United States is due largely to the complex history of their involvement in Sudan and neighboring African states. The United States finds

⁶³ Stephanie Hanson, "China, Africa, and Oil." <http://www.cfr.org/publication/9557/> (accessed February 18, 2009).

itself in a complicated position knowing that sanctions placed on Sudan in the past have not had the desired effect, but has instead opened the door for the country's economic partnership with China. According to Jokowi, "the Americans...have not given Sudan's crisis the attention it deserves partly because Sudan is remote and represents no immediate interest, and partly because the United States met with disaster when it sought to intervene in Somalia."⁶⁴ Thus, the disinterest of the United States coupled with their lack of recent success in the region, has created hesitancy on the part of Washington. This has caused the United States to take a back seat to China whose influence in Sudan far outweighs that of the US, in the hope that their diplomacy will end the atrocities in Sudan.

The rapid growth of the Chinese economy in recent decades has led to China's increased participation in the global quest for the natural resources necessary for sustaining that growth. This has resulted in China becoming the second highest trading partner in Africa, behind only the United States.⁶⁵ However, China is Sudan's primary trading partner, and essential to this relationship and the Sudanese economy is petroleum of which China has cornered the market.⁶⁶ Thus the importance of the economic relationship with China, allows that government to be in a position to greatly influence the Khartoum government and possibly implement change. And as Sudan's most important trading partner, Abramowitz and Kolieb state that China certainly "has the economic leverage to gain the ear of President Bashir," but are unwilling to get involved in Sudanese politics.⁶⁷ As to why this is the case, it has been suggested by the International Crisis Group in a 2002 report that China has "a vested interest in the continuation of a low level of insecurity [in Sudan]. It keeps the other major investors out."⁶⁸ To this end, China has a vested interest in the continued chaos plaguing Sudan, and the necessity

⁶⁴ Jokowi, *War and Slavery*, 170.

⁶⁵ Hanson, *China*.

⁶⁶ Gwen Thompkins, "Chinese Influence in Sudan is Subtle, Complicated." <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=92282540> (accessed February 23, 2009).

⁶⁷ Abramowitz, *China*, 1-2.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 1.

of a continued economic relationship with the Khartoum government. Any change in government or policy may have an affect on China's position in Sudan, and that is a risk they are unwilling to take.

For their part in international policy, China does not see itself in any position to attempt to interfere with the Sudanese government even when discussing human rights violations. This is largely due to China's foreign policy approach, which is based primarily on economics, with an obvious absence of political interference. Often accused of human rights violations themselves, Stephanie Hanson states that "Chinese leaders say human rights are relative, and each country should be allowed their own definition of them and timetable for reaching them."⁶⁹ These "noninterference" policies allow the Chinese government to continue economic relations with Sudan, while avoiding any sense of moral obligation.⁷⁰

However, the Chinese government's economic relations with Sudan extend beyond oil, and this relationship has provided Sudan with a powerful ally in the international community. It is understandable that China would maintain their noninterference policy to avoid any implications or repercussions in regards to Sudan, but they take the relationship one step further by continually backing the Sudanese government against the UN. For its part in this relationship, Danna Harman says "China sells Khartoum weapons and military aircraft and backs Sudan in the UN Security Council."⁷¹ The threats of veto by China in the United Nations' (UN) attempts to deploy peacekeeping forces to stabilize Sudan has significantly weakened the international efforts to pressure Sudan's government.⁷² Ignoring the problems in Sudan

⁶⁹ Hanson, *China*.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Danna Harman, "How China's Support of Sudan Shields a Regime Called 'Genocidal.'"

<http://www.printhis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=How+China%27s+support> (accessed February 23,2009).

⁷² Danna Harman, "How China's Support of Sudan Shields a Regime Called 'Genocidal.'"

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can be construed as noninterference, but defending Sudan in the international community makes China a large part of the problem.

More recently, the International Criminal Court (ICC) announced a warrant for the arrest of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on charges of war crimes and accusing him of orchestrating the genocide in Darfur. China's response to this news was to state their worry over such a drastic measure. In response the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Qin Gang, stated that "China opposes any acts that might interfere with the peaceful overall situation of Darfur and Sudan."⁷³ China further expressed concern that an arrest warrant coming after peace talks in Darfur may disrupt the agreements already reached.⁷⁴ Again China has presented themselves in between the Khartoum government and the due process of the international community. While China's position could be construed as Eastern diplomacy, it may also stem from the difficulties that the Chinese trade monopoly in Sudan may face with a change of government in Khartoum.

Conclusion

As part of the Islamic slave trade, Sudan has a long history of slavery. Sudan became a nation that was the center of interaction between Arabic nomads and African groups. This continued interaction, coupled with the traditions on both sides presented a basis for the continuation of slavery. While it is easy to simplify this slavery as being a product of racial difference, it is much more complicated than any simplification can define. However, these simplifications have merit in the attempt to give light to the problem of modern slavery.

Geographically, Sudan is divided between the northern region and the South. The North is generally defined as being Arabic in tradition, while the South is considered predominantly

<http://www.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=How+China%27s+support> (accessed May 21, 2009).

⁷³ "China Regretful, Worried about Sudan President Arrest Warrant," available from http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-03/05/content_10946492.htm (accessed May 21, 2009).

⁷⁴ Ibid.

African. Tradition has held that the slaves usually come from the South and are imported into the economy of the North. It is important to understand that the enslavement of foreign individuals is a part of traditional slavery, and that what initially occurred in Sudan did not differentiate from this norm elsewhere in the continent. Those from the African population that were initially enslaved were placed in positions within Arabic society which held some esteem. This leads one to believe that at least initially slavery in the region was not based solely upon race.

Over time, the introduction of Islam came to dominate the region, creating a unifying identity for the Arabic tribes. However, the interactions between Arabic men and African women provided a population which, although considered Arabic, blurred the line between those who considered themselves Arabic and those of African descent. Eventually, this transition provided two sides; those who were Islamized, and those who were not. This redefined the positions of the people of Sudan, creating a hierarchy dominated by the Islamic North. In continued attempts at an Islamic identity recognized by the rest of the Arabic world, the North began to look down upon the South, further perpetuating slavery based on cultural identity, not race.

Just as this oversimplification of the historiography of Sudanese slavery is complicated, so too is the solution to the present-day problem. The overlapping of identity in Sudan creates no definitive line which can be drawn between where slavery begins and ends. The generational differences between those who are enslaved and their offspring have further complicated the issue. Attempts to assist slaves by providing their freedom have proven to be as difficult as the causes of slavery itself.

Cour Koot was enslaved more than twenty years ago, taken to the North, and escaped after two years.⁷⁵ Upon escaping, Koot continued to work in the North until the opportunity to return to his homeland in the South came in 2005. Being helped by the UN, he requested that his daughter who had been enslaved and made a wife of an Arab man, also be returned to her ancestral home. In the transaction, her daughter Sara Ali was also transported to the

⁷⁵ Dixon, *Freedom*, 5.

South. For his part, Koot found that the South to which he so desperately wished to return was not in a position to support an economy, and was in a desolate condition. It was obvious that the decades of neglect and war had taken a large toll on the South and that in order to return slaves to their homeland it must be done in conjunction with economic development.

The story of Koot's family also provides interesting generational reactions to the re-appropriation of slaves to the South. When Koot's daughter, Achol Deng was taken north, she was married to an Arabic man, who always treated her well.⁷⁶ Although she was originally a slave brought to the North, Deng became assimilated to the Islamic culture, and wished to remain with her family. Her daughter, Sara Ali, is also being transported south with her mother and grandfather. At 20 years old, Sara has already developed her identity, and in her eyes she is Arab.⁷⁷ For Sara, the trip south has robbed her of her homeland, separated her from her father, and stripped her of any chance of a future.⁷⁸

The problems regarding the various stages of assimilation which lead to self identity among captives and their offspring has not deterred the attempts to free slaves and return them to the South. According to Jok, "[f]rustrated by the indifference of Western governments and the world community at large, Christian organizations from the Western world started the campaign to raise money for the purpose of freeing abducted and enslaved children."⁷⁹ By 2005, Christian Solidarity International (CSI) had bought and freed an estimated 80,000 slaves.⁸⁰ However, this decision to buy slaves has caused a great deal of controversy. According to Robyn Dixon, "Critics [of CSI] say most of the people they bought freedom for were not abductees and the money was pocketed by unscrupulous middlemen who staged the event."⁸¹ There is also the fear that by buying back slaves, traders will be encouraged to continue raiding.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Jok, *War and Slavery*, 161.

⁸⁰ Dixon, *Freedom*, 3.

⁸¹ Ibid.

For Sudanese slaves, the answer to the problem is as complicated as the problem itself. As with most problems it is important to identify the root of the problem, a quest that is not easily concluded when dealing with the complications of slavery. Hidden behind the rhetoric of ethnic identity, religious affiliation, political involvement, and historic principles is the individual. The arguments over slavery in Sudan have continued, and individual solutions have been implemented, but both the problem and solution of modern Sudanese slavery is rooted in the self identity of the slave. Without an absolute separation between slavery and freedom, which is lacking in Sudan, the problem must be evaluated on an individual basis. However, it must also be understood, that the problem of slavery in Sudan has existed for centuries and has occurred to the detriment of the South, and any solution to the problem plaguing that country must include the development of the southern economy.

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Slavery and the Search for Belonging

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In Pursuit of the Sixth Star: An Analysis of Literature and Tactics from the 1911 California Woman Suffrage Campaign

BY SARAH TREVINO PROMNITZ

After an initial defeat to win the vote in 1896, suffragists in California reorganized their efforts and in 1911 campaigned for a state constitutional amendment guaranteeing women the franchise. In order to combat fierce opposition and to increase public awareness of the proposed amendment, California suffrage advocates developed new forms of campaign literature and tactics. An analysis of 1911 suffrage campaign literature uncovers that the campaign was based upon the core arguments of innate womanly virtue and the need to create an inter-class coalition of women dedicated to the suffrage cause. The campaign to gain the franchise was considered a radical movement at the time, and an attempt to alter fundamentally the traditional gender ideologies of the era. To combat this assumption, California suffrage advocates adopted a tactical campaign that was highly visible and aggressive. In doing so, women were able to present a united front to the California public and enlighten the electorate to the notion of females being active participants in the political realm. In suffrage literature, arguments often conformed to traditional philosophies about gender and the separate-spheres mentality. Thus, California suffragists attempted to make the contentious idea of woman suffrage palatable to the public and to elicit greater support for the cause. The 1911 California woman suffrage campaign had a profound effect on the way gender and political equality were perceived within the state, and suffrage advocate's successful victory was a crucial advancement for the legitimization of women as active citizens within the state and for the future movement toward greater gender equality.

In Pursuit of the Sixth Star

The 1911 California campaign to adopt a state constitutional amendment guaranteeing women's suffrage was a crucial chapter in the arduous nationwide struggle for women's enfranchisement and proved to be a watershed moment for women's equality in California politics. Emerging from the suffrage battle was a new woman, one that was endowed with forever altered perceptions of her roles and responsibilities as a female in California society. Furthermore, this perceptual shift extended to the California public as a whole, providing the opportunity for the communal legitimization of women as an active and significant political constituency and laying the foundation for future advancements and gender ideological shifts that would come to characterize the latter portion of the 20th Century.

The journey to become the sixth state in the nation to legalize woman suffrage was not a smooth transition from disenfranchisement, but rather a gradual process steeped with controversy. It called into question the public's basic assumptions about the notions of gender and the nature of political fairness. As a previously proposed amendment, women's suffrage had already failed fifteen years before the advent of the 1911 campaign, and California suffragists quickly assessed the failings of the previous 1896 franchise attempt and made crucial adaptations to the campaign. Modifications were instituted; innovative new tactics were introduced, and as many hindrances as possible were eliminated in order to form a winning political strategy. The contentious nature of woman suffrage ensured that ingenuity would need to be a hallmark of the campaign, allowing California suffragist's to create a movement that adhered to inter-class unity and modern tactical campaigning. The methods pioneered by California were soon adopted by other states in their own quests for woman suffrage, creating a wave of woman suffrage successes that culminated in the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.

To accomplish their goals, California woman suffragists implemented new, more sophisticated campaigning methods that emphasized efficiency, inter-class unity, and traditional gender ideologies. Clearly the suffragists had learned from past failings. Aggressive and highly public campaign tactics were launched with

the intent of depicting the woman suffrage crusade as an inescapable social reform movement; one that would mark the beginning of ethical legislative practices and improve general California society. Also introduced was pervasive and systematized campaign literature that advanced the notion of woman suffrage as not being a means of dismantling traditional gender role doctrines, but rather as a reform that would work to enhance and expand the intrinsic virtue of women. California suffragists also made distinct advancements in the formation of class-wide unification, creating a broad coalition of women from all social backgrounds that proved to be instrumental to the campaign's eventual success.

The events of the 1911 suffrage campaign did not materialize out of a sudden yearning of California women to dominate political life. Rather, it developed out of and in conjunction with the larger national campaign to attain universal woman suffrage. The fundamental ideas of women's political equality had been central to the discourse in the American political landscape since the Republic's inception. In fact, Abigail Adams frequently extolled on the subject to her husband, warning that "if particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation."¹ The jesting nature of the statement clearly shows that Adams realized the futility of her aims, but the underlying sentiment is a clear understanding of a growing concern for women's rights advocacy in the fledging American democracy. To the forerunners of the equal rights movement, there dawned a realization that a nation built upon the ideals of equality and personal freedom would someday have to reckon with the fundamental inequalities embedded within the country's new governmental system.

The pioneering concerns for equality and justice that Adams and others extolled carried over into the antebellum period. Amid the growing abhorrence to the injustices of slavery, the national women's movement witnessed its organizational birth.

¹ Edith B. Gelles, *First Thoughts: Life and Letters of Abigail Adams* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1998), 15.

Women, discouraged by the lack of political influence they wielded in the growing abolition crusade, began a formalized women's rights movement in the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention in the northwestern United States. This inaugural women's rights conference was concerned with the social, moral, legal, educational, and economic status of women. However, the right to vote was not seen nor was it regarded as the initial focus of woman's reform.² As time passed, however, these early women's leaders began to see suffrage as the only way in which to ensure that their rights could legally be protected. Women consequently campaigned vigorously to have the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, born out of the ashes of the Civil War battlefields, broadened to include women. Their failure served only to stiffen their resolve to push for a constitutional amendment specifically targeting the right to vote in relation to gender.

Despite initial setbacks, the woman suffrage crusade continued to gain both in momentum and in followers. Various plans of action to secure the ballot, be it through an all-encompassing constitutional amendment or through a state-by-state suffrage passage, were proposed and fought over. A compromise was eventually reached where the ultimate goal would be the attainment of a nation-wide woman suffrage amendment that would be built upon the strength and support of individual state woman suffrage triumphs. This plan focused on states that seemed sympathetic to the suffrage crusade, and California's location in the suffrage-friendly West made it an ideal candidate to launch the renewed statewide enfranchisement campaign. Additional features made California a prime potential candidate for suffrage, such as its large urban and immigrant population, which would provide the movement with its first victory outside the rural Western regions. To secure California as the sixth suffrage state would also mean a tremendous boost in momentum for the national campaign, with a win serving as a rallying point and potential harbinger for future individual state successes.

In 1896 an initial campaign to pass woman suffrage in California was launched, but ended in a rather resounding defeat

² Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, *One Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement* (NewSage Press, 1995), 9.

for the cause. Woman suffragists concluded that several factors had coalesced to defeat them in their initial effort to gain the vote: the liquor interests and its political allies who propagated the notion that woman suffrage would mean the passage of prohibition; the very wealthy and the very poor who opposed suffrage in the San Francisco Bay area; and the enduring prejudices of the California voting public over the assumption that the vote would fundamentally alter traditional gender roles.³ The fifteen years leading up to the 1911 campaign were spent trying to counter these notions and to extend the suffrage movement's base of appeal across class lines, a tactic that was conspicuously lacking in the 1896 campaign.

As California entered the 20th Century, women were becoming increasingly vexed by the lack of real influence they wielded when it came to initiating statewide reform. Women recognized that they had their own special interests and issues that were separate from men, yet there was a grave shortage of advocacy groups willing to lobby for legislation that addressed their concerns. The few laws and regulations that were passed concerning women's issues and the domestic sphere were considered inadequate and very limited in scope. Suffragists argued that the only solution would be for Californian women to be allotted a larger influence in public society, something that only the right to vote could provide. Women's suffrage was thus promoted to the public as the only way to guarantee that the needs and concerns of the women of the state would be properly addressed.

While the battle for the ballot intensified, California suffragists privately concluded that success could only be achieved if their movement took on a more visible role in the state's public political consciousness. Leaving domestic rhetoric to the literature campaign, California suffragists concurrently engaged in a battle to get as much exposure for the suffrage cause as possible. To accomplish their goals, California suffragists adopted every

³ Ronald Schaffer, "The Problem of Consciousness in the Woman Suffrage Movement: A California Perspective," *The Pacific Historical Review*, 45, no.4 (November 1976): 470.

legitimate form of tactical campaigning they could devise, taking their arguments to the public at large and utilizing such methods as door-to-door campaigning, precinct organization, street speaking and car campaigning, press work, plays and pageants, outdoor meetings and rallies, and participation in suffrage parades.

These new campaigning techniques were revolutionary for the California suffrage campaign and vital to its success. California suffragists refined older techniques and brought in a level of campaign militancy that would have been impossible to institute only a few years before. While suffragists had previously engaged in tactics designed to convince the public of the right to be equal participants in the public arena, they were never greatly persuasive. This was mainly due to the fact that earlier public tactics were educational in nature, attempting to influence the male electorate but rarely going into anything that could be classified as assertive in nature.⁴ Instead, these early suffragists attempted to cultivate support amongst those they felt they could easily convince. Seeking mass public support for woman suffrage was deemed too militant in the early day of the movement, and to engage in street-speaking campaigns and outdoor campaigns would have been unthinkable.

Highly visible tactics, such as those used in California, were successful in bringing the public's attention to the cause of suffrage. Large numbers of women within the state were now seen as active agents and political demonstrators, publicly voicing their right to be equally included in California's political atmosphere.⁵ In doing so, it also became increasingly difficult for the suffrage opposition to continue to characterize women as passive onlookers in regard to political and social change. Public campaigns for the right to vote had an enormous impact on the public's perceptions of suffragists as it highlighted their determination to break through the long-held tradition of California women as being content in their domesticity. For the first time, the electorate could witness the growing dissatisfaction women had with the gender norms of

⁴ Holly J. McCammon, "Out of the Parlors and into the Streets: The Changing Tactical Repertoire of the U.S. Women's Suffrage Movements," *Social Forces*, 81 (March 2003): 790.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 791.

the day on a large and unified scale, putting the issue of suffrage in the context of a statewide gender reform movement rather than a small-scale attempt to alter the gender ideologies of the era.

