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EDITOR'S PREFACE

On behalf of the 2019-2020 Editorial Board, I am proud to present *Columbia Journal of History's* winter 2019 edition.

This season we received a record number of submissions at sixty-eight papers, among which we selected five to publish—about seven percent of the total. The majority of papers came from universities in the U.S. and a few came from institutions in Africa, Asia, and Europe.

In the first paper included within this edition, Malcolm Miller analyzes Brazilian president and dictator Getúlio Vargas' manipulation of combatting nations during World War II—namely the U.S. and Germany—in securing his plans for economic advancement of Brazil. Miller argues that, owing to the strategic importance of Brazil, the country's leader, rather successfully, maintained a policy of neutrality that led the two main forces of war to compete for Brazil's alliance. The paper represents a persuasive investigation of Brazilian agency in wartime international relations; its evidence illuminates how Vargas eventually sided with the U.S. in order to better advance his development plans for the Brazilian economy as well as military. For readers interested in how Vargas' plans for development and national prosperity might have affected ordinary Brazilians—particularly those urban workers and rural proletarians who often become objects of political chess rather than subjects of study—I recommend pairing this paper with the works of Joel Wolfe, like his 1994 essay in *Radical History Review* that details how the leader's policies impacted the lives of laborers.

The second paper by Alec Israeli is a detailed study of the settler-colonial parallels between South Africa and Israel through the writings of the South African Jewish journalist Henry Katzew. Israeli presents a compelling argument on how the creation of Israel helped reconcile white South African Jews with the antisemitic Afrikaner Nationalist Party, the architect of Apartheid. The paper stands as a thorough analysis of the overlaps between South African settler-colonialism and Zionism, especially with regards to ideological parallels, majority-minority dynamics, and real processes of colonial violence. For readers interested in learning more about the parallels between South Africa and Israel as well as the transnational trends in settler-colonialism since 1948, I recommend reading this article alongside the special issue of Duke University Press' *Social Text* from 2003 titled, "Palestine in a Transnational Context," edited by Timothy Mitchell, Gyan Prakash, and Ella Shohat.

Covering the same time period as Miller, Alexandra Todorova reappraises the archaeological research at the site of Haithabu by Nazi-era researchers in her study—the third paper of this edition. Carefully explaining how the Nazi Party distorted scientific data in order to advance its logic of Aryanism and genocide, Todorova calls for scholars to look beyond the hateful distortion as the data generated by researchers of the time, even those sympathetic to the Nazi cause, can still be illuminating. The author illustrates that despite the unfortunate and turbulent history of misuse, the raw data generated by those like Herbert Jankuhn at Haithabu escape the label of pseudoscience. For readers interested in learning more about Germany’s co-option of archaeological research and how racist pseudoscience, in fact, surpasses the boundaries of the Nazi era, essays by Bettina Arnold—such as [her March, 2006 article](#) in *World Archaeology*—are particularly enlightening and will pair well with Todorova’s study.

The fourth article by Bennett Miller examines the National Training School (NTS) for Girls’ in Washington D.C. With a thorough use of Congressional records as well as newspaper articles, Miller offers a meticulous account of how Black women reformers took charge of the juvenile justice system—specifically the NTS that became an all-Black institution for “delinquent” Black girls—in the U.S. capital. Identifying the origin of the School with the interwar progressive reformers who gazed at the rapidly urbanizing American society with anxiety, the author argues that the NTS ultimately failed despite Black women’s acquisition of control, because the double-bind of racism and sexism rendered an institution for wayward Black girls to be undeserving of any substantial support. Miller’s essay is an admirable investigation of the interwar precedent to the U.S. failure in creating adequate support systems for Black youth, especially girls, in the nation’s major cities. For this article—and for the sake of exposing oneself to a magisterial piece of writing—I highly recommend Saidiya Hartman’s *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments*.

Last but not least, the final article of this edition considers the notion of madness as written in *De Medicina*, a medical treatise authored by the Roman encyclopedist Aulus Cornelius Celsus. By Leah Borquez, the paper takes an interdisciplinary approach to textual analysis, as the author considers socio-cultural contexts surrounding Celsus and his writing in clarifying the concept of madness as defined by ancient Romans. In particular, the readings of Greek tragedies that are mentioned in *De Medicina* illuminates the overlaps between medicine and culture; indeed, they mark this essay as an intriguing contribution to the study of ancient medicine. For those curious to learn more about ancient medicine and its connections to Greco-Roman culture, I highly suggest Vivian Nutton’s *Ancient Medicine* from 2013, as it is inarguably a treat for an audience interested in classics as well as medicine.

To all readers: I hope the five articles included within this issue will be enlightening and enjoyable. Undergraduates are amateur—or rather, budding—historians, but our passion toward rediscovering and representing the past for the purpose of truth is second to none. And so I would like to thank the five incredible authors for their trust in the editors of this publication as well as their hard work in producing such commendable papers. I sincerely hope you will continue your studies in history; perhaps I will, in later years, see your names quoted in *The New York Times* or see your books on the best-seller shelves.

I would also like to thank the Department of History at Columbia, especially Professor Neslihan Şenocak, our Director of Undergraduate Studies, whose support connected us to so many incredible scholars within the department. Moreover, to all professors who helped the editors select and review the articles, your dedication to us, the students, is what allows us to remain passionate. We are deeply grateful for your kindness and knowledge; we hope you will continue supporting the Journal and the broader community of students dedicated to undergraduate research.

Finally, I would like to thank all of the editors part of this season's Editorial Board of the *Columbia Journal of History*. It was truly a pleasure to work with you, as you are all incredibly insightful and vigilant. I am proud to be part of such an impressive team.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. M. Song', with a stylized, cursive flourish at the end.

T. M. Song
Editor-in-Chief

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GETÚLIO VARGAS AND THE EQUIDISTÂNCIA PRAGMÁTICA

Malcolm Miller

Abstract: Brazil's entrance into World War II on the Allied side was a significant departure from its prior neutral stance and a great relief to the U.S. which was extremely anxious about its vulnerability to Nazi action emanating from Brazil. Existing historical analyses of Brazil's action tend to suggest it either reflected acquiescence to relentless U.S. pressure or a reflexive response to Germany's sinking of Brazilian ships. Such conclusions fail to acknowledge the efforts of Brazilian president Getúlio Vargas to advance Brazil's position in its foreign relationships as the initiation of World War II greatly increased his country's strategic importance. As an examination of the multi-year interactions between the Vargas administration and its foreign counterparts demonstrates, Brazil's decision was ultimately Vargas' and Vargas' alone, based on his belief that choosing sides when he did would provide the best path forward for his economic plans while also stabilizing his precarious position at the helm of the Brazilian ship of state.

Key words: Brazilian army, Brazilian diplomatic history, Brazil in World War II, *Estado Novo*, Getúlio Vargas, interwar period, international relations, Latin American politics, Oswaldo Aranha, "Pragmatic Equilibrium," Sumner Welles, World War II

Introduction

Brazil spent much of the interwar period engaged in a delicate dance, weaving back and forth in its relationships with foreign powers. Indeed, to many observers, Brazil seemed intent on juggling the concerns of both Germany and the United States on a relatively permanent basis to optimize the *Estado Novo* ("The New State"), the industrialization and development program implemented by Brazil's leader, Getúlio Vargas. With the advent of World War II, however, that indecision prompted considerable angst among U.S. military planners, who developed a strong interest in moving troops into Brazil's northeast territory to fend off a potential Nazi attack. By January 1942, though, Brazil had renounced its ties with Germany, entering the war as a military combatant on the side of the Allies a few short months later. Brazil's exit from neutrality was both a welcome relief to the Allies and an action that distinguished Brazil from many of its neighbors like Argentina that waited until the war's bitter end to renounce Germany. Interestingly, given the abrupt and unique nature

of Brazil's entry into the war, the question of why Brazil made its move when other similarly situated nations did not has attracted relatively little interest, particularly among Western scholars. Simple answers—including the suggestion that Brazil's action reflected acquiescence to relentless pressure by the U.S. or a reflexive response to Germany's sinking of Brazilian ships—fail to acknowledge the complicated calculus that Vargas employed to advance Brazil's position in its foreign relationships, particularly as the initiation of World War II increased the country's strategic importance. As the multi-year interactions between the Vargas administration and its foreign counterparts, especially the U.S., demonstrate, Brazil's decision was ultimately Vargas' and Vargas' alone, reflecting his belief that choosing sides provided the best path forward for his economic plans while stabilizing his precarious position at the helm of the Brazilian ship of state.

Historiography

Despite the global character of the Second World War, not all corners of the conflict have been the subject of rigorous historical study. Though the primary foci of the war—the European and Pacific theaters—as well as the conduct of all the war's major actors have been studied in depth, some noteworthy events in the conflict continue to be ignored by historians; Brazil's entry into the war is one of these. Perhaps this omission reflects the fact that much of the substantial body of research on WWII and Brazilian foreign policy produced by Brazilian scholars addresses other questions besides the country's changing allegiances or, alternatively, the lack of English translations of some Brazilian works and limitations on access to local primary sources.¹ That said, even the holistic analysis of Brazilian-American foreign relations across the entirety of the Vargas period contributed by Gerson Moura, a leading authority on the history of Brazil's foreign policy, seems to have failed to ignite the enthusiasm among non-Brazilian academics that one might have expected given the importance of Brazil's positioning to the Allied cause.² Indeed, within Anglospheric academia, the complex web of Brazil's internal politics and interactions with the war's primary actors and the relationship of those interactions to its eventual declaration as a combatant on the side of the Allies appear to have been seriously investigated only during the 1970s debate between two historians, Frank D. McCann Jr. and Stanley E. Hilton. Contributions to the literature since then are limited to references to McCann and Hilton in publications addressing Brazil's history and a 2014 book on Brazil's wartime experience by Neill Lochery, *Brazil: The Fortunes of War*, a highly atmospheric narrative that skirts around the edges of the McCann-Hilton debate without really engaging with the arguments of either side. In 2018, McCann, himself, published an exhaustive book on the changing dynamics of the American-Brazilian relationship from the 1930s to the 1970s, but this work serves mainly to complement his prior research with the relevant sections focused on the military activities of the period but, nevertheless, still consistent with his established conclusions concerning Brazil's approach to WWII. Thus, given the lack of advance in the literature, it seems most fitting to address the question of Brazil's agency

in its decision to side with the Allies by first reviewing the original arguments laid out by McCann and Hilton.

