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Baking and Breaking Bread: Ethnographic Reflections on Pastry Making and Community Building in a Mexican-American Panadería
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INTRODUCTION

Latinos In Memphis

What, and where, is Latin America? This is a question that few ask, but one on which most have an opinion. Many people in the United States would say that Latin America is located south of the U.S.-Mexico border, and in some ways they would be right. Geographically speaking, Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean comprise the region known as Latin America. However, I contend that Latin America is not merely a geographical zone, but also a cultural entity, and national or regional boundaries do not confine it. Latin America, that is to say Latin American culture, exists throughout the United States – in Los Angeles, in San Antonio, in New York City, and in Memphis, Tennessee.

The 2010 census of the city of Memphis reported 6.5% of the population as Hispanic or Latino.[1] Numbers of Latinos in the United States have only grown since then, and the presence of undocumented immigrants generally goes unrecorded in census data. It is easy to perceive Latino presence in this city as limited to El Mezcal and yard work crews, but that assessment is simply incorrect. If you drive east from Rhodes College down Summer Avenue – a main thoroughfare in the Midtown area – you will quickly notice a much different world than the one inside the college gates. Dotted among miscellaneous shops, signs read "*Lavandería*," "*Colombian Arepas*," and "*Abogado*." Laundromats, restaurants, and law offices are merely a few examples of the bustling Latino community just minutes away.

Figures 1 and 2: Attorney's office and Laundromat on Summer Avenue, both of which I saw every week on my drive to the bakery

It is a quiet and much-disputed group, ignored by some and engaged by others, censured for drug culture and for stealing jobs but simultaneously lauded for its food and its music. In the midst of that contention, the Latin American voice is heard least. My wish for this study is to bring much-needed and well-deserved attention to a few of the many Hispanic people who are shaping Memphis culture and community in a positive (and delicious!) way.

Selecting A Site

In my early contemplations of a scene for this cultural study, I determined that a Latino-owned site or a site that embodied an aspect of Latino culture would best suit my interests. I have long felt passion for the Spanish language and for Latin American cultures, and in recent years Latino culture and communities in the United States have particularly interested me. I considered several Latin American restaurants in the area, but I was already familiar with the majority of those sites to a certain extent, having either eaten their food or spoken with people who had. The Kay Bakery Panadería Monterrey, on the other hand, offered a site at which I had no prior experience and therefore fewer preconceived notions of its character, a fact that I believe opened me to recognizing the singularities of the bakery with more objectivity. I also hoped to observe and interact with both staff and customers more intimately at the *panadería*, as it is smaller in size and staff than those restaurants with which I was already familiar. Furthermore, although customer reviews and personal experience indicated that those restaurants are consistently authentic and delicious, they draw a wide array of customers due to greater popularity and more extensive advertising, whereas I was seeking a site of more niche interest.

METHODS

The Ethnographic Method

In undertaking this ethnography, by which I mean a description of the people and customs comprising the culture of a place, I studied the Kay Bakery Panadería Monterrey on Avon Road, just off of Summer Avenue. In order to form an accurate picture of the culture of the bakery, I observed its practices by watching others at the site and by performing informal interviews when the occasion arose. I also participated in those practices by purchasing food items as a customer. I made my observations over the course of the semester, for three hours on Saturday mornings or on weekday afternoons when I could not go on Saturdays.

I took care to physically situate myself within the space in terms of location, appearance, and language. In order to observe unobtrusively, I first chose a location in each of the three main rooms (the front, the kitchen, and the decorating room) that would provide me with a clear view of activities while keeping me out of the way of customers and staff members. In the front, I sat at one of two small, round, metal tables, facing the center of the room with my back to the drink case. I generally spent one hour and a half in that location, doing homework and observing the customers as they selected their pastries and rang up at the register. I divided the latter hour and a half between the kitchen and the decorating room. In the kitchen, I stood next to a partition in the wall that allowed me to watch both the bakers and the staff members that were icing pastries or decorating cookies at a table near the entrance to the front room. In the decorating room, I sat or stood (depending on whether or not a stool was present) at a tall, narrow, unfinished wooden table just behind a partition that half-enclosed a small space containing a stand mixer, a radio, and a number of supplies. My vantage point allowed me to observe all three decorators at the large counter on which they worked. Second, I took care to dress as befit the regular crowd at the bakery – casually, opting for tennis shoes rather than boots, for example. Third, I attempted to speak with people in the language most comfortable for them, whether that happened to be Spanish or English. Several of the staff members speak little English, thus I spoke Spanish with them, whereas I spoke both Spanish and English with staff members that had substantial knowledge of English. If arriving customers greeted me in Spanish or English, I did likewise.

Ethical Considerations

From the beginning of this project, I primarily wanted to ensure that in my study, as in any well-conducted anthropological study, ethical concerns would take priority over my personal objectives of gathering information and immersing myself in the culture. I was honest and

forthright with both staff and customers about my objectives and methods, and my field notes and this paper accurately reflect my observations, conversations, and experiences. I also solicited ongoing verbal consent from the staff for the duration of my time at the bakery, and I would have done so with customers in the event that I recorded specific details or quotes. Furthermore, to the end of protecting individual privacy throughout this study, my notes recorded all members of the subject population under pseudonyms (which I have likewise used in this paper), and I did not solicit or record personal identifying information from the customers.

I know from personal experience, as well as from professionals and volunteers that work with Latinos in the United States and Memphis specifically, that a number of these individuals may have undocumented status in the U.S. It was neither my intention nor my desire to inquire after any of the subjects' immigration status, and any information of which I became aware was neither recorded in my notes nor shared with any person. My responsibility in this study was first to do no harm to the security or wellbeing of the subjects, and any violation of trust would have compromised both my personal integrity and the integrity of the ethnography. For this reason, only in the confidence that I have complied with ethical standards, in the treatment of all individual subjects and of the site itself, have I completed my study.

DESCRIPTION

Setting The Scene

The first day that I walked into the bakery, I inhaled notes of yeast and flour, of sugar and glaze; this warm, bready smell, wafting in from the kitchen and emanating from the display cases, was the one that I had anticipated in my idealized imaginings of a first visit. It was a Monday shortly after noon, and the customers, two Hispanic women with their children,

conversed softly among themselves, while the young woman behind the register asked if she could help me. Just inside the entrance to the Panadería Monterrey, a doormat with the bakery logo and a book of sample cakes greet arriving customers. Pathways scuffed from foot traffic along the linoleum floor lead customers around the room to display cases and a refrigerated drink case. Next to the drink case sit gift bags, tablecloths, and goodie bags for sale, along with stacks of Spanish newspapers – a striking image of the Latin American-ness that the bakery name indicates.

There is an element of self-service to a typical Mexican bakery that the Panadería Monterrey owners have chosen to employ, as well. When a customer enters, he or she can grab a metal tray and a pair of tongs and walk from case to case of pastries and breads, pulling out desired items and placing them on the tray until he or she is satisfied, then take the tray to the cashier for the goods to be rung up and placed in a brown paper bag. This particular bakery blends that Mexican grab-and-go ease with exchanges more typical of an American bakery. Breads and pastries fill plastic trays in the self-serve cases in the front of the store – *churros*, doughnuts, elephant ears, brownies, muffins, *conchas*, *novias*, Danishes, buns and rolls, something like crème horns, empanadas, *cazuelas* (cookie cups) filled with cream or fruit, and flower-shaped cookies topped with coconut, pecans, or sprinkles.

Figures 3 and 4: (Left) Self-serve display cases packed with goods. (Right) Novias, made from the same dough as conchas but given a flatter shape and dipped in fine sugar.

Cookies in the counter display case typically include chocolate chip, coconut, pecan sandies, wedding cookies, chocolate-pecan, shortbread, and teacakes on small plastic trays. These require a staff member to remove them for purchase. A cold case next to the counter holds cannoli, slices of *tres leches* cake, and "*fruit coctel*," a mix of pineapple, cucumber, mango, and a sweet, tangy powder called *chamoy*. Bright *piñatas* of American cartoon characters dangle from the ceiling, and model cakes that a customer might see in any

bakery in the United States are on display on a high shelf behind the counter. The right side of

the store (when looking in from the outside) stocks grocery items such as avocados, onions,

tamarind, and cactus, as well as household goods such as paper towels and napkins. It lends the

bakery an air of hominess and *cotidianidad* (or "everyday-ness"), as if people could shop there

daily as they might in a community marketplace.

Stimulating The Senses

Two realms of sense meet and mingle in the panadería. In the front of the store where the

customers shop, the gentle soundscape consists of the unobtrusive buzz of the refrigerator and

the rhythmic "*tap tap tap*" of the tongs, an occasional creak from the opening and shutting of the

display case doors, the soft hissing of the sink as employees wash their hands, and the sporadic

hum of customers' conversation. Only a few steps away, the kitchen and the decorating room

vibrate with noise and energy. Busy hands roll and pound bread dough, cut out cookies, squeeze

crinkling icing bags, and scrape metal trays free of the residues of baked treats. The oven, the

walk-in refrigerator, and the stand mixers blend their unique tones to form a thick and

permeating din, the intensity of which I failed to notice until it suddenly stopped one Saturday

morning. The simple act of closing the oven door or shutting down a mixer or two instantly

converted the excited throb to a soft pulse, and although I felt that time slowed down a bit, the

staff continued working at the same pace as before. Everyone moves especially quickly on

Saturdays, as they prepare not only a particularly large supply of the daily goods but also

numerous special-order cakes.

The music pouring from the radios merits its own discussion. The decorating room,

where two women and one of the owners work, plays soft music such as *bachata* and *son* (a

traditional Mexican genre), whereas the kitchen, where three to four men and the two younger

women work, typically plays more aggressive styles such as *reggaeton* along with the softer

selection. I asked one of the owners, Marcos, why they choose to play country music in the front

of the store as opposed to the same Latin American music to which they listen in the back. He

replied that, in part, they do so for the sake of non-Hispanic customers that may not know or

enjoy Latin music. They also want to provide a calming environment for the customers, and

Latin American music is "too exciting" for that purpose – "It makes you wanna dance," as he

says. My observations in the back of the bakery certainly attest to the latter statement, as staff

members sing, clap, and whistle along to the music while they work.

Figure 5: After baking, the cakes are stacked in one of these metal racks to cool. From there, Sara, Betania, and Carlos trim the cakes, then ice and decorate them.

The most consistent visual stimulant throughout the bakery, aside from breads and

pastries, is the glint of metal. In the front, customers gather pastries with metal trays and metal

tongs, and two small, slightly sticky metal tables and four metal chairs gleam in the sunlit area

by the windows. In the kitchen, dull and worn metal trays and metal cake pans laden with goods

stack in the shelves of metal carts, and a sturdy metal sink adorns the back wall.

Flour-dusted metal stand mixers, icing-coated metal spatulas, and shining metal

decorating tips on piping bags glimmer at every turn and create an interplay of golden-brown and

silver, soft and hard, warm and cold, organic and synthetic. Among the silver and brown,

though, moments of color burst forth in pinks, purples, yellows, greens, and blues, particularly in

the decorating room. Shelves teeming with supplies of all hues line the walls of the small space. Edible items such as food coloring, sprinkles, chocolate chips, and colored cornmeal, as well as tools such as cookie cutters and plastic decorating items, transform these shelves into a vibrant, popping display of color, in an array that reminds me of traditional Mexican fabric. In some fashion, the organized clutter of these spaces coheres to form a beautiful and exciting mosaic of sight, sound, and smell that for me has come to define the material space of this cultural scene.

RUNNING THE PANADERÍA MONTERREY

A History Lesson

One slow afternoon, Marcos and I began to talk about my schooling and our families. The conversation naturally (although in a roundabout way) transitioned into an explanation of how the Panadería got its start, when he and his brother Carlos purchased Kay Bakery nine years ago. Carlos had worked at another bakery in town for a number of years until that point. Due to business circumstances that Marcos and I did not discuss, Carlos's hours were cut back. He told his employer that he could not work with reduced hours, explaining that he could either work the same number of hours as before or find work elsewhere. She refused to re-extend his hours, so he left that bakery and found that Kay Bakery was for sale.

Marcos lived and worked in Chicago for many years before his brother bought the bakery. One day he received a call from Carlos, who said that he wanted to purchase a bakery but did not have sufficient funds on his own. Marcos traveled to Memphis to help put a down payment on the bakery and then returned to Chicago, planning to work another six months before permanently joining his brother. Six months turned into two or three years, and when he finally moved to Memphis, Marcos initially did not like working in the bakery. He enjoys the bakery

now, both the work itself and the community of people, and even though he knows relatively little of baking or of decorating technique, he does what he can and works on the business side of the bakery, as well.

He said that he is originally from a small town between Ciudad de Mexico (that is, Mexico City) and Acapulco. Thus, I was curious as to why he and his brother had named the bakery "Panadería Monterrey," as Monterrey is a city located in an entirely different state than Acapulco and Mexico City. Marcos explained that, when he and Carlos signed the deed to the bakery, the sellers recommended putting a Spanish name on the sign along with the Kay Bakery logo. In that way, the brothers could both maintain the bakery's old clientele and attract a new Hispanic clientele that would understand (by virtue of the sign) that the bakery served Mexican treats alongside United States-American goods. One of the men that worked at the bakery before the brothers purchased it was also Mexican, from the city of Monterrey, and the brothers decided they liked the sound of "Panadería Monterrey." Thus the name "Kay Bakery Panadería Monterrey" came into existence.