These conspicuous campaign tactics generated reams of publicity for the suffrage movement as the public was highly intrigued by these demonstrations that challenged the notions of female respectability that had previously eschewed women's vigorous participation in public life.⁶ Women actively engaging in such "masculine" demonstrations were widely reported by the press, but moreover, it helped to reshape suffragist's perceptions about their own political validity. As they participated and campaigned for men to grant them all the privileges of citizenship, they themselves were already actively participating in activities that defined the citizen. The tactical and publicity campaigns of the woman suffragists made California women a highly visible component of society, which warmed the state electorate to the idea of women as eager and enthusiastic political participants. California women had identified a goal for themselves and united around it to secure its passage, attaining an unprecedented degree of visibility for their cause in the process.

The saliency of the campaign also showed the fierce commitment that California woman suffrage advocates had for the cause, aiding in the perception of a dedicated, statewide suffrage movement. In publicly protesting, California women firmly placed themselves in the public realm, distancing themselves from the old traditions of best being suited to tend home and hearth. As historian Ellen Carol DuBois noted, suffrage leaders expected that by "overstepping the boundary of respectability would etch suffrage beliefs on women's souls, beyond retraction or modification."⁷ By engaging in visible protest, women were

⁶ Sherry J. Katz, "A Politics of Coalition: Socialist Women and the California Suffrage Movement, 1900-1911," in *One Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement*, ed. Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, (NewSage Press, 1995), 255.

⁷ Ellen Carol DuBois, "Working Women, Class Relations, and Suffrage Militance: Harriot Stanton Blatch and the New York Woman Suffrage Movement, 1894-1909," in *One Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement*, ed. Marjorie Spruill Wheeler (NewSage Press, 1995), 240.

directly challenging the separate-spheres mentality, a long held gender role ideology that divided the sexes into public (male) and domestic (female) spheres of dominance. By participating in a movement that was so highly public, California suffragists were able to ceremoniously sever the bonds of domesticity that for so long held them, allowing them to fully immerse themselves into the fight for woman suffrage.

The increased assertiveness of the campaign also served to legitimize the concept of women's enfranchisement. As suffragists took their arguments to the streets and directly to the public at large, they began to see themselves, and were consequently seen as, legitimate participants in political reform. With every new campaign victory came an increase in suffragist's awareness within themselves, as they realized that by acting and protesting as citizens, they were being seen as plausible candidates for future political equality. This shift in perception meant that California women, regardless of the outcome of the 1911 election, were determined to make their presence felt within the realm of California politics. The mass movement for women's enfranchisement solidified suffragist's determination to win not only state's suffrage, but to aggressively take on the issue of nationwide suffrage as well.

The California suffrage movement as a whole provided a sense of unity to the women of the state, bringing women from various socio-economic strata, religious ideologies, and political backgrounds together and united in the fight for a common cause. Historian Sherry J. Katz takes special note of this trend in her analysis of the importance of Socialist women to the campaign, stating, "the demand for suffrage constituted a 'capricious umbrella' under which a large diversity of women, organizations, and beliefs could temporarily stand."⁸ This overtly public campaign for the ballot visually unified suffragists in the public's perception of the cause. Mothers and factory girls, the wealthy and the poor, all publicly campaigned together in solidarity for the cause and were successful in giving the issue of woman suffrage a sense of urgency and importance that rhetorical argumentation alone could never hope to achieve.

⁸ Katz, "A Politics of Coalition," 249-50.

Also of paramount importance to the 1911 California suffrage movement was the literature campaign. Realizing the potential value of a pervasive suffrage literature operation, suffrage leaders retooled their literature and adapted it as an instrument of mass marketing, a means of extending the issue of suffrage beyond the realm of the provincial and making it an issue of statewide importance. Literature disseminated during the 1911 California suffrage campaign was unique in that it was systematic, repetitive, and ubiquitous. California suffrage leaders looked to the infant advertising agencies as their inspiration for the diffusion of their core literature, and marketed the issue of women's suffrage like a salable commodity. Relying heavily on catchy slogans, simplified messages, and iterative arguments, California suffrage literature was successful in portraying votes for women as applicable and acceptable to the average citizen. Moreover, suffrage workers were able to adopt the principles of contemporary consumerism and apply it to their campaign, effectively recasting the image of woman suffrage as modern, attainable, and nearly impossible to ignore.

In order to sell the issue of women's suffrage as a viable commodity, it needed to be dispersed as one, and California suffragists wasted no time in bombarding the male electorate with signs, buttons, flyers, posters, and pamphlets, advancing the cause of woman suffrage. California suffragists even took their campaign to the air, tossing woman suffrage leaflets from a balloon floating two thousand feet above Los Angeles' Fourth of July festivities.⁹ The ubiquitous nature of suffrage literature dispersal allowed suffragists to saturate the state with their aims, overwhelming critics of their cause by the sheer volume of campaign material that they spread out to the public. Furthermore, the diffusion of campaign literature to the masses was one of the first indications that the 1911 suffrage campaign would not be a quick and quiet affair by the suffragists; instead, it would be an all-encompassing

⁹ Jane Apostol, "Why Women Should Not Have the Vote: Anti-Suffrage Views in the Southland in 1911," in *Women in the Life of Southern California*, ed. Doyce B. Nunis, Jr. (Los Angeles, CA: Historical Society of Southern California, 1996), 270.

assault on California. Campaign literature was quickly recognized to be a cheap and efficient means to ensure that the most critical messages of the woman suffragists could effectively be distributed to the public.

California suffragists adamantly refused to allow the woman suffrage issue to be pushed into the shadows of a busy election year, and they relentlessly barraged the voting public with their strongest arguments and most influential supporters. In recalling the enthusiastic and confident nature of the California campaign, suffragist Carrie Chapman Catt recalled, “So omnipresent was the insistent suffrage propaganda that the twenty-two other constitutional amendments were thrust into the background and thousands read and talked of woman suffrage only, day after day.”¹⁰ Thus, California suffragists ensured that suffrage would not be an issue in the 1911 election, but would rather be *the* issue, one that had the capacity to be a turning point in California politics.

The 1911 California suffrage campaign also saw the introduction of systematized literature campaigning that allowed for the greater dispersal of information, something that the previous individual methods conspicuously lacked. With a new standardized and efficient campaign literature strategy, California suffrage advocates could reach out to the broad diversity of the state’s population. These new methods guaranteed that the suffrage message would transcend regional, social, and class lines. New literature campaigning meant the issue of woman suffrage would appeal to voters in both the northern and southern portions of the state, which constituted two very different political and social backdrops. New campaign techniques would also help convince both the wealthy and working-class members of the state to join the fight for woman suffrage as well as transcend organizational and cultural ties, giving California women a common cause to unite around.

While the tactical campaign was successful in being the visible justification for women’s political equality, the literature

¹⁰ Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler, Introduction by T.A. Larson. *Woman Suffrage and Politics: The Inner Story of the Suffrage Movement*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), 175.

campaign in California was successful in influencing the public on a more personal level and aimed to bring in a wider audience in support for the cause. The literature campaign also specifically targeted, on a deeper analytical level, many of the attacks the opposition was purporting to the public and could make claims and assertions specifically designed for use in certain regions and segments of California's population. Campaign literature also served as an important way to counteract the aggressive public tactics that were being employed by the suffragists, becoming a way to appeal to members of the California electorate on a more traditional level than large-scale community tactics would be able.

The vast majority of California suffrage campaign literature was built upon two distinct concepts designed to neutralize the issue of suffrage. This first overarching argument was built upon the assumption of the innate morality of women. Women, being perceived as the moral guardians of society, would benefit the California public by bringing their virtuous and ethical attributes into the political arena. In what became a defining feature of the campaign, suffragists utilized a blend of innovation and traditionalism in gender rhetoric that served to neutralize the concept of woman suffrage, making it more palatable to a skeptical California public. For example, a suffrage pamphlet entitled "Why California Women Should Vote" declared that "women are so generally chaste, that even fraud, force, money, pretended love, and the allurements of an idle, elegant life cannot tempt from virtue's path enough women to supply the demand."¹¹ These characterizations presented to the California voting public an incorruptible segment of the population, one that would be endowed with the capacity to make ethical voting decisions and would have the greatest chance of cleaning up political corruption.

¹¹ "Why California Women Should Vote" California suffrage pamphlet, distributed by the California Equal Suffrage Association, San Francisco. Ida Rust Macpherson Collection By and About Women, Denison Library, Scripps College, Box 1, Folder 32. Hereafter referred to as IRMC.

¹² Clifford Howard. "Man Needs Woman's Ballot," California suffrage extract. IRMC, Denison Library, Scripps College, box 1, folder 92a.

The intention of the second main concept of California suffrage literature was to solicit and maintain an inter-class alliance of support. This second concept focused on arguments and rhetoric intended to unite women of all classes under the banner of suffrage, shifting the suffrage movement from an upper and middle class crusade to an all-encompassing one. With campaign literature targeting women of all social classes, the women's suffrage movement could break away from many of the more elitist constraints that bound the movement, while at the same time utilizing the vital contributions of wealth and political prestige that the upper classes could add to the cause. In addition to seeking out expanded class-wide support, suffrage literature also made a conscientious effort to appeal to the needs and concerns of other constituencies, namely mothers and both the men and women of the rural and urban sectors of the state.

This California campaign literature spoke directly to the wage-earning women and summed up the need for working women to be able to vote. One example of this is a pamphlet entitled "Why Wage-Earning Women Should Vote," which declared that more than seven million women in the United States daily left their homes to go out in the world and fought beside men for their living. They worked under greater disadvantages and temptations than men, they worked for longer hours and lower wages, they bore the greater burdens of their industrial system, yet they did not have the protection which men had of the ballot.¹²

As it now appeared that the number of women seeking wages would invariably continue to rise, it became of utmost importance to protect them from the strains of work. They asserted women were naturally more delicate and, without proper protection, would wind up with the "stunted growth and impaired vitality of the English working people" that were forced to suffer due to the "direct results of lack of legislation in their behalf when the introduction of machinery made possible the great exploitation of labor."¹³

¹² "Why Wage-Earning Women Should Vote," California woman suffrage pamphlet, printed by the California Equal Suffrage Association. IRMC, Denison Library, Scripps College, box 1, folder 74.

¹³ *Ibid.*, box 1, folder 74.

Campaign literature made it plain that one of the principle purposes of suffrage was to alleviate the problems that had begun to arise with the onset of increased industrialization and mechanization.¹⁴ It was argued that before the advent of mass industrialism, women had more satisfactory domestic living conditions. Popular campaign arguments asserted that these women never had occasion to venture out of the comforts of the home since they could produce virtually any commodity that was needed themselves. Food, clothes, soap, candles, and other items of home necessity were all made by home women with their own home-grown products and their own labor. Domiciliary concerns were thus their primary concern, and they consequently had no reason to enter the public sphere. They left the public realm to the men who, being the dominant sex in the public arena, consequently made laws in order to protect their own male interests.¹⁵ As mechanization and industrialization began to mass-produce items more cheaply and in greater quantities than the lone housewife was able, the center of women's work was transferred to the factory—forcing women to abandon their sphere of influence and enter the previously male-dominated public dimension. Campaign literature thus focused on the perceived need to protect women from the harsh realities of public life that now surrounded them on a daily basis.

The specific constituencies mentioned in literature thus blended both a call for unity and for the extension of feminine virtue. For instance, in specifically targeting the needs of mothers, California suffrage literature ennobled the responsibility as an example of moral perfection. As one suffrage excerpt pointed out, "...in any case involving a moral issue, in any case involving the welfare of the child or the home—the foundation corners of the nation—she is above all else the Woman, the Mother. If, therefore, for no other reason than this, we need the woman's ballot."¹⁶ The

¹⁴ Schaffer, Ronald, "The Problem of Consciousness in the Woman Suffrage Movement: A California Perspective," *The Pacific Historical Review* 45, no.4, (November 1976): 475.

¹⁵ "Why Wage-Earning Women Should Vote," IRMC, box 1, folder 74.

¹⁶ Ibid.

adequacy with which a woman could perform her expected obligations as a wife and mother depended largely on the degree of available support from the political area, as laws and legislation that regulated home life were becoming of increasing importance to the new, urbanized society that was beginning to characterize the lives of many individuals. The franchise thus began to be promoted as a means for mothers to gain lasting and important legislative influence for the rights and protections of the home she governed.

The basis of the arguments advocating the need of home women to have the vote rested upon the assumption that it was the mother who was responsible for the cleanliness of the home, the wholesomeness of the food provided to the family, and the health and educational upbringing of the children within the home.¹⁷ While the mother was supposed to provide for all these things, she had no recourse when the markets were flooded with unsanitary, impure food, when her family had to try to survive in substandard housing, or when dangerous diseases and immoral influences were an ever present threat to her family's well-being. The vote was thereby proposed as the ultimate solution for the ills that plagued the home, making the concept of suffrage appealing to California mothers and reformers alike.

In recognizing the link to the reformist mindset, suffrage leaders were quickly able to connect California women's suffrage with Progressive reform. This crucial link enabled suffragists to characterize the franchise as a vital tool that could be used for the extension and implementation of greater Progressive reforms throughout the state. In doing so, suffrage literature was able to highlight long-held assumptions about the altruistic nature of California women, portraying them as community servants who, with the vote, would be able to extend their philanthropic goals to a statewide level. Throughout the country, women had a long history of being active in community and social reforms, working behind the scenes to make societal improvements in areas that

¹⁷ "Women in the Home" California suffrage pamphlet distributed by the Political Equality League. IRMC, Denison Library, Scripps College, box 1, folder 85.

could easily be linked to the domestic sphere. The issue of enfranchisement was thus reconstructed to fit the parameters of a sort of community service project, a designation that appealed to the traditionally ingrained notions that women were best suited for the establishment of communal societal reform.

Not content to make the issue of woman suffrage a purely regional one, California suffragists intended to use the immense level of support suffrage had in rural areas to combat some of the fierce opposition the amendment faced in urban ones. What rural inhabitants lacked in urbane sophistication they more than made up for in egalitarian ideals, with men and women routinely working as partners in the home and community in order to ensure their economic well-being. It was in the rural areas of the state that the Western ideas of individuality and equitable domestic partnerships were most pronounced, and therefore these areas could always be counted on as strong supporters of the suffrage amendment.

California suffrage literature was thus produced and distributed to these areas that intended to make rural inhabitants fully mobilized and active participants in the woman suffrage cause. Therefore, suffrage literature emphasized the perceived social benefits of living in rural areas, urging inhabitants to spread their ideal ways of living to their less fortunate counterparts in the city. The vote, it was argued, would help combat the vices of urban areas that were slowly starting to permeate into the fabric of rural life. For instance, one pamphlet entitled "*To the Farmers and Fruit Growers of California*" was expressly designed to appeal to country inhabitants and specifically warned of the dangers that prohibition of women's votes entailed. Noting that California rural women and their families were perceived as living in a purer community than their counterparts in the cities (for they had cleaner air, more wholesome food, and lower levels of vice than larger urban centers), the pamphlet stressed that the vote must be granted to women or else the city vote would outpace the voice of rural inhabitants and lead to corrupted city legislation forever

tainting the pureness of rural life.¹⁸ The stress here was that rural people must not become complacent about their idyllic lives in the country, and that woman suffrage would help to ensure the protection of their way of life.

California suffrage literature also noted that the ballot would be a vital aid in ensuring that women from all classes and backgrounds could attain a higher sense of civic and social responsibility. The inclusion of these arguments aimed to counteract much of the criticism leveled at the suffrage movement by their opponents as to the character and background of the women that might soon be able to vote. However, literature aimed at enveloping women of various classes into the cause had the negative consequence of sparking the ire of the anti-suffragists, highlighting the controversial nature that subject of class had within the spectrum of political equality. Emphasizing the concerns of a large portion of California's population, one anti-suffrage campaign bluntly asked, "Are we prepared to throw into political life all the women, good and bad, intelligent and unintelligent, of the whole United States, including the swarms which belong in Europe but have been adopted here?"¹⁹ Social status, despite its controversy, was too valuable a political asset to be given up on so easily. The precarious situation of woman suffrage forced the movement to make political connections that they never before would have considered, and the class-wide inclusiveness that the campaign adopted proved to be a successful feature of the campaign.

Suffragists contended that good citizenship and a high degree of public responsibility could never be achieved without enfranchisement, and to allow half of the United States population to live ignorant of the ideals and duties of a good citizen was to counter the fundamental benefits that came with an independent upbringing. As one suffrage pamphlet noted, what California

¹⁸Millicent Shinn, "To the Farmers and Fruit Growers of California," California suffrage pamphlet, distributed by the College Equal Suffrage League, IRMC, Denison Library Scripps College, box 1, folder 112.

¹⁹Jane Apostol, "Why Women Should Not Have the Vote: Anti-Suffrage Views in the Southland in 1911," in *Women in the Life of Southern California*, ed. Doyce B. Nunis, Jr. (Los Angeles, CA: Historical Society of Southern California, 1996), 269.

women needed most was the “openness, the publicity, and the responsibility of action” that suffrage could bring.²⁰ Californian suffragists were quick to point out in their literature the folly of expecting a woman to remain ignorant of civic responsibility yet simultaneously be accountable for instilling those same attributes onto future generations. Californian suffrage literature emphasized this disparity by stating, “Women who are slave mothers bring forth slave children. An enfranchised motherhood will bring forth a race which has never been equaled for nobility, heroism, and true greatness.”²¹ It was therefore argued that if nothing else, woman suffrage would help foster future generations that could be taught from experience the responsibilities and duties of a proper citizen.

While suffrage literature in many ways promoted the traditional social doctrine of the separate-spheres philosophy—an act that seems contradictory to the goal of suffrage and citizenship—it was actually a method of making the issue of woman suffrage more acceptable to the average California voter. Conducting an inoffensive campaign was the only way to retain voter’s sympathy to the cause of suffrage, and to purport anything that could be perceived as overtly radical would have been disastrous to the movement. If the suffragists had any hope of their movement being victorious, it was crucial for them to convince the electorate that enfranchisement would neither alter the rigid gender role notions of their era nor reduce the tremendous influence women wielded in their dominion of the home.

Womanly virtue and femininity were highly prized gender characterizations that were vital to the success of both the suffragists and anti-suffragists alike. For the anti-suffragists, it was their most prized argument, and they quickly latched on to the matter, redefining it to fit their own agendas and using it to justify their own reasoning behind opposing woman suffrage. The anti-

²⁰ Thomas Wentworth Higginson, “Direct or Indirect Power of Women.” California woman suffrage pamphlet distributed by the California Equal Suffrage Association. IRMC Denison Library, Scripps College, box 1, folder 110.