In *Brazil, the United States, and World War II: A Commentary* and *The Brazilian-American Alliance, 1937-1945*, Frank D. McCann lays out his “passivity-domination thesis,” characterizing Brazil as the hapless victim of a far stronger and more sophisticated American counterparty.³ Rooted in a U.S.-centric perspective, McCann’s book suggests that the Vargas administration, driven by a “[misplaced] faith in the American commitment to Brazil” and enamored of the idea that it was pursuing a “true alliance of destinies” with America, allowed itself to get outplayed at virtually every hand by the U.S. whose “general tendency ... [was] toward placing Brazil, a penetrated society, in a dependency relationship.”⁴ Specifically, between 1940 and 1942, Brazil was courted by the U.S. as an ideal regional counterweight to the more Axis-inclined Argentina and Chile and a source of supply for its own war effort. Of course, McCann notes, given a U.S. policy view that Brazil’s “stability was essential to the hemisphere defense plans of the United States and to American trade, Washington had no choice but to support Vargas [and Brazil] ... as long as it was cooperative and useful to American interests.”⁵ That support, however, was narrow. The United States was far less inclined toward helping Vargas achieve his own goals of industrializing his country and fortifying its military resources against its southern neighbors than it was in ensuring that Brazil gave the U.S. a bulwark against a German attack from Africa and a steady stream of raw materials. As McCann remarks, desirous of maintaining Brazilian loyalty, the U.S. would occasionally throw some scraps, principally arms, Brazil’s way. He also notes the Vargas administration’s constant efforts to eke out an advantage over the U.S. by dangling its German ties in front of U.S. policymakers. But, he suggests, even if such attempts might have had a chance of success, they were inadvertently undermined by Vargas’ foreign minister, Oswaldo Aranha, who was a strong and vocal supporter of Brazil moving closer to the U.S., and far too susceptible to American blandishments.⁶ Indeed, Aranha’s enthusiasm for the U.S. often backfired, as when its failure to deliver the arms that Aranha had promised strengthened the position of pro-Axis elements in the Vargas government with the resulting internal dissension “allow[ing] Germany and the United States to play the divided Brazilians against each other.”⁷ That Brazil’s proudest moment in the war, the launch of its expeditionary force, the Força Expedicionária Brasileira (FEB), to fight with the Allies in the Mediterranean theater, was an act of its own volition that does not, in McCann’s view, undermine his portrayal of Brazil as the trailing partner in its relationship with the U.S. He claims instead that the FEB was a natural product of Brazil’s impression “that only active participation on the battlefield would get arms for their forces and the postwar participation that the national leaders coveted.”⁸ Unfortunately, Brazil once again badly misread America’s interest in, and appreciation for, Brazil. Despite all of Brazil’s diplomatic efforts and stratagems,

[i]nstead of recognition as a world power, the war gave Brazil the image of a dependency of the United States, whose wartime efforts and sacrifices were

not even deemed worthy of proper reparations from the defeated enemy whose interests now appeared to consume Washington's attention.⁹

This view by McCann is best contrasted by the work of Stanley E. Hilton. In his 1979 article "Brazilian Diplomacy and the Washington-Rio de Janeiro 'Axis' during the World War II Era," Hilton explicitly rejects McCann's portrayal of Brazil as a U.S. supplicant. Instead, he submits, Brazil actively courted and gained concessions from the United States, driven by a "Machiavellian opportunism" designed to pit America and Germany against each other. The concept of duplicity does not itself distinguish Hilton from McCann. McCann invokes a long-standing Brazilian diplomatic colloquium—first "para Ingles ver" (for the English to see) and later "para Americano ver" (for the American to see)—describing the country's practice of saying one thing to a great power while doing the opposite.¹⁰ But while McCann minimizes the effectiveness of Brazil's attempts to manage the bigger states, Hilton asserts that its deceitful statecraft was quite successful, as in its continuing trade with Germany in contravention of a 1935 agreement with the U.S.—activity which it denied or downplayed to a frustrated and suspicious United States for years.¹¹

Hilton also describes in some detail the extent to which Vargas would go to play both sides, including the engineering of a crackdown on Nazi activity in southern Brazil to reassure the U.S. of Brazil's anti-Axis sentiment. In an impressively choreographed sequence of doublespeak, Vargas used a subsequent meeting with the concerned German ambassador to reassert his "friendliness" towards Germany only to then characterize that same meeting as an "angry clash" in communications with the American ambassador.¹² Hilton evidences the fruitfulness of Vargas' balancing act by pointing to his ability to secure funding for his much-desired Volta Redonda steel facility by pitting Germany against the U.S., using the German "interest in the project [as a] trump card . . . to pressure the Americans." In fact, it was only when Brazil received "firm guarantees of greater American military assistance," that it finally agreed to cut ties with Berlin.¹³ Hilton also notes Vargas' efforts to demonstrate to the Brazilian people that, U.S. gifts aside, he was no slave to U.S. interests, halting, for instance, Brazilian shipments of raw materials to the United States in the middle of 1942 to protest the poor protection of those convoys from Axis submarines.¹⁴ Finally, throughout his piece, Hilton documents what seems to be a considerable amount of deference paid by American policymakers to Brazil's interests as well as concern that its desire for Brazil to fully commit to the Allied side not be misinterpreted, undercutting McCann's depiction of an America bent on Brazilian domination. That said, Hilton does not directly address Brazil's actual decision to enter the war after the German sinking of a number of Brazilian military and civilian vessels in August, 1942—although there is no implication that the declaration of war was other than a wholly Brazilian choice, and one the U.S. supported after the fact.¹⁵ In summary, he sees Brazil's activity up to, and through, the war as largely driven by Vargas' intentional creation of a "special relationship with Washington as a means of extracting military and economic assistance from the United States" which he achieved at "relatively low cost."¹⁶

Hilton's Machiavellian realpolitik and McCann's "passivity domination thesis" seem to present ends of the spectrum for explaining Brazil's deepening relationship with the Allies. Hilton describes Brazil as a savvy manipulator of Axis and Allied countries for its own benefit while McCann positions it as the manipulated party. Unfortunately, the paucity of other participants in the debate leaves a substantial gap between the conflicting narratives. Additionally, both suffer from a lack of coverage on the somewhat sizeable step Brazil took from breaking off relations with the Axis to actually declaring war. With the intent of closing that gap it seems worthwhile to review the evidence on both sides, specifically focusing on the period when, as a result of increasing hostilities, Brazil's strategic importance to both Germany and the United States would have increased, presumably also giving Brazil its maximum point of leverage on the international stage.

Vargas and the *Estado Novo*

To frame that review, it is useful to understand the context within which Getúlio Vargas was operating; as Brazilian dictator through World War II, he would have had to support, if not drive, Brazil's march to war. Vargas' decades-long domination of the Brazilian political scene and the principles of his *Estado Novo* had their roots in the demise of the Old Republic, the period from 1889 to 1930 when Brazil was ruled by an oligarchy of coffee planters from the Brazilian southeast. As the leading opposition figure during the 1930 Revolution, Vargas derived his support from "a complex coalition" of disparate parties.¹⁷ That group included political leaders from Minas Gerais and Rio Grande de Sol seeking to break the hold of their counterparts from the southeast, the new Partido Democrático of São Paulo formed in opposition to the then ruling Republican party, young revolutionary military officers known as the *tenentes*, and certain coffee growers who had their own grievances with the party in power.¹⁸ While the collective might of the group was sufficient to sustain Vargas' bid for control, its lack of internal cohesiveness was an issue for Vargas throughout his years in power.

In 1930, Vargas became President of Brazil and quickly began to break up the Old Republic, establishing a new constitution in 1934 that broadly expanded federal powers politically, economically, and socially. Vargas' chief goal was to modernize the Brazilian economy, specifically by creating a heavy industry sector which could supply and support the infrastructure which he believed fundamental to achieving his objectives.¹⁹ As Governor of Rio Grande do Sul, Vargas had successfully supplanted existing *laissez faire* economic policies with a strongly interventionist regime that focused on the creation of a series of regional commodity cartels whose scale gave them competitive advantages over the small producers from other regions.²⁰ However, attempting to implement similar tactics on a national scale to further his industrialist vision brought Vargas into conflict with regional power players as well as ideological opponents to his centralization of power.²¹ Just prior to the 1938 presidential election—in which he was constitutionally unable to participate—Vargas engineered a coup and created the *Estado Novo*, a benign phrase for the corporatist

dictatorship meant to remedy the “capitalist disorganization” that he believed was responsible for Brazil’s economic disarray.²² Suspending the previous 1934 constitution in favor of a new one which consolidated decision-making within “high-level State agencies,” Vargas sought to implement his economic policy on a more aggressive pace, even as World War II approached. With the knowledge that “foreign trade [would be] of paramount economic and political importance” to accelerate his plans, Vargas worked to rekindle relationships with the world’s leading economic powers, which was not an easy task even from an internal perspective given the dissension within the government and the military on whether Brazil was best served by favoring the Axis or Allies.²³ Somewhat ironically, as Brazilian historian Gerson Moura points out, Brazil’s political dynamics only served to strengthen Vargas’ personal impact:

The narrowing of the decision-making circles plus the deep political divisions within the whole State apparatus, and in particular in the Cabinet, frequently caused Vargas to become the supreme judge of foreign relations and an active actor in the making of the main foreign policy decisions. Thus in many cases the final word came from Vargas.²⁴

And, when it came to foreign policy tactics, for a time Vargas personally believed that Brazil was best served by staying in the middle of Germany and America’s competing interests.

German and American Interests in Brazil

Remaining at the very center between two battling world powers was, at first, a convenient and rational choice for Vargas. As historian Leslie Bethell notes:

The growing power of Germany in the world, the potential threat Germany posed to U.S. hegemony in South America, Brazil’s economic and military links with Germany and, not least, the existence of personal and ideological affinities with Nazi Germany in some sectors of Brazilian society and government provided Getúlio Vargas with the opportunity to pursue a policy of *equidistância pragmática* between the United States and Germany.²⁵

For several years, this “pragmatic equilibrium” strategy appeared to be at least moderately successful in establishing beneficial relations with both the U.S. and Germany—and, to a lesser extent, with Italy. After all, by 1939, trade with both countries had grown tremendously, with more than half of all Brazilian exports arriving at the shores of Germany and America.²⁶

The advent of World War II tremendously disrupted Brazil’s trading relationships but also rendered Vargas’ tenuous balancing of Axis and Allied relationships harder to sustain yet potentially more profitable; in significant part because Brazil morphed from a peripheral

concern to a source of substantial anxiety for both sides of the war. As noted earlier, McCann and Hilton describe Brazil as a country of some interest to the Roosevelt Administration, initially by reason of geography. Even before the outbreak of the Second World War, control of Brazil's "bulge," its northeastern coast, was considered to be an issue of vital interest to American security policymakers; its loss to forces hostile to the U.S. would not only threaten American shipping across the Atlantic, but might also allow it to serve as a launching point for potential future offensives against the U.S.²⁷ Additionally, like Germany, the U.S. was interested in Brazil's "market and resources," a focus that grew as America's own war effort taxed its supplies of strategic raw materials.²⁸ The U.S. strategy of positioning Brazil to meet its objectives was somewhat fractured, reflecting the multitude of viewpoints on the American side. The Army, for instance, was fairly hardline, generally preferring a high pressure approach that ideally would result in its taking over complete control of Brazilian military operations. The Navy, in contrast, believed that its specific military interests would be better achieved by taking a more conciliatory tact—a stance more in keeping with Roosevelt's own preference for temperance, and the new approach in American policy he described in his 1936 address to the Brazilian National Congress.²⁹ That said, there was unanimity on the American side that, as desirable as it was to remove Brazil's exposure to Germany, any path to that end should stop short of outright hostility between Brazil and the Axis. Vargas' position was sufficiently unstable that if he chose to go to war with the Axis nations, the enmity that aggression might engender within the sizeable contingent of the Brazilian military with fascist sympathies, not to mention the large pro-Axis German population in Brazil, could potentially lead to his overthrow.³⁰ Given these considerations, from a diplomatic perspective, convincing Brazil to simply commit to neutrality seemed the least fraught path, and that moved to the top of the list of U.S. policy objectives for Brazil, second only to Roosevelt's broader regional goals.