Figure 6: Storefront sign at the bakery, as seen today

Managing The Business

The ability of the bakery to turn a profit is one of most important facets of the business. In order to do so, the bakery must pay less for its supplies than it is able to charge for its goods. To that end, the bakery orders its baking supplies, such as granulated and powdered sugars, flour, and shortening, from a company based in Georgia that, as of several years ago, has a distribution plant in Little Rock, Arkansas. The bakery's decorating items such as plastic characters, designs, sugar sheets for edible printouts, sugar flowers, and other cake toppers come from another large company. A local shop down the road sells some of those items, but the bakery does not buy from that shop due to its high prices, which include no discount for the bakery even though it would be purchasing large quantities of the items. Buying in bulk from large distributors helps the bakery to profit off of its sales.

Unlike large businesses – which must go to great lengths to ensure quality control due to the speed of production and the quantity of employees – the Panadería Monterrey's nine-person staff controls product quality simply by maintaining the tasks that each individual consistently performs. Sara and Betania always decorate cakes; Juan, Julián, and Isaac each bake particular goods in which they have come to specialize; Elisabet and María decorate cookies, frost various pastries, and run the cash register because they both speak English; and Carlos and Marcos dabble in various tasks according to what needs extra attention. However, the brothers have been forced to make concerted efforts at quality control of customers' experiences over the last year. Until not long before I began my study, the brothers rented out the adjacent unit, where

they now sell grocery items, to another man. At some point into his occupancy, the brothers began to hear complaints from their customers regarding the manner in which that man treated them. When Carlos and Marcos could not resolve the problem with that tenant, they terminated his lease in order to protect the happiness of their customers and the integrity of their business.

Figure 7: Grocery items in the adjacent unit, including lettuce, melon, tostadas, paper goods, and chiles

CULTURAL THEMES

Baking Bread

Two cultural pillars rose up as the bakery slowly manifested itself to me, the first of which is the process of baking bread. A great deal of expertise contributes to the smooth and successful running of the Panadería Monterrey. In a matter of minutes, one can see the bakers' intimate and intuitive understanding of their craft, as they measure and roll and pound and cut and slice with cookie-cutter perfection each time. The decorators, too, move their hands with a

fluidity and a consistency that produce beautiful, symmetrical cakes. Most of the staff members have their own families at home, but each works tirelessly, and the bakery is open from 8 AM to 8 PM every day of the week.

I once asked Elisabet, who has worked in the bakery for just over a year now, what she thought was the most important part of the bakery, or what makes it unique. She quickly came back with an answer: "If you ask a customer why they come here, they say it's because this place has the best cakes in Memphis." I do not doubt it, because the cakes are bright, beautiful, and delicious. Carlos told me on my first day of observation that every cake is made fresh to order and never frozen, whereas many larger bakeries will bake and trim, then freeze cakes for future use. He and the rest of the staff appear to take (well-deserved) pride in that fact.

I would like to take a moment to highlight the technical and social processes that produce each cake. On Saturday mornings, Betania and Sara (the two decorators) and Carlos station themselves around a large counter and begin the rapid and skillful task of decorating those much-coveted cakes. They at first speak sparsely and quietly, but conversation increases and livens as time passes. All three appear relaxed in spite of their speed, chatting and singing along to Mexican music as they blaze through the cakes (I say blaze because I have done a fair amount of amateur cake decorating, and I would spend thirty minutes to an hour on the same work they accomplish in fifteen minutes). As they work, the rhythms of their job appear. The scalloped piping around the edges of the cakes looks like waves and moves like waves as they apply it, undulating, smooth, and constant. The decorators themselves embody a particular rhythm as they ice the whole cake before beginning to decorate it. A decorator stacks two layers, trims off the sides to make them even, scrapes the cake scraps into the trash holes, dabs the sides with a damp towel, and wipes any remaining crumbs off of the tray. Next, she gobs icing onto the top

of the cake with a large, flat spatula and spreads it in a full but uneven layer, repeating the same spreading action on the sides. Finally, she smooths the sides with a rectangular metal scraper, and again takes up the long spatula to smooth the top. I have closely watched Sara as she does so: swiping off a layer of icing, wiping it onto her hand, swiping again, wiping again, and finally scraping the icing off of her hand and back into the mixing bowl. Swipe, wipe, swipe, wipe, swipe, wipe, scrape, all in a fluid path of movement. She pats the icing smooth and flat with a towel after scraping. All of these motions, which would feel so foreign to someone who had never before decorated a cake, are natural and comfortable on these decorators, who pour their time and skill into every cake that leaves the bakery.

As my conversations with Elisabet progressed, she took care to explain that there are other *panaderías* in Memphis, at least eight, possibly ten. However, Kay Bakery Panadería Monterrey carries perhaps the greatest clout in terms of the reputation of its cakes. She noted that in her opinion, not as an employee but as a customer, the Panadería Monterrey also has the best Mexican bread and pastries in Memphis, with a team of excellent bakers behind it all. Juan, Julián, and Isaac prepare every item that enters the oven, from cookies to breads to cakes, with expert efficiency and technique. Isaac was a staff member at Kay before the brothers bought the bakery, and Marcos revealed that Isaac has worked consistently at the bakery for at least twenty years. His expertise has played a vital role in maintaining not only the quality of the bakery over the years, but also its reliability in producing the same goods the same way. The staff is still using the same recipes that the creator of Kay Bakery designed over seventy years ago. The Mexican recipes are, of course, new, and one of the most popular among those is the *concha*. One of these round buns fits neatly into my two hands and consists of airy, slightly sweet bread topped with a powdered sugar-shortening mixture patterned like a shell. All of the

buns are the same golden-brown, but the topping comes in an array of bright colors, yellow and

pink being two of the most popular. Marcos insisted that, "If you don't have *conchas*, it's not a

bakery." I have heard the same from Carlos and several other staff members. If people come in

looking for *conchas* and the bakery has run out for the day, those people say that they will come

back the next day, and they leave. "No *conchas*, no reason to stay," as Marcos stated.

Figures 8 and 9: (Left) A scored yellow concha awaiting purchase. (Right) Others have a more distinct shell pattern, like these chocolate conchas.

One of the most salient quotes that I took from my study at the bakery came to me in the most benign of ways. "We always use our hands," Carlos said to me one Saturday as he used his hand to spread icing on cinnamon rolls. Elisabet was working at the same table, pouring syrup onto *cortadillo* (bread striped with strawberry filling and cream cheese) and spreading it with her hand, as well. The decorators also use their hands to collect excess icing as they level the tops and sides of cakes. The bakers do so when they roll out and shape the dough for cookies and breads. This idea captures what has emerged as a theme in the culture of the bakery. Every task performed in the bakery is hands-on, from weighing to mixing to baking to decorating to moving customer's purchases from trays to paper bags; every item is handmade. The owner even keeps a bottle opener at the cash register to open the Mexican glass-bottle sodas for his customers by hand. The staff members appear to have an extremely intuitive relationship with their materials, and I believe this stems from their constant and conscientious contact with the material culture of their space.

Breaking Bread

The second pillar of the Panadería Monterrey, complementary to baking bread, is the notion of breaking bread. I mean this in its metaphorical sense – sharing a meal, sharing one's time, sharing personal experiences, thoughts, and emotions, and forging a community in doing so.

Two instances of warmth and welcome introduced me to the community of the bakery. On my first day of observation, the owner asked me at one point if a particular client's name, one not particularly uncommon but with no Spanish equivalent that I know, was a man's or a woman's before piping it onto the cake. It did not occur to me that I would have the opportunity to truly be of use to anyone at the bakery, even though I had offered to do small

tasks as compensation for my time. When he asked me about that name, he made me feel that I was already beginning to belong within a particular space in their culture. Near the end of my hours that same day, the owner announced that pizza had arrived for lunch and invited me to have some. I politely declined, but one of the decorators brought me a slice anyway. Then she asked what I would like to drink – I declined again, but she insisted, and I asked for a Coke. I realized then the need to accept their hospitality. I think there exists within me a United States-bred predisposition to decline such gestures, stemming from a desire not to be inconvenient or needy. At its core, though, the issue may really be one of pride. "We," as United States Americans, do not want to need other people. Need runs countercurrent to the American individualism and independence that form the backbone of our society. The bakery staff indicated to me on that first day that I was not merely a stranger and an individual, but that I was invited to become a member of their community.

That sense of community has grown ever more vivid throughout the course of my study. As Elisabet pointed out, the continued success of the bakery stems not only from good products but also from good relationships, both among the staff and between staff and customers. "We almost know everybody that comes in here. Sometimes we do have new people that are recommended from other customers," she commented, indicating how loyal and how pleased their customers are with the goods and the environment at the bakery. She also told me that "when you have a good relationship among everyone [the staff]," it makes the day go by quickly. The staff members truly are a family. Aside from the brothers that own the bakery and Elisabet and her sister María, no one is related by blood, but they care for each other, tease each other, respect and rely on each other, and truly enjoy working in that community.

The broad, loyal customer base comprises another vital component of the bakery's

continued success. Kay Bakery was founded in the 1930s or 1940s and has been a staple feature of Memphis food culture since that time. I can remember going to my aunt and uncle's house as a little girl, and for nearly every celebration eating a canasta cake from Kay's. Many other Memphians share similar memories, based on both the reviews I have seen online and the personal reviews that Marcos hears from customers. People who grew up in the neighborhoods around Kay's and have moved away, either to the suburbs or out of town, will visit the bakery when they are in town, and they may place advance orders for a dozen cookies or a cake. Sometimes these long-lost but loyal eaters come to the area only for the sake of going to the bakery, where they can buy the same cakes or cookies that they remember from their childhoods.

Beyond the classic Kay's crowd, the introduction of a Spanish name and Mexican goods has enabled the bakery to expand its appeal to an ethnically diverse community. The majority of clients that I see on a regular basis are Hispanic or Latino. However, customers of Indian and Middle Eastern origin or descent have approached Marcos to tell him how much they love the Mexican sweets, especially the breads and the *tres leches* cake, because those particular goods remind them of foods from their native cultures.

In summary, the culture of the Kay Bakery Panadería Monterrey thrives because it provides a space of comfort for people of manifold backgrounds. Whether people find that comfort in reliving childhood memories, speaking their own language, tasting familiar flavors, or singing along with coworkers to a flour-dusted radio in a hot kitchen, they find it at the Panadería Monterrey.

CONCLUSION

In *Tales of the Field*, John Van Maanen writes that the trade of ethnographers is to "make

sense of strange surroundings and pass on our understandings to others…[to] mix the art and science of cultural representation."[2] I hope that I have done just that in carrying out my ethnographic study and sharing my findings in this paper. In structuring my ideas into words, I have attempted to let the poetry of the space speak through my prose, the truth of the culture speak through my interpretations.

As I contemplated my place within the bakery's culture, I struggled with the idea that I was, by nature of my presence, disrupting and changing that culture and compromising my own study in that respect. However, unless the bakery receives the same clients at the same times every week or every month (which, based on the Valentines rush that I witnessed, it does not), its culture is of necessity in a constant state of flux. Now at the end of my study, I, too, occupy a place within that culture. I have shaped it and it has shaped me, perhaps in imperceptible ways. That, I believe, is the inevitable result of any ethnography.

Through the processes of "interviewing the experts" and "participating and observing," I learned as much about the ethnographic process as I did about the culture of my study. I learned that the best insight into culture comes from organic interactions and conversations, and from the minutiae that work their way into the ethnographer's subconscious as she accumulates time with the people that allow her into their lives. When I asked for information, I received good information. When I looked for staple features of culture (such as linguistics or materials), I found them. However, when the "locals" provided information of their own accord, rather than in response to my prompting, they knew exactly what they wanted to say and how they wished to communicate it. When cultural features manifested themselves to me either spontaneously or over time, rather than in response to my seeking, they conveyed greater depth of meaning than I could possibly have imagined. In these encounters, that which was most important to the native

culture shone through. In *The Taste of Ethnographic Things*, Paul Stoller emphasizes the importance of writing responsively, rather than walking into a study as an engineer, seeking to fit a culture into preconceived notions. I know now from experience that no matter how I orchestrate (or attempt to orchestrate) my ethnographic research, my most essential tasks are to watch, to listen, and to learn.

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Men's Centrality in Language and the Need for Grassroots Resistance
Caroline Reilly, Class of 2018

Language is a source of power for individuals, groups, and overarching systems and ideologies. As a weapon of control, it is often overlooked because of its omnipresence in society. Language is far more than a mode of communication and a means of relaying information from one person to another; it is how we understand ourselves, comprehend our world, and know the value of the people and ideologies around us. It is the foundation upon which we learn to think and thus directs how we function and behave in our society. Cultural in nature, language reflects societal norms, privileges certain people, and retains fluidity across different boundaries – those between two different cultures and between dominate and subdominate cultures. The meanings ascribed to entities through language, to words that compose it, and to the stylistic uses of it become culturally dependent as well (Bresnier 1990; Cook-Gumperz 1995; Gal 1995; Philips 2003; Whorf 1956). For example, women in the United States tend to utilize an indirect style of linguistic expression – one that marks their voice as tentative, weak, ineffectual and inferior within the American context – while Malagasy-speaking cultures of Madagascar see it as an eloquent, skillful, and ornate way of expressing oneself through language (Bresnier 1990; Kendall 2003; Reid et al. 2003). Even though each cultural context values a different linguistic style, both privilege the same voice, the same group of people: men. Language's power is often used to quietly and subtly advantage men through its devaluation and domination of women. Although research on gendered language indirectly addresses and analyzes this power, a majority of the available literature fails to explicitly refer to language's potency and pervasiveness in society and its role in perpetuating cultural values. Also, there is a fair amount of research on resistance and positing for macro-level change through the reorientation of language, but very little academic research, in the traditional sense, on micro uses of resistance in everyday life. Considering this and the important

role language plays in our construction of reality and evaluations of people, we need to focus future research on not only the dominating power language wields at a systemic level but also the power it has in resistance on an individual level. Women, power, and language need to be put in the same research, the same paragraph, the same sentence.