²¹ “Why California Women Should Vote,” California woman suffrage pamphlet. Distributed by the California Equal Suffrage Association. IRMC Denison Library, Scripps College, box 1, folder 72.

suffrage campaign publicly decried women entering the public sphere, as to do so would forever shatter the separate-sphere philosophy. Anti-suffrage women perceived access to the ballot as the ultimate threat to their femininity, an arrow directly through the heart of true womanhood. Former suffragist Helen Lewis placed the argument in context when she declared, “the very womanhood of America is threatened...by participation in campaign activities and the intimate and unconventional contact that would serve to erase the tradition of women’s dependency—the fundamental factor in all the world’s history that has served most to nourish the love and respect of man for woman.”²² To anti-suffrage leaders, woman suffragists were asking for a fundamental and inalterable shift in the very nature of gender roles. The right to vote was not merely an invitation for women to exert greater political influence on state politics; with the vote came the *expectation* that women would shoulder the responsibility of political legislation on the public stage. In the anti-suffragist’s view, granting women the vote was seen as a flagrant public refusal of a woman’s supreme role in the domestic sphere and an open rejection of the qualifying attribute of womanhood and femininity.

Not only was suffrage a threat to assumptions about gender ideologies, it also posed a danger to the few women who did in fact wield a measure of political influence and power. To grant universal woman suffrage was to strip upper and middle class women of the delicate partnership in political authority that they had carved out for themselves. They created a special niche in the political sphere where women gained influence from their connections to influential men. These few women were the influential backbone of the anti-suffrage movement, and had carefully cultivated not only a place of power for themselves but also a special image, one where they were perceived as the exemplars of moral propriety.

While the expectation that women were needed to bring about societal reform had, to some extent, always been present for American women, never before had the suffragists been expected

²² “Woman Suffrage a Menace to the Nation,” issued by the Nebraska Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage. IRMC Denison Library, Scripps College. box 1, folder 119.

to put their successes and failures for all to witness on the public stage. Bound by the dogma of the separate spheres of philosophy, anti-suffragist women had taken the role of marshaling political reform from behind the scenes. Centering their operation backstage worked for them because these women, by virtue of their vast wealth, high social rank, and direct access to powerful male political leaders, wielded tremendous legislative influence.²³ From this vantage point, anti-suffrage women could still adhere to their socially acceptable roles as mistresses of the home, yet would still be able to halt, hinder, and flat out crush woman suffrage reforms.

Suffrage literature therefore had to communicate to voters that women's enfranchisement was not a radicalized assault on traditional gender norms, but rather an issue that was a politically and economically necessary for the entire state and applicable to Californians of all classes and backgrounds. The California suffrage literature campaign was a highly successful balancing act, appealing to both traditional gender ideology but at the same time promoting the greater public responsibility for the women of state. In doing so, suffragists presented to the male electorate a movement with all the potential to bring lasting reform and improvement, and yet maintain a semblance of traditional gender roles and responsibilities. The combination of vigorous campaigning, uniting suffrage support across a broad spectrum of social, regional, and class differences, and maintaining a campaign rhetoric that balanced traditionalism, finally proved to be enough to convince the male electorate, who finally granted suffrage to the women of California in 1911.

Utilizing innovative new campaign literature and tactics, California suffragists had finally achieved their goal, and the resulting consequences of suffrage proved to bring drastic change to women on both the state and national level. The passage of women's suffrage in California, with its great wealth and influence, assured that the issue of woman suffrage would not have its success confined merely to the rural and sparsely populated

²³ Marshall, Susan E. "Splintered Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Campaign Against Woman Suffrage." Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1997, 183.

Western regions. With the state's large urban and immigrant population, the California victory proved that women's suffrage could be successful in the more populous Eastern regions whose own demographics mirrored those of California. Women's suffrage in California was also successful in obtaining some of the Progressive reforms that suffragists promised the vote would provide, such as an extension of the eight-hour work day, raising the age of consent from sixteen to eighteen, minimum wage laws, and provisions for equal guardianship of children.²⁴

The California suffrage victory also was able to alter the perceptions that women had about themselves. The achievement of women's suffrage in California proved to be a crucial transition period for the women of the state, as women were able to make their first great detachments from the traditional notions about female propriety and respectability. The campaign was successful in forever altering previous notions about the respectability of women in public life, allowing women in California to be seen as legitimate political players within state. While they still appealed to the perceived ideal duties and obligations of women, suffragists still managed to successfully engage in new tactics and actions that brought them firmly into the public sphere, where their endeavors earned them a marked degree of political respectability throughout the state.

Suffragist's new tactics laid the foundation for the radical shift in the views about women that would come about in the following decades, and prepared women to take on the challenges of extended equality. The California campaign for suffrage was a liberating one, one that helped relax the strict doctrines of separate-spheres and allowed women to accept the concept that they should be allowed all the responsibilities and duties befitting a citizen of the nation. Most important of all, Californian women now saw themselves as being able to elicit great change within their state and throughout the nation. Californian women had at last won their hard fought battle for political equality, creating a lasting change in the perception of their entire gender. The events and struggles of the 1911 woman suffrage campaign was most successful in

²⁴ Schaffer, "The Problem of Consciousness," 492-93.

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allowing women to begin to perceive themselves, and be perceived by the public, as full citizens of the state of California.

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Chiune Sugihara: A Psychohistorical Study of a Rescuer of Jews during the Holocaust

BY CHRISTINA ALANNE PERRIS

This article seeks to analyze the actions of Japanese diplomat Chiune Sugihara, a rescuer of Jews during the Holocaust, utilizing a personality model developed by social scientists Samuel and Pearl Oliner. The Oliners's altruistic personality model centers on the idea that individuals who became rescuers have a distinct personality that responds to the complex interaction between three components: 1) the external circumstances they are confronted with; 2) internal characteristics that goad them into action; and 3) their ultimate decision to take action. Although no two-dimensional model is ever complex enough to capture the intimate complexity of a human personality, the Oliners's model is ideal in "fleshing out" the personality of Sugihara as very little is known of the man beyond his rescue effort; he left scant written accounts of his life.

Introduction

What is a hero? A hero is many things to many people. To some, a hero is nothing more than a fictional character who possesses superhuman powers or someone who protects and serves their community. Then, there are those people who know a type of hero so rare and remarkable that they only emerge out of the darkest chapter of modern history; they are a brave group of extraordinary individuals simply known as rescuers. Although their descriptive name is simple, their actions were far from that; each one of these unique individuals risked their lives to help Jews escape the nightmare of Adolph Hitler's Final Solution.

Since the emergence at the end of the Second World War of these accounts of unimaginable risk by seemingly ordinary

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people, social scientists have sought to uncover the motivation of these supremely beneficent acts of compassion. Did these rescuers benefit financially from their rescue efforts? Or were they societal outcasts who empathized with these refugees fleeing from what amounted to a terrorist regime? Or were they simply motivated out of a narcissistic need for self-aggrandizement?

As the stories of rescuers continued to emerge, a husband-wife team of social scientists, Samuel and Pearl Oliner¹, sought to answer these questions about rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust. The Oliners interviewed rescuers and non-rescuers in an effort to identify a pattern of behavior that led some people to act and others to simply stand by and watch. Their research revealed a complex interaction between external circumstances the rescuers found themselves in, the internal characteristics of the individual rescuers and the way in which they chose to act. The Oliners defined this structure as “the altruistic personality.”

The theoretical model of the altruistic personality proposed by the Oliners becomes quite useful when trying to understand a rescuer by the name of Chiune Sugihara, a Japanese diplomat stationed in Kaunas, Lithuania in 1939 who, over the course of four months in 1940 issued as many as 10,000 Japanese transit visas to predominantly Polish Jews fleeing the horrors of the concentration camps and Hitler’s Final Solution.²

The Enigma of Chiune Sugihara

Before exploring the Oliners’s model in depth, it is important to first introduce the individual to whom it will be applied and why the application of the model is necessary to understand the man. Chiune Sugihara is a bit of a historical enigma. He was born in

¹ Samuel and Pearl Oliner, *The Altruistic Personality* (New York: Free Press, 1988), back leaf.

² Japanese Foreign Ministry, “Miscellaneous Documents Regarding Ethnic Issues: Jewish Affairs,” volume 10, 1940, Diplomatic Record Office, Japanese Foreign Ministry, Tokyo, as cited in *In Search of Sugihara: The Elusive Japanese Diplomat Who Risked His Life to Rescue 10,000 Jews from the Holocaust* (New York: Free Press, 1996), 285-6.

Yaotsu, Japan on January 1, 1900.³ He was originally trained as a teacher of the Russian language at Harbin Gaukin, an institution of higher learning located in the former Chinese village of Harbin. It was at this time Sugihara showed his proficiency in learning languages⁴; in addition to his native tongue of Japanese and his second language of Russian, the future Japanese diplomat also became proficient in German. In 1939, Sugihara was assigned to Japanese consulate in Kaunas, Lithuania; during his time there, he fulfilled his dual mission as an eastern European diplomat in the service of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs by also serving as a spy, monitoring the movements of both the Soviet and German armies.⁵

This dual existence was also apparent in Sugihara's personal life; he was married twice, once to a White Russian by the name of Klaudia Apollonov and the second time to a Japanese woman by the name of Yukiko Kikuchi, with whom he had four children. Yukiko and three of their children were with him in Kaunas when Sugihara began the effort that would catapult him into the category of a rescuer. Despite all of his professional achievements as a scholar, a diplomat, and a rescuer, Sugihara left only a brief autobiographical sketch of his life; it provides little detail not only into his activities, but it also provides no additional insight into his personality and his motivations for rescuing the Polish Jews in Kaunas. Without any firsthand accounts to provide the information necessary to develop an authentic case study of Chiune Sugihara to uncover possible motivations for his rescue efforts, the Oliners's altruistic personality model serves as an invaluable tool in developing a deeper understanding of not only the elusive Japanese diplomat, but, in a broader context, other rescuers as well.

³ Japanese Foreign Ministry, "Miscellaneous Documents Regarding Ethnic Issues: Jewish Affairs", 17.

⁴ Levine, *In Search of Sugihara*, 54.

⁵ Pamela Sakamoto, *Japanese Diplomats and Jewish Refugees: A World War II Dilemma* (Westport, CN: Paeger, 1998), 103.

The Altruistic Personality & Chiune Sugihara: A Brief Summary of the Oliners’s Theory and Its Application

The structure of the altruistic personality as proposed by Samuel and Pearl Oliner consists of three major interacting components: the external circumstances the rescuer faces, referred to as “external circumstances”; the internal characteristics instilled in the rescuer over the course of their life, defined simply as “internal characteristics”; and the ultimate moment the rescuer moves from their stance of inaction to action, appropriately charged with the title of the “moment of action.”⁶ Each of these three components is further divided into a number of specific traits or circumstances that must be met or present in an individual for them to be considered having the distinct altruistic personality of a rescuer.

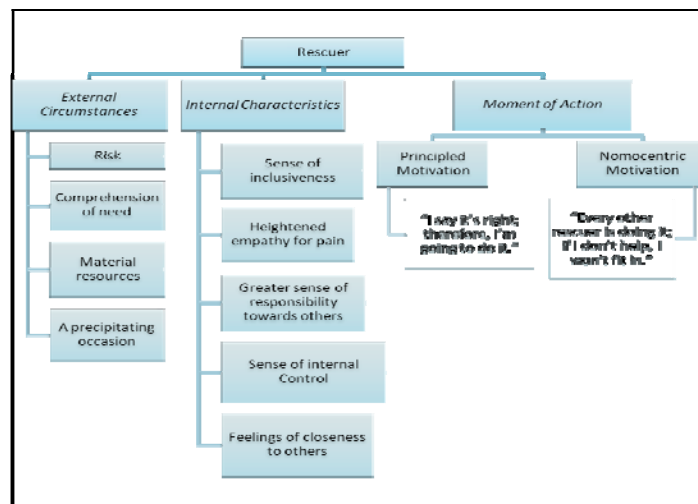


Figure 1: A visual representation of the Oliner model of the altruistic personality – Christina Perris

⁶ Oliner and Oliner, *The Altruistic Personality* , 113-222

The Altruistic Personality's First Component: External Circumstances

The Oliners define four key external events as having aided a rescuer's decision to take action: 1) "Information about and the comprehension of need," 2) "Risk," 3) "Material resources" and 4) "A precipitating occasion."⁷

According to the Oliners's research, the rescuer first learns about the plight of the Jews either through their direct experience, a firsthand account or through a reliable source. The knowledge acts as a catalyst, forcing the rescuer to give the situation careful and deliberate thought. In the case of Sugihara, it was hard for him to ignore the need; the line of Polish Jews outside the Japanese consulate gates in Kaunas in March 1940 pled in mostly desperate silence of the need.

According to Sugihara's second wife Yukiko, the sight of those desperate and dispossessed souls did not go unnoticed by the young deputy foreign minister. It was obvious by the "terror on their faces" these people had escaped something horrible; it was just Sugihara was not sure what they were escaping nor the much more important *why*.⁸ Determined to assess their need further and compelled by his duties as a diplomat, Sugihara sent one of the Poles who worked for him to get together a small group of "delegates" to speak for the large crowd. Amongst the representatives chosen was Zorach Warhaftig, the leader of the Polish Zionists, and later a key figure in the establishment of the state of Israel.⁹ The tale the small delegation told Sugihara was compelling; it outlined what the Polish Jews had already endured at Hitler's hands and the bleak future that lie ahead if they were forced to remain in Lithuania or, worse still, if they were sent back to Poland where anti-Semitism had already begun to metamorphose into genocide.

⁷ Ibid., 113.

⁸ Sugihara, *Visas for Life*, 2-3.

⁹ Levine, *In Search of Sugihara*, 176.

Sugihara's response to the compelling argument makes it very clear he comprehended the need; a flurry of communications between the Japanese consulate in Kaunas and the Foreign Ministry's headquarters in Tokyo indicates the level and depth of Sugihara's comprehension of the need. At first, he approached finding a solution the only way he knew how, as an underling diplomat by appealing to those with more political clout.¹⁰ It would take something more to motivate Sugihara to take action.

The next criterion of external circumstances which impacted how or whether a rescuer decided to act was risk. The level of risk directly connected to Sugihara's case is difficult to ascertain for a number of reasons. It is clear the Japanese government's immigration policies during the early part of World War II were, only in appearance, very stringent. For example, one criterion called for anyone entering Japan to have a certain amount of money before they were permitted into the country. Despite this requirement, the Japanese government rarely held to this – or, for that matter, any – of their stringent immigration requirements by allowing anyone with paperwork that appeared to be in order to enter their country.¹¹ Since the Japanese government appeared to violate its own immigration policy, then why would it turn around and prosecute a Japanese diplomat for doing the same? It would appear Sugihara was fairly “safe” from punishment if he decided to become a rescuer; however, Sugihara's second wife Yukiko seems to contradict this viewpoint with her fear for “[their] lives, [their] future, Chiune's job, everything.”¹² Why, if Sugihara was safe from prosecution by the Japanese government, did his wife fear for their safety? Although it appears Yukiko's fear was solely connected to Sugihara's decision to help out the Jews, her concern for their family's well-being might have actually been rooted in her anxiety over Sugihara's role as a spy. This possibility is corroborated by Yukiko herself when she speaks of the first time Sugihara goes to the Soviet Embassy in Kaunas to seek approval of allowing the Jews to pass through Russia: “I was concerned about

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 63.

¹¹ Sakamoto, *Japanese Diplomats and Jewish Refugees*, 48.

¹² Sugihara, *Visas for Life*, 17.

his safe return from the Soviet Consulate because...I...knew that the Russians perceived him as a high security risk.”¹³

The next criterion linked to the decision to respond were the material resources the rescuer had available to him to aid in his rescue effort. Sugihara’s authority and vested powers as the deputy foreign minister were all the material resources he needed to fulfill his role as a rescuer. With nothing more than many strokes of a pen on a transit visa, Sugihara provided the dispossessed men, women and children who found their way into his office in the Japanese consulate with a way to begin a new life in a safer land.

The most significant of the aforementioned criterion was the last one: “a precipitating occasion.”¹⁴ The precipitating occasion was literally the exact moment when the rescuer made the conscious decision to transition from the inactive role of a bystander to the active role of a rescuer. Each rescuer the Oliners interviewed gave different responses as to what these precipitating events were, but all had one common, underlying theme: they struck at the deepest cord of the rescuer’s sense of humanity in such a way that inaction became quite literally inexcusable and unacceptable to the rescuer.

For Sugihara, this moment actually came in December 1939 when the Japanese diplomat and his family were invited by eleven-year-old Solly Ganor to celebrate Hanukah with him and his family.¹⁵ At this celebration, Sugihara not only got to see the traditions and customs of the Jewish faith, but he also got to hear a firsthand account of the horrible treatment and murder of the Jews in Poland by a family who had made the decision to escape the country before the killing of Jews began. Several participants at the celebration that evening later commented on how Sugihara appeared absorbed in the accounts of the Nazi atrocities.¹⁶ A few days later, Sugihara made a statement to the family friend that

¹³ Ibid., 19.

¹⁴ Oliner and Oliner, *The Altruistic Personality*, 113.

¹⁵ Levine, *In Search of Sugihara*, 155-6.

¹⁶ Ibid., 156.

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nearly admitted his commitment to aid the Jews: “Tell your family and friends...the time to leave is now.”¹⁷

Although the Hanukkah celebration predated Sugihara’s rescue efforts, it is obviously the moment when Sugihara realized that inaction would no longer work. Sugihara continued to go through the proper bureaucratic motions to try to convince the Foreign Ministry of the need to rescue this group of persecuted people, but it was becoming very clear to him their response would be one of denial and indifference. It is very clear from even this earliest moment the young deputy foreign minister knew there was a high probability that in order for something to be done that he would have to take the initiative. Even at this early point, Sugihara demonstrated his commitment to the cause of rescuing the Jews when he agreed to help the dispossessed Mr. Rosenblatt from the Hanukkah celebration by stepping over his diplomatic bounds as deputy foreign minister and agreeing to help the Jewish refugee obtain a transit visa.¹⁸

The Altruistic Personality’s Second Component: Internal Characteristics

After identifying the external circumstances that prompted rescuers to act, the Oliners turned their focus inward as they sought to identify the character traits of the altruistic personality. Over the course of their research, they discovered five key characteristics linked to the altruistic personality: 1) “a sense of internal control”, 2) “stronger feelings of closeness to others”, 3) a “greater sense of responsibility towards others”, 4) a “heightened empathy for pain”, and 5) a “sense of inclusiveness”.¹⁹

The most abstract criterion of this component has to be the rescuer’s sense of inner control. “Inner control” is different from “self-esteem” in that the former deals with an inner sense of the self that is strong and well-defined by a set of fixed principles and

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 157.