Like the U.S., Germany also had a significant economically-driven interest in Brazil, albeit accompanied by much grander political aims. Hitler—emboldened by factors including Germany's continuing discussions with Brazil regarding arms and the support of the Volta Redonda steel project, Brazil's vocal German immigrant population, and the Brazilian military's fondness for Germany—envisioned the country as the cornerstone of Germany's Latin American foreign policy and the foundation for the continent's resistance to U.S. hegemony.³¹ Of course, Germany was not oblivious to Brazil's proximity to the U.S., so, in addition to its foreign policy overtures, the Nazis established an extensive espionage network in Brazil to stay abreast of the impact that American pressure would have on Vargas.³² Additionally, though the Germans placed paramount importance on their commercial ties to Brazil—after all, the economic and industrial state of the motherland were far more important to Germany's strategic aspirations than the political leanings of the minor nations of Latin American—they did not ignore the ideological aspect of their relationship with Brazil. Thus, as they worked to deepen their trade ties with Brazil, the Nazi party simultaneously focused on establishing internal Brazilian networks of sympathetic private citizens (generally of German descent) and officers.³³

The Pragmatic Equilibrium

Caught between two suitors, Vargas saw the onset of war as a reason to accelerate his dalliances with both sides. From his perspective, employing this “pragmatic equilibrium” had always been the obvious solution to the “crucial problem of [Brazil’s] economic expansion” and his simultaneous pursuit of arms and other support to build the Brazilian military.³⁴ Even as hostilities between Germany and the U.S. grew, it was still likely to produce more benefit for Brazil than throwing in with one power or the other. In a rapidfire progression, he planned to send Army Chief of Staff, Goes Monteiro, on diplomatic trips in 1939 to Germany, Italy, and the U.S. while ordering, at Roosevelt’s invitation, a subsequent mission to Washington headed by the pro-America Aranha to promote stronger ties with the U.S.³⁵ This pattern of simultaneous negotiations was to be repeated numerous times over the next several years as Vargas pushed relentlessly to secure the economic and military support he felt were critical to Brazil’s future.

On the economic front, as the war progressed, Brazil focused most particularly on securing funding for the Volta Redonda project to create the steel production capacity that was the centerpiece of Vargas’ plans to develop native heavy industry.³⁶ Where the Germans were quick to respond, using “generous offers of postwar trade agreements and construction of the mill” to win Brazil over, the Americans struggled to bring anything substantive to the table, initially offering only to lobby U.S. firms to invest in the mill.³⁷ The disparity between the quality of support offered by the competing powers set off alarms in Washington that Brazil might be on the verge of throwing in with the Axis.³⁸ Fearful of the negative political repercussions, U.S. efforts became somewhat more responsive to Brazilian requests for monetary aid, at least to the extent of tentatively exploring actual governmental financial support.³⁹ Vargas seemed less than swayed by the vagueness of American gestures, and on June 11, 1940 gave a pointed and well-covered speech, announcing that, to meet his industrialization goals, he would look to “the strong peoples,” an obvious reference to Germany.⁴⁰ Not surprisingly, his words raised enormous concern in the U.S., generating numerous communications among Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Ambassador Jefferson Caffery, Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles, and Roosevelt himself, attempting to evaluate Vargas’ intent. Vargas himself sent a conciliatory message to Roosevelt on June 13 but then turned around and gave a similar speech a few weeks later.⁴¹ In the end, the brazenness of his public comments drew the reaction he sought.⁴² As then Acting Secretary of State Welles described to the Federal Loan Administrator:

...the failure on the part of this Government to assist the Brazilians in this matter will in all probability according to the American Ambassador in Brazil result in the immediate acceptance by Brazil of a German offer to build the plant, which the Germans are prepared to do on terms which they will allow

the Brazilians to write themselves. Germany's predominance in Brazilian economic and military life would thereby be secured for many years.⁴³

Of note is the conviction with which Welles writes, bolstering the argument that Brazil did wield considerable leverage against the U.S. That leverage worked in this instance. The U.S. supplied Brazil with two \$20 million loans in August, 1940 and March, 1943 as well as technical assistance resulting in the completion of the steel complex in 1946.⁴⁴ All in all, Volta Redonda appeared to be an outright win for Vargas and, perhaps, an exemplary implementation of Brazil's strategy of pitting Germany against the U.S. for its own gain.

Brazil's attempts to win military support were more problematic, complicated by the, at best, mixed allegiances of its own military leadership as well as conflicts among American military and diplomatic leaders as to how to manage the exposure of the U.S. to a potential German attack from the south. Regarding the former, with the actual onset of the war in Europe, and the stunning initial German victories over Allied forces, Brazil's careful Nazi-Allied balance tipped at least a little in Germany's favor. For one thing, German victories had the unfortunate effect of bolstering pro-Axis support within Brazil, especially in military circles, and increasing the already healthy respect held by many members of the Brazilian military for the quality of German weapons.⁴⁵ That sentiment was further amplified by Germany's willingness to provide arms to Brazil at a time when America was frustratingly inconsistent with regards to their intent to themselves supply weapons to Brazil, regularly approving sales of materiel only to fail to follow through as a result of issues with existing Congressional prohibitions against the export of arms.⁴⁶ But if Brazil was not getting what it wanted, neither was the U.S. military, as strategic locations in Brazil for positioning troops and planes remained inaccessible.

The American Response

Brazil's standoffishness was hardly an idle matter to U.S. military leaders. As the war progressed in Europe, concerns grew that it might expand to the Western Hemisphere—with Brazil joining the wrong side in that escalation. The notion of a German move into Latin America had never seemed far-fetched to American military planners who acutely recognized the paramount importance of the Atlantic to American security in any war. Though the North Atlantic could certainly be secured from the American mainland, there was still the South Atlantic to contend with, and Brazil was indispensable to its control. In addition, American planners were quite cognizant of South America's vital position in the "Nazi blueprint for world domination," particularly Brazil, which not only was the easiest target to reach, but also boasted air fields that would have granted the Germans the ability to strike deep into North and South America by air.⁴⁷ Based on strategic value alone, Brazil seemed a natural next step for a Nazi war machine looking for its next victim; that Brazil possessed a sizable population of Nazi sympathizers who were especially concentrated in the high command of the military was especially alarming, but no more so than Brazil's

persistent emphasis that its allegiance would lie with whichever state furnished it arms.⁴⁸ In mid-1938, when Brazil actually entered into a contract to receive arms from Germany's Krupp Group, American fears heightened, and the U.S. began to explore more muscular options to keep Brazil from fully entering the German orbit.⁴⁹ By 1939, in the course of the development of the Army-Navy Rainbow Plans, U.S. planners commonly recognized that the Northeast of Brazil would need to be under Allied control for the U.S. to effectively wage war against a German assault on the Western Hemisphere. With estimates that nearly 70 percent of the Brazilian Army's senior officers were Nazi sympathizers, William J. Donovan, the chief of the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS)—a predecessor to the CIA—pointed out the fallacy of any solution that relied on Brazil's cooperation, proclaiming that the adoption by Vargas of an anti-Axis policy "could probably produce an army revolt."⁵⁰ The increasing reality of a scenario involving Brazil's capitulation to a German military action seemed to demand that America devise a strategy to meet that event. By December 1941, American military planners were developing emergency invasion plans for the Northeast. Plan Rubber, as it was known, would have been a Herculean effort for the U.S. to implement, calling for more than 100,000 troops to be committed to the four-pronged invasion; there were to be landings in Recife, Natal, Belem, and the remote but strategically vital island of Fernando de Noronha.⁵¹ However, when weighed against the potential danger to which the U.S. would be exposed should Brazil enter the Nazi orbit, extreme measures seemed justified.

Hoping to forestall such drastic action, the U.S. continued to engage in strenuous diplomatic efforts to convince Brazil to willingly give it the military presence it sought. One small but important victory toward that end came late in 1941, not because of U.S. efforts but rather in spite of them. With strong evidence, the U.S. and Great Britain feared the dangers posed by German airlines which, since the beginning of the war, had been used for a variety of nefarious purposes in the region. As Roosevelt's Chief of Staff reported:

We all agree that German controlled airlines in South America provide Germany with the means for spreading Nazi propaganda, for communication with German agents and sympathizers in South America, and for familiarizing German military personnel with South American terrain. They also provide bases which would be of great strategic value to an invader. Consequently, these airlines constitute a definite threat to the security of the United States in the event of war with Germany.⁵²

Since 1940, German airline Condor, in association with Italian carrier, LATI, was suspected of carrying out reconnaissance off the coast of Brazil that was threatening British shipping and facilitating the passage of Axis vessels through the British blockade. The U.S. and British had exhorted the Brazilians to work with them to "de-Germanize" Brazilian airways but, according to journalist Mary Jo McConahay, Vargas was unsympathetic, as LATI, in particular, had established investment and employment ties to the Brazilian elites, including with his son-in-law who had been hired by LATI as a director. As late as November 1941,

Ambassador Caffery was still imploring the Vargas administration to help remove the Axis airline menace, to no avail.⁵³ Not content to wait any longer, in a sensational bit of spy craft carried out that same month, the British arranged for microfilm containing a forged letter, purported to be penned by LATI's President and outlining an Italian plan to work with Vargas' enemies to mount a coup, to fall into the hands of the apparently unsuspecting Ambassador Caffery—who promptly delivered the microfilm to Vargas. The subterfuge worked. A “furious” Vargas immediately changed course and by January 1942, Brazil had seized control of LATI and Condor.⁵⁴ It is notable that, despite its best efforts, the U.S. played only an inadvertent role in the LATI/Condor takeovers; however it came about, Vargas was acting on his own. Nonetheless, the impact of removing the Axis presence from Brazilian airways and airfields was highly significant, particularly as the Axis menace approached the Western Hemisphere.