MEANING

The cultural situatedness and foundation of discourse creates language imbued with meaning. Linguistic meaning extends far beyond the definitions of words when contextualized in our culture. It is descriptive, mapping terms onto entities and processes they describe; representative, demarcating social categories in and through language; and expressive, displaying the speaker's or writer's feelings, moods, dispositions, or attitudes to the subject she is describing (Bresnier 1990). Words carry the weight of cultural representation and definition and their stylistic employment carry the weight of cultural status. They are filled with meaning, giving us agency in upholding the different power relations and structures language sustains (Lakoff et al. 1980).

Language is the "primary tool people use in constituting themselves and others as 'kinds of people'," and thus the means by which we regulate social practices and processes (Eckert 1995, 470). The meanings we ascribe to speech styles and specific words allow us to segment and organize society and the roles within it. Saturated with cultural meaning, words become labels that categorize, generalize, and stereotype people. We use language to reduce, simplify, and naturalize the people around us in an effort to throw people into the neat categories so that people can know the "right and appropriate" behaviors, attitudes, and linguistic styles attributed to their ascribed social group (Eckert et al. 1995; Palomares 2015). The cultural discourse not only forces a desired moral order through describing the nature and power of persons but also places the weight of an expected, an approved behavior on a person or group.

As an instrument of regulating power, language is a necessary tool in creating a cultural identity, in understanding one's own life and role as well as those of others. Our actions are limited by our ability to define through the language available to us (Kraus et al.). This is why we see young girls navigating their identity through narration (Cook-Gumperz 1995). Their actions are limited by what they can define and what they notice are connected to people like them, like their moms. These girls unknowingly socialize themselves into the role of what a woman and mother should be because they are placed within a male-dominated context that prescribes them specific gender roles and are given a sexist language with which to narrate, investigate, and act out gender roles. Adults fall into this same trap, reflecting on and expressing their gender identities through a gender-skewed language (Weatherhall et al. 2003). We all forget our thoughts and perceptions are "controlled by the inexorable laws of pattern," by the "unperceived intricate systematizations of [our] own language" (Whorf 1956, 252). We fall victim to the roles, attributes, and characteristics deemed essential products of our biological sex through gendered language (Cook-Gumperz 1995; Leaper et al. 2004; McCauliffe 1993; Swann 2003). We are not born with an innate sense of sexism but are introduced to it through the gender bias in our language.

Children do more than learn roles and distinct styles of speaking when being socialized into society and culture. In learning language and how to use it, children also learn what is to remain unspoken and what is unspeakable – they begin to understand who and what merits discussion and recognition while simultaneously ascertaining which persons, characteristics, and experiences are to remain silent, to remain hidden (Kulick 2003). Even though being silenced strips power away from a person, silence in itself is a display of power. The ability to control what is spoken and what is unspoken and the agency to continue it is asserting power over a subdominate or dominated group. This is observed in literature with the absence of the female voice,

symbolically annihilating women from history by silencing them and hiding their presence (Andersen 2005; Lakoff 1995). The acknowledgment of women in literature only improves slightly, with the female presence in literature being caricatured by men and their primary roles: finding love and pursuing romance (Andersen 2005; Pavlenko 2001). Putting this in conversation with young girls' narrative play, our language reflects and creates a deep, unconscious bias against women which remain with us due to our patriarchal and misogynistic past.

Silencing is to exert one's power over another through language, to prevent one from participating in the human experience and in human existence. Being silent is an act of power, a showcase of one's abilities to control society. Silence unmarks a person, making *his* power invisible to the un-inquisitive eyes and ears. Linguistically, this allows men and the idolization of their features and characteristics to pervade our thoughts, our structures, and our behaviors while remaining hidden through our conception of the norm. We label to signify a deviation from "normal" – white, cisgendered, heterosexual, masculine, and male. This practice, when left unquestioned, forces us to police ourselves and the people around us while allowing men to silently and covertly maintain their power through creating stereotypes and deciding who or what characteristic becomes a stereotype. Those in power, like the "jocks" in Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet's study, prefer not to be labeled. For "jocks" – these pictures of academic, athletic, and social prowess – to be labeled is to have their presence marked and their complicit role in upholding the power structures that benefit them and that their presence obscures (1995). If we were to mark men as present, to blatantly expose their authority that allows them to define us and ascribe meaning, we could change our current male dominated reality. This notion of domination and the resistance it conjures suggest that "the strongest form of power may well be the ability to define social reality, to impose visions of the world" (Gal 1995, 178). To control

language is to control meaning and the construction of our reality. Language is power that current sexist systems and structures have over us and power that we as individuals have in maintaining or resisting those entities of domination. The human agent can continue fighting the war for men by mindlessly succumbing to their dominating influence in language or s/he can resist domination, wage war against it.

LANGUAGE AS POWER

The Binary

Language provides its greatest asset of control through its foundation on the concept of the binary. Binaries only allow for the visibility of two things at one time and require us to perceive those two things as opposites. Because of our linguistic roots in binaries, we believe everything has an antonym, an adversary. This is problematic not only because it forces us to overlook and ignore the intersectionality, the complexity, of a human being but also because it coerces us into believing that one person is better than another for a culturally prescribed reason. Now the binary becomes the heart of our problem. Men, being the center of our language and of our assumed norm, become what we envision as great, as good, as the ideal. As their biological opposite, women must be – according to our binary mode of thinking – men's opposite in every quality and characteristic. We conceptualize men as strong, intelligent, working, and capable and women as weak, naïve, idle, and ineffectual. With men as our subject and our center, women are our linguistic other, becoming the objects and the inhabitants of the margins in our societal narrative. We cannot envision opposites as equals because of our binary understanding and comprehension of language and of our world. Our society consists of greater thans and lesser thans, of humans and subhumans, of oppressors and oppressed. "Power relations are always relations of struggles" between two groups – men and women, black and white, young and old – and it is this very perception of that

struggle that gives the dominators power (Fairclough 1941, 34). Men have dominated women for so long because they, being the ones in power, assign the marginalized labels and meanings in a way that is beneficial to them. They have the ability to splinter the efforts and power of women by deciding when a woman of color should be perceived as only by her color and not her biological sex. We forget the binary of man and woman when we are forced to consider another binary of color. This is the binary's power: it creates a habit in us to forget the other attributes of a human being when one characteristic, chosen by those more powerful, is emphasized more than the others.

Domination

Thinking. Biases infused into language pervade our thoughts because our thoughts and beliefs cannot exist without language. Our construction of language is both an influence on and influenced by ideologies, which are the "[i]nstitutional practices which people draw upon without thinking" (Fairclough 1941, 33). Ideologies "embody assumptions which directly or indirectly legitimize power relations," meaning that we continue the domination of women by using the "common" discourse as it was created to be used (Fairclough 1941, 33). Even though we have the ability to defy sexism through language, we often uphold various structures of domination and oppression by not questioning ideas such as why we believe "throwing like a girl" is an insult or why "she's one of the guys" is meant be a compliment. Ideology is "most effective when its workings are least visible," when the powerful are able to inject their beliefs and ideas into the common, or dominant discourse (Fairclough 1941, 85). The powerful, men in a multitude of contexts, project their "practices as universal and 'common sense'," an opportunity that the rest of us – women and other men when looking at the norm intersectionally – never got to have (Fairclough 1941, 33). Men slowly, quietly, and skillfully indoctrinated everyone into perpetuating their domination. Ideology's workings are "most effective when [they are] least visible" because

we unknowingly adopt them and their precepts, perceiving them as our normal, commonsensical, and only framework with which to understand the world" (Fairclough 1941, 85; Lakoff 1995). Our commonsense tells us that males are the ideal human, and our language reflects that ideology whether we believe it to be true or not (Vainapel et al. 2015). We value strength, intelligence, the ability to support oneself, and the confidence to stand up for oneself. All of these characteristics, these traits we seek to embody, are traditionally tied to our vision of what a man should be. We strive to be what we believe men are by using men as the symbol for the traits we value and aspire to attain. Men's ideology of themselves as the epitome of humanity pervades our thoughts and becomes women's own through our consent to men's possession of power and through our acquiescence to their various displays of power. They rule us by mass consent in our adoption of the gendered language created to benefit them.

This understanding of men as paramount in our gendered and patriarchal culture is reflected in how we use our language, the words that comprise it, and meanings associated with those words (Christiane 2011; Mastrine 2013; Pavlenko 2001; Mastrine 2013; Vainapel et al. 2015). First and foremost, we perceive men as the subjects of our narrative, as the active participants and shapers of society (Villines 2013). Most professions that we prize or find noble automatically assume men as their employees because of the very names of the jobs available – such as police*man*, fire*man*, council*man*, and so on (Villines 2013). This gives men an automatic advantage in pursuing these lines of work because they are perceived to be the only persons suitable for the rigorous demands of the job. Also, our reference to humanity as *man*kind sets men as the standard in the visions of our species. This bias manifests itself in seemingly mundane or taken-for-granted aspects of our everyday lives, aspects such as sports, with reporters referring to women as girls while calling men what they are – men (Messner 1993). Reporters show disrespect towards these women as well,

calling female athletes by their first names even though they use men's full names or last names (Messner 1993). Our nation continues this disrespect to this day, reifying this devaluation to the point that we saw the United States refer to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton regularly on national television as Hillary while unknowingly displaying a sign of respect for the man running against her, Donald Trump, by giving him the customary honor of using his last name..

Of course, many people argue that we refer to Clinton by her first name because she has chosen to do so. But even this logic is tainted. Clinton kept her maiden name Rodham up until former president Bill Clinton lost his reelection campaign for governor in 1980 (Graham 2015; Ross 2015). She chose to claim Bill Clinton's last name in an effort to help his ratings and support because "on the list of voters' gripes, was the fact that she used her maiden name" (Graham 2015; Ross 2015). Even after adopting Bill Clinton's last name, Hillary Clinton continued to use her maiden name when she ran for a United States Senate seat in New York, appearing on the ballot as "Hillary Rodham Clinton" (Graham 2015). In fact, Clinton is referred to as Hillary Rodham Clinton everywhere except in the public political arena (Ross 2015). Some claim that Clinton chose to go by Hillary to separate herself from the "legacy of a lame-duck president who was at once highly popular yet also deeply scandal-tainted (Graham 2015), others arguing that it was a way for her to "[repackage] herself – changing her name, her appearance, and her public demeanor" (Graham 2015). However, regardless of our reasons for referring to this highly accomplished politician by her first name, we as a people need to acknowledge that by doing so we "[serve] to, at best, reinforce gender and workplace stereotypes – that women need to be 'approachable,' not abrasive or aloof, in order to get the job done and be liked while doing it – and at worst, infantile and put her in her place " (Drexler 2015). We force Clinton to choose to appear personal and familiar over showcasing her ambition and "decorated career in government" because we are

uncomfortable with seeing a woman in the seat of power men have historically held (Drexler 2015). Clinton wanted to be her own woman, and she received backlash for her progressive attitude with a failed reelection of her husband. We call Clinton by her first because she needs to be the female we envision all women to be and because we have tied her legacy with that of her husband. We can view a man as standing on his own, yet we cannot view Clinton as anything but a product or extension of Bill Clinton. Even though using Hillary Rodham Clinton's first name may seem harmless in nature, it exposes a general devaluing of women in our American society.

Our very own vocabulary gives men a subvert and ever-present advantage as well. The English language has more negative terms to describe women and those terms also carry heavier negative connotations than their masculine counterparts (McConnel-Ginet 2003; Sutton 1995). For example, "master" draws us to a vision of power and prestige whereas its feminine pair "mistress" invokes images of secrecy, sex, and sin (Sutton 1995). Terms for women such as spinsters, ladies, and mistresses all have sexual definitions, thus describing women as objects and characterizing them by their "sexual relation to men" (Sutton 1995, 279). Historically, women's sexuality has been depicted in literature with women performing the role as a damsel in distress in need of help or with heroines on a quest for love (Pavlenko 2001). Even in recent literature and media that depict a strong central female character, story lines of love and romantic lust make cameo appearances in her journey. By viewing women as people who are seen but not as people who profoundly contribute to society, we make women invisible; we make women invisible unless we decide to interject them into our narrative as objects and passive agents or acknowledge women's existence as men perceive it (Ehrlich 2003, Lakoff 2003). Women are devalued pawns who fulfill a thankless role of sidekick according to the literature we read and the language we speak and hear on a daily basis.