¹⁹ Oliner and Oliner, *The Altruistic Personality*, 178.

the latter deals with how the person feels about himself.²⁰ Sugihara possessed this trait as he had a strongly-defined sense of honor, which was instilled in him by his parents at a very young age. Both of the Japanese diplomat's parents contributed significantly to the development of this sense of inner control; Sugihara's mother could trace her family lineage back to the era of the *samurai* and his father served in the Army in 1895 during the Sino-Japanese War.²¹ From these backgrounds dominated by the ideals of honor and duty, and the very close relationship Sugihara shared with both of his parents for most of his life, it is safe to say that the Japanese diplomat came to first imitate, then integrate these prized traits into his own personality; the characteristics that were demonstrated by his parents through their actions ultimately became the blueprint for the structure of his own personality.

The next trait present in the altruistic personality is "stronger feelings of closeness to others."²² Sugihara obviously possessed this trait as evidenced by the close relationships he had to his family, his friends and strangers. As aforementioned, Sugihara was very close to his parents; this was a feeling of his that never changed despite the fact that his father had effectively disowned him for choosing to be a teacher rather than a doctor.²³ In Japanese culture, filial piety is strongly practiced and the father's wishes for his child's future are always followed; no disobedience is tolerated. It is surprising that despite Sugihara's open defiance of his father's wishes for him to become a doctor, that their relationship was not permanently and irreparably damaged. In fact, towards the end of the elder Sugihara's life, father and son were able to completely mend the rift the youthful Sugihara had created with his chosen career.

Of all the examples of these close relationships Sugihara had, the most surprising and vivid example of his sense of closeness with others would have to be the close relationship he maintained with his first wife, the White Russian, Klaudia

²⁰ Ibid., 177-178.

²¹ Levine, *In Search of Sugihara*, 18.

²² Oliner and Oliner, *The Altruistic Personality*, 178.

²³ Levine, *In Search of Sugihara*, 52.

Apollonov. Although the letters to substantiate her claims were kept to herself and not shared with author Hillele Levine, Klaudia claimed she remained in close contact with Sugihara clear up until a year before his death in 1986.²⁴

Sugihara also possessed a greater sense of responsibility toward others, another internal characteristic defined in the Oliners's model of the altruistic personality. In all areas of his life, he was obviously very conscious of this responsibility. His role as a diplomat charged him with the responsibility of representing the Japanese people in countries where a Japanese person more often than not had never been seen before; therefore, he was charged with the monumental responsibility of what amounted to the experience of first contact, where his conduct could possibly set the tone for diplomatic relations between Japan and the country in which he was stationed for decades to come. His role as a father and husband also charged him with the responsibility of overseeing the safety and welfare of his wife and children. Although these are common responsibilities that would not necessarily set Sugihara apart from anyone else, there is another experience in the Japanese diplomat's life that might have deepened his sense of responsibility for others, especially the Jews: his commitment to his religion.

When Sugihara married his first wife, he converted to the Greek Orthodox Church, the same religion his first wife and her family practiced. Although Sugihara wrote nothing on his religious beliefs, he obviously held a deep connection to the faith as demonstrated when he married his second wife. Sugihara required his second wife to be baptized in the Greek Orthodox Church before they married.²⁵ Given Sugihara's obvious commitment to his new-found faith, it is clear he felt very strongly about many of the Christian doctrines imbued within the Church and, as evidenced by his later rescue efforts, compelled him to literally become "his brother's keepers" when he chose to aid the Jews.

Sugihara also had a heightened empathy for pain. This next criterion of the altruistic personality was obviously instilled in

²⁴ Ibid., 71.

²⁵ Sugihara, *Visas for Life*, 41.

Sugihara when he lived in Harbin.²⁶ During that time period, Sugihara witnessed the Chinese village become a refugee center for Jews fleeing the persecution of the highly anti-Semitic White Russians. It was also during this time that Sugihara was married to his wife Klaudia and living with her and her White Russian family. Although there are differing accounts as to whether Sugihara had any contact with any Jewish refugees during this time, it is not hard to make the jump in deductive reasoning that it is possible Klaudia's family with their White Russian background might have shared their fellow countrymen's feelings towards the Jews. As the situation deteriorated in Harbin, Sugihara became witness to the brutal executions and murders of the unwanted "burden" of Jews in the village by members of secret agents for the Japanese Army. Couple this experience with his wife and her family's probable anti-Semitic fervor, it is clear to understand how Sugihara may have developed his heightened empathy for the pain of the Jews that resurfaced again when he was faced with the same faces deformed with the worry and terror he had witnessed years before in Harbin.

All the aforementioned traits of Sugihara tie into the final criterion of the internal characteristics of a rescuer, the all-important sense of inclusiveness. Although it sounds abstract in its definition, the Oliners simply mean by this phrase that a person has the ability to recognize everyone as human regardless of their physical, political, or religious differences. In addition to all the other aforementioned traits of Sugihara that demonstrate his ability to see Jews as equals, there is one additional trait that made Sugihara unique: it was his ability to be a "cultural chameleon."

Sugihara was described by several of his closest friends as being able to adapt his countenance and behavior to match his audience. When he would interact with a group of Japanese diplomats, Sugihara would be serious and sedate as he spoke Japanese; however, if a Russian acquaintance entered the room, the diplomat's entire manner would change to one of warmth and joviality as he greeted the person in perfect Russian. Sugihara

²⁶ Levine, *In Search of Sugihara*, 54.

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carried his role of a “cultural chameleon” into his interactions with the Jews by seeking out assistance to learn the Talmud.²⁷

Sugihara’s Moment of Action

The final and most important component of the altruistic personality is how the rescuer chose to take action. There are two possible motivations: the normocentric motivation, in which the rescuers choose to respond because they feel they must act as others are expecting them to act, or the principled motivation, in which the rescuers act solely because they feel, based on their own principles, it is the right thing to do. Sugihara obviously fits the latter motivation as he clearly felt it was the right action to take. Sugihara did not feel he had to respond because others made him feel as though he had to; rather, he acted after he had given considerable thought to the situation, its risks and his responsibilities as a fellow human being. Sugihara’s reaction was not spontaneous, and he tried other routes available to him because of his position to get the Polish Jews the assistance they needed. When his efforts failed, he did not give up because he knew something had to be done for these refugees. According to his wife Yukiko, Sugihara knew he would never be able to live with himself if he turned his back on these souls in such desperate need of assistance. He also knew the cost to him and his family could be great.²⁸ Nevertheless, he made the decision to help. The magnitude of his effort was immense. Over the course of five months between March and August 1940, Chiune Sugihara issued approximately 6,000 transit visas to mostly Polish Jews.²⁹ These transit visas afforded their recipients the opportunity to leave Lithuania, travel across the Soviet Union, with their final destination being Japan.

²⁷ Ibid., 158.

²⁸ Sugihara, *Visas for Life*, 17.

²⁹ Sir Edmund L. de Rothschild, introduction to *Visas for Life* by Yukiko Sugihara, translated by Hiroki Sugihara, ix.

Conclusion

The altruistic personality model created by Samuel and Pearl Oliner is an exceptional tool in deconstructing the personality of a man as complex and elusive as Chiune Sugihara; however, as with any theoretical model, it provides only a clinical, two-dimensional model that is far too simplistic to understand the many complex facets of the human psyche. In the case of Chiune Sugihara, the Oliner model is a useful tool because Sugihara wrote virtually nothing of consequence as to the nature of his rescue efforts, his religious and/or political beliefs, and his own feelings about what the Jews endured at the hands of a man like Adolph Hitler. Without the Oliner model, a psychohistorical analysis of Sugihara would be nothing more than a collection of guesses and unsubstantiated conjectures. With the Oliner model, a social scientist can literally “flesh out” the skeleton of Sugihara’s personality and add dimension to this obviously remarkable, yet highly enigmatic man.

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The Ideological Scalpel: Physician Perpetrators, Medicalized Killing and the Nazi Biocracy

BY MATTHEW D. FULLER

With the conclusion of the Nuremburg Doctor's trials in August 1947, the role of German physicians in the concentration camps of Europe became a widely discussed and researched topic in the historiography of the Holocaust. Like many other perpetrators indicted by the Allies following the Second World War, German physicians claimed to have been swept up in the mass indoctrination of the National Socialist movement and had ultimately become powerless cogs within the Nazi totalitarian regime. While this claim may be true in some cases, the historiography of German physicians-turned-killers reveals different sources of motivation which allowed doctors in the Third Reich to reverse the precepts of the Hippocratic Oath in order to therapeutically kill for the greater health of the German Volk.

In order to fully comprehend the topic of Nazi physicians, the historian is charged with the responsibility of presenting Nazi doctors alongside all perpetrators of the Holocaust, rather than treating the institution of German medicine and its practitioners as unique phenomena. Reminiscent of the Browning-Goldhagen debate, the history of medicine in the Nazi regime has grappled with identifying the root cause or causes which led to such a dramatic shift in the professional and ethical standards of most German physicians, thus creating (to borrow from historian Christopher Browning's verbiage) genocidal killers out of "ordinary" doctors. Historians of medicine in the Third Reich

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must grapple the complex concept defined as the “healing-killing paradox.”¹

First presented by psychologist Robert Lifton, the healing-killing paradox is an attempt to understand the process through which physicians willingly reversed the precepts of their Hippocratic Oath within the Biocracy of Nazi Germany. The healing-killing paradox poses to the historian the ethical question: How does a physician ultimately turn their healing capabilities into an instrument of suffering and death? Lifton’s work opens the historical dialogue on physician-killer motivation, defining the process of “why” as a matter of coercion and brutalization which necessitated the triggering of psychological “doubling,” a “Faustian Bargain,” in which the individual is able to project their actions upon a psychologically created second-self, thus allowing the physician-turned-killer to “function psychologically in an environment so antithetical to his previous ethical standards” while simultaneously providing “a form of psychological survival in a death-dominated environment.”² As the historiography has progressed, however, scholars have continued to revisit the idea of motivation, realizing that in regards to Nazi physicians, it is insufficient to treat the environment of Auschwitz as the tipping point for the choice made by physicians to transgress and destroy the ethical threshold of German medicine. Francis Nicosia and Jonathan Huener, among others, address this fact with the poignant statement, “German physicians during the 1930s and 1940s did not respond to Nazi racial ideology and the career opportunities it offered as if they existed in a scientific and philosophical vacuum.”³

To come to terms with both the healing-killing paradox and the perversion of doctors under the Nazi Regime, one must delve deeper, beyond the psyche of the doctor charged with killing. What does the historiography reveal in terms of prime motivation? To

¹ Robert Jay Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), 430.

² *Ibid.*, 418-419.

³ Francis R. Nicosia and Jonathan Huener, eds., *Medicine and Medical Ethics in Nazi Germany: Origins, Practices, Legacies* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002), 5.

what extent can Lifton's model of "doubling" be accepted, if at all? How and why does such a dramatic transmutation or reinterpretation of medical ethics come about? Understanding the sociological mind-set in addition to the professional, political, and academic changes and opportunities which occurred in medicine during the Nazi regime all serve as equally important elements in understanding what created and drove the Nazi physician-turned-killer. Although the progression of scholarship ultimately proves the doubling model to be lacking, Lifton eloquently and chillingly begins the story with its ending: "We may say that the doctor standing on the ramp represented a kind of omega point, a mythical gatekeeper between the worlds of the dead and the living, a final common pathway of the Nazi vision of therapy via mass murder,"⁴ acting in the service of the *Völk* and for the greater health of the German social organism.

Perpetrator Motivation

The historiography has shown that German physicians undoubtedly served as party functionaries, forwarding the biomedical vision (and underlying genocidal goals) of the Nazi party through their actions within the context of the political atmosphere just as any other group of perpetrators did. However, it is of the utmost importance to understand the compliance of German physicians within the scope of their personal and professional motivations as well. German physicians, with their access to the most elite levels of education available within the Nazi regime, were arguably more enlightened than their "ordinary" counterparts, and being such, should be perceived as having a greater level of understanding in terms of their chosen course of action as well as accountability for those choices. When analyzed within the historical context of perpetrators, it may be argued that while German physicians may have conceivably endured greater levels of indoctrination through the process of *Gleichschaltung* and the Nazification of medicine, they possessed a greater resource of

⁴ Lifton *The Nazi Doctors*, 18.

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education upon which to distinguish between right and wrong, ethical and unethical. Why, then, did they fail to do so?

Lifton, in his analysis of the healing-killing paradox, views the Nazi physician's existence within the environment of Auschwitz as the final stage of a long process of psychological detachment which ultimately culminated in a process he termed "doubling." Viewing Mengele as the epitomized example of this process, Lifton states the feelings of the physician, upon arrival to Auschwitz:

... had been blunted by his early involvement with Nazi medicine, including its elimination of Jews and use of terror, as well as his participation in forced sterilization, his knowledge of or direct relationship to direct medical killing ("euthanasia"), and the information he knew at some level of consciousness about concentration camps and medical experiments held there if not about the death camps such as Auschwitz.⁵

This process of detachment, Lifton argues, resulted in the creation of a second psychological persona, which he terms "the Auschwitz self."⁶ It was through the physician's psychological double, Lifton maintains, that the individual became habituated to the Auschwitz environment and was able to approach it logically, technically, and amorally. Additionally, the process of doubling provided Nazi physicians with the ability to diffuse responsibility upon the Nazi hierarchy, thus rendering them unaccountable for the actual act of killing.⁷ The result was the physician, having manifested a psychological double in order to handle the dehumanizing atmosphere of Auschwitz (or any death camp, for that matter), found their "Auschwitz self wavered between the sense of omnipotent control over the lives and deaths of prisoners and the seemingly opposite sense of impotence, of being a powerless cog

⁵ Ibid., 442-43.

⁶ Ibid., 419

⁷ Ibid., 444.

in a vast machine controlled by unseen others.”⁸ The long process of brutalization at the behest of an overpowering and fear-inspiring totalitarian regime, according to Lifton, gave German physicians little choice in the matter, ultimately resulting in their complacency and necessitating their psychological adaptation for survival, while simultaneously facilitating medicalized killing and human experimentation.

Lifton’s approach is representative of the Functionalist camp of the Holocaust dialectic. Functionalists believe that the origin of the Final Solution lies within the radicalization of Nazi ideology and the initiative of bureaucrats from lower levels of the Nazi program. This “groundswell” of genocidal initiative is widely supported by Holocaust historians like Lifton and Christopher Browning. In his research of Reserve Police Battalion 101, Browning reaches a similar conclusion in regards to perpetrator motivation. Browning’s book, *Ordinary Men*, serves as a microcosmic approach to understanding what motivated, as Browning describes, “ordinary” Germans to become genocidal murderers. Like Lifton’s scholarship surrounding Nazi physicians, Browning seeks to break the misconception that the murderers of Jews were all fanatical Nazis and ideological automatons. By presenting the historiography in such a manner, Browning, like Lifton, provides a more “human face” to the perpetrators of the Holocaust. His analysis, based on the unit’s surviving battalion roster, allows Browning to surmise that the battalion’s demographics in regards to social background were extremely representative of the German state as a whole. Given the origins of the men in Police Battalion 101, Browning concludes that by 1942, prior to the battalion’s arrival in Poland and perpetration of genocidal violence, the men “would not seem to have been a very promising group from which to recruit mass murderers on behalf of the Nazi vision of a racial utopia free of Jews.”⁹ Additionally, Browning concludes the men of Police Battalion 101, unlike the SS physicians who, more often than not, emerged from the realm

⁸ Ibid., 447.

⁹ Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1998), 48.

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of academia as Nazi ideologues, were antithetical to the idealized candidates for genocidal murder:

Reserve Police Battalion 101 was not sent to Lublin to murder Jews because it was composed of men specially selected or deemed particularly suited for the task. On the contrary, the battalion was the “dregs” of the manpower pool available at that stage of the war. It was employed to kill Jews because it was the only kind of unit available for such behind-the-lines duty.¹⁰

The problem Browning is left with is how to understand the manner in which these “ordinary” Germans were capable of facilitating the deaths of so many Jews.

Browning believes the origin of Police Battalion 101’s capability to participate in the murder of Jews is manifold. Following the unit’s traumatic introduction to genocidal murder at Józefów in July of 1942, the men of Battalion 101 were consistently involved in ghetto-clearing operations, deportations, anti-partisan actions, “Jew Hunts,” and additional massacres. Browning asserts that while most men succumbed to the brutalization of their existence and killed, whereas relatively few did not, the majority of the men acted as follows:

The largest group within the battalion did whatever they were asked to do, without ever risking the onus of confronting authority or appearing weak, but they did not volunteer for or celebrate the killing. Increasingly numb and brutalized, they felt more pity for themselves because of the “unpleasant” work they had been assigned than they did for their dehumanized victims. For the most part, they did not think what they were doing was wrong or immoral, because the killing was sanctioned by

¹⁰ Ibid., 165.

legitimate authority. Indeed, for the most part they did not try to think, period.¹¹

Browning, like Lifton, concludes the combination of factors ranging from a brutalized existence, to ideological influence, to pressure for conformity resulted in the fundamental psychological shift necessary to create genocidal killers out of ordinary Germans. Based on Browning's findings, it could be argued that members of Reserve Police Battalion 101, like their SS Physician counterparts, underwent a form of doubling in order to habituate the trauma of genocide as well.

In contrast to the functionalist approach, political scientist Daniel Jonah Goldhagen believes that the Third Reich's initiative of Jewish genocide was completely controlled by Hitler himself, and that the intention of elimination existed from the very beginning of Hitler's political career. Unlike the functionalist approach presented in the scholarship of Lifton and Browning, Goldhagen's text, *Hitler's Willing Executioners* is representative of the Intentionalist camp and takes a far broader approach in an effort to uncover the root of perpetrator motivations, focusing on a sweeping analysis of German history and culture both before and during the Nazi era. Whereas Browning presents a multi-causal approach, Goldhagen vehemently asserts that Germany's cultural history of *eliminationist* anti-Semitism is the prime-mover in motivating German perpetration of the Holocaust. Goldhagen directly challenges Browning's assessment while simultaneously indicting *all* Germans when he states:

Germans' antisemitic beliefs about Jews were the central causal agent of the Holocaust . . . The conclusion of this book is that antisemitism moved many thousands of "ordinary" Germans – and would have moved millions more, had they been appropriately positioned – to slaughter Jews. Not economic hardship, not the coercive means of a totalitarian state, not the social psychological

¹¹ Ibid., 215-216.