The American military's attempts to establish physical operations in Brazil seemed equally unproductive through most of 1941. For months, negotiations lacked progress, not least because of the competition between the U.S. Navy and Army on how to proceed—with the Navy in favor of moderation while the Army pushed Roosevelt, with increasing desperation, to step up the pressure on Brazil to cooperate.⁵⁵ Roosevelt remained sympathetic to Vargas' challenges, noting “the determined opposition of Brazilian Army leaders to the entry of American ground forces . . . [and] the ease with which pro-Nazi elements could fan popular sentiment against any American move that could be interpreted as imperialistic or an infringement on Brazilian sovereignty.” He was also aware that Vargas and Arahna “had been trying since August to mold Brazilian opinion in favor of more open collaboration with the United States.”⁵⁶ However, the Army's insistence on the urgency of U.S. troop deployment in Brazil was buttressed by the “general agreement” of Roosevelt and Churchill in late December 1941 that the failure of Operation Barbarossa, Germany's attempt to knock Russia out of the war, would compel the Germans to seek to gain ground in Africa, putting it on a path to move toward the Atlantic and Brazil. Perhaps to stave off more aggressive U.S. action or out of concern over U.S. descriptions of German plans to “seize” Brazil, in December, 1941, Vargas finally relented, allowing the U.S. to station 150 Marines, so-called “aircraft technicians,” at airports in the critical locations of Natal, Recife, and Belem.⁵⁷ Though such a small force could hardly resolve the issue for the U.S., Roosevelt himself saw Brazil's concession as an appropriate first move, recognizing that Vargas needed to tread carefully with his own military given its fierce resistance to an American military presence in Brazil.⁵⁸ In fact, Vargas did not escape the incident without conflict because though his concession had pleased the U.S., it did, in fact, irritate the pro-Axis elements in his own military, stiffening their resolve to stymie further U.S. troop movements into Brazil.⁵⁹ Nonetheless, Under Secretary of State Welles was convinced that “the Marines were an opening wedge,” and that “the road to [further] Brazilian cooperation was paved with munitions shipments,” a prophecy that was to play out only a few short weeks later.⁶⁰

Brazil as an Ally

Propelled by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the 1942 Rio Conference, the third in a series of meetings of foreign ministers from across the Americas, was ostensibly scheduled to examine “the protection of the western hemisphere,” and develop means for promoting economic solidarity among the various nations of the Americas.⁶¹ Of course, the U.S. goal for the conference was to get any member of the Americas who had not already done so to sever ties with the Axis.⁶² Given that it was hosted in Rio de Janeiro, Vargas took the opportunity to give the welcoming address, and ever conscious of the political potency of a public statement, called for the conference to “reaffirm our unanimous solidarity with the United States and to resolve, with prudence and decisiveness, how to bring security and how to protect our peoples.” Vargas further asserted that “it is the aim of the Brazilians to defend, inch by inch, our territory against any incursions and to not allow their land and waters to be used as a launching point for attacks against brother nations,” also affirming the need for economic development on the continent.⁶³

The actual proceedings of the Rio Conference do not matter so much as the backchannel bilateral negotiations between Vargas and Welles that occurred concurrently. Vargas was cynical about U.S. interests, noting in his personal diary that “[it] looks like the U.S. insists on dragging us into war, even though this may not be useful for us or them.” He further commented that those countries that had already declared war on the Axis had been “coerced by American pressure.”⁶⁴ But true to form, Vargas presented a different stance to Welles, such that on the same date Vargas was complaining about the U.S. in his diary, Welles cabled Secretary of State Cordell Hull that Vargas was “support[ing] the United States 100%.”⁶⁵ Vargas did, however, work with Aranha to convince Chile and Argentina to break with the Axis, while still voicing to the U.S. his concerns about the grave security risks that break would create for Brazil, especially if Argentina and Chile continued to support the Axis. In response, Welles guaranteed that, with Roosevelt’s support, Vargas would finally receive the arms he had long coveted.⁶⁶ On January 25, all twenty-one Pan-American nations supported a resolution to rupture diplomatic relations with the Axis nations. Though the conference result was only a recommendation as opposed to an outright agreement to sever relations—a concession to Chile and Argentina who were not prepared to go that far—Vargas gave Aranha permission to declare at the conference’s closing ceremony on January 28 that Brazil would “stand by its word ... [and] in consequence of the recommendations of the Third Consultative Meeting of Foreign Ministers, [that] Brazil has broken diplomatic and commercial relations with Germany, Italy and Japan.”⁶⁷

To Germany, who, only a year before, had been enjoying a profitable trading relationship with Brazil—with Brazil willing to risk serious confrontation with the United Kingdom over the seizure of the cargo ship *Siqueira Campos*, which was carrying Brazil-bound German arms—the announcement of this *fait accompli* was a shocking betrayal.

Retaliation was swift. Barely a month after Aranha's declaration at Rio, German and Italian submarines were ordered to move directly against Brazilian commerce in the South Atlantic. On February 16, the Brazilian vessel Buarque was sunk and the Germans sunk another Brazilian ship just two days later—and with them, Brazil suffered its first casualties of the war.⁶⁸ Days after the attacks, Vargas, Aranha, and even Roosevelt issued public statements in strong protest of the German actions: Vargas decried the “brutal attack against our nation's ships by the corsair submarines of the Axis that aim to terrorize us,” noting that “only the continental principles of solidarity and of decisive collaboration ... can strengthen us.”⁶⁹ Aranha described the dozens of messages of condolences and support Brazil had received from countries both within and beyond the Western Hemisphere, notably from China, Belgium, Greece, and Yugoslavia; and Roosevelt reaffirmed “the insoluble friendship of the American people to the Brazilian people and our profound gratitude at their cooperation in the defense of the Hemisphere that has already resulted in so many sacrifices for Brazil.”⁷⁰ Crucially, General Eurico Dutra, the famously pro-Axis Brazilian Minister of War, also issued a public statement, assuring his countrymen that “the Army stands ... with the people ... willing, as always, to make all the sacrifices - moral and material - in defense of our grand fatherland.”⁷¹ Dutra's statement represented a complete change in stance for the Brazilian military from a position of admiration and mostly tacit support for the Axis powers to one of determined opposition to them, with Dutra further affirming that the army “will loyally obey” Vargas and “will not falter in its most glorious mission to” Brazil.⁷²

More formally, Brazil issued some diplomatic protests and, hoping to forestall further German attacks, attempted to reaffirm its status as a neutral power. It was all for nought as German commerce raiding continued apace. In August, the Germans launched a major assault, using submarine warfare to sink five vessels between August 14th and 17th and kill more than 600 Brazilians. Within Brazil, the public reaction was fierce, “with the youth leading the calls for an immediate response” to these acts of aggression.⁷³ The U.S. may have believed that their interests and Vargas' stability were best served with a neutral Brazil simply providing material to feed American war industry, but, given the public outrage, Vargas calculated that not responding would be the more perilous course. On August 22, 1942, Brazil declared a state of hostility against Germany and Italy. In the weeks that followed, Vargas issued two decrees: the first, no. 10.358 on August 31, had the effect of placing all of Brazil in a state of war; the second, no. 10.451 issued September 16, called for a general mobilization across all of Brazil.⁷⁴ Interestingly, also, Vargas agreed at the end of August to allow all U.S. and Brazilian military forces to be placed under the command of Admiral Jonas Ingram, a man whom Vargas admired and trusted so much he called him “Brazil's Sea Lord” and “My Strong Right Arm.”⁷⁵ As to why, after all the resistance to U.S. control, Vargas suddenly jumped so far into the American camp, some have pointed to Vargas' deep distrust of the British as well as the divisions within his own military which prevented one of their own from being granted the respect as a leader that apparently Ingram could get, irrespective of his citizenship.⁷⁶ The U.S. Navy's patient efforts to build a relationship with the Brazilians had paid off.

Conclusion

With its entry into the war, the era of Vargas' pragmatic neutrality came to an end, and Brazil's overriding foreign policy goal became that of elevating the country's stance among the Allies to achieve the best possible postwar position. Vargas worked relentlessly to establish Brazil as the foremost supporter of the U.S., because the North American ally was a member of the powerful United Nations Security Council and since he recognized the U.S. as the South American regional hegemon. In support of these aims, the FEB was organized and dispatched, though not without a struggle. The United Kingdom strongly resisted what it regarded as unnecessary interference from an untested force until the U.S. prevailed upon them to allow the FEB to play a role given its importance to Vargas.⁷⁷ For all intents and purposes, however, Brazil played a passive role in the rest of the war, contributing most impactfully through the steady stream of raw materials it shipped north to sustain the American war effort.

Looking back on the run-up to the war, it is clear that Brazil always aspired to be treated more seriously by the Great Powers than its economic status might otherwise have called for, and its ability to draw that deference was largely a function of Vargas' appreciation of the country's immense strategic power. As shown throughout this paper, Vargas consciously played Germany and the U.S. against each other to secure the economic and military support so essential to his development plans. It is equally evident that he ultimately sided with the U.S. because that is where he felt the country's interests resided, not because he was overwhelmed by pressure from the U.S.—notwithstanding the fact that the U.S. was enormously relieved to have Brazil firmly in its corner. Further supporting the independence of Vargas' action was Brazil's declaration of war with Germany, an action that Vargas felt was an essential response to public outcry over the August 1942 German attacks but that the U.S. had hoped Brazil might avoid. All that said, the tremendous disparity in absolute power between Brazil and the same great powers—whose ranks it dreamed of joining after the war—was a severe limiting factor to Brazil achieving its post-war aspirations and, frankly, should have been recognized as such. Instead, in the lead-up to its declaration of war, Brazil's objectives inflated disproportionately with the leverage it gained from America's desire for a Brazilian commitment to the Allied cause.

Nonetheless, the fact that Brazil's importance on the global stage faded after the war should not detract from the tangible benefits Vargas was able to reap during the window when Brazil mattered most. The record clearly shows Vargas placing the U.S. in a position of having to respond to German proposals, garnering him some unambiguous wins in the process, including American arms shipments and, most notably, the Volta Redonda steelworks, which proved instrumental to fostering the creation of native heavy industry as well as the economic development of the country. In fact, Frank McCann's significantly more flattering portrayal of Vargas' achievements in an article twenty years after his seminal piece largely derives from his recognition that Vargas' "maneuvering" did not simply result in

“the basis of an industrial plant” that he had first described, but actually built the foundation of the modern Brazilian industrial economy.⁷⁸ If one believes that history’s truths are only fully revealed with time, than the great debate over the lasting success of Vargas’ pragmatic equilibrium have been finally and firmly settled in the affirmative.