Behavior. Words and the meanings attached to them do more than simply skew our view of a particular gender; they affect our behavior in our attempt to fulfill the roles into which we are socialized through language (Bresnier 1990; Cook-Gumperz 1995; Eckert 1995; Gal 1995; Kraus et al.; Lakoff 1995; Leaper 2004; Eckert, et al. 2003; Vainapel et al. 2015). Because of their power in our narrative as a silent and central feature in understanding women's roles and place in it, men often use silence to display their dominance and to force women into a subordinate position (Lakoff 1995). This act of silencing is accomplished through linguistic play and behavior, and is learned from a young age. Men learn to make their presence known and to display their power in the classroom as boys, using different linguistic articulation than girls that gives them an advantage in academic contexts (McAuliffe 2003; Swann 2003). As their presence continues to be noticed over that of girls, boys learn tools of silencing to suppress and maintain control over women (Mendoza-Denton 1995). A common tool of control in silencing is interruption (Fairclough 1941; Lakoff 1995). Through interruption, boys and men are able to control the contributions of others, when others may speak, who has the spotlight, and the evaluation of the speaker and his/her ideas (Fairclough 1941). Men also maintain their authority through nonresponse, or "silencing by silence" (Lakoff 1995, 27). By denying women recognition in classrooms and business meetings, men reinforce the dominated role of women and the "actuality" of inferiority in the minds of women.

Women, constantly reminded of their gendered status through linguistic controls and displays of power, perform the roles ascribed to their gender. In fact, this devaluation of women is so apparent to the untrained eye and so ingrained in the subconscious that those who do not identify with the gender or sexuality ascribed to their biological sex perform the binary roles of man and woman (Moore 2006). For example, in the black lesbian community, women with a more

masculine demeanor are labeled as "aggressive" (Moore 2006, 127). Men are equated with sexual, physical, and linguistic aggressiveness in our dominant culture and these women perform those traditionally masculine roles, roles that "should not" belong to them. However, when masculinity is appropriated in this way, men often label these masculine women as "butch" (Moore 2006). This serves as an insult to a male imposter, reminding women that they cannot fulfill men's central and dominant role in society. Linguistic practices "continually bring into being individuals' social identities" (Ehrlich 2003, 646; Fairclough 1941). Even though the women above are not identifying with the characteristics traditionally ascribed to women, they use language as a way to define their social identity in the use of the term "Aggressives" to identify those who are more masculine (Moore 2006).

In addition to this display of gender performance, heterosexual women tend to fulfill the role created for them through language. Our very legal system reinforces the stereotypes attributed to women traditionally, painting women as ineffectual, unintuitive, and victims during rape cases (Anderson 2005). Until the 1950s and 60s in the United States, a woman had to display "utmost resistance" for sex to be considered rape (Ehrlich 2003, 653). Unfortunately, this statute is still in effect in Canada. Its current presence and its infusion within our American legal system creates a culture that allows society to assume women are men's sexual playground unless they physically resist to their utmost ability. This subconscious perception of women in culture's eye allows attorneys to annihilate women's agency on the stand. Attorneys point out all of the possibilities the complainant could have taken, painting her rape as a "failure" to be an effectual or mindful agent (Ehrlich 2003). Complainants are coerced into admitting their weakness, fragility, and incompetency on the stand as the attorneys – in this case a man – ask controlling questions that presuppose the truth and thus leave the women only one "logical" answer, the answer that paints

the crime as their fault (Ehrlich 2003). This tactic not only furthers the perception of women as ineffectual agents but also coerces women into believing that they are ineffectual, that they need to behave accordingly. Women's perceptions of themselves are altered from childhood because of this power to convince women that they are what language describes them to be (Villines 2013). Assuming the qualities of their stereotypical identity continues into the workplace as well. Women prize politeness and likeability over asserting their own authority, partaking in "face-saving" strategies – directives and feedback given in a way that "save[s] face for the subordinates" (Kendall 2003, 602). Females with institutional authority tend to give commands in the form of requests and downplay errors by sharing ownership of the work through saying things such as "we should" or "let's do" (Kendall 2003). Women also downplay their authority in the presence of men who are their equals, assuming that subordinate role into which they have been socialized. Women fulfill the roles language and society tells them to perform.

Structure. Behavior informs structure (Anderson 2005; Fairclough 1941). Yes, the two have a dialectical relationship, but individual agency and repeated relations and actions created these systems and institutions of inequality that continue to shape our thinking and actions. Through our labeling of women as sexual objects, we have created an institution, a legal system that assumes consent, that assumes a woman – the most common victim of rape – wants sex even if she says no. Because it presupposes women as sexual objects, we continue to perceive women as such, asking about the clothes the victim wore or if she was "asking for it". In this manner, language is a structure in itself and the power source for the current oppressive systems in society that perpetuate female inferiority (Fairclough 1941, 22). We, as social actors, are not merely "sociolinguistic 'dopes', mindlessly and passively producing linguistic forms" shaped by gender (Ehrlich 2003, 653). We actively and knowingly create imbalances in society when we do things

such as call a woman "bitch" while aware that it is a word that is sexually charged and ascribed to animals as well as women (Sutton 1995). "[G]ender is inscribed on the body through socially, culturally, and historically shaped discourses of gender" (Pavlenko 2001, 218). We perform the roles ascribed to our gender; we let those discourses shape our lives and our thinking through our active participation in it (Lakoff 2003; McConnell-Ginet 2003; Moore 2006). Because we connect men and power linguistically, we have trouble envisioning a woman in a place of power, actively fighting her opportunity by attacking her sexuality (Lakoff 2003). Language and the society it has formed bias our thinking, and we actively encourage that bias by renewing their energy through our compliance with them. We revert to a desire of a woman being subordinate rather than powerful. We attack her sexuality because those structures tell us that is a woman's paramount value, and we assume any woman with power must not be able to use her sexuality properly. "The powerless cannot choose to be silent," meaning we actively silence women through these sexist structures we continuously strengthen to dominate the less powerful (Lakoff 1995, 25; Mendoza-Denton 1995). Structure encourages and perpetuates our gendered behavior because we give it the power to do so, and it is because of this that women continue to perform the role of subordinate under these systems of domination.

Resistance

Our power to sustain these systems of domination and oppression means that we have the power to change them if we were to question the structure that shapes our gendered behavior. "[T]hose who do hold power are liable to make a bid for power" (Fairclough 1941, 68). The women of this nation have an opportunity to gain power in society, but they must actively fight in order to achieve equality. In order to emancipate women from their oppression, we must become critically aware of the structures reinforcing gendered behavior and beliefs, of language and its

implementation (Fairclough 1941). We need to analyze how language furthers women's oppression and their performance of a subordinate role. Feminists are working towards this through "exposing and documenting sexist practices in language use and communication" (Pauwels 2003, 552). In doing this, they make visible the silencing and oppression of women in our context and make heard the female voice. The primary way in which feminists have fought for linguistic equality is through "language change" (Pauwels 2003, 553). This is an attempt to affect change on a structural level through reorienting language, petitioning institutions to use gender-neutral language or by creating a common gender (Christiane 2011; Pauwels 2003). However, these structural changes would not profoundly affect the lives of women because men are still the assumed neutral in our context (Christiane 2011). Revising the current linguistic narrative will give women the opportunity to excel by allowing them to be described and conceptualized, to be linguistically visible (Christiane 2011).

The best way to achieve this visibility is through action that can be made on the individual level in everyday life. Women can disrupt language by doing things such as saying she instead of he as the default, or neutral, pronoun in everyday talk and in essays. Through causing "uncomfortability" by changing the subject of our narrative, this strategy raises awareness of the "many subtle and not so subtle ways in which the woman and the female are discriminated against in language" (Pauwels 2003, 555). Another way in which women can assert their power and voice in language is through "a strategic response to dominant hegemonic forms," through re-appropriation (Sutton 1995, 289). "A group's appropriation of labels that have been derogatorily applies by outsiders is often a power strategy" yet there is not extensive research on this form of resistance (McConnell-Ginet 2003, 70). When women use terms that have been used historically, and are sometimes by definition intended, to devalue women as terms of endearment for one

another, they perform an act of solidarity and assume the capability to create meaning in our society. To make meaning and define the world is power, power that has been both kept from women and incessantly used against them. If women were to recognize this power and utilize it on an individual scale, true linguistic change on a structural, or macro, level would occur. Women gain a voice by assuming this power. As individual agents, women can disrupt the functioning of language by putting their names in the narrative, by presupposing themselves as the norm. They can regain power in their personal lives by taking control of language, and they advance the status of the female social group in the process. This is where research and feminist theory need to focus their attention, because behavior and individual action have the capability to change the world around us and the structures that constitute it.

CONCLUSION

Language shapes our perception, influences our behavior, and creates a framework that forces us to function on gender bias. We all use it and its gendered norms, and thus we all perpetuate the oppression women face in our complicit or explicit support of these gendered systems. But we also have a choice. In noticing how our language affects members of society, we provide the most basic platform for equality. All of us can assert women as subjects in our narrative by simple means, such as presupposing *she* as neutral or actively marking men as present. Desilencing women and their voice is not an easy task, but it is something we can achieve if we all work together on an individual and interpersonal scale. Women, we must continue to fight for more power; we must continue to make new meanings for ourselves. In these small ways that we come together as a group, we affect substantial changes in our society's perception of women and their role in society. It is time that we research and make known the ways we can each contribute

to this change. It is time that we start researching and understanding power as a bottom-up process and not solely a means of domination.

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Transitional Justice in Forensic Anthropology: A Literature Review
Elise Crosswhite, Class of 2017

INTRODUCTION

In the aftermath of gross human rights violations, states and international actors have played a major role in providing transitional justice efforts with the aim of offering aid in community healing, justice, and reconciliation. In 1984 American anthropologist Clyde Snow traveled to Argentina to help investigate the graves of victims of Argentina's right wing military. Snow assembled the first organization devoted exclusively to applying forensic expertise to the investigation of political violence (Rosenblatt 2010). Snow set a precedent with the creation of that team and now forensics organizations play a vital role in transitional justice mechanisms, which are implemented in order to redress legacies of human rights abuses

One of the main problems facing forensic anthropologists when they are called in to help with transitional justice is that they have to figure out how to fulfill both the ethical and social responsibilities to the community they are serving and the truth seeking obligations of the organization that employs them. These two actors typically have conflicting wants in the justice process, where the community desires a focus on identification of the victims, and organizations on garnering evidence for trials and commissions. In the post-conflict societies of Guatemala and former Yugoslavia, top-down processes were used in the transitional justice efforts with a concentration on macro-level driven initiatives that often put an emphasis on a western ideal of justice, rather than looking at the role of local cultural context. In my research I intend to examine the specific transitional justice mechanisms used in these two cases to see how they were carried out and how engagement with the community was employed in these efforts. I also plan to explore how forensic anthropologists navigated the contending voices of the community and the organizations (either state-affiliated or non-government organization) that employ them

in order to examine how forensic anthropologists balance these sometimes competing obligations in human rights violation cases.

TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE THEORY

According to the International Center for Transitional Justice, transitional justice refers to "the set of judicial and non-judicial measures that have been implemented by different countries in order to redress the legacies of massive human rights abuses" (ICTJ 2016). These human rights abuses often take the form of war crimes, genocide, or crimes against humanity and they often feature disappearance and mass graves (Rosenblatt 2010; Schmitt 2002). Crimes against humanity can be differentiated from war crimes as they apply only to crimes committed on a large scale (Schmitt 2002). Genocide deals with acts committed with the "intent to destroy, in whole in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group" (United Nations Treaty Convention 1951).

These three human rights abuses are crimes for which an individual can be prosecuted and it is often the evidence provided by mass graves that allows for a conviction. Several authors have proposed different definitions for mass graves. Some advocate that a mass grave be based on a number, like Skinner who suggests a grave must contain at least six individuals to be considered as such (Skinner 1987). Schmitt offers a more holistic definition though that considers the importance of social context in creating these graves by defining a mass grave as "one that contains the remains of more than one victim who share some common trait connected with the cause and manner of death" (Schmitt 2002). International governments and non-government organizations are often the groups hiring forensic anthropologists to find and exhume these mass graves in order to supply evidence for transitional justice measures. These

measures include criminal prosecutions through trials or tribunals, reparations programs, and various kinds of institutional reforms (ICTY 2016).

There are four main theoretical approaches to transitional justice measures that exist in the literature. There is a "maximalist" approach which advocates a high level of accountability through human rights trials and perpetrator-focused retributive justice, a "moderate" approach advocating truth commissions as an alternative victim-oriented restorative justice mechanism, a "minimalist" approach that advocates for amnesty as opposed to accountability, and a "holistic" approach that involves multiple mechanisms (Olsen, Payne, and Reiter 2010). Olsen, Payne, and Reiter call for an alternative theoretical approach called the "justice balance," which demonstrates that the balance provided by multiple mechanisms used in tandem is essential to success because using a single mechanism alone is limiting and confining. In Guatemala there is a variety of different approaches used, but in former Yugoslavia a maximalist approach was taken, which may contribute to why the case has been traditionally viewed negatively.

Literature presents the transitional moment as a time when bargains are struck, referring to compromising on an approach that will satisfy all stakeholders, in a way that would endure over time (Sikkink and Walling 2007). These bargains are made in what is termed "compromise justice" where political elites can substitute one form of justice for another in an attempt to satisfy diverging audiences. Grodsky identifies seven frequently used policies and places them on a transitional justice spectrum that organizes the mechanisms along a continuum that proceeds from restorative to retributive mechanisms. In his compromise justice theory he focuses on three actors: international state elites, domestic political elites, and domestic non-elites (Grodsky 2009). In this theory he says that domestic political elites are forced to engage in a compromise between the international state elites and domestic non-elites. International state elites typically

push for justice, following a maximalist approach, whereas constituent non-elites pressure against it, as they often favor minimalist approaches.