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pressure, not invariable psychological propensities, but ideas about Jews that were pervasive in Germany, and had been for decades, induced ordinary Germans to kill unarmed, defenseless Jewish men, women, and children by the thousands, systematically and without pity.¹²

Goldhagen's belief is that the history of German cultural anti-Semitism developed in a manner far different than the rest of Europe, essentially substantiating the *Sonderweg* thesis normally applied to German political development.¹³ According to Goldhagen, unlike the rest of Europe, German anti-Semitism was especially virulent and destructive and took on a form that was not just exclusionary in form, but eliminationist in regards to European Jews.

Because the German consciousness is grounded in such a radically different conception of anti-Semitism, Goldhagen maintains that it had developed into a defining cultural axiom. He asserts that in a society, the cognitive models of beliefs, viewpoints and moral and ethical values lie below the level at which a society will consciously perceive them, yet they serve to inform individuals with a sense of understanding. Seeing as these models are a "culturally bred conception of personal autonomy," all that was necessary for ordinary Germans to make the leap to genocidal murder was the green-light from a higher authority, namely Hitler and the Nazi party.¹⁴ Goldhagen states German anti-Semitism "was in *this historical instance* causally sufficient to provide not only the Nazi leadership in its decision making but also the perpetrators with the requisite motivation to participate willingly in the extermination of the Jews."¹⁵ In essence, Goldhagen argues that Hitler and German society were in collective agreement in regards to the status of Jews, and because of this symbiosis, ordinary Germans, like the members of Police Battalion 101 and

¹² Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), 9.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 419.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 417.

SS Physicians, would become motivated genocidal executioners not because they required to, but because they *wanted* to.

Goldhagen's argument of cultural anti-Semitism as a motivating factor is beneficial, but at the same time is too narrowly (and harshly) focused. From a historical perspective, it is erroneous to group all Germans into the category of anti-Semite, particularly under the heading of *eliminationist* anti-Semites. Additionally, Goldhagen's thesis of German anti-Semitic heritage does not sufficiently explain the genocidal actions of the Ukrainian Hiwi auxiliary troops or Lithuanian civilians, both of which perpetrated atrocities against Eastern European Jews with little or no instigation from German occupiers. At the same time, Browning and Lifton's functionalist approaches, citing brutalization and the pressure to conform amongst the back drop of Nazi indoctrination are not fully sufficient in explaining why Germans – ordinary, physicians, and anyone in between – would willingly play an active or even complacent role in genocidal murder.

Scientific and Social Roots: Rassenkunde and anti-Semitism

In order to understand the healing-killing paradox and physicians as perpetrators, it is vital to analyze both the scientific and sociological roots of the concept. European imperialism and subsequent colonialism brought increased contact with the indigenous peoples of Africa and Asia, the result of which was a growing interest among European scholars in the field of racial theory, particularly intellectuals in Germany.¹⁶ These new theories on the existence of the various "races" of humanity, when coupled with Charles Darwin's ideas of evolution presented in *On the Origin of Species*, gave rise to the belief that not only were certain

¹⁶ Peter J. Haas, "The Healing-Killing Paradox," in *Medical Ethics and the Third Reich: Historical and Contemporary Issues*, ed. John J. Michalczyk (Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1994), 20.

racess superior to one another, but that these races were in fact involved in a struggle for the Earth's resources. As Haas observes, "For those who saw race in these terms . . . the question of racial identity and relationships became a deadly serious game. Race and race relations for these people not only explained the past, but also accounted for the present and provided a blueprint for the future."¹⁷ As racial theory grew in prominence among German academics and politicians alike, it ceased to act as theory and instead became recognized as the scientific discipline *Rassenkunde* (racial science). Although anti-Semitism remained a prevalent aspect of European and German culture in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it had yet to become a pressing concern for the German medical community. The emergence of scientific racism served to legitimize anti-Semitism by classifying Jewish biological inferiority as scientific fact, a perception which severely darkened the social and medical climate in Germany.

In 1895 this new science led German Darwinist Alfred Ploetz to publish *Grundlinien einer Rassenhygiene*, a text in which he not only addressed the concerns of Social Darwinists that the German race was facing degeneration but also coined the term "racial hygiene." According to Ploetz, two reasons existed for this degeneration: "first, because medical care for 'the weak' had begun to destroy the natural struggle for existence; and second, because the poor and misfits of the world were beginning to multiply faster than the talented and fit."¹⁸ Initially, Ploetz believed Jews and Aryans were equally cultured and that anti-Semitism would eventually be seen as irrelevant in the modernizing world. Ironically, although Ploetz's treatise did not concern itself with anti-Semitism, it did perceive the Nordic race as being superior to all others.¹⁹ In 1905, Ploetz and other racial hygienists formed the Society for Racial Hygiene, consisting of a diverse membership of Left and Right wing political advocates, as well as individuals with both racist and non-racist leanings. This diversity lasted until the end of the First World War, after which

¹⁷ Ibid., 20.

¹⁸ Robert N. Procter, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine under the Nazis* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 15.

¹⁹ Ibid., 21.

the political Right maintained far greater influence over racial hygiene publications due to the efforts of Julius Friedrich Lehmann, a leading medical publisher in Germany at this time.²⁰

Racial hygienists in Weimar Germany focused their energies on the social aspects of *Rassenhygiene* and *Rassenkunde*. Still concerned with Ploetz's initial concerns of the German race's health, eugenicists viewed genetics and eugenics as available tools for rationalizing and controlling reproduction in addition to solving other social problems. Although there existed a differentiation between the original term of "racial science" and the new term of eugenics (the change was an attempt by Alfred Grotjahn to distinguish between legitimate and politically racist ideologies within the movement)²¹ the basis for the eugenics movement was, initially, intended to safeguard the genetic health of all people, not just Germans. Historian of science Garland Allen notes that Germany was not alone in its fascination and facilitation of eugenics as a legitimate science. Throughout the early twentieth century, other European nations as well as the United States adhered to the teachings and scientific misconceptions offered up by the eugenics movement. Extending the legitimacy of the pseudo-science beyond the realm of biology and genetics, eugenicists on both sides of the Atlantic felt that eugenic conceptions applied to the broad spectrum of society as well. Garland states, "[e]ugenicists and their supporters played on concerns about livelihood, taxes, safety and social chaos to build support for supposedly scientific solutions to problems such as immigration restriction and sterilization."²² The attraction to the eugenics movement, Allen argues, was rooted in the social and economic turmoil of the post World War I era, and as the social and economic realities of Germany grew far worse and more chaotic under the constraints of the Versailles Treaty and world-

²⁰ Proctor *Racial Medicine*, 26-27.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 22.

²² Garland E. Allen, "The Ideology of Elimination: American and German Eugenics, 1900-1945," in *Medicine and Medical Ethics in Nazi Germany: Origins, Practices, Legacies*, ed. Francis R. Nicosia and Jonathan Huener (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002), 30.

wide economic depression, the appeal of eugenics, and its offers of legitimate scientific hope, resonated deeply with the German populace.²³ Ultimately in Germany, eugenics became “a movement that grew out of and supported a much larger social agenda. It was the social rather than the scientific content of eugenics that would determine its ultimate course.”²⁴ Germans, particularly those interested in eugenics, began to search for a scapegoat upon which to blame the faltering nation’s troubles. Buoyed by the growing popularity of the eugenics movement, many turned to their cultural, anti-Semitic roots.

Historian Robert Proctor perceives this shift in the collective German conscience as part of the creation of a new form of anti-Semitism which had begun to emerge during the fallout of the First World War and the Versailles Treaty. In the politically charged and economically destructive climate of the post-war era, the image of the Jewish cultural “threat” became more contentious and prevalent in the defeatist mindset of Germans. “Jews became a convenient scapegoat for the troubles of the twenties . . .” states Proctor, “Jews were attacked as individualists or socialists, materialists or formalists; Jews were singled out as the cause of both capitalist chaos and Bolshevik tyranny.”²⁵ Additionally, Proctor points out that many Germans felt disenfranchised and displaced by both resident and immigrant Jews, viewing them as the root cause of Germany’s defeat in the First World War and malevolent job-stealers.²⁶ German anti-Semitism rapidly expanded beyond the culturally accepted norm and reached a new and violent apex. Additionally, the rise of right-wing Nationalist political movements stoked the fires of fear in Germany over the Bolsheviks in Russia and the economic collapse. Combined with the field of racial science, a new form of nationalized and modernized anti-Semitism emerged.

A major turning point in the politicization of racial science and doctrine occurred in 1924, following Adolf Hitler’s failed Munich Beer-Hall Putsch of the previous year. While imprisoned

²³ Ibid., 33.

²⁴ Ibid., 29.

²⁵ Proctor, *Racial Medicine*, 143.

²⁶ Ibid., 143.

in Landsberg, Hitler was introduced to the work of Fritz Lenz, a racial scientist whom had developed radicalized concepts in regards to eugenics.²⁷ Lenz's writings, in particular his two-volume text on human genetics and racial hygiene, likely struck a chord with Hitler because of the emphasis on the supremacy of Nordic racial traits and the inherent inability of Jews to integrate into Gentile society and culture due to genetic immutability. Hitler, in-turn, further radicalized these ideas and integrated them in his perspective on politics and Social Darwinism. The various ideas on race, science, and society that Hitler melded together in his manifesto *Mein Kampf* signaled a stark change in the perception of Jews in the new racial hierarchy of Germany. In his work, Hitler began to portray European Jews in a dehumanizing manner, both on a political and biological scale, claiming the Jews of Europe were "nomads" and "parasites" continuously driven from the "nations he has misused" in order to claim "a new feeding ground for his race."²⁸ This newly created image of the Jews not as humans but as a form of socio-biological disease became an integral element of the language of the Nazi political movement and mirrored the existent framework of the growing eugenics movement as well as the existential reality of Weimar Germany, as "[b]iologically defective racial and ethnic groups were claimed to be the source of society's problems, and by preventing those individuals (and collateral members of their families) from having children, eugenicists were convinced that the problems could be eradicated in a few generations."²⁹ Eugenics had found its political voice in Adolf Hitler and throughout the mid to late 1920's and early 1930's, this social and scientific perception of Jews resonated with clarity throughout German society and culture during the growing Nationalist *völkisch* movement.

²⁷ Michael H. Kater, *Doctors Under Hitler* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 114.

²⁸ Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1943), 304-305.

²⁹ Allen, "The Ideology of Elimination: American and German Eugenics, 1900-1945," 30-31.

The Völk and Nazi Biocracy

With the Nazi seizure of power in 1933, Adolf Hitler brought a bio-political utopian vision to the forefront of the German cultural experience. The *völkisch* concept of the National Socialist movement was designed to instill within the German people a longing for the traditional and conservative values held prior to the First World War. Hitler's interpretation of German cultural history was the nation, founded in strength and purity during the pre-war era, had slowly been eroded from within by the influence of Jews and Bolsheviks. The war, according to Hitler, had successfully halted the "period of creeping sickness" affecting Germany, stopping "[t]he disease [that] would have become chronic," before it could further harm the German people.³⁰ In regards to Jewish influence on German culture and economics, Hitler wrote, "it is easily possible that after a certain time unquestionably harmful poisons will be regarded as an ingredient of one's own nation or at best will be tolerated as a necessary evil, so that a search for the alien virus is no longer regarded as necessary."³¹ Hitler believed the allowing of Jewish assimilation in Germany had weakened and sickened the nation and ethnic population. The Jews, according to Hitler, were the cause of Germany's ills and the requisite medicine to cure these ills lay within the *völkisch* movement.

The movement was the embodiment of all that was necessary to address the social concerns of Germans and the Nazi Party. Known in the historiography of Nazi Germany as the "Myth of Blood and Soil", Proctor describes the movement's goals as follows:

The Nazi vision of a more natural or organic way of life reflected in part, Nazi desires to return German society "to the earth," to a premodern or rural way of life, free of the complexities of modern civilization . . . It is important to recognize, however, that this "organic" vision of National Socialist ideology was not just a form of social

³⁰ Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 232.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 233.

apologetics; it also informed the practice of science . . . These sciences were linked with broader social movements that were trying to reorient German science and medicine toward more natural or “völkish” ways of thought or living.³²

This idea of fully integrated social and political ideology for the sake of the racial health of the German people stood at the core of Nazi domestic policy and defined the regime as a Biocracy. The importance of the individual within the defined parameters of the bio-political vision became tantamount to the health of the Reich and German race.

The German state was no longer a nation of sociopolitical machinery led by Nazi ideology. Instead, it was an organic nationalistic entity, wherein the health of the whole was dependent on the purity of its individual parts, the populace. With scientific racism holding such deep importance to the Nazi ideology, a totalizing, organic vision emerged, requiring a new manner in which to implement political influence. The perception among the Nazi hierarchy was the German state was infected with the cancerous social disease embodied by the Jews. Nazi leadership understood that in order to respond to this threat, it would be necessary to court the medical profession and integrate it within the political cause. Lifton observes that “[a]mong the biological authorities called forth to articulate and implement ‘scientific racism’ – including physical anthropologists, geneticists, and racial theorists of every variety – doctors inevitably found a unique place.”³³

Doctors were to become a new type of leader for Nazi Germany, charged with not only the health of the Reich’s citizens, but the health of the Reich itself. The melding of political and medical ideologies that eventually led to medicalized killing were perhaps best expressed by Nazi doctor Fritz Klein in 1942. When asked if a conflict existed between his Hippocratic Oath and therapeutic killing, Klein responded “Of course I am a doctor and I

³² Proctor, *Racial Medicine*, 224.

³³ Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*, 17.

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want to preserve life. And out of respect for human life, I would remove the gangrenous appendix from a diseased body. The Jew is the gangrenous appendix in the body of mankind.”³⁴ The direction of German medicine had been firmly set prior to the elicitation of Klein’s comment. Nearly a decade before, the duty of surgically and therapeutically “healing” Germany and the *Völk* was laid at the feet of physicians and necessary action would be taken to bring medicine into the political fold. The change, however, did not happen overnight.

The Medical Crisis, Nuremburg Laws and Gleichschaltung

Many of the established physicians the Nazi regime inherited were firmly rooted in the conservative values of the republican era.³⁵ The Nazi political movement, successfully geared toward influencing and attracting lower middle class workers, did not readily appeal to conservative members of educated professions, like physicians. However, by 1933, these same physicians were among those individuals who had felt displaced and disenfranchised following the First World War. As the failed Weimar Republic gave way to the new Nazi government, the members of Germany’s medical community saw an opportunity to reverse their fortunes alongside the new regime. Proctor believes understanding the appeal of the National Socialist movement to German physicians is rooted in these particular sentiments:

Impoverishment after the war and economic collapse during the final years of the Weimar Republic polarized the profession politically. At the same time, physicians warned of a “crisis in medicine,” a crisis variously construed as the bureaucratization, specialization, or scientization of medicine – problems blamed on the socialists, the

³⁴ Ibid., 15-16.

³⁵ Kater, *Nazi Doctors*, 12.

Jews, or the numerous quacks that eternally plagued the profession. Physicians expressed a desire to win back “the confidence of the people.”³⁶

Despite their professional standing, German physicians were equally affected by the same troubles and doubts that plagued the rest of the nation in the twenties. The creation of socialized medical insurance along with the establishment of “impersonal” medical clinics was perceived as a shift from medicine as a craft to medicine as a business. This change, which rankled many within the profession, was commonly referred to as “Factory medicine” (*jüdische Fabrikmedizin*) and was attributed to a Jewish-Bolshevist presence within the field.³⁷ Because of these dissatisfactions with the profession, German doctors whom had been established prior to the First World War viewed the Nazi seizure of power as an opportunity to “redress anomalies left over from the health administration of the Weimar Republic.”³⁸ In an ironic twist, they traded a perceived medical crisis for an actual one.

Younger physicians, those either in the waxing years of practice or the waning years of schooling, faced even more hardship than their well-entrenched professional contemporaries. Often plying their trade for an income that placed them below the poverty line and suffering from a lack of professional mobility created by their older peers, young physicians found the Nazi movement appealing for opportunistic reasons. Kater also asserts that new physicians “had been socialized in an era of ideological acerbity and had been exposed to an increasing Nazi presence in the body politic.”³⁹ Additionally, the *völkisch* movement, which focused on a return to the importance of the general physician over the medical specialist, created greater prospects for young physicians to establish a practice in rural areas. Therefore, “[i]n his heart of hearts the Nazi physician was a country doctor. It was in the countryside that the Nazi ideology of ‘blood and soil’ could

³⁶ Proctor, *Racial Medicine*, 69.

³⁷ Proctor, *Racial Medicine*, 164.

³⁸ Kater, *Nazi Doctors*, 12.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 57.

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best be complemented with the holistic, organically oriented practice of medicine.”⁴⁰

The belief arose that general practitioners, especially those skilled in obstetrics, were needed far more than specialists in the German provinces. Regions far-removed from industrialized centers led many new physicians to focus their studies accordingly. This manifestation of the Nazi concern over propagation also adhered to the *völkisch* precept that moving away from industrialized medicine would benefit the continuing effort of racial purification of the German populace. In 1934, Wilhelm Frick, Reich Minister of the Interior, in a Mother’s Day speech, stated his desire that the new breed of physician be “a ‘doctor to the Nation [*Volkarzt*],’ who would ignore individual patients’ interests (and, by implication, even their right to live) in order to improve the life of the *Volk* as a whole,” based on the demand that “[t]he eugenic doctor treats not the individual but the genetic property (*Erbgut*) of the *Volk*.”⁴¹ This new direction for German medicine was radical shift in practice and ideology and is highly representative of the “reactionary modernism” of the Nazi political culture. Coined by historian Jeffery Herf to describe the Nazi’s thinking as being both revolutionary and reactionary, there existed a strong desire to advance medicine (and German culture) parallel to modernity while infusing progress with romanticized and outmoded visions of heritage.

This radical process stands as a defining element of Nazism and the revolutionary new ideology became a focus within the medical community. The Nazis had given the younger generation of physicians a new vision and ethic to work toward. It also signaled the first step toward the actual medical crisis that plagued Germany throughout the Nazi regime. As Germany geared itself for war throughout the 1930’s, the decline in specialized medicine and proper medical education would become blatantly obvious following the opening stages of the Second World War.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 26.

⁴¹ Claudia Koonz, “‘Ethical Dilemmas and Nazi Eugenics: Single-Issue Dissent in Religious Contexts,’” in *Resistance Against the Third Reich: 1933-1990*. Edited by Michael Geyer and John W. Boyer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 25.