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⁷⁸ McCann, "Brazil, the United States, and World War II: A Commentary," 64; McCann, "Brazil and World War II: The Forgotten Ally."

BETWEEN DESERT AND PLATTELAND: ISRAEL, SOUTH AFRICA, AND THEIR SETTLER-COLONIAL LINK IN THE WRITINGS OF HENRY KATZEW

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Abstract: This paper studies the writings of South African Jewish journalist Henry Katzew in order to better understand the sudden rapprochement between the Afrikaner National Party and white South African Jews that began in 1948, in which the former distanced itself from antisemitism, while much of the latter affirmed an apolitical stance on apartheid. At the center of this reconciliation was the 1948 establishment of Israel, given the subsequent Afrikaner support for and identification with it as a settler colonial state like South Africa, and the strong Zionism of South African Jews. This process is well demonstrated by Katzew's work, as he expressed sympathy for both the Afrikaner and Israeli cause. Examining his philosophy of "group survival" (founded upon racial divisions of land and labor), as well as the example he felt Israel displayed for South Africa, provides unique insight into the settler colonial parallels of the two nations, drawn both retrospectively and by Katzew and his contemporaries. In his writing, these parallels are observable in terms of the actual settler process, its self-justifying myths, and the common racial anxieties of white South Africa and Israel in the age of decolonization.

Key words: Henry Katzew, settler-colonialism, Zionism, Apartheid, South Africa, Israel, Afrikaners, South African Jewry, labor, Afrikaner National Party, race-relations, whiteness, white supremacy, antisemitism

Introduction

South African Jews had reason for concern in 1948. That year, D.F. Malan of the Afrikaner nationalist National Party was elected prime minister. The Party, which would in the coming years construct a white supremacist apartheid state, had a history of virulent antisemitism. In the 1930s, as Nazi-sympathetic movements gained ground among Afrikaners, the party appropriated more of their rhetoric. Malan himself argued for bills to restrict Jewish immigration precisely when Europe was becoming increasingly unsafe for

Jews.¹ And, during World War II, National Party members of parliament called for Nazi victory.² Immediately prior to the election a few short years later, then, predictions of pogroms upon National victory did not seem too far-fetched.³ Yet soon after his election, Malan stated to the Jewish community his administration's policy of "non-discrimination against any section of the European population," apparently inclusive of Jews.⁴ Jewish fears of intensified antisemitism did not materialize. In fact, in the coming years, the relationship between the National Party government and Jews vastly improved. What accounted for this seemingly sudden rapprochement?

Some argue that it was an election strategy all along, with Malan actually appealing to Jews beforehand to gain their support.⁵ But this cannot be a full answer, as the Party did not need the Jewish vote to win.⁶ Another factor may have been the rising economic status of Afrikaners and a subsequent decrease in a feeling of competition with Jews, and thus a reduction in explicit antisemitic attitude.⁷ This may have accounted for a long-term reconciliation, but Malan's about-face and the Jewish community's general acceptance of it—equally integral to reconciliation—were both too sudden to be a result of a years-long process. The rapprochement's suddenness suggests a specific event may have spurred it. And, its timing points toward what that event may have been: rapprochement was concurrent with the establishment of the Jewish state of Israel, as both Israel's declaration of independence and the election that put Malan in power occurred in May of 1948.⁸ Considering Malan's early support for Israel, there is a strong case for the establishment of Israel as the originary and continuing link of reconciliation.

Those who emphasize the Israel connection often partially explain it in terms of the Afrikaner identification with Israel as a white settler colonial state like South Africa.⁹ For the purposes of this paper, I am using a conception of "settler colonial state" developed from a number of sources. I use the term to describe a state created in a process by which settlers first seek to eliminate or dominate native populations as a result—whether intentional or not—of a constant goal of land acquisition. They then aim to build a new settler society in place of the pre-existing native society and maintain racialized boundaries within a new polity, the settler colonial state, to retain control, with settlers as sole claimants to the status of self-governing "people."¹⁰ The degree to which Israel fit this model, especially from the perspective of Afrikaners, is to be discussed in detail below, as is the complicated question of how and why a Jewish state would have been seen as "white" by Afrikaners, when the racial status of South African Jews was at the time only just recently—or perhaps never truly—settled, and Israel's population included Jews that may not have been considered "white" by Afrikaner standards.

Much work has also been done retrospectively examining the parallels of settler colonial processes in the two countries—applying a theoretical framework of settler colonialism to tease out similarities and differences in the ideologies, tactics of violence, and racial-legal practices used by Jewish Israeli and white South African settlers in their consolidation of territory in their respective locations. Some of this scholarship likewise considers the nations' burgeoning diplomatic alliance in the age of apartheid.¹¹

These two strands of study—one emphasizing contemporary colonial identifications between South Africa, particularly Afrikaner, and Israel, the other externally remarking on the two nations' colonial commonalities and cultivated diplomatic relationship—can be brought together in order to better understand the rapprochement. That is, there is room to elaborate on the colonial parallels contemporaries of the rapprochement drew during its development in order to show how such parallels both informed Afrikaner-Jewish reconciliation from its apparently sudden beginning in 1948 through the coming years, *and* in themselves can affirm and further elucidate retrospective colonial analyses.

The writings of South African Jewish journalist Henry Katzew provide unique, helpful insight into these parallels. Katzew was something of the pro-Israel missing link between Afrikaner and Jew, sympathetic as he was to the former's cause through the early apartheid years and convinced that there were lessons from Israel's Jewish settlers from which South Africa could learn to solve its racial woes. Katzew spent a good portion of his career describing these lessons, which were predicated upon his developed ideology of group identity and settlement. He placed existential, spiritual importance upon membership in ethno-cultural identity groups, which for him transcended politics and, only seemingly, subsumed race; he further maintained that each group would thrive most through self-development on its own demarcated land.

His following suggestions for South Africa, in particular for its Afrikaners, were further sustained by his perceptive awareness of the two nations' colonial parallels, whether or not he explicitly understood or acknowledged them to be "colonial."¹² As he described, these were parallels to which Afrikaners were either drawn; in his prescriptive tendency, *should have been* drawn; or, considering his lessons' frequent unfulfillment, *could have been* drawn. Admittedly, some of the commonalities Katzew described were not quite precisely so, but such misunderstandings of his still prove illustrative of the gap between his distorting colonial lens and the material reality of colonial processes. In any case, Katzew's writing, especially that from 1948 to the tumultuous years of early 1960s South Africa, is thus invaluable in bringing forth and further interrogating the parallels in question between Israel and South Africa, and, in his topical commentary, contextualizing them in apartheid-era strife as well as the postwar global push for decolonization.¹³

Jews, Whites, and Antisemites in the South African Scene

Henry Katzew was born on May 14, 1912 in Johannesburg to Lithuanian Jewish immigrant parents who had come to South Africa to escape the antisemitic pogroms of Czarist Russia. He grew up in relative comfort, with a father who worked as a merchant and mother who raised six children.¹⁴ Katzew became involved in South African journalism early on, joining the *Rand Daily Mail* and *Sunday Times* as a cub reporter in 1931. Through the 1930s he wrote for a number of papers and spent a brief time in Britain. After naval service during World War II, he served as an editor for *Jewish Affairs*, the journal of the South African

Jewish Board of Deputies, for five years.¹⁵ He continued to be active in the Jewish press in the following decades, maintaining a weekly column in the *Zionist Record* called the “South African Scene” under the pen name Karl Lemeer, in addition to regularly writing for many major Afrikaans and English papers.¹⁶

Katzew was a refined and idiosyncratic writer with a speculative, philosophical streak; alongside his journalistic work, he published essays on Jewish spirituality—one in 1954 causing a drawn-out debate in the pages of *Jewish Affairs*—and even short stories, often dealing with questions of Jewish identity.¹⁷ In these pieces, he likely did not see himself as straying from his journalistic role too much, as for him journalists had the expansive intellectual task to “embrace all the adventures of man’s aspirations...and social dynamics.”¹⁸ He believed newspapers had great power, at one point claiming that “progress” in South African national self-understanding owed more to newspapers than to politicians.¹⁹

With this broad view of journalism defining his purpose, he seemed to place himself within the bounds of the great importance he imbued upon writers and artists in general. Creative work for Katzew held the role of articulating the distinct cultural voices of different groups through history, whether national, ethnic, or racial. Though he thus often reported on a variety of cultural events, he had a special focus on written language. In line with his faith in newspapers as above the political, he believed, “[l]eadership belongs to writers and poets more than to any other class of people. They pave the way to change...Jew, Afrikaner, Irishman, have but to consult their own modern history to find the confirmation.”²⁰ Katzew most apparently applied this thought to his own Jewish community. He praised South African Jewish efforts to establish Hebrew schools, and, in the vein of generational preservation, called for more organizational support for children’s Hebrew education, and was expressly enthusiastic when mothers learned Hebrew.²¹

This group-specific linguistic and cultural aspect were central to Katzew’s developed ideology of “group survival”—the idea that each group in South Africa, which Katzew deemed to be Afrikaner, English, Black, Coloured, and Jewish—had a right to “the retention of distinctive kinds of experience and insights” through time, with, in a sense of existential threat, the group preserving the individual “against this shabby fate [of death]” so as to “replace meaninglessness with meaning.”²² And, due to the nation’s racial and ethnic heterogeneity, group survival was “an authentic South African aim.”²³

There was a certain egalitarianism in this thought; Katzew spoke of all different groups in South Africa in terms of their need for group survival. For example, he believed “all peoples are entitled to commune somewhere, undisturbed, with their own genius.” Evidently, Katzew deemed land, language, and culture to be central elements to group survival.²⁴ Consistent with his favoring of the cultural over the political, Katzew also held that the survival of each group went “far deeper than politics” and lamented that survival had become a political struggle between races in South Africa.²⁵ Perhaps this lack of appreciation of the deeply political aspect of South African racial division—concerning resource and labor distribution, political representation, and continental influence—created limits in his understanding of the specific kind of existential dread Afrikaners maintained as

well as the apartheid legislation bolstered by such dread. Indeed, his particularly group-cultural diagnosis of black-white conflict produced a similarly group-cultural response: the group of the Jews, Katzew argued, could break the unfortunately political impasses between the races.