The precise mechanism chosen is the result bargaining power between these two pressure groups and if the pressures are coming from opposite ends of the spectrum, as they often are, then the mechanism should come from the center of this spectrum. The center of the spectrum has more moderate approach mechanisms, like truth commissions, which are often recognized as middle of the road policy between criminal prosecutions and amnesties (Grodsky 2009; Olsen, Payne, and Reiter 2010). In compromise justice theory, the transitional justice process is one full of tradeoffs between different stakeholders and one where there is not a dichotomous choice to be made when negotiating justice mechanisms. Rather, there is a continuum of options to select from so as to fit the different situations and to satisfy varying parties (Grodsky 2009; Rosenblatt 2010; Sikkink and Walling 2007)

COMPETING OBLIGATIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS

The irreconcilable goals of different stakeholders in the investigation influence a process of transitional justice full of tradeoffs (Rosenblatt 2010). Stakeholders within the transitional justice process include families of the missing, the international community, perpetrators of human rights violations, post-authoritarian governments trying to establish democratic politics, and formal organizations such as Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental groups like the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP), and international tribunals like the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). While forensic anthropologists are potential stakeholders themselves, they are more so externally located, as they are the ones who must negotiate the competing demands and desires of these various stakeholders. So rather than seeing them as a stakeholder in their own right, I visualize

them as being at the intersection of these different groups. Due to the many competing voices involved in the process, consideration of the psychological, judicial, political, economic and humanitarian consequences of exhuming humans is vital at the beginning of any investigation because what may seem clear-cut usually involves complex and ambiguous boundaries and ethical dilemmas (Fondebrider 2002).

Families of the missing are arguably the most important stakeholders as they are the ones being most affected by these extra legal situations. Although their voice was relatively unheard in the case of former Yugoslavia, they were not voiceless as they did create associations for support and articulated their demands to organizations involved in the search for the missing. They are also the group most likely to take charge of the search for the missing's whereabouts. Investigators have often overlooked the wishes of victims' families as their desires are seen as taking second place to the more immediate task of garnering evidence (Cordner and McKelvie 2016; Fondebrider 2002; Wilson 2006)

Multiple authors have commented on how there is a disconnect for the programs offered at the macro level and the micro level as the state programs seem to undermine the social recovery processes needed at the micro level. (Pouligny, Chesterman, and Schnabel 2007; Sanford 2003; Viane 2010; Viane 2010). This is illustrated in the case of the former Yugoslavia where the primary goal of the forensic work was on making evidence available to enable prosecution, resulting in efforts that overwhelmingly unaddressed the needs of the families (Cordner and McKelvie 2016; Vollen 2001). The ICMP report on excavations in Batajnica demonstrates this emphasis on collection of evidence as the report discusses the objectives as being purely based on evidentiary needs, with there being no mention of identification (ICMP 2002). This disconnect is also apparent in how macro level stakeholders want maximalist

approaches to transitional justices whereas local communities tend to favor minimalist approaches (Grodsky 2009; Olsen, Payne, and Reiter 2010; Viane 2010).

In previous years, authors have noted that the needs of victims' families have gained increased recognition, visible in reports of the Commission for Historical Clarification in Guatemala, but also evidenced through the work of many researchers who are now starting to discuss the need to effectively address the concerns of families (Cordner and McKelvie 2016). While most authors agree that the wants of victims' families should be the primary concern of investigators, researchers who worked in the field tend not to be self-reflexive in how well they addressed the needs of the community.

Post-authoritarian governments, or post-conflict nations, also have a stake, as they often are still unstable, facing deep divisions and other challenges (Rosenblatt 2010). Politicians, foreign powers, and perpetrators often have vested interests in keeping the past silent and governments might worry about revisiting contentious histories, which may bring about social and political upheaval. According to Grodksy, it is the government/domestic elites that are the ones trying to balance these different types of post transitional justice in a way that satisfies both their desire to remain in power and their country's need to stabilize after dealing with these atrocities. The domestic elites are the main group engaging in compromise justice as they are the ones sandwiched between formidable international state pressures for justice and constituent non-elite pressures against it.

The international community is also a stakeholder and I define it in the same way as Adam Rosenblatt in his book "Digging for the Disappeared: Forensic Science After Atrocity:"

"(the international community) can refer to economic and political relationships that bind states together…. the international networks of communication, funding, and solidarity

that exist among human rights activists and humanitarians; as well as a philosophical

attitude-sometimes called "cosmopolitanism"-imagining individual human beings as

being part of a moral community that transcends national boundaries" (Rosenblatt 2015).

The international community tends to be very visible throughout the process of transitional

justice and forensic work, seen through international and humanitarian institutions and

organizations such as the UN and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and

intervening governments of democratic nations. Forensic teams are often associated with these

institutions and organizations, because they are the ones hiring, funding, and coordinating their

efforts, so they often end up having a stake as a voice wanting "justice." Thus forensic workers

often have to find a balance between their needs and the families of the missing's needs (Sanford

2003).

I categorize formal organizations under international community as these organizations

are often highly intertwined with and influenced by the international community. Furthermore,

they tend to have the same stake as the international community in being the voice advocating

evidentiary needs. In the case of the ICTY a formal organization prioritized investigation over

evidentiary needs to obtain "justice," which more often than not is a word used to justify military

actions of Western powers to domestic audiences (Rosenblatt 2015). NGOs are often intertwined

with the national community as well, tending to be more justice oriented in terms of

identification and working with families as opposed to larger governmental organizations that

show preference for evidence. An example of a non-government institution that works more for

families identification based needs rather than evidentiary needs is the Forensic Anthropology

Foundation of Guatemala (FAFG) that works to return loved ones' remains (Sanford 2003).

While I have grouped together all formal organizations, the different types of organizations do

tend to have different goals and thus different stakes in the research, but ultimately they are

related, as they are the ones normally funding and coordinating forensic efforts.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND STANDARDS

In terms of ethical considerations or a set of standards for conducting investigation, many

authors comment on the lack of effective guidelines. This puts into context why anthropologists

must ascertain how to navigate the voices of different stakeholders; it is because there aren't

really rules or standards guiding them in terms of ethics in the social context as standards tend to

only refer to technical practice and procedures (Blau 2006). Some of these technically minded

guidelines and protocols include the Minnesota Protocol and the Rome Statute (Cordner and

McKelvie 2016; United Nations 1991). The Minnesota Protocol provides detailed instructions as

to the technical steps to be taken in dealing with gross human rights violations. It was created

with the purpose of providing uniform standards in these cases and it give guidelines to ensure

the conduction of an objective investigation (Rosario 2013; Stuesse 2013; United Nations 1991).

It would seem reasonable to assume there was an internationally recognized set of ethical

guidelines for this work since the field of forensic anthropology is so often ridden with ethical

dilemmas and since many researchers in the field have commented on the importance of

internationally recognized standards. Cordner and McKelvie argue for standards that address the

tension between justice and identification while Clark argues for a situational code as opposed to

a one-size-fits all code, because a general code can offer valuable guidance. A general code

could also lead to a risk of compartmentalizing ethical aspects of research (Clark 2012; Cordner

and McKelvie 2016). Thus their solution of a situational approach would be useful because it

allows for the development of contextually sensitive ethical procedures and speaks to the fact

that this work is being practiced in the social world and thus requires multifaceted ethical

awareness rather than compartmentalization (Blau 2006; Clark 2012). According to my research it seems that researchers realize the need for ethical guidelines and often argue for codes of ethics for future work in the field, but they often do not comment reflexively about ethics in their own work. This omission of ethics in their own research may reveal why a standard has not effectively passed.

TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE IN FORMER YUGOSLAVIA AND GUATEMALA

The former Yugoslavia case has traditionally had a negative reception with researchers who find the ICTY's work unsuccessful in fostering healing within the community (Clark 2012; Vollen 2001). As former Yugoslavia broke apart throughout the 1990s, its territories were battlegrounds for serious conflict and human rights abuses including widespread attacks against civilians, population expulsions, systematic rape, and the use of concentration camps (ICTJ 2016). In 1993 the UN created an ad hoc tribunal, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, to prosecute war crimes that occurred in the 1990s (Grodsky 2009; ICTJ 2016). While other national courts were established to try war crimes, they faced many challenges, and the ICTY took on the brunt of the efforts, as well as the criticisms.

The ICTY has been criticized for multiple reasons including prioritizing the evidentiary over the humanitarian needs, for handling the storage of the bodies poorly, for rushing the investigation, and for making controversial acquittals on appeals of Croation generals and the former Yugoslav army chief (Clark 2012; Grodsky 2009; ICTJ 2016; Stover and Shigekane 2002; Vollen 2001). For the local community, the main problem aside from opposing the ICTY while the international community kept pushing for it, was the disconnect that occurred between the families and the investigation (Stover and Shigekane 2002). The anthropologists were put in a difficult position as the macro level was telling them to investigate as many massacre sites as

possible in a short time period, while the local level wanted them to stay and help identify their family members. Thus they were not providing aid to the local communities, but were helping fulfill the international community's want for "justice" (Clark 2012; Grodsky 2009; Stover and Shigekane 2002). The ICTY's mandate ended in 2013 (ICTJ 2016).

The ICMP had also monitored exhumations at Batajnica between 2001-2002, excavating five mass graves. Although the goal was more comprehensive than the ICTY's, including both political and forensic objectives as well as a civic initiative to work with families, the report did not mention fulfilling identification needs for families (Huffine et al 2001; ICMP 2002). The PHR created an initiative to try to right the failures of the work of these previous groups, but they were met with resistance because they had no authority or control over remains. The initiative thus came to halt, but the PHR did lobby coal authorities for a dedicated local identification team, which has been created since (Vollen 2001). Overall, the efforts in former Yugoslavia were well intended, but ended up being ill-considered.

In Guatemala there is a tension between macro and micro level processes, but there is a less negative reception because of the many different forms of transitional justice mechanisms that were offered (Sanford 2003; Stover and Shigekane 2002; Viane 2010; Viane 2011). Guatemala faced a 36-year armed conflict between the government and insurgents in which human rights violations occurred. The war ended in 1996 by a UN-brokered peace and under their promise for truth, the Historical Clarification Commission (CEH) was created. The CEH estimated 250,000 deaths and disappearances from the state's military operations against Mayan communities (ICTJ 2016). The Forensic Anthropology Team (FAFG) was thus established and they created a DNA bank to help identify remains for return to their families (ICTJ 2016; Mitnick 2013; Sanford 2003; Stuesse et al 2013). In addition to the Commission and the

anthropology team providing aid, the state began the National Reparations Program to satisfy victim groups needs and also allowed for amnesty, which follows the wishes of survivors who normally do not want to sue those responsible (Sanford 2003; Viane 2010; Viane 2011). On top of this, trials were employed, such as the famous trial of the former Guatemalan military dictator Efrain Rios Montt (Mitnick 2013; Rosario 2013; Stuesse et al 2013). Investigators used the guidelines provided by the Minnesota Protocol to conduct a neutral investigation that gave credibility to the prosecution, which allowed him to be convicted of crimes against humanity (Mitnick 2013; Rosario 2013). Guatemala has not received the backlash found in the former Yugoslavia case, which supports the findings of Olsen, Payne, and Reiter who argued that countries that use multiple mechanisms in tandem tend to find more success in their reception (Olsen, Payne, and Reiter 2010).

CONCLUSION

The work of a forensic anthropologist in the context of international human rights violations is never clear-cut; in fact, the situation is often ambiguous and ridden with ethical dilemmas. While each case is unique, having information from past research can be an invaluable aid as it provides a framework for how and how not to navigate the field. By looking at the conduction of transitional justice practices in former Yugoslavia alone, we see that a more comprehensive and coordinated strategy needs to be created for identifying and treating remains of the dead in the aftermath of war, a strategy in which both humanitarian and legal needs can be satisfied. This is possible as evidenced by the efforts at Ocvara, where both the legal and evidentiary needs of a tribunal and the humanitarian needs of families were fulfilled in the forensic investigation (Stover and Shigekane 2002). How do we repeat that scenario in the future when every case will undoubtedly have different stakeholders, obstacles, and ultimately different

circumstances. Examining past cases is one way to achieve this as it exposes the strengths of the

investigation, which a researcher can then follow. It also exposes weakness in the research.

Following this logic, this research is important as it assesses the cases of former Yugoslavia and

Guatemala, adding to the discussion on how to proceed in the future.

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Skeletal Analysis in Pompeii and Herculaneum
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Michael MacKinnon explains that the term osteoarchaeology did not exist until processual archaeology emerged. This "New Archaeology" stressed a more scientific and hypothesis-based testing model, with a greater input from the physical and biological sciences, and de-emphasized cultural-historical approaches. Osteoarchaeology generally refers to the analysis of bone remains, which can include bony structures such as cartilage. Classical osteology is thus an amalgamation of disciplines that provides an interdisciplinary means to reconstruct the natural and cultural world of classical antiquity through the analysis of bones from classical sites.[1]

In Pompeii and Herculaneum, interpretation of human remains has been dominated by a "storytelling" approach. One of the most enduring influences of this approach comes from Edward Bulwer-Lytton's novel *The Last Days in Pompeii*, where Bulwer-Lytton embellishes on evidence from associated artifacts of skeletons found in Pompeii to weave a narrative about the the victims lives. The legacy of this approach is seen in both popular and academic evidence. Estelle Lazer, a physical anthropologist who worked in Pompeii, states that this approach lures "normally sensible scholars into the false notion that they should somehow be able to know everything about the site and reconstruct it into history or diorama."[2]

She finds evidence of this in the work of two physical anthropologists who worked in Herculaneum, Sarah Bisel and Luigi Capasso. For each of these anthropologists, she provides an example of how they have stretched evidence to provide interpretations of lifestyles of victims they study, illustrating how they followed this storytelling approach. This criticism of Bisel and

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[1] Michael Mackinnon, "Osteological Research in Classical Archaeology," *American Journal of Archaeology 111:3 (2007)* 474.
[2] Estelle Lazer, *Resurrecting Pompeii* (New York: Routledge: 2009) 265.