The Nazi Bioracy was now capable of advancing its agenda, beginning with the steady dismissal of Jews from the medical profession. Feeding upon its own strength, the medical revolution would create a professional vacuum in which the loss of Jewish medical experience, intellect, and specialization would be replaced by inexperienced, eugenic-centered general practitioners. Subsequently, Jews of all professions faced discrimination which had increased parallel with Nazi political power. Nazi racial ideology, in particular the perception of Jews as a social and cultural disease, keenly affected Jews in the medical profession. Jewish doctors were effectively attacked on two separate fronts using aspects of racial science and political ideology. The first form of persecution focused on the ethical standards of Jewish physicians. Aside from propagating traditional stereotypes, Nazi propaganda also insinuated that Jewish physicians acted in a sexually inappropriate manner, taking advantage of Aryan female patients thus threatening racial purity⁴² The second, and more damning form of persecution was an attack on Jewish racial purity. Kater presents the example of H.H. Meier, a Hamburg physician who believed that “the elimination of Jewry from physiandom and other facets of health leadership’ [w]as a medical precaution for the collective health of the nation.”⁴³ This sort of perception furthered thinking of the Jewish question along medical lines, thus increasing the concept that doctors played a vital role in resolving the issue.

With the passing of the Nuremburg Race Laws on September 15, 1935, the German medical profession moved further along the path of self-inflicted crisis. In keeping with the theme of a Nazi Bioracy, the laws were considered a public health measure⁴⁴ and resulted in Jews being politically reclassified as non-citizens. Jewish physicians were likewise denied the legality

⁴² Kater, *Nazi Doctors*, 192.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 178.

⁴⁴ Robert N. Proctor. “Racial Hygiene: The Collaboration of Medicine and Nazism,” in *Medical Ethics and the Third Reich: Historical and Contemporary Issues*, ed. John J. Michalczyk (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1994), 37.

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to remain within the medical profession. Kater defines the passing of these laws as follows:

These regulations dealt the most devastating blow to German Jewry to date . . . The most obvious one was that since all Jewish civil servants who had been Hindenburg-exempt (served in the German military during the First World War) had to be forcefully retired, albeit with a – later reducible – pension, the remaining professors of medicine, *Amtsärzte* [public health officials], and other state employed Jewish physicians were finally to be dismissed.⁴⁵

Additionally, the categorization of *Mischling* (individuals classified as being part-Jewish through ancestry) allowed Nazi officials to broaden the spectrum to which they applied these professional dismissals.⁴⁶ The Jews in the medical profession were further persecuted and disenfranchised until their medical licenses were finally revoked in September 1938. The process of forcing Jewish physicians out of the profession, both legally and ideologically, provided upward mobility for the generation of young German doctors whom had been fully indoctrinated into the Nazi biomedical vision. This process of replacement, fueled by the reorganization of the medical profession under the process of *Gleichschaltung*, served to sink Germany deeper into its unforeseen and self-inflicted medical crisis.

The revolutionary reorganization of society under *Gleichschaltung* resulted in the removal of Jews from all levels of professional existence. In medicine, one aspect of the process replaced qualified deans and rectors of medical schools with political ideologues rather than trained physicians served to further damage an already misled academia. The successful melding of eugenics with political ideology resulted in a marked increase in the popularity and enrollment of students in medical academia. Kater describes that although the inclusion of eugenics into the

⁴⁵ Kater, *Nazi Doctors*, 193.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

permanent curriculum of medical schools was resisted prior to 1933, the Nazi regime's dedication to providing logistic support and backing to teaching positions in *Rassenkunde* changed the response of the medical community, resulting in a gradual acceptance and institutionalization of racist-eugenics.⁴⁷ However, there existed an inherent flaw in the change of curriculum. With the student body increasingly wishing to pursue medicine along the lines of racial science, there existed an overwhelming need for instructors in *Rassenkunde*, but, as there had not been a previous tradition of training in the discipline, instructors with often only a passing interest in the subject were assigned to teach.⁴⁸ Consequently, Germany faced a situation in which its growing core of doctors focused their studies on pseudo-science under the tutelage of instructors who proved to be "pathetically incompetent."⁴⁹ This lack of substantive qualified instruction in genuine medical science was only one of many glaring hindrances brought about by the Nazi party's process of *Gleichschaltung*. The end result was that as late as the close of the Second World War, despite German medical education's continued focus on *Rassenkunde*, "the Reich ministry of education still had no choice but to concede failure in the area of *Rassenkunde* instruction; certified faculty did not exist and the students' grasp of the subject matter was found to be wanting."⁵⁰

The vacuous *Rassenkunde* by itself was debilitating enough to the legitimacy and competency of German medicine to throw it into crisis. However, there existed a far greater consequence of *Gleichschaltung* as Germany moved closer to war during the mid to late 1930's. In *The Nazi Conscience*, historian Claudia Koonz notes that within the realm of German scholarship, including medicine:

After Hitler declared his "very major reorientation"
in the war against the Jews, a veritable academic

⁴⁷ Ibid., 114.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 115.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 116.

industry in antisemitic research evolved. News reports, documentary films, exhibitions, and textbooks disseminated the latest scholarly findings that blamed Jews for the existence of “the Jewish question.” Thus, the decrease in physical violence after the Nuremberg laws coincided with an intensified disinformation campaign that rationalized white collar persecution. This strategy established the parameters of a genocidal consensus among the planners of the Final Solution and simultaneously reassured the general public that greater vigilance against “Jewish danger” was justified.⁵¹

The emphasis to legitimize *Rassenkunde* across the intellectual spectrum in Germany posed a two-fold threat to Jews who had already been legally marginalized. The mass proliferation of published works dealing with racial studies, presented as scientifically legitimate by respected institutions like the Kaiser-Wilhelm Institute and the Königsberg Institute, gave an aura of credibility to the “otherness” of the Jews. Additionally, it proceeded “to endow traditional Christian stereotypes about ‘the Jew’ with the cachet of modern scholarship.”⁵² This legitimization of the Nazi racial ideology brought with it professional benefits for scholars in the form of status, funding and increased opportunities to advance their careers. The fallout, however, would be that general populace, already inundated with coarse propaganda the likes of Julius Streicher’s *Der Stürmer*, would be subsequently, and subtly, influenced from above, as the intellectual circles of Germany would scientifically and culturally “prove” the inferiority of Jews.

The infusion of political ideology served as the death knell for the education of doctors under the Nazi Regime. Physicians had already been led astray by the pseudo-science concepts impregnated within nationalist politics, but the manner in which political fervor could outweigh technical and educational

⁵¹ Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2003), 191.

⁵² Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*, 200.

competence proved to be most undermining. Kater notes, “[In] the Third Reich academic dullness was no impediment to career progress if skillfully paired with Himmler’s political power . . .”⁵³ Additionally, he points out younger physicians gave in to the political pressure of the Nazi movement and that “[at] teaching clinics and university medical departments, assistant physicians and lecturers with an eye on a regular chair after January 30, 1933, would therefore suddenly be seen to flaunt formal Nazi affiliations that might have embarrassed them in prior years.”⁵⁴ Not only was political fanaticism becoming more important than technical skill, the spectre of war looming over Germany soon required a greater demand of politicized physicians to be available for frontline duty in the *Waffen SS* and *Wehrmacht*. In order to meet this increase in demand, substantial changes were made to medical curriculum. Kater explains:

On April 1, 1939, certainly in expectation of an armed conflict . . . [the] final examination was clipped to about six weeks, one of the preclinical semesters was abolished, and the practical year between final examination and licensure was halved and tucked inside the new, streamlined course of studies, with the first three months of internship . . . to be served after the seventh semester and the last three months after the ninth. Two years were saved, but students had less time to spend on their studies . . .⁵⁵

In addition to limited time spent involved in formal education and internship, the *völkisch* movement’s emphasis on *Rassenkunde* and the value of general practitioners over specialists likewise affected the professional capabilities of the new generation of medical professionals.

⁵³ Kater, *Nazi Doctors*, 132.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 133.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 155.

The dearth of medical skill became apparent by the time Germany entered the Second World War. Newly-minted “doctors” were rushed to the frontlines and required to perform life saving operations on their fellow soldiers under deplorable conditions. In the heat of battle with soldier’s lives on the line, truncated coursework, political fervor for racial science and lack of technical surgical expertise “produced ramshackle physicians, whom even the wounded soldiers did not trust.”⁵⁶ Despite these glaring shortcomings of the medical profession and the doctors it produced, the politicization of medicine, in the eyes of Nazi medical functionaries, was deemed a stellar success. As late as 1942, Rudolf Ramm, who was tasked with supervising the successful *Gleichschaltung* of German medical education, felt the expulsion of Jews and other politically “unreliable” elements from the medical profession “would guarantee that the provision of medical care for the population would not be endangered” and that the process had reestablished the ethics and professional standards of the craft⁵⁷. Ironically, in 1941, prior to Ramm’s claims of success, the dire medical situation on the ground in Russia due to a shortage of qualified medical personnel resulted in the government’s “mobilization of a number of Jewish doctors and nurses to assist in the care for the wounded.”⁵⁸ Despite the clear indicators of the medical crisis’ rapidly accelerated growth following the seizure of power in 1933, the Nazi hierarchy was unperturbed in implementing a key tool for furthering the biomedical vision. The politically motivated and racially educated SS physician was, in the eyes of the regime, advancing the Biocracy’s vision and creating a genetically, culturally, and ethnically pure Aryan utopia.

⁵⁶ Kater, *Nazi Doctors*, 173.

⁵⁷ Proctor, *Racial Medicine*, 90.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 154-156

The Healing-Killing Paradox – Sterilization and Euthanasia

Despite the crisis which had been overtaking German medicine in the 1930's, caused by the dismissal of qualified Jewish medical faculty, the infusion of Nazi political ideology and emphasis of racial science, and the reduction in properly trained medical specialists, the Nazi party moved forward with the implementation of its biomedical vision, thus creating the healing-killing process of therapeutic national medicine. The Nazification of medicine, in addition to the establishment of the *völkisch* movement, presented the Nazi regime as one dedicated to healing the genetic and racial ills of the German state. The first step of this “healing” process was the identification and sterilization of those deemed to be a threat to genetic purity. This was done so that the Nazi's might “eliminate the possible hereditary influence of a wide variety of conditions – blindness, deafness, congenital defects, and such ‘crippled’ states as clubfoot, harelip, and cleft palate.”⁵⁹ Already, in July of 1933, the Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring was drafted by members of the National Socialist Physicians' League and allowed doctors to forcibly sterilize those deemed genetically unfit for reproduction.⁶⁰ The subsequent establishment of Genetic Health courts helped to lend state-sponsored legal backing to the practice, creating a more accepting response from German doctors in the early years of the regime. By 1935, with the passing of the Nuremberg Race Laws, Nazi propaganda, *Rassenkunde*, and *Gleichschaltung* within the medical profession greatly expanded the notion of protecting the health of the *Völk*. All that was required was a program designed to facilitate the handling of those deemed unsuitable to exist within the national body.

The genetic profiling and sterilization measures being enacted by the Nazi regime by the mid 1930's did not rise with the regime, however. The National Socialist agenda was simply putting into practice concepts which had been introduced to the

⁵⁹ Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*, 26.

⁶⁰ Proctor, *Collaboration*, 37.

medical community almost two decades earlier. In 1920, Karl Binding and Alfred Hoche, both distinguished German university professors, collaborated on what became known as the Binding-Hoche study. The treatise medicalized the concept of therapeutic killing, arguing that “destroying life unworthy of life is ‘purely a healing treatment’ and a ‘healing work’ [in addition to being] compassionate and consistent with medical ethics.”⁶¹ Additionally, the Binding-Hoche study presented this process of killing as being an economically beneficial application of medicine. According to the study, the state would not be required to allocate budgeting to the care of the genetically or mentally ill if there were no such individuals to care for. By 1938, the Nazi’s followed through on this perverse medical conception when the practice of forcible sterilization evolved into the systematic killing of those deemed genetically or mentally inferior under national law. The responsibility of this state-sponsored killing was left to the nations physicians.

The euthanasia program originally targeted genetically inferior children and implemented various methods of facilitating death, either through starvation, exposure, or long-term administration of various lethal medications. By late 1939, starvation as a method of medicalized killing was developed by Dr. Hermann Pfannmüller, director of the Eglfing-Haar institute. Pfannmüller took pride in the method hailing it for its cost-effectiveness and practical image to the foreign press.⁶² Despite personal initiative like that of Pfannmüller, the sterilization and euthanasia programs were initially orchestrated by government offices. The Führer decree of October 1939 changed this by granting authority solely to the medical profession, handing physicians the reins of the program and allowing them to implement it as they deemed necessary.⁶³ Operating under the auspices that German physicians were fully within the fold of the regime’s ideology, the decree expanded the euthanasia program to include adults and resulted in the creation of the T4 program. The change in doctrine was timed to coincide with the invasion of

⁶¹ Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*, 46-47.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 62.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 63.

Poland, and was viewed as being “justified as a kind of pre-emptive triage to free up beds”⁶⁴ for soldiers wounded on the frontlines of battle. The increased number of undesirables slated for death, and the speed in which they would require liquidation called for a more systematic method of killing. It was under the T4 program that German physicians first implemented the use of gas as a method for mass extermination, all in assumption of establishing the purity of the German race in a medical manner.

It is important to note Lifton’s observation that the doctor’s selected for the killing application of *Rassenkunde* “came to be chosen apparently for their combination of inexperience and political enthusiasm.”⁶⁵ By the opening salvos of the Second World War, Germany was waist-deep in its self-inflicted medical crisis. Although the process of euthanasia in addition to the later systematic killing of Jewish and political prisoners in the death camps was conducted in a manner that was perceived as outwardly medical, it was anything but. Lifton argues that “the primary – perhaps the only – *medical* function of the killing doctors was to determine the most believable falsification of each patient-victim’s death certificate.”⁶⁶ It is arguable that the moniker of “doctor” should even be granted to the majority of individuals licensed to practice medicine under the Nazi regime. As stated earlier, the Nazification of curriculum, emphasis on political background over academic capability and overwhelming interest in pseudo-scientific racial theory, hardly qualified German doctors as such. Additionally, many doctors with upper-class backgrounds, like Mengele, joined the SS as a way to maintain elitist standing.⁶⁷ This reality leaves questions in the mind of the historian as to whether or not Nazi doctors, particularly SS doctors, truly adhere to the definition of a physician. When doctors begin to act as physicians of the state, in which the community trumps the individual, and act in accordance to political ideology more than legitimized and

⁶⁴ Proctor, *Collaboration*, 38.

⁶⁵ Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*, 73.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁶⁷ Kater, *Nazi Doctors*, 165.

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proven science and research, do they remain doctors or do they simply become ideological tools?

The transformation of the already horribly misguided T4 program stands as the apex of the German medical crisis, representing the ultimate manifestation of the bastardization of medicine under Nazi influence. The program was converted for use in the concentration camps under the codename 14f13 and served, as Lifton argues, as the primary link between medical killing and genocide.⁶⁸ Under the 14f13 protocols, the target pool for industrialized medical killing was widened considerably. The focus on the mentally ill became less and less important than “political prisoners, Jews, Poles, draft evaders or those deemed militarily unsuitable, those guilty of ‘racial’ crimes, [and] habitual criminals.”⁶⁹ Early successes of the German military between 1939 and 1941 placed Poland and other territories under Nazi control. These territories were inundated with populations that did not adhere to the standards of the National Socialist biomedical vision. The personal letters of Nazi doctor Friedrich Mennecke, the physician in charge of the 14f13, are most revealing as to the perception Nazi ideologues had of their non-Aryan Eastern European charges:

You can tell by looking at the Russian people that they are born and raised right in the dirt, so they don't know any better. These people are really only silhouettes in human form that Jewish Bolshevism had an easy time molding in its image. No other people would be better suited to be misused for an idea as absurd and crazy as Bolshevism. This is not a master race, but the most primitive, stubborn, and shabby heap of humanity that we have in Europe.

⁶⁸ Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*, 134.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 137.

A single human life means as little here as in any lower order of animals.⁷⁰

Mennecke's observation also notes the political animosity which ran parallel racial perceptions. Nazism and Communism were antithetical political ideologies and Nazi propaganda had long paired the image of Jews and Bolsheviks as being synonymous. A new layer of hatred had been cast upon the German mind-set. The war that Germany waged against Russia was a war of racial domination and genocide. In 1941, German Sixth Army Commander Walter von Reichenau, in an address to his troops, stated:

In the East the soldier is not only a fighter according to the rules of warfare, but also a carrier of an inexorable racial conception {*völkischen Idee*} and the avenger of all the beastialities which have been committed against the Germans and related races. Therefore the soldier must have *complete* understanding for the necessity of the harsh, but just atonement of Jewish subhumanity.⁷¹

There existed no differentiation between Jew and Communist as Nazi ideology was successfully mobilized to dehumanize any persons who did not fit into the pseudo-scientific principles of *Rassenkunde* and, while utilizing the war as a cover for "medically necessary" killing. Subsequently, the ultimate in Nazi public health measures was implemented; the creation of Auschwitz and the beginning of mass industrialized slaughter.

⁷⁰ Peter Chroust, "Selected Letters of Doctor Friedrich Mennecke," in *Cleansing the Fatherland: Nazi Medicine and Racial Hygiene*, trans. Belinda Cooper (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 250.

⁷¹ Walter von Reichenau, "The Indoctrination of the German Soldier: For Volk, Führer, and Fatherland," in *Sources of Twentieth-Century Europe*, ed. Marvin Perry, Matthew Berg, and James Krukones (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000), 243.

Auschwitz - Anus Mundi and Josef Mengele

Auschwitz-Birkenau represented the culmination of all sociopolitical and scientific factors which had defined the Nazi biomedical vision. It stood as the ultimate expression and implementation of *Rassenkunde* and the addressing of the problem of “life ‘not worthy of life.’”⁷² *Gleichschaltung* within medical academia had successfully provided Heinrich Himmler, head of the SS and concentration camp system, with politically reliable doctors who would be capable of performing the necessary functions of mass murder required within the camps. Lifton defines these selected doctors as being “medically undistinguished, strong in their Nazi ties, and personally self-aggrandizing”⁷³ and it would be these sorts of individuals who would be placed in charge of the medical concerns within the concentration camps. Additionally, Lifton continuously states that all aspects of killing within the camp maintained the deception of legitimate medical practice. From the transportation of *zyklon-B* poison in Red Cross vans, the gas’ administration by SS medical corpsmen, to the selections performed by doctors on the ramps and medical wards “the killing program was led by doctors – from the beginning to the end,”⁷⁴ as one survivor testimony concluded.