Katzew believed Jews were in a sort of in-between position, and could not, in his era of apartheid, pick a side between white or black: Jews, he said, sympathized with the former by nature of being a minority, and with the latter by nature of their common history of disrespect. Thus, he felt that “Jewish group experience” could inform, *needed* to inform, all sides in the conflict. Here was a prescriptive injunction for Jews to act on issues of interracial conflict that he would frequently repeat in his writing.²⁶ Katzew further articulated that Jewish in-betweenness had implications for *intraracial* relations too, within the white group to which most South African Jews—both according to Katzew and in practice—belonged.²⁷ He posed Jews, among English and Afrikaaners, as “the third White force in South Africa,” capable of reconciling the former two groups.²⁸ He even tried his hand at this reconciliation through his faith in newspapers, regularly contributing an English column in the Afrikaans paper *Die Beeld* at the invitation of its editor.²⁹

The very theory and practice of regarding Jews as the “third” white group, let alone one qualified to give advice to other possibly antisemitic whites, underscores Katzew’s confidence in Jews’ whiteness. Yet white Jews’ apparent whiteness was not always unquestioned in South Africa, especially when Jewish immigration peaked around the turn of the century.³⁰ In the thirty years before World War I, 40,000 Jews emigrated to South Africa, mostly Ashkenazim from Eastern Europe, particularly Lithuania, where Katzew’s parents were from.³¹ They joined and soon outnumbered a small, mostly Anglo-German Jewish community that had emigrated the century before, and valued a certain bourgeois cultural assimilation.³² However, assimilation was not a given for the newcomers.

Some whites saw them as unwanted immigrants, casting them as racial “Others” along with Chinese and Indian immigrant laborers. Vocations taken up by Jewish immigrants further contributed to their racial grouping with non-whites. Many came to run eating houses for black miners known as *kaffireatas*—a name based off “*kaffir*,” a common slur for black South Africans. This work was especially degrading in the eyes of whites, given its close proximity to black workers—such Jews earned the disdainful label of “white kaffir.”³³ Yet work in the eating houses had further implications: so as to mitigate the degradation of serving blacks, immigrant European Jewish workers would engage in the overt racism commonplace in their new home, distancing themselves from blacks and identifying with their own white exploiters.³⁴ Indeed, these Jewish immigrants—like Katzew’s father, the merchant—were in general able to avoid the most grueling manual labor, given this was usually left to blacks.³⁵ These labor dynamics reveal the significance of these Jews’ place as *European* immigrants—a status partially enshrined by an amendment added, in response to Jewish demands, to a 1913 immigration restriction bill to include a European language test, with Yiddish listed as a European language.³⁶ Thus understood as Europeans, they, albeit uncertainly at first, came into South Africa’s race hierarchy as

whites, and, even if other whites objected, sought to define themselves as such.³⁷ They rode on their learned racism and the benefits it furnished, especially as they rose up in economic status and assimilated to white and usually Anglo-Saxon South African society, their whiteness solidified further.³⁸ As one Jewish observer remarked in 1957, “as a whole, Jews in South Africa have shown themselves to be no more immune from race prejudice than any other group.”³⁹ Katzew himself wrote that second and third generation Eastern European Jews constituted “a community enjoying the fruit of the prevailing system of discrimination against people of color and achieving...a great ‘success story.’”⁴⁰ However, even if these Jews were comfortable in whiteness within a few decades of arrival, not all of them would engage with it in the same way.

Katzew’s active acknowledgement of Jews’ whiteness and his associated injunction to race-related action contrasted with the attitude of many of the main national Jewish institutions, such as the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD). Founded in 1912, the SAJBD was something of the public face of South African Jewry, working with the aim “to safeguard the religious and civil rights and welfare of the Jews...and to act in their behalf on all matters affecting their relationship with the...authorities.”⁴¹ The SAJBD’s relationship with whiteness was not as forthright as Katzew’s; during the apartheid years—notably, as will be detailed, as the Nationalist government and Israel grew closer—this relationship would manifest itself as a nominal disengagement from questions of race and politics.

Before 1948, during the worst of the National Party’s antisemitism, the SAJBD was more involved in such matters. It took clear political stances against the racialism of the Party. In an article some years later, Katzew quoted a number of defiant editorial pieces through the 1940s from the SAJBD’s journal *Jewish Affairs*. One, before the 1948 election, stated, “On racial issues he [the Jew] should take as liberal a view as possible.” Another, from right after, reminded the government that “[w]ithin the small European minority, there can be no room for intolerance...while, in relation to the non-European population...the only safeguard for peace lies in just treatment.” Yet within weeks, as Katzew went on to explain, it seems the SAJBD’s concern shifted to focus only on the “small European minority” of which they were a part, rather than the “non-European population” which would increasingly suffer the weight of apartheid.⁴²

After the new National Party Prime Minister D.F. Malan assured a July 1948 SAJBD deputation of his government’s policy of “non-discrimination” among Europeans, the editors of *Jewish Affairs* wrote of their ready acceptance of the conciliation between National Party and Jew, chalking up the Party’s antisemitism—in a language consonant with the Party’s titular platform—to “foreign ideologies.”⁴³ Past antisemitism was erased while contemporary racialism, as Katzew pointed out in his criticism of the editors’ stance, went unmentioned.⁴⁴ The SAJBD here accepted Malan’s affirmation of Jews as within the fold of whiteness as the National Party—though based upon Afrikaner nationalism—came to emphasize the unity of *all* whites.⁴⁵ Katzew further observed that “[a]s time went on doctrines were enunciated on both sides which increasingly commended themselves to Jews who sought peace from crisis,” providing a 1951 quote from E.J. Horwitz, then chairman of

the SAJBD, which affirmed that the organization was a “non-political body,” and that the Jew had “the right of every citizen to support whatever party he wishes.”⁴⁶ This “non-political” stance was professed before 1948, but it was then paired with assurances that Jews “must not be indifferent to the lot of the non-European.”⁴⁷ Such assurances would be replaced by implicit support for the existing regime within a few short years. And, the Board’s attitude was broadly reflective of the community. Few rabbis spoke against apartheid; one who did, Rabbi André Ungar, observed that “[r]esigned acceptance or hearty approval is the prevalent attitude of individual Jews towards racialism.”⁴⁸ From before the election to soon after, then, the SAJBD (and to an extent the wider community) went from anti-racialism to conciliation with the apartheid party to a combination of non-threatening non-politics and positive support. To reiterate the question of rapprochement, but from the Jewish side: how did this shift of attitude occur so quickly?

The formal acceptance into whiteness, notably as classification in racial groups came to have even greater, legally-codified material impacts, is one explanation.⁴⁹ It could have seemed the ultimate guard against antisemitism, an institutional-level manifestation of the same logic which had led the Jewish *kaffireata* workers to identify with the white against the black decades before. Guarding against antisemitism would indeed be urgent in the years immediately following its intensification at home and abroad. But this explanation is incomplete—what assurance did the SAJBD have that the National Party had actually changed its stance other than Malan’s word, especially when the Party pushed forward on other discriminatory legislation? As Katzew put it, “How was it that the Jews of South Africa did not balk at reconciliation which, though relieving them, offered no hope to the non-whites?” For Katzew, the concurrency of Israeli independence to this National Party reconciliation was key to answering the question he posed; the National Party government’s early support for the new Jewish state, he went on to argue, was what helped the Jew to forget the Afrikaner’s antisemitism.⁵⁰

The state of Israel was proclaimed on May 14, 1948 and the elections that put Malan in power were on May 26.⁵¹ Soon after, in July 1948, Malan received a delegation from the South African Zionist Federation (SAZF)—the second Jewish delegation he received that month, after that of the SAJBD—and, as per its requests, expressed support for Israel and offered the South African government’s help in facilitating the transfer of goods, non-weapon military supplies, and funds there. Less than a year later, he granted Israel *de jure* recognition.⁵² This was an important gesture for Jews; A.M. Melamet, then chairman of the Cape Council of the Board of Deputies reflected in 1956: “Nothing has done more to transform relations between Jew and Afrikaner than the establishment of the State of Israel...The Jew...has deeply appreciated the sympathy shown to Israel...by the present Government.”⁵³ It is telling that “Jew” is used here unqualified, the implication being that *all* Jews were fond of Israel.

Indeed, Malan and the National Party government’s support for Israel only answered Katzew’s question about the source of Jewish reconciliation because of the strength of Zionism among South African Jewry and their institutions—implicit in both Katzew and

Melamet's answers is an otherwise misleading identification of Jewish identity and support for Israel. In her 1954 history *The People of South Africa*, accomplished South African Jewish author Sarah Millin wrote: "Ninety-nine per cent of the Jews in South Africa were Zionists... they were the most ardent Zionists in the world."⁵⁴ Ninety-nine percent seems an exaggerated figure, and Millin likely did not substantiate her number. What this description *does* reveal, however, is that the self-presenting face of the South African Jewish community was a Zionist one, enough so to merit such a generalization. And, nestled within the national separation of whites between English and Afrikaner, Zionism as a white, Jewish nationalism was integral to cultural group identity.⁵⁵ This affinity for Zionism was reflected institutionally: a 1950 piece on South African Jewry in the then-Jewish journal *Commentary* related, "In South Africa Zionists have for some years formed the majority of the [South African Jewish] Board of Deputies, and occupy the leading posts in the Jewish community."⁵⁶ And, nearly half of Jews that year had purchased "shekel" memberships in the World Zionist Organization—South African Jewry often held the record for membership by country.⁵⁷ Membership was encouraged by the SAZF in fundraising drives around a so-called "Shekel Day." A 1960 article in their *Zionist Record* newspaper—the byline of which read "The Organ of South African Jewry"—advertising the fundraiser even asserted that "Jew" and "Zionist" had "become synonymous."⁵⁸

To come back to Katzew's question, then, as to why Jews would have accepted reconciliation with the National Party, his answer that it was the Party's stance on Israel thus holds water. But this question demands an answer, too, of its inverse: why would the National Party have sought reconciliation with the Jews at this specific moment? Again, Israel was at the center, and for reasons perhaps preceding the settler colonial identification, too. Even before 1948, Afrikaners, given their own history of struggles against British rule—especially the 1899-1902 Boer War, fought over British imperial control of South Africa and resulting in Afrikaner defeat—showed sympathy for the Jewish settlers in Palestine fighting the British colonial administration.⁵⁹ The SAJBD indeed praised the Nationalist press for its "objectivity" in covering the conflict, in comparison to the English papers.⁶⁰ Following Israel's establishment, Jews noticed and built upon Afrikaner sympathies, highlighting apparent commonalities of two peoples existing in struggle. Melamet affirmed the parallelism of struggle in the Boer Wars and Israel's creation.⁶¹ Millin wrote that the Afrikaners saw a "kinship between themselves and the Jews," comparing the homeland-seeking Israelites of Exodus to the Voortrekkers—the thousands of Afrikaners who struck out to settle the land beyond the British Cape Colony in the 1830s, land which Millin—hinting at a parallel of native erasure in Afrikaner and Zionist colonial ideologies—described as "wilderness."⁶² Katzew joined in, emphasizing Jewish reciprocity. He related that after 1948, Jews "obtained a deeper appreciation" of the Afrikaner struggle against "the Imperial Union Jack" and saw in the Afrikaners similar "identities of purpose." On top of this, he said, "[The Jews] also deeply valued their [the Afrikaner] attitude to Israel."⁶³ Katzew elsewhere noted parallels in Afrikaner and Jewish history—defeat, concentration camps, exile, and their common value of group identity.⁶⁴