Capasso's work is not to condemn their conclusions as invalid, but is rather to invite a sense of caution in accepting their interpretations as fact without providing the science to back these assumptions.

In addition, Lazer states that Pompeii and Herculaneum have been in the grip of the Bulwer-Lytton approach for too long. Thus in her work she follows the more scientific analysis approach offered by Mackinnon, which is in direct opposition to that of Bulwer-Lytton. She presents the analysis of skeletal remains in a manner that does not push evidence beyond what is reasonable. In her work she is constantly transparent in her methods to show why she made certain decisions and why there are limitations in jumping to certain conclusions. She even states that her goal was to make her findings accessible and to arm the reader with enough information to be able to critically assess the literature and findings of other researchers.

The sites of Herculaneum and Pompeii were two Roman towns in the Campanian region of Italy that were destroyed by Mount Vesuvius on the historically disputed, but generally accepted date of August 24, 79 A.D. The site of Herculaneum lies 6 km West of the volcano whereas Pompeii is 10 km Southeast, the direction of the prevailing winds that day. Vesuvius destroyed both towns, but due to varying reasons like distance and wind, the two cities were buried in different ways. Thus, people died of varying causes as evidenced by skeletal analysis. In Herculaneum victims were exposed to temperatures of at least 500-600° Celsius whereas in Pompeii victims were exposed to half of that, about 250-300° Celsius.[3] Due to this we can conclude that Herculaneans died from sudden exposure to extreme heat, meaning their internal organs stopped functioning before they had time to consciously react to the conditions, a state

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[3] Pier Paolo Petrone et al., "Human corpses as time capsules: new perspectives in the study of past mass disasters," *Journal of Antrhopological Sciences* 89 (2011): 1-4.

known as fulminant shock. On the other hand, Lazer shows through her sample that Pompeiians died of several different complications including extreme heat, asphyxiation, as well as due to falling structures and pumice in the first stages of the eruption.

Giuseppe Fiorelli revolutionized the way human remains from Pompeii were regarded when he and his assistant applied the method of pouring plaster into the negatives of decomposed organic remains, namely bodies of humans and animals, in the hardened ash from the second phase of the eruption. The type of preservation that enabled victims to be cast is unique to the region around Pompeii and cannot be seen at Herculaneum based on the groundwater table level. In Herculaneum bodies were encased in soft and wet debris that ensured the forms of victims were not preserved. However, the individuals who were killed in later surges in Pompeii rest well above the groundwater table which facilitated the drainage of decomposing soft tissue and the fine ash associated with surges hardened before there was time to decay, leaving the body negatives.

Lazer was provided with the opportunity to undertake the first x-ray analysis of a cast of a victim in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. It was one of 54 victims found in Villa B in Oplontis. It was the first and only body at the time of her writing in 2009 to be cast in epoxy resin, a durable, inert, and translucent substance that made it easier to see through in x-rays (Figure 1). It was assumed the body was that of a young woman based on the bracelet found on her arm. One of the aims of Lazer's work was to test this assumption.

The researchers were able to confirm that that the body was that of a woman through traditional diagnostic landmarks on the skull, teeth, and pelvis. She was older than had been claimed though as epiphyseal union had been complete, all of her teeth had been erupted, and her frontal sinuses were fully extended. She had caries cavities observable on four of her teeth and a

small abscess had begun to form on one of her premolars. A healed fracture was observable at

the styloid process of the left radius, which was consistent with having fallen on that outstretched

hand. Analysis showed no signs of dental or medical intervention in her life.[4]

While the research from the "Lady of Oplontis" seems limited in that it only provides

insights pertaining to this one individual, it is actually this narrow focus that makes skeletal

analysis valuable. Classical history focuses on notable people and events and provides us with

clues to how people lived, but it does not bring common individuals', like women and slaves,

stories to us.[5] This story is also important as it shows that plaster casts can be a valuable asset to

skeletal analysis because, as Lazer states, it provides a sample of potentially complete skeletons

of individuals, which can then be used as controls to test and build on the results obtained from

the disarticulated sample found in the Sarno baths in Pompeii.

In Herculaneum, physical anthropologists Bisel and Capasso, and forensic anthropologist

Pier Paolo Petrone were the main skeletal researchers. In Pompeii, Lazer performed the main

work on skeletal analysis. In Pompeii Lazer dealt with many problems including time restraints,

budget restraints, and poor excavation treatment of the bones, and poor storage that led to

disarticulated skeletons (Figure 2). The time and budget restraints meant constraints in research

question possibilities due to the inability to look at bones at the microscopic and molecular

levels. The poor excavation treatment and storage of the bones means that the skeletal collection

was disarticulated. Thus ageing and sexing techniques that require multiple trait assessment

based on the entire skeleton, were made at a lesser degree of certainty and disorders were

diagnosed through gross inspection of a single bone.

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[4] Lazer, *Resurrecting Pompeii,* 26-271.
[5] Susan Kirkpatrick Smith, "Bodies of Evidence: Skeletal Analysis in Roman Greece and Cyprus," in *A Companion to the Archaeology of the Roman Republic*, ed. Jane DeRose Evans, (Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2013), 141.

In Pompeii, Lazer used the techniques of forensic anthropology to determine sex, age, height, and signs of illnesses in the human remains. Much of her work revolved around determining this information, and deciding how to go about garnering this information due to storage obstacles. Lazer then used the information from these traits to challenge conventional views held about the population at the time of eruption. Along these lines she used skeletal analysis to determine in which phase of the eruption people were killed and how they experienced death within that phase.

Lazer began by determining sex, which she states is normally based off of the assumption of bone robusticity and size, but she focused on a combination of ten observations and three measurements from a sample of 158 left adult bones, as juvenile skeletons are hard to sex until after puberty occurs.[6] Lazer's sample was mainly comprised of the collection stored in the Sarno Baths. She states that for this sample, the best pelvic features for sex separation were the ventral arc, the sub-pubic concavity, the sub-pubic angle, and the medial aspect of the ischio-pubic ramus.[7] Lazer mainly relied on the pelvis, but she also looked at measurements of the left humerus, measurements of the left femur, observations of mandibles, observations of teeth, as well as mesurements and observations of skulls. It is noteable that she only examined the left long bones so as to avoid the possibility of the same individual being measured twice. Based on these measurements and observations, Lazer found that the assertion that males were the ones most likely to survive was not supported as there were roughly even numbers of each sex. Lazer states that if anything, the Pompeiian sample is skewed towards skeletons with male attributes.[8]

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[6] Lazer, *Resurrecting Pompeii,* 122.
[7] Ibid., 122-123.
[8] Ibid.*,* 117-137.

In describing the age estimation process, Lazer discusses the difficulties of producing this information as complete skeletons are required to make a confident determination. She states that juvenile skeletons produce the most reliable results because their estimation is made through dental stages like tooth eruption and epiphyseal fusion. For adults she used the pubic symphesis, skull sutures, the development of the frontal sinuses, the development of Pacchionian depressions, and tooth attrition to calculate possible age. From this information Lazer determined that the evidence did not confirm the common notion that the sample would be biased towards those who were old or extremely young. This is because it was believed that since they could not fend for themselves, they would not have been able to get away in time for the eruption. A full range of ages were represented in her sample with the exception of young individuals, which Lazer attributes to the inability of untrained excavators to distinguish infant bones from animal bones or to the possibility that they were so fragile their remains were not able to survive. Through skeletal analysis, Lazer was able to illustrate that the assertion that young, healthy males were most likely to survive was not supported through the Pompeii skeletal sample.[9]

Unlike Lazer's sample in Pompeii, Bisel, Capasso, and Petrone were able to work with fully articulated skeletons in Herculaneum. Therefore there was no need to establish which bones were better indicators of dimorphism and there was a higher degree of certainty in their conclusions. Like in Pompeii, the sample used in Herculaneum produced roughly even numbers of each sex. Of the 139 skeletons Bisel studied, she determined 51 to be male and 49 to be female, while the other 39 were young and thus difficult to sex. Capasso established sex for 144 of 162 skeletons, identifying 83 as male and 61 as female. More recent examinations by Petrone show a sample that is 37.4% male and 31.8% female out of 215 skeletons studied.[10]

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[9] Lazer, *Resurrecting Pompeii,* 138-166.
[10] Ibid., 136.

As for age, research in Herculaneum revealed the same bias found in Pompeii in which there was a lack of infants and young children. Bisel produced an age distribution chart with a five-year age range for each group. This age distribution chart was a method then used by Capasso and Petrone in their work (Table 1). In Bisel's research, she reported a lower than expected incidence of juveniles in the Herculaneum sample. When he researched a decade later, Capasso used a range of macroscopic and microscopic ageing methods and found a lack of sub-adults in their mid to late teenage years (Table 2). Petrone also found an insufficient amount of sub-adults and adults, which he suggests is due to the impact of the 62 A.D (Table 3). earthquake that occurred in the region. Both Capasso and Petrone argue from these results that their samples are representative of the population in 79 AD.

Beyond ageing and sexing skeletons in her skeletal analysis, Lazer mainly focuses on health indications that the bones present, although she does dedicate a small section to stature. Of note in her analysis on stature is that the average stature from Pompeii and Herculaneum is almost equal to that of the modern population. The measurements taken by Capasso in Herculaneum reveal height almost equal to that of modern Neapolitan males and females, as the measurements fall within a centimeter's difference of each other. This not only deconstructs the common conception that ancient Italians were shorter than modern day populations, but also suggests regional continuity for height.[11]

Macroscopic and microscopic examination of human bones can provide information on serious diseases and traumatic injuries in ancient populations, as well as on more mundane information such as work related stress and nutrition deficiencies.[12] In both Pompeii and Herculaneum the results of looking at pathology indicated that there was no skewing towards

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[11] Lazer, *Resurrecting Pompeii,* 117-246.
[12] MacKinnon, "Osteological Research in Classical Archaeology," 481

individuals with diseases or disorders. In Pompeii, Lazer had to use macroscopic techniques, which comprised of gross inspection of single bones, to learn about health and pathology of the victims. From this she was able to conclude that the majority of victims were not exposed to major illnesses, that the population had access to reasonable nutrition in their growing years, and that there was a sense of robustness in the population as evidenced by the sheer number of healed and healing injuries. She was also able to conclude that the population had poor oral hygiene. This conclusion possibly provides indirect evidence for systemic infections or soft-tissue pathology, which cannot be determined from just skeletal remains. Lazer also found the presence of age-related disorders like Hyperostosis frontalis interna (HFI) and diffused idiopathic skeletal hyperostosis (DISH) that suggests individuals were surviving into old age.[13] This challenges the view that is often presented by scholars that ancient people were shorter-lived than their modern counterparts. Instead, skeletal analysis provides us with the information that the lifespan of ancient peoples, at least in Pompeii, was similar to that of a modern Western population. Overall she found there was no skewing in her sample towards people with infirmity, thus it was not just the ill who were left behind in the eruption, which is consistent with the findings presented in the Herculaneum sample.

The sample in Herculaneum, like Pompeii, does not show a favoring of individuals with pathology, but also similar to Pompeii it shows a trend in poor oral health. Capasso records evidence of severe tooth wear in 5% of 2966 teeth studied, 135 caries cavities cases in 3236 teeth, or 4.17% of the sample, and 52 cases of abscesses in teeth out of 23 individuals.[14] Capasso also identified cases of brucellosis and tuberculosis in the victims, which was possible because

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[13] Lazer, *Resurrecting Pompeii,* 206-213.
[14] Ibid., 172.

he had fully articulated skeletons available to study.[15] Other pathological change looked at by these researchers is trauma, which includes various bone injuries. Bisel did not distinguish between fractures, dislocations, and inflammatory responses but reported that 32 % of the males in the sample and 11.4 % of the females in the sample displayed evidence of trauma.[16] Capasso did differentiate fractures, reporting fractures in 10.5% of the 162 individuals he studied. He attributed the higher incidence of fractures in males to gender related division of labor. These figures are higher than the Pompeian figures created from the work of Lazer.[17]

Ancient writers like Strabo and Pliny the Elder described the population as heterogenous, and thus Lazer also set out to find population indicators in order to prove or disprove this idea. She found the most helpful traits in looking for population indicators to be non-metric traits like the palatine torus, double rooted canines, and squatting facets of the tibia. When examining these, Lazer concluded that there was a certain level of homogeneity either as a result of shared genes or a common environment during the years of growth and development. So the heterogeneity mentioned by ancient writers may not have been a genetic distinctness, but a separation coming from culture and language.[18]

Anthropologists are able to bring the stories of the dead back to life by analyzing the information found in human remains from archaeological sites.[19] Skeletal remains in Pompeii and Herculaneum are a great source of information not only about the local populations centered around one of the most famous events in history, the eruption of Vesuvius, but also provide us with a larger synthetic analysis of Ancient Roman peoples. Through osteoarchaeology, these

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[15] Ibid.,197.
[16] Lazer, *Resurrecting Pompeii,* 237.
[17] Ibid*.,* 195.
[18] Ibid., 245.
[19] Susan Kirkpatrick Smith, "Bodies of Evidence: Skeletal Analysis in Roman Greece and Cyprus," 141.

researchers were able to answer broader questions such as during which stage of the eruption people were killed and how they died, as well as more narrow questions about individual and local community health. In answering these questions they were also able and to challenge conventional views about the sites and ancient peoples in general. For example, Lazer challenges the commonly held interpretation that the people left behind to die in Pompeii were the very old, young, women, and those too sick or weak to escape. She also challenges beliefs about stature of ancient people and lifespan of ancient people. Using the techniques of forensic/biological/physical anthropology, researchers can bridge the gap between the osteological and archaeological fields and present a more complete illustration of ancient life.