Despite the overwhelming amount of indoctrination that Nazi medical professionals underwent prior to the utilization of 14f13 within Auschwitz, the horrifying reality of the extermination camp was so psychologically powerful that its additional influence as a motivational force cannot be denied. Lifton points out it was a Nazi doctor Heinz Thilo who referred to the camp *anus mundi*, or “anus of the world,” and the application of the term was appropriate as it was representative of, as a Polish psychiatrist concluded, “‘the necessity to sweep clean the world’ a vision ‘of the Germanic superman, . . . of a world where there would be no place for sick people, cripples, psychologically immoral people, contaminated by Jewish, Gypsy or other blood.’”⁷⁵ In the Nazi

⁷² Proctor, *Racial Medicine*, 73.

⁷³ Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*, 154.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 166.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 147.

biomedical vision, Auschwitz was the facility in which the Reich's cultural and genetic waste would be permanently eliminated, a rationalization that lent more weight to the perception that medical, rather than political, functionaries were accountable for the killing. Despite this level of responsibility placed in the hands of doctors, it is of particular interest to recognize which duties assigned to doctors were considered medical and non-medical.

Although there may have existed the conception among prisoners and Nazi physicians that all duties performed by the doctors within the structure of the camp were medical in nature, there was no distinction for the camp Kommandant, Rudolph Höss. In his memoirs, written after his capture by Allied forces at the end of the war, Höss detailed the SS administered rules and regulations under which the camp was operated. Within these detailed lists of operating procedures is a heading titled "The Non-Medical Activities of the SS Doctors in Auschwitz." Following the heading is a list of actions performed in the process of medicalized killing, from the ramp selections and *zyklon-B* application, to medical block selections and abortions. All of these duties given to SS doctors were interpreted and executed with the understanding of being non-medical in nature.⁷⁶ The real medical duty of camp doctors was to see to the health of the German soldiers manning the camp. As far as prisoners were concerned, their medical responsibility did not extend beyond assuring that they (the prisoners) would be healthy enough to remain productive.⁷⁷ This distinction is vital to understanding the breakdown in the biomedical vision of the physicians in question, as they may have been so affected by the German medical crisis that they were unable to perceive delineation between science and politics. The medical bureaucracy had taught them that every act they performed was medical in nature, purifying and strengthening the *Völk*. From the SS perspective, the doctor in the camp performed in more traditional role. While these opposing distinctions may be

⁷⁶ Rudolph Höss, *Death Dealer: The Memoirs of the SS Kommandant at Auschwitz*, ed. Steven Paskuly, trans. Andrew Pollinger (New York: De Capo Press, 1996), 223-225.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 217.

indicative of the power struggle that existed between SS factions, one wishing to preserve prisoners as a labor resource (despite the agenda of higher authority) and the other aiming for maximized extermination, it could arguably be an indicator of not only the SS doctors of Auschwitz being recognizably undertrained in medical science, but they had also fully succumbed to the twisted logic of the ideology.⁷⁸ Nazi physicians ultimately fell into the latter of the two factions, as the responsibility and accountability of their traditional role as medical practitioner was superseded by the influence of Nazi ideology, turning them into party functionaries first, doctors second.

From this perspective Josef Mengele represents an iconic figure of both the German medical crisis and the overwhelming influence of Auschwitz. Mengele, enrolled in the medical program at the University of Munich during the Nazi seizure of power in 1933, was in a most opportunistic place to be influenced by the political ideology of the Nazi party and the misleading concepts of *Rassenkunde*. In 1935, he was awarded his Ph.D. in anthropology and medicine after completing his dissertation on the hereditary abnormalities of human jaws, earning a citation in the *Index Medicus* of 1937.⁷⁹ William Seidelman states that although the influence of party politics could already be seen in Mengele's work, it was not of a sufficient level to deny that Josef Mengele was of "respectable professional origins,"⁸⁰ in the context of medicine in the mid 1930's. It must be noted, however, that in 1931 during his first year at the University of Munich, Mengele joined the *Stahlhelm* (Steel Helm), a paramilitary unit of the Nazi party comprised of university students. His allegiance to the *Völk* and the ideals of the Nazi movement at such an early stage also influenced his interest in racial science and anthropology.⁸¹ The conception of Mengele shifting from a "credible" physician to a

⁷⁸ Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*, 174.

⁷⁹ William E Seidelman, "Mengele Medicus: Medicine's Nazi Heritage." *The Milbank Quarterly* 66, no.2 (1988): 225. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3350031> (accessed March 10, 2009).

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 221.

⁸¹ Lucette Matalon Lagnado and Shiela Cohn Dekel, *Children of the Flames: Dr. Josef Mengele and the Untold Story of the Twins of Auschwitz* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), 40-41.

death camp butcher is misleading. The Nazification of medicine and the continuous influence of *Gleichschaltung* increased importance of political reliability for upward mobility. This fact coupled with Mengele's early involvement in the Nazi movement leaves little doubt that he became increasingly receptive to the Nazi biomedical vision during his medical education, for ideological and opportunistic reasons. By the time Mengele reached Auschwitz in April of 1943, he had received his baptism of fire two-fold, both in the Nazified halls of medicine and the racially and politically charged battlefields of the Eastern Front. Undoubtedly, Mengele was exposed to ideological propaganda the likes of von Richenau's speech, mentioned earlier, during his service at the front. Upon assumption of his role as camp physician of Auschwitz, Mengele would have been a fully indoctrinated Nazi ideologue, intent on utilizing his sadistic ambition to exploit "ample opportunities for what passed as scientific research . . . which could be used for academic purposes, such as acquiring the *Habilitation*, or second scholarly book, enabling one to teach in a medical faculty or even become a professor."⁸² He had internalized Nazi racial policy, and represented the culmination of the German medical system in crisis.

Under the influence of *Gleichschaltung* and the medical crisis, the eight year span between the receiving of his PhD and his assignment to Auschwitz resulted in Mengele's embracing the concept of therapeutic healing through killing. One must remember that he, and numerous other German doctors, was a product of a medical system in crisis in addition to a culture subjected to mass indoctrination. By all outward appearances, there existed a duality in the nature of Dr. Josef Mengele while at Auschwitz, a fact which drives Lifton's "doubling" thesis. Survivor testimony has revealed two sides of Mengele, an outward manifestation which earned him his infamous nickname, the

⁸² Michael Kater, "Criminal Physicians in the Third Reich: Toward a Group Portrait," in *Medicine and Medical Ethics in Nazi Germany: Origins, Practices, Legacies*, ed. Francis R. Nicosia and Jonathan Huener (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002), 87-88.

“Angel of Death.” In recalling Josef Mengele, survivor Peter Somogyi, a twin subjected to experimentation by the SS physician, stated, “Mengele related to twins on different levels. With my brother and me, he liked to discuss music. We had long talks with him about culture. Perhaps because of this, we were not afraid of the experiments – or of him . . . I remember thinking Mengele was a rather nice man.”⁸³ These very conversations originated on the selection ramp due to Mengele’s tendency to whistle classical music tunes while sending transport arrivals to the gas chamber. Another survivor, Vera Blau, recalled a young gypsy twin that Mengele used to shower with affection. It was with this imagery of humanity that Blau described Mengele, but in a rather paradoxical way. “I believe Mengele loved children,” Blau observed, “even though he was a murderer and killer. Yes! I remember him as a gentle man.”⁸⁴ Despite the affection showed to the child, Mengele personally walked the boy to the gas chambers when the Gypsy camp of Auschwitz was liquidated.⁸⁵

Because the actions of Mengele seem to be so diametrically opposed, Lifton concludes that he represents the most extreme form of psychological doubling. Lifton maintains that Mengele “had to form a new self in order to become an energetic killer” and that “his prior self could be readily absorbed into the Auschwitz self,” thus enabling him to easily process the healing-killing paradox.⁸⁶ However, it can be argued there was no paradox in the reversal of healing to killing for Josef Mengele. Medicalized killing in the death camps was simply an extension of National Socialist will. National Socialism, as eugenicist Theobald Lang had once stated, was simply applied biology.⁸⁷ For Mengele, the act of killing those deemed scientifically inferior or sub-human was an act of “healing.” The combination of his Nazified medical education and political indoctrination had brought Mengele fully within the fold of the *völkisch* conception of Germany and by acting upon the proscribed precepts necessary to heal both the

⁸³ Lagnado & Dekel, *Children of the Flames*, 77.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 67

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁸⁶ Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*, 424.

⁸⁷ Proctor, *Racial Medicine*, 30.

Germany nation and its people, he was acting in a manner which was both appropriate and relevant. The paradox did not apply, because there was no differentiation between the two: killing was an act of healing, and vice versa. It was not the horrifying degradation of Auschwitz which turned Mengele into a murderer and torturer; instead, it was the methodical exposure to and assimilation within Nazi ideology which twisted him, and others, as a doctor and a human.

Dr. Miklos Nyiszli, a prisoner pathologist and Hungarian Jew forced into the employ of Mengele, witnessed much of the extent of Mengele's atrocities. Amidst the demonic experimentation and murder inflicted by Mengele, however, Nyiszli did recall a brief moment of human emotion exhibited by the feared doctor:

During our numerous contacts and talks together, Dr. Mengele had never granted me what I might call a private conversation. But now, seeing him so depressed, I screwed up my courage. "Captain," I said, "when is all this destruction going to cease?" He looked at me and replied: "*Mein Freund! Es geht immer weiter, immer weiter!* My friend, it goes on and on, on and on . . ." His words seemed to betray a note of silent resignation.⁸⁸

This moment of human weakness, however, did not keep Nyiszli from describing Mengele as a "criminal doctor" and describing his "research into the origins of dual births [as] nothing more than pseudo-science."⁸⁹ His observation of the work Mengele pursued while in Auschwitz is particularly revealing. It shows from the professional opinion of a licensed, and legitimate, doctor that Mengele, despite academic and professional recognition at the start of his career, had become no better than other physicians produced by the German medical system in crisis. Additionally, Mengele's

⁸⁸ Dr. Miklos Nyiszli, *Auschwitz: A Doctor's Eyewitness Account*, trans. by Tibère Kremer and Richard Seaver, (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1993), 172.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 97, 109.

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own admission that the killing seemed to be endless may reveal his own doubts over the ability of the Nazi Biocracy to fully realize its agenda, despite his personal level of commitment to the ideology.

Despite any doubts that may or may not have existed for Mengele, the unique environment of Auschwitz, with its availability of human research material in addition to its social, political, and moral isolation became a forum for him to ply his politicized trade; in short, he could play God. Lifton states, “In speaking of him as a doctor ‘playing God’ and then reversing that image to ‘God playing doctor,’ one prisoner doctor touched upon Mengele’s sense of being the embodiment of a larger spiritual principle, the incarnation of a sacred Nazi deity – whether that deity was itself an ideological vision of the future or the Führer himself.”⁹⁰

The Shift in Cultural Axioms

Historian Claudia Koonz believes the motivation for the perpetrators of the Holocaust originates from both the functionalist and intentionalist camps, being composed of a multitude of factors. German cultural anti-Semitism, the eugenics movement, political indoctrination, and the process of psychological “numbing” all play a role in the collaboration and enactment of persecution and genocidal murder of European Jews. She states that, “collaborators in racial persecution were ordinary in a different and more frightening way than the image of banal bureaucrats and obedient soldiers suggests.”⁹¹ The process of “othering” Jews during the Nazi Regime was, according to Koonz, achieved subtly by the ethnocrats of the German government playing upon the fears and concerns of a disillusioned and socio-politically fractured culture. Between the years 1933 (when the Nazis seized power) and 1939 (the German invasion of Poland), Hitler and the Nazi Party went to great lengths to constantly adapt the party program and the government in order to maximize compliance and success

⁹⁰ Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*, 379.

⁹¹ Koonz, *Conscience*, 273.

with various measures aimed at socially isolating Jews. Koonz points out repeatedly in her text that between 1933 and 1935, prior to the implementation of the Nuremberg Race Laws, Hitler himself scaled back his anti-Semitic rhetoric while party officials attempted to quell SA violence in the streets against Jews, all in an effort to garner stronger support and establish deeper credibility for the National Socialist government. Unlike Goldhagen's analysis, Koonz draws the conclusion that it was not anti-Semitism that made Germans Nazis, rather Nazism that made them anti-Semitic.⁹²

As support for the National Socialist movement grew, so did its influence on every aspect of life within German society. The subtle and methodical process of indoctrination was not only manifesting in verbose political speeches and anachronistic paramilitary rallies, but in facets of popular culture and everyday life. Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's Reich Minister of Propaganda, executed his job with extreme efficiency, increasing the appeal of Hitler's cult of personality while simultaneously promoting ethnic fundamentalism. "A skillfully managed public relations campaign allowed moderate Germans to rationalize their support for Nazi rule. They could become 'yes but' Nazis – welcome ethnic fundamentalism and economic recovery while dismissing Nazi crimes as incidental."⁹³ By focusing on ethnic homogeneity rather than Jewish diversity – "self-love" rather than "other-hate"⁹⁴ – during the formative years of the Regime, Hitler and the Nazi party were successful in changing the axis upon which German morality and ethics spun. This shift in the cultural axioms, the change in what "ordinary" Germans and German physicians perceived as right and wrong as a collective society, was the greatest component in creating complicity to the Holocaust.

Historian John Roth's analysis of ethics during the Holocaust supports Koonz's argument. Roth states:

⁹² Ibid., 10.

⁹³ Ibid., 102.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 10.

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It can be argued that ethical injunctions against needless and wanton killing, for example, obtain normative status because collective experience shows them to have social utility. Such killing is wrong, on such a view, because it threatens individual and social well-being. Over time this lesson is experienced, taught, and driven home so that the ethical norm becomes embedded “in our bones.” But what if individuals or social groups do not understand wanton and needless killing in the same way? Himmler and his followers could agree that wanton and needless killing was wrong, but they did not think that the destruction of the European Jews fit that description.⁹⁵

From a 21st century perspective, the perpetration of the Holocaust by Germans during the Nazi regime, be they the facilitators of genocidal murder or complacent and apathetic bystanders, is without doubt morally and spiritually horrendous and wrong. However, in the context of Germany during the 1930's and 1940's, to the ordinary German, the role they may or may not have played was, collectively, right *in terms of accepted standards of behavior and morality*. This level of acceptance is not the singular result of deep rooted cultural anti-Semitism, as Goldhagen asserts. The German conscience was not one of anti-Semitism poised at the brink, waiting for the words of an ideologue to start it down its eliminationist course. Additionally, the vast majority of German society did not allow itself to be turned against those who were ethnically different, particularly Jews, because of purely external factors and the radicalized pro-activity of mid-level Nazi bureaucracy, as has been argued by Browning. Goldhagen is correct to focus on the ideological drive, but the argument only goes so far. At the same time, Browning's focus is too narrow, and while it helps to explain perpetrator motivation on one level, it falls short of bridging the gap to Goldhagen. Koonz's analysis

⁹⁵ John K. Roth, *Ethics During and After the Holocaust: In the Shadow of Birkenau* (Houndmills:Palgrave Books, 2005), 71.

successfully weaves the two dialectics together, creating a deeper and broader understanding of perpetrator motivation.

As Koonz points out, “[t]he popularizers of antisemitism and the planners of genocide followed a coherent set of severe ethical maxims derived from broad philosophical concepts . . . they denied the existence of universal moral values and instead promoted moral maxims they saw as appropriate to their Aryan community.”⁹⁶ The Nazi party had a racially charged agenda that was blatantly clear, but, unlike Goldhagen’s belief that Germans were on board with the program from day one or Browning’s belief that limited indoctrination played a minor role on the ground in Poland, the German populace, prior to the war, was influenced to such a degree through propaganda, scientific and intellectual legitimization, and government support, they truly believed Jews and other non-Aryans posed a threat to the imagined community of the *Volk*. The difference between right and wrong, ethical or unethical, was perceived through the *völkisch* lenses, and any action (or inaction) that preserved the sanctity of the *Volk*, the state and the Führer was of paramount importance. Roth clarifies this reality succinctly when evaluating Germans under the Third Reich: “They were not mindlessly obedient; they acted in terms of what they came to regard as right and good. To do the latter, they may have had to suppress or override some moral inhibitions, but they could do so without feeling that they were irrational or morally unjustified in doing so.”⁹⁷

The Hippocratic Oath, written sometime in the 4th century B.C., has long served to define the ethical responsibilities and standards expected to be upheld by physicians.⁹⁸ Whereas the original Greek religious aspects of the Oath have fallen by the wayside with the rise of Christianity and modernity in Europe, the core of the oath remains relative and intact:

⁹⁶ Koonz, *Conscience*, 1.

⁹⁷ Roth, *Ethics During and After the Holocaust*, 85.

⁹⁸ Michael North, *Greek Medicine: “I Swear by Apollo Physician...”: Greek Medicine from the Gods to Galen*.
http://www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/greek/greek_oath.html (accessed April 13, 2009).

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I will use those dietary regimens which will benefit my patients according to my greatest ability and judgment, and I will do no harm or injustice to them. I will not give a lethal drug to anyone if I am asked, nor will I advise such a plan; and similarly I will not give a woman a pessary to cause an abortion. In purity and according to divine law will I carry out my life and my art. I will not use the knife, even upon those suffering from stones, but I will leave this to those who are trained in this craft.⁹⁹

The Hippocratic Oath is more than one of healing; it is an oath of trust, responsibility and accountability. By taking this oath, physicians commit themselves morally and professionally to the art of healing and of saving lives. What happens, however, when political influence, scientific legitimacy, and personal ambition overtake the moral and ethical compass? Under the joint influence of social, political, and scientific ideologies during the Nazi Regime, the most important aspects of the oath appear to have disappeared along with the ancient Gods. Adherence to tradition was superseded by science while morality drowned beneath a wave of reactionary modernism. According to Koonz, the movement away from progressive education, believed to be overly subjective and leaving ethnic Germans “defenseless against the ravages of a decadent culture,”¹⁰⁰ culminated in collective education and cultural identification centered on a conglomeration of Social Darwinism, anti-Semitism, and eugenics which paved the way for a horrifying shift in German medical history and introduced the world to the reality of medicalized killing, epitomized by the Holocaust and the medical experimentation performed at death camps like Dachau and Auschwitz.

The lengths to which the Nazi regime went in order to maintain the illusion of healing while industrializing death, on a horrifically grand scale, cannot be discounted as a historical anomaly, nor can the physicians entrusted with the task be

⁹⁹ North, *Greek Medicine*.

¹⁰⁰ Koonz, *Conscience*, 132-33.

analyzed separate from the scholarship on Holocaust perpetration. Doctors represent healing and their ability to cure ills and save lives instills a level of trust and accountability upon the profession. *Gleichschaltung* within German academia, medicine and culture was fundamental in creating not only corrupt physicians, like Mengele, but a society tolerant and/or apathetic to the existence of death camps, like Auschwitz, where the most heinous of crimes in the name of science and social health were conducted. “Like the spirit *Malach Hamavet*, Mengele was a master destroyer, a satanic figure brimming with evil and without regard for human life. But also like his namesake, Mengele was ‘angelic’ in appearance and demeanor, able to charm, to woo, to captivate, to trick and seduce, everyone he met, most especially young children.”¹⁰¹ This image of Mengele is quintessential in representing German medicine under the Nazi regime.