These comparisons, however, were overshadowed by the settler-colonial parallel, undergirded by white racial concerns. Malan, despite—or perhaps in compliment to—his antisemitic record, still stated his respect for the Jews as a “race-conscious nation” and saw their supposed return to the Holy Land as a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy—just as Afrikaners, as Katzew pointed out, saw themselves as “Chosen” to bring “Christian civilisation to Africa.”⁶⁵ Afrikaner nationalists likewise framed Israel as a civilized outpost, with Jewish victory over Arabs as an apparent victory of white over non-white. So eliding “Jew” and “white” in the Israeli context likely reflected the eurocentrism of much Zionist ideology and the normative racial dominance of white Ashkenazi Jewry over Jews of non-European descent who were apparently excluded in Israel.⁶⁶ The parallel would translate into panicky terms of white perseverance in an increasingly post-colonial world: Afrikaners saw in Israel their own self-perceived situation of a white nation surrounded by non-white threat.⁶⁷

Thus, if Israel was the hinge upon which the détente between National Party and Jewish community functioned, it was a white, settler-colonial hinge. But the common identifications here are simply the beginning; they neither quite do justice in exposing the settler-colonial parallels between Israel and South Africa that Afrikaners recognized, nor explain why the parallels may have merited Jewish sympathy in reconciliation. Here, then, exploring Katzew’s writing on Jews, Afrikaners, and the Israel connection can elaborate on these outlined affinities with the insight from the Jewish side of rapprochement. Katzew focused on his own conception of Afrikaner-Jewish parallels, but developed them far more than what is written above. Informed by his active engagement with South African Jews’ whiteness and the knowledge gained from having observed Jewish colonization in Israel firsthand, he was explicitly sympathetic to the Afrikaner psychology of racial fear.

Katzew and White Anxiety in the Age of Decolonization

Katzew’s Afrikaner-Jew parallels differed from others in that his were paired with a prescriptive aspect: because both Afrikaner and Jewish nationalism shared a “strong survivalist aspect,” he claimed, “the Jew...has something to say to Afrikanerdom.”⁶⁸ Moreover, his Jewish identification with the Afrikaner went beyond a shared distaste for the British, as it was additionally informed by the post-war decolonization the Afrikaners so feared. Katzew challenged his readers to reckon with this fear, for example providing a long excerpt from a speech by Nathan Shamuyarira, chief editor of African Newspapers, with the warning: “Europeans should realize that all Africa was going to be ruled within the next 15 years by the African people and it was in their own self-interest to come to terms with it.”⁶⁹ Katzew argued that Jews, as minorities, were well-equipped to advise not only Afrikaners, but all white minorities of Africa on their coming-to-terms with this eventuality. The “Jewish group,” he stated, “has important lessons for the white man.”⁷⁰ Thus, whatever pretense of egalitarianism he may have maintained in his group survival theory and his

repeated claims that Jews could help all racial groups were overtaken by specific concern for whites.

So much is apparent in Katzew's thoughts on the December 1949 opening of a monument to the Voortrekkers. To be clear, the Voortrekker push towards the interior was not the homeward journey through the wilderness that Millin described in her comparison, but was rather the violent settler colonial process of land acquisition, attempted native elimination, and racialization laid bare. It was predicated upon the military defeat and dislocation of people in the native Ndebele kingdom, followed by a series of destructive clashes with the Zulu. The trekkers then claimed fertile land and set up their own government, which excluded the Africans, Asians, and people of mixed-descent—many of them servants brought with the trekkers—in their midst.⁷¹

Millin's narrative, glossing over this history, eliminated the natives in word; Katzew provided the complementary inverse of valorizing their self-perceived replacers, as he reflected on the grand monument to colonial history before him. He reveled in the singing of Afrikaans gospel, in his view the only way "of preserving Western civilization on this sub-continent." Preservation was indeed on his mind. He expressed deep foreboding: the "omens" were "not bright for European survival." Whites, he said, were "a mere speck in this African continent."⁷² Katzew's concern for whites in Africa would indeed only deepen in the coming years as decolonization accelerated.

In Kenya, as a "Black man's government" was set to soon take charge, Katzew noted in 1960 this would be the realization of the National Party government's "worst fears."⁷³ He offered advice to the small population of Afrikaners in Kenya out of the Jewish experience of minority survival, along with their kindred white "Belgians in the Congo" and "British in Nyasaland."⁷⁴ He maintained that the Kenyan Afrikaners would only be able to stay if Jomo Kenyatta, leader of a black government seen as an obstacle to white livelihood, did not "threaten" their "cultural, linguistic, and religious identity."⁷⁵ Here, the cultural aspect of group survival appears, but its superficial egalitarianism—he does not claim Afrikaner culture to be superior—meets the racial anxiety of post-colonial white alienation he earlier articulated at the Voortrekker monument. A similar process is observable in his coverage of the success of a referendum in Rhodesia in 1961, which allowed 15 African parliament members to sit in a House of Assembly of 65.⁷⁶ At this time, as in South Africa, a tiny white minority ruled over a non-white majority population; the Afrikaner press, Katzew reported, thus reflected on increasing white isolation in Africa.⁷⁷ Katzew likewise suggested the inevitability of non-white rule in Africa, and, true to his form, offered a cultural diagnosis of why Afrikaners feared this so much. Unlike the Jews and the English, he said, their culture was still young, undeveloped, and thus less secure against whatever threat under black rule.⁷⁸ Here, again, the cultural aspect of Katzew's thought crossed over into white fear of African resistance. His solution to these racial concerns was not the egalitarianism we see elsewhere, or even a coded sense of superiority. In the above-quoted 1949 Voortrekker monument article, he was quite explicit in what how he felt whites—not just Afrikaners—should respond: "white South Africa cannot afford to be just to the native while the present

numerical disproportion exists.”⁷⁹ For Katzew, white minority necessitated white superiority.

It appears contradictory, then, that Katzew nonetheless opposed much of the South African state’s apartheid legislation. He maintained that “the harshness of the discriminatory legislation against the non-White peoples when studied in detail, can only produce shock, doubt and dismay.”⁸⁰ Job reservation policies reserving better work for whites were especially objectionable for Katzew, and he criticized these “immoral” rules throughout his writing.⁸¹ With this position and his general openness to discussing race, he was disappointed with the SAJBD’s passivity. He called for an entirely new leadership, and demanded positive action—anything else would be a denial of “our own [the Jews’] experience.”⁸² As explained, Katzew repeatedly emphasized that Jews were well-positioned to help all in South Africa, and specifically the Afrikaners. If not discriminatory laws, what was it that he believed they had to offer?

For Katzew, the solution for the Jews’ struggle for group survival lay in Israel; if the Jewish and Afrikaner struggle were parallel, then Israel was the Jews’ proffered example for the Afrikaners to emulate. He elaborates on this thought in his 1955 book, *Solution for South Africa: A Jewish View*, and the same ideas are found throughout his journalistic work as well. In these writings, his starting point was his above-described specific concern for white survival in Africa in the age of decolonization. Israel, then, provided a parallel in terms of racial threat. The imprint on the inner title page of *Solution* summarizes the aim of the book as follows, echoing the comparisons made by Afrikaners themselves:

Two small nations are fighting for survival in our days: the 1 ½ million Jews of Israel surrounded by 40 million Arabs; and the Afrikaner nation of South Africa in a continent of awakening black men. Can they win through? The submission of this booklet is that they can, and by methods not dissimilar.⁸³

The argument that thus progresses in the book is the prescriptive lesson from Israel Katzew pressed upon Afrikaners. Through this lesson, going back and forth between Israel and South Africa, Katzew’s writing brings out the colonial similarities between the two.

Israel’s Example for South Africa: Sanctuary and Self-Labor

In *Solution for South Africa*, Katzew relates his experiences during seven weeks he spent in Israel in 1954, traveling and speaking with Jewish settlers. He was an emphatic supporter of their Zionist project; in the grand, historical language he was wont to use in his concern for the well-being of cultural groups, he proclaimed, Zionism “has been the guiding star of Jewish history” and praised Israel as the “spiritual centre” necessary to the survival of Jewish identity, a steward of Hebrew and the “spirit of hope.”⁸⁴ His infatuation with Israel, however, was not at the expense of the Jewish diaspora. Katzew saw diaspora and Israeli Jewry as mutually reinforcing, with the successful development of the former

dependent on the latter. In *Solution* and elsewhere, he notes that with the formation of Israel came a revitalization of diaspora Jewish culture.⁸⁵ With Israel ensuring Jewish survival as a “guard over the Jewish past,” Jews all over the world could thrive with a central cultural repository from which to draw.⁸⁶ A character in one of Katzew’s short stories for *Jewish Affairs* seems to act as a surrogate for Katzew in proving this point. This character, a Jewish South African named Mark Berman, counters his skeptical companion, who thinks the establishment of Israel implies the dissolution of the diaspora. Berman—or rather Katzew who, as noted previously, celebrated Hebrew learning—insists that while many Jews will indeed go to Israel, most will remain in the diaspora, where Israel will make them “Jewishly proud,” where they will have a “vigorous, Jewishly-alive community, capable of speaking the resurrected Hebrew tongue, enjoying the cultural fruits of Israel.” And, diaspora Jews would be able to do all this, Berman says, while still “profoundly attached” to the diasporic land they live upon.⁸⁷

Katzew referred to this relationship between Israel and the diaspora as a “sanctuary-dispersion” or “homeland-dispersion” model and suggested that the “key to Afrikaner survival lies, as in the case of Jewish survival” in a territorially-marked spiritual center.⁸⁸ He proposed this center to be in the Cape Province—sometimes, specifically the Western Cape—of South Africa, arguing that with a place for Afrikaners to which to emigrate, those who remained outside in racially-mixed areas would live in racial harmony.⁸⁹

But, expanding the Jewish identification with Afrikaner fears to broader, racial fears of white annihilation, in *Solution* Katzew held that *all* whites had little hope as a minority, and thus encouraged the Afrikaners to take the English, Jewish, Dutch, and German South Africans with them should they form a homeland; it was to be a “White Israel.”⁹⁰ Here, then, the cultural aspect of Katzew’s group survival theory appears confused. Katzew claimed the homeland would allow Afrikaner culture to develop, to become “creative and spiritual.”⁹¹ But would not the Afrikaner, that “stunted poet,” need a degree of autonomy to develop?⁹² Why would the enemy of Afrikaner autonomy, the English, against whom Katzew rallied in Jewish solidarity, be allowed in the Cape homeland? Why would the English feel compelled to come, if Katzew maintained that they were more culturally secure with the prospect of non-white rule in Africa? It seems Katzew, in combining his group survival and sanctuary-dispersion theories, subordinated the cultural to the racial, in a similar way that Malan, of the Afrikaner-centric National Party, had denounced any discrimination against groups within the *entire* white population upon his election.