Figures and Tables

Figure 1: "The Lady of Oplontis" – epoxy resin cast of woman found in Villa B in Oplontis

Figure 2: Estelle Lazer with the disarticulated skeletal collection housed in the Sarno Baths in Pompeii.

Age-at-death estimate in years	Number of individuals	Per cent
< 1	5	3.65
1–5	13	9.49
6–10	10	7.30
11–15	12	8.76
16–20	6	4.38
21–25	6	4.38
26–30	20	14.60
31–35	11	8.03
36–40	11	8.03
41–45	19	13.87
46–50	19	13.87
51–55	4	2.92
55+	1	0.73

Table 1: Age distribution in Herculaneum as calculated by Bisel

Age-at-death estimate (years)	Number of individuals (n=143)	Percentage of sample
0–4.9	17	11.9
5.0–9.9	12	8.4
10.0–14.9	14	9.8
15.0–19.9	7	4.9
20.0–24.9	17	11.9
25.0–29.9	17	11.9
30.0–34.9	14	9.8
35.0–39.9	12	8.4
40.0–44.9	11	7.7
45.0–49.9	10	7.0
50.0–54.9	9	6.3
55.0–59.9	3	2.1
60.0+	0	0

Table 2: Age distribution in Herculaneum as calculated by Capasso

Age intervals	Percentage
0–5	11.1
6–10	8.7
11–15	11.1
16–20	5.8
20–25	6.3
26–30	14.9
31–35	11.5
36–40	9.1
41–45	9.6
45–50	9.1
>50	2.9

Table 3: Age distribution in Herculaneum as calculated by Petrone

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Figure 1: Lazer, Estelle. *Resurrecting Pompeii*. London; New York: Routledge, 2009, 262

Figure 2: Australian Broadcasting Corporation. "Dr Estelle Lazer Helped Uncover the True Story of Pompeii." Feature. *Conversations with Richard Fidler*, http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2013/11/22/3897011.htm.

Table 1: Lazer, Estelle. *Resurrecting Pompeii*. London; New York: Routledge, 2009, 161

Table 2: Lazer, Estelle. *Resurrecting Pompeii*. London; New York: Routledge, 2009, 162

Table 3: Lazer, Estelle. *Resurrecting Pompeii*. London; New York: Routledge, 2009, 163

Explaining Reification
Weston Breay, Class of 2017

When preparing to write this paper, I tried to explain in conversation to classmates of mine who are natural science majors the concept of reification. Because I was striving to make this complex sociological theory accessible and relevant to non-theory students, I thought a conversation with non-social science majors would be a helpful exercise. However, I found that the task of making reification easily understandable in a brief conversation, or a paper for that matter, is not an easy task. This difficulty is attributable mainly to the broadness of the concept and its applicability to almost, if not all, human constructs. It takes an extremely astute level of understanding to take a very broad concept such as reification and simplify it properly and understandably. Here is my attempt to do just that.

Reification, in very basic terms, is to attribute the existence of something that is a human construct to a nonhuman force. In verb form, to reify means to forget or ignore that something is a human construct. One of the easiest ways to understand how humans actively reify things is through the study of religion and specifically the origin of religion in society. Every observed human society has practiced some type of religion and used that religion to justify and explain certain social norms and behaviors. Society's invention of collective religions to explain these human rituals is an act of reification because these norms are a product of the society itself and therefore a human construct.

Reification of religion is a concept that originates from the so-called father of Sociology himself Emile Durkheim. Durkheim was a researcher of early totemic religions and was specifically interested in the concept of reification as it relates to the origin of totemic religion and its symbols. In his writings on religion, Durkheim states that all religions divide everything that exists into two distinct categories that he calls the "sacred" and the "profane." Symbols, or

words and phrases, that in society are assigned specific designation or meaning would be considered sacred, and all other things would fall under the category of the profane. Examples of sacred symbols in different cultures are a Christian cross, hieroglyphic representations of gods in ancient Egyptian writing, or totem carvings of specific animals in the totemic religions that Durkheim studied. The designation and treatment of certain objects by a society as sacred and powerful is itself and act of reification because humans are attributing an ethereal and otherworldly force to something that is entirely a creation of their own society. Durkheim claims that "this division of the world into two domains, the one containing all that is sacred, the other all that is profane, is the distinctive trait of religious thought," and it is because of this dichotomy of the sacred and profane, that is found at the root of all religions, that Durkheim sees all religious practice as inherently based in reification.

Durkheim then expands on this concept of all religions being inherently reifying to reach the conclusion that "there is no such thing as a false religion." The term mana refers to the invisible but ever present moral forces that guide and shape the behavior of individuals in society. Unlike physical symbols deemed sacred, mana refers more to unwritten social rules and norms that govern the thoughts and actions of members of a society. Along with the separation of sacred from profane, religions also exist in every culture to explain and give meaning to the mana. So therefore, if all religions were invented by man and exist to serve the same two purposes of explaining the sacred and the mana for the culture which they inhabit, it is illogical to deem some religions false while another is deemed valid.

In one conversation I had with a friend about reification she asked me if a physical thing, such as the table we were sitting at, could be reified? Here my friend has unknowingly wandered into a territory of questions that is best answered by the works of Karl Marx in his critiques of

capitalism. Reification is all about the forgetting of the human element involved in making or creating something, and unlike Durkheim who applies this concept mainly to our designations of some things as more sacred than others, Marx applies this concept to consumable commodities and products, up to and including the table my friend and I were sitting at. Marx is disturbed by capitalism's exploitative effect on the regular worker and the consumerist and materialist culture that it breeds. In his critique he claims that consumers and owners of the means of production mentally remove and choose to ignore the human labor element that went into the creation of a certain product, be it textiles, technologies, or a table. Therefore, they reify an object by forgetting the human element of its creation.

Marx doesn't only apply reification to final consumable products. For Marx, societies acceptance of political economy and of capitalism is also a form of reification. He states that "We presupposed private property, the separation of labor, capital and land, and of wages, profit of capital and rent of land – likewise division of labor, competition, the concept of exchange value, etc." All these facets of our society that Marx lists are aspects of the capitalist system that are mainly just accepted as immutable social facts, when in reality they are all simply human concepts that in his view do more harm than good. Marx points out that societies blind acceptance of the existence of these aspects of capitalism without recognizing the human aspect of their creation and implementation is the very definition of reification.

The next logical step in the conversation about reification is to discuss the relevance of the theory. How does understanding reification help us to better ourselves? The answer to this is up to interpretation and differs from person to person, but one major benefit is that humans are always better off when they can recognize and comprehend the forces exerted on them by the world around them. Understanding reification can help people strive towards the epicurean ideal

of elimination of suffering, but in a more practical sense the elimination of unnecessary suffering. If someone in pain can grasp that their suffering is simply the product of reification and human constructs, then they could potentially find relief in that realization.

Art Constructing and Constructed by Nasser's Nationalism
Jill Fredenburg, Class of 2017

Egyptian art has a significant history that is reflected in the importance of visual art to both the country's current Arab nation building and its structuring of an Islamic government. Art and cultural production is usually highly reactionary and dependent upon the political positions of the majority. This bureaucratic intent was particularly true in Egyptian art from 1920 to 1960. Using art to establish public unity or to enhance a specific type of ruling power was not born from these years, however. In fact, new artists after 1920 participated in the histories of ancient Egypt, the appeal of European modernism, new anti-colonial nationalism, and finally the post-1952 state socialism all simultaneously.[20] Pushing back against the conservatism of Egypt's elites, artists of multiple mediums began to more outwardly criticize their state's culture in a way that still persists today, utilizing state-funded skills. In these ways, art serves as both a nation-building tool and a form of national critique. A strong example of these uses begins with the case of Gamal Abdel Nasser.

This paper will analyze the ways in which Nasser, one of the two principal leaders of the Egyptian Revolution of 1952 and Egypt's second President, was able to use art and its makers to construct and maintain a revitalized Arab nationalism. It will also examine how the movement from secular Arabism to the creation of a religious Islamic state after Nasser was both affected by and able to contribute to the social-practice work of Egyptian artists. By citing specific examples of television, social media and mobile phones, as well as non-electronic forms, including paintings and graffiti, the importance of political visual messaging to much of Egypt's evolutions and revolutions will become apparent. This study of art and nationhood will begin just

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[1] Winegar, 11, 113, 279.

before the coup d'état that brought Nasser to power, follow Egypt's changes, and unpack the role

of art and media in the Arab Spring of 2011.

Nasser was not truly attracted to military life itself. Instead he was hopeful for a general,

semi-powerful position as a path to ridding Egypt of British domination and the rule of the

corrupt pasha class.[21] In line with these goals, he came to political popularity at a time when the

region was almost entirely dominated by both British and French colonialism. This created the

opportunity for there to be an "other" in the construction of Egyptian nationalism. This

longstanding colonialism had dampened previously existing Egyptian national pride, but the

coup d'état led by Nasser and his assembly of Free Officers was the beginning of the end for

British influence in Egypt.[22] The Free Officers seized power in the early morning hours of July

23, 1952. Declaring that they had acted in the name of the 1923 Constitution, they demanded

King Farouk appoint a prime minister of their choice and rid the military high command of his

allies and supporters. In 1953 they outlawed all political parties and announced that there was to

be a three year "transition period," then proclaimed their movement a revolution. In 1954 the

newly founded Command Council of the Revolution appointed Nagib as the first president of the

republic. In that same year, they outlawed the Muslim Brotherhood after this group attempted to

assassinate Nasser. Shortly thereafter, Nagib was denounced as a tyrant and a subtle supporter of

the illegal Muslim Brotherhood, so Nasser forced him to hand over his presidency.[23] This series

of events that changed the course of history for Egypt did not occur completely independently

from what was happening in the art world in the region at the time. In fact, the Free Officer's

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[2] Mansfield, 36.
[22] Casey, 218.
[23] Gordon, 4.

generational support largely stemmed from the output of assessments of the monarchy by progressive artists.

Founded before this revolution, the active arts collective called the Art and Freedom group began gathering artists together. They specifically searched for similarly-minded peers who were making art about the political current. They were responsible for reviving cultural life in Egypt in the late 1930s and early 1940s. In order to continue doing this work, the group worked to frequently challenge imagery and literary academicism, pushing for disruptions in the normalized art world. In this way artists began to do their own type of nation-building. By choosing to engage in the mainstream art forms in new, disruptive ways, these people started imagining what new, specifically Egyptian art could look like. Art and Freedom's main promotion of Surrealism countered those years' fascist view that this type of art was "degenerate." This push back against a heavily weighted and specifically important aspect of fascism reflected the general public's political views of that time. By using the majority's distastes, this group was able to generate work onto which the public was able to latch and many young people were able to unite. This momentum continued to inspire Egyptian artists in the following decades.

This Surrealist-leaning energy shifted, however, with the founding of the Contemporary Art Group in 1946. The creation of this organization inspired many artists to turn to research. They began to place greater attention on the heritage of Egyptian folklore and the importance of storytelling in the origin of Egypt's nationhood.[24] In 1949, just before the end of the reign of the Egyptian monarchy, Egyptian painter Abdul Hadi El Gazzar released to the world a 89-by-96 centimeter oil-on-cardboard painting that is known by many names, *including Line of Hunger*,

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[24] Oxford Islamic Studies.

The Theatre of Life, and *Popular Chorus against Injustice*. This revolutionary painting, one of the most well-known Middle Eastern works of the 20th century, depicts eight barefoot women and one girl standing together. Each of these figures sits solemnly with empty plates in front of them. This depiction of the crippling household economic situation, directly in reference to what was common during the rule of King Farouk, is an example of the Egyptian Revolutionary Art that spurred Nasser's generation towards non-monarchical nationalism. El Gazzar, having understood the pains of being ruled by the monarchy, embraced the new republican regime led by populist Nasser. He used these ideas to create what was perhaps his most famous and recognizable painting after the revolution. His 1961 piece, *The Charter*, depicts a woman wearing a crown, holding Abdul Nasser's manifesto. The piece, which is now exhibited in the recently reopened Egyptian Modern Art Museum, instantly became an icon of the 1952 revolution.[25] This blatant celebration of Nasser's ideas and plans became well-known because of its subject matter and aided its subject matter, Nasser, in gaining legitimacy with a wider variety of Egyptian citizens. It is in this and other similar ways that artists impacted and reacted to the changes in the political climate during this time. Because of similar bureaucratic support from artists that massively benefitted the Command Council of the Revolution, when Nasser gained the presidency, he was able to recognize the importance of visual means to meet nationalist ends.