For physicians in the Third Reich, opportunities presented by the professionalization and legitimization of racial science by the Nazi regime helped to create an environment in which German physicians played an integral role in the creation of an ethnically homogenous state. Koonz persuasively suggests that:

Moral catastrophe did not take place only on the killing fields and concentration camps in the distant East. It began at home, in the Reich, during the so-called peace years . . . Bureaucratically sanctioned persecution was presented as a protective measure against Jewry, depicted as an amorphous moral danger. Individual Jews’ evident suffering, however unfortunate, was cast as collateral damage on the crusade for ethnic rebirth.¹⁰²

As cultural and ethical axioms shifted in favor of the *Volk* concept and away from accepted Enlightenment traditions of universal freedoms, German physicians, and the German populace as a whole, found their willingness to conform to the racial policies of

¹⁰¹ Lagnado & Dekel, *Children of the Flames*, 76.

¹⁰² Koonz, *Conscience*, 256.

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the Nazi party to be both acceptable and responsible. As Jews and other undesirable elements of German society found themselves increasingly marginalized, persecuted and “othered,” the response to their plight by their cultural and ethnic superiors was one of apathy, violence and murder. German physicians, increasingly immersed in all forms of influence, from indoctrination to brutalization to opportunism, found themselves existing deeper within the axiomatic shift than their “ordinary” contemporaries. As no single element is capable of fully defining medicalized killing or the politicization of German physicians, it must be understood that numerous ideologies, personal decisions, and shifting standards of ethics all played a role in the reorganization and reimplementation of German medicine. The historiography shows the manifestation of medicalized killing and the motivation for German physicians to circumvent the precepts of their Hippocratic Oath has deep historical roots and derives more from the changes in social, political, and scientific thinking responsible for the Nazification of German medicine than the uniquely amoral and cruel atmosphere of Auschwitz itself. As their stake in the healing-killing paradox and the perpetration of the Holocaust grew ever larger, the reality of physicians performing at the behest of the Third Reich was such: rather than serving as the scalpel in the ideological hand, they were the hand wielding the ideological scalpel for the greater good of National Socialism and the ethnic German state.

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Alicia Gutierrez

Dead Fish in the Desert: A Brief Photo-History of The Salton Sea

BY ALICIA GUTIERREZ

Located around 150 miles to the east and south of Los Angeles lies an unburied treasure and an ecological hotbed of debate. While you may not find the treasure in the archetypal sense, you'll find it in a still, stagnant, and salty body of water in the middle of the desert, the Salton Sea. Considered by many to be an ecological disaster, or a big puddle of sewage, few people take the time to see or smell past all these negative characteristics and find the history behind it. The Salton Sea was once a human-made desert Riviera, but now, it's come to be the abandoned, neglected brainchild of profit-seeking exploiters. Presently, government and environmental groups are trying to figure out how to deal with the Salton Sea. Understanding the quandary of the Salton Sea relies heavily on understanding its history. Human's adaptation to the environment can create a desert oasis-turned-wasteland, but ultimately, it's up to humanity to fix the mess that has been created and unearth the dissipating potential of the Salton Sea.

Driving along the 111 South from Palm Desert towards Niland, you don't really see a lot: date palms, the railroad, the occasional passing car; but one thing stands out as almost omnipresent. Perhaps it is the almost endless glittering, blinding shimmer of sunlight hitting the expanse of murky blue water, or the stench of rotting death. Either way, you can't escape it. Welcome to the Salton Sea.

Looking at it now, you would not guess this used to be a hot spot for the rich and famous in the 1950s and 1960s, but the Salton Sea's history is as rich as the sea is salty—from before the early natives who lived in the Salton Basin beginning around 700

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C.E. to the current increasing levels of salt responsible for algae blooms and wildlife mortality. Once a hub for the wealthy to dock their yachts, water ski and relax, all that remains of the Salton Sea's former glory are a few run-down, graffiti-covered yacht clubs, an eerie shoreline playground and a question about its rise and fall.



Though a beautiful shade of blue in this photo and from afar, up close the Salton Sea resembles more of a dark, amber beer with dead fish floating in it.

I vividly remember my first time really going to the Salton Sea. It was the middle of summer, I was on my way to my grandparent's house and I had a big crack in the windshield of my Jeep. I wanted to see the Salton Sea up close. I left both of my side windows open about an inch to minimize the expansion of the ever-spreading crack. I walked around and when I got back to my Jeep I wondered why there was a mysterious black foggy haze inside of it. When I opened the door, I realized those were flies. Determined to document my experience during a later visit, I armed myself with hand sanitizer and three of my cameras.

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Home to more dead fish than people, skeletons and remains of massive fish and bird die-offs can be found scattered along the shoreline of the Salton Sea. While approaching the sea, instead of sand, you can hear the crunch of bones and barnacles under your feet. Photo by: Alicia Gutierrez

Visible from space, the Salton Sea's surface area is approximately 380 square miles, roughly twice the surface area of Lake Tahoe. It measures 15.5 miles across its widest point and 36 miles in length. The Salton Sea we recognize now "is a body of water that currently occupies the Salton Basin."¹ However, it is not the first body of water to do so. The ancient coastline of the Gulf of California once extended as far north as Indio. As silt accumulated from the Colorado River, it enclosed and separated the newly formed Salton Sea from the Gulf. This basin, or sink, is approximately 280 feet below sea level, with the surface of the sea at around 220 feet below sea level. The original lake did eventually dry up completely, but several lakes have formed on and off within the basin, due to the unpredictable Colorado River which changed its course and directed water into the basin on several occasions.

During the summer a considerable amount of water evaporates from the Salton Sea when the neighboring desert can reach temperatures upwards of 115 degrees Fahrenheit. This continual process of flooding and evaporation is what also

¹ "Historical Chronology," (Salton Sea Authority), <http://www.saltonsea.ca.gov/about/history.htm> (accessed March 27, 2009).

contributes to its incredible level of salinity. While the desert receives only around two to three inches of annual rainfall, the Salton Sea is fed more water from

two main tributaries, the Alamo River and the New River. Both flow north from Mexico, receiving drainwater along the way. Considered the most polluted river in the United States, the New glugs through Mexicali, Mexico, a city... that dumps in raw sewage, inadequately treated sewage... as well as a visible assortment of trash...and phosphate detergents. [While] most of the bacteria from Mexico seem to die off before its waters reach the Salton Sea... the appalling condition of the New River serves to stigmatize the sea.²

Currently, the Salton Sea's salinity is calculated at 44 ppt (parts per thousand). This is 25% greater than the salinity of the Pacific Ocean whose current level is 35 ppt. When the water in the Salton Sea evaporates during the summer, the salt gets left behind. With less water present, and the same amount of salt remaining and accumulating, the concentration ratio of salt to water gets skewed and the water grows saltier and saltier. For example, in 1998, approximately 1.3 acre-feet of water with roughly 4 million tons of dissolved salt in it entered the Salton Sea through the main tributaries and other sources of water.³

In the early 1820s, trappers including Jedediah Smith, Kit Carson and Wm. Wolfskill visited the Salton Basin.⁴ During the California Gold Rush, miners who did not want to wait for the snow in the north to melt traversed Imperial Valley via Warner's Hot Springs and Carriso Creek.⁵ While the southern pass may have

² Robert H. Boyle, "Life—or Death—For the Salton Sea?" *Smithsonian* 27, no. 3: 86.

³ William de Buys, *Salt Dreams* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 221.

⁴ "Historical Chronology," Salton Sea Authority.

⁵ *Ibid.*

seemed an easier trek in terms of elevation, it was a desert nonetheless. Many miners who attempted the southern pass died along the way, especially those who attempted this feat during the summer.

Floods ravaged the Salton Sink from 1852 through 1867. Major development plans for irrigating the Salton Sea began in the 1890s. However, when funding was finally negotiated with the financiers, the blowing up of the American battleship *Maine* in the harbor of Havana on February 15, 1898, coupled with the war that followed it, put a stop to negotiations.⁶ In late 1899, irrigation mogul George Chaffey took interest in the California desert. He set up a reconnaissance of the area for that December and attempted to secure support from the California Development Company (CDC). Securing support from the CDC was no easy task, but Chaffey, “waged a board-room battle.”⁷ In 1901 when the CDC finally realized the capability that the Imperial Valley had for seemingly endless agricultural productivity, irrigation canals were dug from the Colorado River.⁸ Seven hundred miles of canal were developed, and from this, 77,000 acres of land could be cultivated and irrigated. George Chaffey had found a way to tame the desert. By 1904 the area began to develop, and more than 12,000 people moved to the neighboring desert, and towns of Brawley, Holtville, Heber, and Calexico. The railroad made transport easy and allowed for the growth of economic markets.⁹

⁶ Pat Laflin, “The Salton Sea: California’s Overlooked Treasure,” *The Periscope*, Coachella Valley Historical Society, 1995, (reprinted 1999).

⁷ William de Buys, *Salt Dreams*, 79.

⁸ “Historical Chronology,” Salton Sea Authority.

⁹ Mildred de Stanley, *The Salton Sea: Yesterday and Today*. (Los Angeles: Triumph Press, 1966), 24.



Salton Sink, California. From: *Salt Dreams*, 156.

In 1906 and 1907 after another season of flooding, the biodiversity of the Salton Sea area, including large populations of waterfowl, like white pelicans, cormorants and brown pelicans, was finally recognized. Soon thereafter, sport fishing began to be promoted. From 1917-1918, during World War one, the catching of mullet became a lucrative business to the Salton Sea.¹⁰ After World War One ended, the Salton Sea became a tourist attraction for its mullets and Mullet Island on the south side of the Sea.

In 1924, the Salton Sea became a “permanent drainage reservoir”¹¹ after President Coolidge issued an executive order to set land aside. According to this executive order, the Salton Sea essentially became the place for Imperial Valley to allow its run-off to divert to. In 1928, construction for the Boulder Dam and All American Canal was authorized. This would put a stop to the flooding that devastated the Basin in the mid 1850s and early 1900s.

¹⁰ “Historical Chronology,” Salton Sea Authority.

¹¹ Ibid.

In 1929, the California Department of Fish and Game began an experiment. The Department of Fish and Game would go to the San Joaquin River, San Felipe, and San Francisco Bay, catch fish, and then transplant everything they caught, with the exception of sharks, into the Salton Sea. They introduced various species of fish to see which ones could survive. Even San Bernardino played a role in the creation (or attempted creation) of the Salton Sea's ecosystem. In 1934, 15,000 silver salmon fingerlings from the Department of Fish and Game hatchery in the San Bernardino Mountains were transplanted into the Salton Sea. Unfortunately, they were never seen again.¹²

During World War Two, ocean fishing was too dangerous with German submarines patrolling the waters. As a result, the Salton Sea became profitable for its mullet, again. Between 1944-1945, U.S. B-29s from the Army's Heavy Bombardment Squadron, commanded by Lt. Col. Paul Tibbets, made periodic yet highly secret practice flights to drop dummy bombs into the Salton Sea. It was Tibbets and his crew in the *Enola Gay* who dropped the first Atomic Bomb over Hiroshima.¹³ During World War Two, the Salton Sea also served as a Naval Base. There was some speculation because at the time it was never mentioned in newspapers, but the base was located just a few miles from the current Highway 86 on the southwestern part of the Salton Sea. According to local historians, "the base was headquarters for a torpedo and skip bombing range."¹⁴

In the 1950s, the Salton Sea became a tourist attraction again, but this time for speed boaters. Because of the high water density, boats were able to go faster on the Salton Sea than anywhere else. In October 1950, a Speedboat Regatta, sponsored by the American Power Boat Association was held. About 2,000 people attended and five world records were set.¹⁵ The Regatta was held in the Salton Sea in 1951, and even more speedboat records were set. With the increasing number of visitors, more kinds of saltwater fish were introduced to the Salton Sea, as a result the

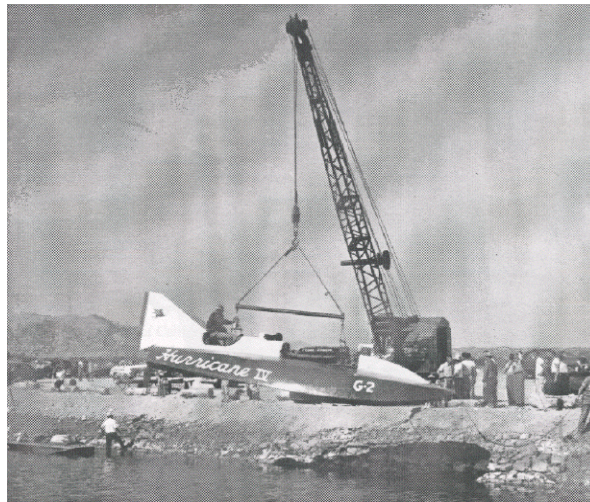
¹² Mildred de Stanley, *The Salton Sea: Yesterday and Today*, 52.

¹³ "Historical Chronology," Salton Sea Authority.

¹⁴ Pat Laflin, "The Salton Sea: California's Overlooked Treasure."

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Salton Sea State Park was dedicated in 1955. In 1958, planning for the Salton City community began under M. Penn Phillips Co. Phillips and other developers bought nearly 20,000 acres that they subdivided on paper for schools, parks, churches, shops and houses. They also “spent \$1 million on a freshwater distribution system... and lavished \$350,000 on an 18-hole golf course.”¹⁶ The North Shore Beach and Yacht Club, a \$2 million resort, opened its doors in 1960, by this time, the Salton Sea had been, and now because of the North Shore Yacht Club, continued to be visited by the likes of Jerry Lewis, the Beach Boys, Frank Sinatra, Dwight Eisenhower and Desi Arnaz. The Salton Sea was gaining more and more attention. In fact, “by the early 1960s the Salton Sea State Recreation Area was attracting more visitors annually than Yosemite National Park.”¹⁷



"Hurricane IV" was always a popular entrant during the speedboat regattas. From: "The Salton Sea: California's Overlooked Treasure." As printed in the Coachella Valley Historical Society's Journal *The Periscope*.

¹⁶ Robert H. Boyle, "Life—or Death—for the Salton Sea?"

¹⁷ Steven Greenfield, "A Lake by Mistake." *American Heritage: Invention & Technology Magazine* 21, no. 3 (Winter 2006).
<http://www.americanheritage.com/articles/magazine/it/2006/3/2006.html>
(accessed April 2, 2009).

The Salton Sea's apex came right before its fall. In fact, for no apparent reason, M. Penn Phillips, the man who had been so consumed with the creation of the Salton Sea, sold all of his interests in the Salton Sea and the neighboring cities in November of 1960. In 1961, the California Department of Fish and Game began to worry about the increasing salinity of the Salton Sea. Further, they even predicted that the entire sea would die off by 1990. However, in the book *The Salton Sea: Yesterday and Today*, which was published in 1966, there were no such worries evident. In fact, this book markets the Salton Sea "as the ideal place to spend your weekends and vacations with marinas, yacht clubs, [and] air-conditioned luxury motels..."¹⁸ In 1968, Atlas Plastics Corporation, the only corporation that Salton City ever got, closed its doors, just 4 years after its inception in 1964. In 1974, plans to reduce salinity were discussed but never came to fruition because tropical storms Kathleen and Doreen did a considerable amount of damage and flooding to shore-side resorts.

Legislation over the Salton Sea had been going on since Theodore Roosevelt's presidency and role in the development of the Salton Sea, but it wasn't set into full motion until the Sonny Bono Memorial Salton Sea Restoration Act was introduced to the Senate in 1998. According to this bill, its passage calls for a further study of the Salton Sea, cost effective alternatives, and development plans to put these alternatives into action.

The current salinity levels of the Salton Sea are harmful to fish reproduction. Further, the excess run-off results in spiked increases in levels of nitrogen, phosphates, and fertilizers and cause the Salton Sea to enter a eutrophic state creating breeding grounds for botulism. However, the Imperial Valley, America's salad bowl, plays an important role in the agricultural industry and needs a place to dispose of its excess soil, salt and run-off water. The Imperial Valley is responsible for "somewhere between one-third and one-half of all winter vegetables consumed in the United States... and the value of the valley's annual production exceeds \$1 billion."¹⁹ If the Salton Sea grows any saltier, all the fish—and birds that feed off those fish— will die and the Salton Sea will

¹⁸ Mildred de Stanley, *The Salton Sea: Yesterday and Today*, volume 3.

¹⁹ William de Buys, *Salt Dreams*, 183.

resemble the Great Salt Lake in Utah. This is particularly bad as the Salton Sea is the last stop for birds on their migratory flight south. According to the Sonny Bono Memorial Salton Sea Restoration Act, the desired salinity for the sea is between 35 and 40 ppt, roughly that of ocean water. A plan was proposed to Congress to divide the Salton Sea into two parts. According to this proposal, the northern part of the Salton Sea, in Riverside County, would be maintained, and the salt would be pumped out or filtered into the southern part of the Salton Sea, in Imperial County. However, Imperial County resented this proposal because it appears to benefit Riverside County.

Presently, the Salton Sea still attracts visitors. There are no restrictions for fishing tilapia; it's a birdwatcher's paradise and a desert-junkie's campground. The weather allows for year-round recreation with hiking, camping, hunting, boating and off-roading allowed. I must admit, during my Memorial Day weekend photography expedition I saw more people at the Salton Sea than I had ever seen in every visit before, combined.

Perhaps it is an environmental ticking-time-bomb, but I will admit I have fallen in love with the Salton Sea. Its smell no longer bothers me and almost fades away. The hot desert air, mixed with the fresh winds and the saltiness of the sea, cunningly tempts you to take a deep breath. It has a character that is completely unique. Perhaps a local best described the Salton Sea's limbo when he said, "if the sea were clean, this place would be another Palm Springs, and goodbye to us all."²⁰ This is true. However, it seems almost antithetical to see the Salton Sea's former and potential glory as daunting. The Salton Sea is a place where the division between success and failure is beautifully and artistically blurred, thereby rendering the two indistinguishable from each other. If it were cleaned up, the Salton Sea would be just like any other lavish lakeside or seaside resort, but in reality, the Salton Sea's true beauty is found in its inconsistencies. Two hundred and twenty or so feet below sea level, this sea is a paradox. In the midst of a vast desert is the largest, and one of the

²⁰ Robert H. Boyle, "Life—or Death—For the Salton Sea?"

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few remaining wetlands in California.²¹ It is a place where rocks can float and wood can sink and a place to find dead fish in the desert.

²¹ Steven Greenfield, "A Lake by Mistake."

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