Nasser's government regarded culture as a vitally important aspect of Egypt's nationalist and socialist revolution. Because of this view, they spent heavily on radio, theatre, cinema, and the arts. In fact, many important artists and art movements would not have been able to exist without government subsidies because Egypt at that time had very few private image buyers. The state's monopoly over wide media culture and entertainment did mean, however, that nearly

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[25] Qassemi, 1.

everything that was published or broadcasted was infused with Nasserist socialist propaganda. This quickly became normalized to the point that children began to take no notice of the pro-nationalist messages.[26] Television personalities, celebrities, actors, and especially radio hosts all became tools for pro-Nasser discussions and the censorship of opposing voices, not an unusual occurrence in states attempting to find stability, became more commonplace.

Nasser continued to make use of his popular successes of 1954-1956; the debate over the Baghdad Pact, the Bandung conference, the Czech arms deal, and the Suez crisis, using them to his advantage in his social correspondence and wider communications. In order to ensure the legitimacy of his 'revolution' and to gain regional influence, he used popular resources including radio. Through this work he created a Arabist narrative built around multiple forms of Arab unity and the need for continuous confrontation against the already widely hated imperialism and colonialism.[27] An example of popular, cultural media presenting this Arabist storyline is the 1963 film *Saladin the Victorious*. This artwork, written and performed in Arabic, helped to promote the Egyptian government's ideals. The main character of the work, Saladin, parallels Nasser in many ways. The film presents Arabs in conflict with European powers. Even the issue of religiously diverse Arabs are tackled in this film, with Muslim and Christian members of this nationalism coming together to defeat their colonizers.[28] It is through normalized and highly consumed sources that most propaganda is able to make its way even into the lives of those who actively avoid political discourse. Here, even a film that was only loosely based on Nasser's actual characteristic and was not fully funded by the Egyptian government was able to act as a means to the president's nationalistic ends.

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[26] Mansfield, 126.
[27] Teti, 80.
[28] *Saladin the Victorious*.

Because Egypt's achievements in the arts are so closely connected with its national prestige, there was almost no serious art criticism, though there is sometimes criticism to the growth of artists. Even political cartoons and stories in the press that were meant to be humorous became dull after the revolution because criticism could only be directed at foreign governments and personalities. The most dangerous aspect of this drawback, however, was that the rest of the world had no way to respond to the Egyptian press's accusations, and so the writers could be as inaccurate with information as they pleased without the threat of being contradicted.[29] This misinformation was often the only readily available illuminations over current events that were available to the Egyptian public. This type of censorship allowed Nasser to reiterate his own successes repetitively, leaving little room for creative renderings of questions about his governing, character, or actions. This cycle of positive messaging only aided Nasser's cult of personality.

Though he was able to successfully manipulate the vast majority of Egyptian media, Nasser was unable to remain entirely in popular command. "Nasser remained essentially a nationalist, a pragmatist, and a dictator. But he was a dictator in a military regime in which the military was loyal to his rival, Abdel-Hakim Amer."[30] Art began to not only become affected by the regime, but was beginning to reflect upon and critique it. The point of change in Nasser's popularity in Egyptian and Arab politics was most likely born from the formation of the United Arab Republic (UAR) with Syria in 1958. This union was unable to stay strong and eventually fell apart because of Nasser's misunderstandings in regard to the Syrians. He treated them as if they were Egyptians, causing them to distrust whether or not his Pan-Arabist ideals were genuine. After the union split apart in 1961, Egypt became isolated in the Arab world. This was

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[29] Mansfield, 127.
[30] Quandt, 182.

an incurable setback to Nasser's pan-Arab goals.[31] Though still widely loved, many of the conditions in Egypt began to aid in a decline of Nasserist power. The Six Day War heavily contributed to this end. Though the Arab nationalist project had the support of the strong Soviet Union, it was still lacking in urgency and importance when compared to the peace-seeking in Israel upon which the United States was working. In the 1967 War with the Israelis, Israel used similar methods as the British in 1956. They destroyed the Egyptian air force with bombs, even as Egypt's planes had not been actively fighting them. With his pride wounded after the defeat of 1967, Nasser resigned. The evidence of his charisma, cult of personality, propaganda, and rhetoric was clear, however, because after his resignation he was brought back to the presidency by the force of the unstoppable street protests that demanded his return.[32]

Especially in Egypt, regimes that were seen or even understood as able to construct and unfalteringly support a post-colonial Arab identity had their ideals flattened by the extent of Israel's victory in the 1967 war. An example of art reflecting its context is the late Syrian playwright Saadallah Wannous's *An Entertainment Evening for June 5*. This play was written as a successful attempt to capture the absurdity of the loss to Israel. In it, a director has to explain to a befuddled and impatient audience that the evening's planned performance was cancelled and they would need to go home. Between 1967 and 1970 Nasser's reform agenda began to show weaknesses, lost much support, and faltered. His socialism increased and began to resemble a Soviet-style bureaucracy more than his original quest for pan-Arabism. This shift was also documented through a creative lens. The film *al-Karnak* (1975) depicted the new and intimidating police state that Nasser had formed whilst combatting the Muslim Brotherhood and the Egyptian communists. Nasser was unable to leave behind a robust state as his legacy, but he

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[31] McDermott, 27.
[32] Pascoe, 175-176.

did leave behind a Nasserist group that propelled art and media usage forward: "it was the force

of Nasser's personality and his political skills that resolved the problem of the absence of

genuine democratic institutions built in his period."[33] Without these works of art, there would be

fewer pieces from which to draw and understand the ways in which Nasser and his struggles

were viewed. Nasserist artists continue to promote topics such as pan-Arabism, socialism, and

peace, which in turn serve as examples of what Egypt continues to seek in its leaders.

In Chant Avedissian's *The Nasser Era and Om Kalsoum*, completed in 1994, the central

figure in the large left panel is a very hopeful-looking Nasser. The mixed media artwork depicts

the 1952 military coup, where the rendering of King Farouk is unattractive and somewhat

satirical. The images that circle around Nasser evidence the conditions that came about during

Nasser's regime. Transistor radios exist boldly in the piece, representing Nasser's preferred

means of disseminating propaganda. The image acts as a sort of visual and historical

representation of Nasser's rise and the beginnings of his wavering control. It indicates the

tensions present during the Cold War and Suez Canal crisis, despite the Egyptian public's read of

those events as beneficial to their state. "The Soviet-backed Aswan High Dam, the hammer and

sickle, and Egyptian and Russian flags further document the political choices of the period. The

panel on the left contains images from popular culture, including Yakan, a famous soccer player

in the 1950s, and Dave Johns, Mr. America of 1977 and Mr. Universe of 1978."[34] The piece also

includes a beautifully accomplished portrait of Nazem el Ghazali, a well-known Iraqi singer. An

illustration of Klwatan, an area that is meant to call the viewer to the imagined goal of an all-

encompassing Arab nation, decorates the right panel. Avedissian's artworks call to mind the

ever-changing Egyptian experience. The beginnings of public disillusionment with Nasser and

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[33] Pascoe, 175-176.
[34] National Museum of African Art.

his constant battle to stay well-liked despite changing circumstances is well-depicted in this important, long lasting portrait. This work reiterates the position of art as a meaningful, though not free of bias, way of documenting history.

It is not unusual for media to be one of the primary areas of focus for a regime. In fact, since the beginning of the ease of information sharing, authoritarian states have needed to view control as synonymous with monopoly over visual production, as success and stability both are unlikely without this power.[35] This type of media domination is not unusual, as advertising and patriotic songs that praise governments, militaries, and other state institutions become more accessible to a greater number of people. With nationalist pop-culture references and powerful imagery, even contemporary leaders wield art to sway the Egyptian masses in their favor. The importance of "successful rhetoric and symbols [in order to] produce legitimacy, charisma or hegemony for the regime"[36] cannot be overstated. The election of the current president of Egypt, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, "provided evidence for the resilience of Nasserism with its institutional and ideological legacy. Replacement of demands for bread, social justice and equality with that for security was reflected in the pro-Sisi campaign with a nostalgic Nasserist iconography."[37] Sisi is an example of how Nasser's use of artistic allegory set a precedent for personality-building by those in Egypt's highest office.

Years later, Egypt has lost their president to the viral Arab Spring. Mubarak, the most recently overthrown president, was forced out in 2011. Egypt is currently under the leadership of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, who has begun using Nasserist rhetoric himself. Documentary and street art (graffiti) had a large impact of the accessibility and strengths in numbers of the Egyptian Arab

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[35] Khatib, 1.
[36] Wedeen, 5.
[37] Sahin, abstract.

Spring. The documentary, eye-witness accounts added truth to these artists' productions. Art, for them, is neither simply a reflection or tool of propaganda for the government, nor is it a historical document. Now art acts as the agent of an artist's testimonial, their vessel for criticisms of long-standing inequities. "In a rather provocative and controversial exhibition entitled 'This is Not Graffiti' shown at Cairo's exclusive Townhouse Gallery in September-October 2011, nine popular street artists were commissioned to come to the gallery and paint on the walls of the gallery space."[38] Suddenly, artists that were formerly revoked or dismissed for works deemed too politically motivated or controversial are now being paid and are highly marketable in the art world. This is likely because contemporary collectors are "interested in artists' engagement with the notion of a revolutionary site as a place of negotiation and political struggle."[39] It is in this way that art has come full circle, from being implemented by Nasser to serve as state-supported propaganda, to critiquing government leaders, and benefitting financially while doing so.

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[38] Demerdash, 8.
[39] Ibid.

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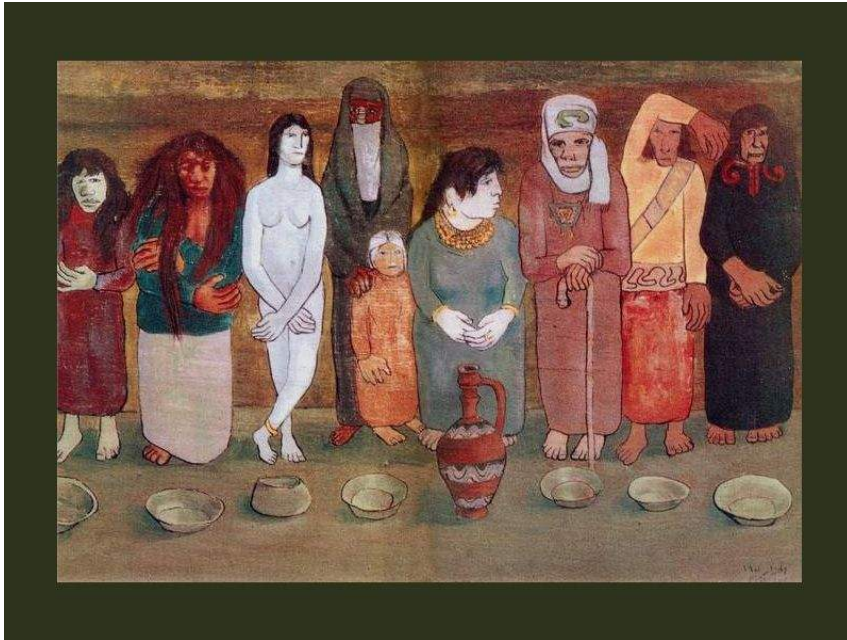Wedeen, L. (1999). *Ambiguities of domination: Politics, rhetoric, and symbols in contemporary*

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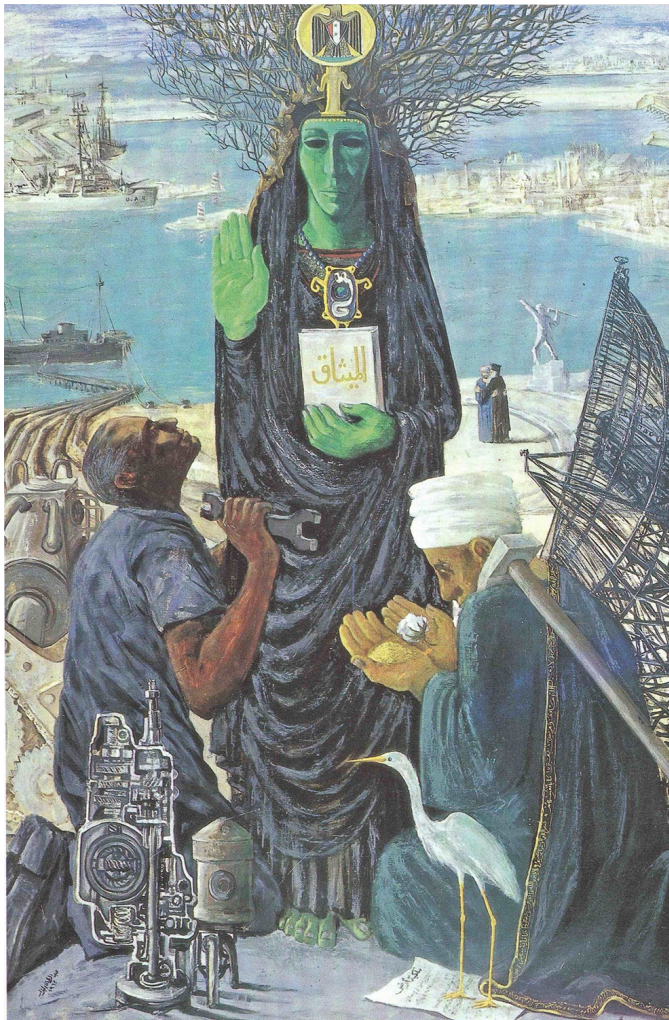
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