Katzew’s conception of an explicitly white homeland in South Africa is unsurprising given that his approach to settlement in Israel, the model “sanctuary,” was likewise white-centric. In his calls for Jews to settle—in line with his prescriptive thought, his preference of action over word, he maintained that one could not be a true Zionist “from afar”—he repeatedly emphasized the need for specifically *Western* Jews to settle—and to do so before Arab refugees from the 1948 war returned—so as to “blunt Arab mischief.”⁹³ This preference echoed a white Western tilt long present in Zionist ideology. Early recruitment for settlers focused on European Ashkenazi Jews—to the relative exclusion of other, non-

Ashkenazi Jewries; Theodor Herzl, the great formulator of political Zionism, wrote that Jews would create in Palestine, for Europe, a “barrier against Asia,” an “outpost of civilization against barbarism” to guard holy Christian sites.⁹⁴ Herzl also at one point expressed a desire to do away with the Palestinian population, the more forthright flipside of the Zionist slogan of native erasure referring to Palestine as a “Land without a People for a People without a Land.”⁹⁵

Katzew, too, perpetuated this myth of an unpeopled land. An entire section of *Solution* is entitled “Empty Land,” in which he reflected upon Israel as “an uninhabited land” in need of settlement.⁹⁶ He would later affirm this in the *Zionist Record*, stating there that the Jewish “victory” would not have been possible “if Palestine had not been bare and desolate.”⁹⁷ When he did acknowledge the natives, it was usually as a “problem,” castigating them for what he saw as their failure to properly cultivate the land—thus providing justification for settlement—or in reference to their opposition and expulsion during the 1948 war.⁹⁸

He elsewhere argued for a parallel between Israel and South Africa in the consideration of empty land: like Israel before Jewish settlement, he said, South Africa at the time of its initial white settlement was ready for a “fresh start.” He went on to laud whites for the technological advance they brought South Africa—another justification for settlement, here retrospective.⁹⁹ Such a narrative would likely have resonated with Afrikaner readers. Central to Afrikaner nationalism was an insistence upon a right to the land, based upon a belief that the land upon which the first Dutch settlers—the forebears of the Afrikaners—arrived in 1652 was empty.¹⁰⁰ This was hardly true; people have inhabited southern Africa for millennia. When the Dutch first landed, the hunter-gatherer San and the pastoralist Khoikhoi prevailed in the west, with Bantu-speaking farmers in the east. The Khoikhoi were the first to meet the settlers. By the early 1700s, displacement by, violent conflict with, and the reception of disease from the Dutch had seriously damaged their way of life.¹⁰¹ Afrikaner mythmakers seemed to forget this; they—perhaps informing Millin’s perspective—likewise claimed that the later Voortrekkers had settled on empty land in the east.¹⁰²

Katzew’s sympathy for the heroic Voortrekker narrative is apparent in his laudatory piece on the Voortrekker monument. But, as explained, in this piece he ruminates not on the *lack* of Africans in the settled land, but rather on the *excess* of Africans to the point of threatening the Afrikaners. Population ratios needed shifting for whites to be safe, he argued—hence the call for emigration to his proposed white homelands, bordered areas within South Africa where whites would be the majority, even if they were *not* a majority in the nation as a whole.¹⁰³ But emigration alone was not sufficient for Katzew. The real work came after, through Katzew’s notion of *self-labor*, the idea, as he would articulate it, that group development had to come in its entirety from the exclusive work of the people of the group. Katzew repeatedly invoked this idea, and it came to be the centerpiece of his group survival theory and advice for the Afrikaners.

His highest praise of Israel was that it was built through, as he saw it, Jewish self-labor: “the Jews of Israel are creating their nation by the sweat of their brows and the toil of

their own hands.”¹⁰⁴ Labor had multiple benefits: it put “men in communication with their higher selves,” was a means to materially fulfill the spiritual project of group survival and was necessary to actualize the biblical chosen-ness of the Jews.¹⁰⁵ Indeed, Katzew ends his book *Apartheid and Survival*—a collection of his newspaper and journal articles he curated—with a quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson, part of which stated: “Labour is God’s education.” In full, the quote tellingly calls for “earning our bread” by collective contribution; mapping this notion onto national or cultural concerns produces Katzew’s labor-focused group survival.¹⁰⁶

But not just any labor anywhere would do. Katzew’s conception of self-labor was necessarily tied to location and, complementarily, his commitment to a territorial sanctuary was necessarily tied to self-labor. For Katzew, the maintenance of each necessitated the other. And, as exemplified by Israel, group survival demanded both. Israel’s history embodied a “group experience”—a historical, spiritual, and material “victory” of the Jewish people “over themselves.” In “redeeming” the “barren malarial earth” of Palestine—again, that trope of empty land—Katzew held that Jewish settlers simultaneously redeemed themselves, recovering their lost relationship to manual labor.¹⁰⁷ Katzew’s praise of Israeli settlers was thus not just for their labor, but for laboring specifically where they were—through labor, “undertaking the entire task of colonisation.”¹⁰⁸ The praise of self-labor straddled a number of seemingly contradictory colonial strains in Katzew’s writing: it was compatible with both a narrative of empty land without natives that stresses the need for settlers’ labor as well as a narrative of lazy natives needing proper stewardship which justifies settlement. In both instances, Jewish self-labor is posited as the default for any labor at all. Yet Katzew also implied that self-labor had to be actively constructed in the colonial context, as he commended policies of David Ben-Gurion—Zionist leader and first Prime Minister of Israel—that prevented Arabs from working for Jews.¹⁰⁹ Such practices were integral to Jewish colonization, as the *positive* self-labor identity Katzew lauded *negatively* defined itself through and against native exclusion as Jews settled on native land.¹¹⁰

This praise of Ben-Gurion was not unique. Katzew made apparent throughout his writing that Ben-Gurion was a major inspiration of his thought, and even sent a copy of *Solution* to the prime minister.¹¹¹ Ben Gurion figured prominently in the book, in which Katzew related a brief yet impactful meeting with him. He offered Katzew a conception of self-labor in a few words: “A nation that does not do its own dirty work commits suicide. Do you think we would have re-created the Jewish people if we had consented to the Arabs doing our dirty work?”¹¹² Dirty work being manual labor, otherwise unflattering labor—working the fields, emptying latrines—but the necessary labor Katzew saw as a step toward national self-rebirth. Ben-Gurion had a similar view of labor as Katzew, too; in Katzew’s words, Ben-Gurion saw it as “the creative force that makes for national virility and power.” Here was a masculine language implying the strength and reproductive capability—“virility”—necessary for long-term group survival; contrast this with, as Katzew put it, pre-settlement Jewish “passivity.”¹¹³ Indeed, through a *Jewish Affairs* article criticizing Jewish

traditionalists, Katzew upheld Ben-Gurion's notion of laboring—"tending the sheep"—as a new Jewish ideal.¹¹⁴ Though unmentioned by Katzew, other aspects of Ben-Gurion's thought ring consonant with Katzew's settler-colonial underpinnings. Ben-Gurion compared Jewish settlers to "conquistadores" and rhetorically erased natives in his conception of the Jews "conquering a land." Such is also the implication in his characterization of the settlers as "pioneering."¹¹⁵

The colonial connection between the two may be gleaned more obliquely from Katzew, however, as he actively used Ben-Gurion's thought and action—specifically his insistence on the necessity of labor to build a Jewish "colony" and his promoting the Arab exclusion integral to Jewish colonization—as examples for the Afrikaners to follow.¹¹⁶ Indeed, Katzew claimed that Ben-Gurion's "dirty work" advice was a "climactic expression" of his own thoughts on South Africa; the advice was "one of the signposts to the white man" for "his future in the post-colonial era."¹¹⁷ Only, in the South African case, it was black South Africans who Katzew thought should be excluded: he wanted the Afrikaners to do their own "dirty work." If self-labor was needed for the establishment of a Jewish sanctuary in Israel, it therefore followed with Katzew's call for a white sanctuary, his so-called "White Israel"—a territory for preserving a sense of security for the minority of whites and creating as well as sustaining that sense through violent displacement of non-white others—within South Africa.

South African Interest and Limits in the Sanctuary Solution

Katzew was thus upset by Afrikaner identifications with Israel that left self-labor unmentioned.¹¹⁸ Curiously, though, in one instance in which he was critical of this identification, he related to Afrikaner writings which seemed to resonate with his diagnosis of the white man's problem in the age of decolonization. Just as Katzew framed his question of white survival in the context of possible threats in Rhodesia, Kenya, and Africa as a whole, many of the Afrikaners he quoted in his *Zionist Record* column identified with the position of white settlers in decolonization processes elsewhere. One invoked the French in Algeria and British in Rhodesia—indeed after the referendum Katzew commented on—*along with Israel*, as parallels to the Afrikaner problem of being a small, embattled nation.¹¹⁹ This parallel did inform Katzew's work, but here, however, he saw Afrikaner use of it as oversimplifying. While Katzew would use the parallel as a foundation off which to develop the self-labor, sanctuary solution for the Afrikaners, Afrikaners stopped at the parallel itself. Katzew reproached the Afrikaner writer drawing the above comparison and similarly criticized Afrikaners elsewhere, feeling they looked to Israel for the wrong reason: for Katzew, the Jewish settlers' greatest victory was not just in their survival among and victory over the Arabs—for which the Afrikaners praised them—but as stated, victory "over themselves" through self-labor.¹²⁰ And, it was the self-labor element that Afrikaners were, for the most part, missing in their attempt at survival through the apartheid state.

Katzew, as discussed, opposed its discriminatory legislation. However, he did *not* oppose apartheid in its “connotation of separate development.”¹²¹ *Apartheid* literally translates from Afrikaans as “separateness” or “apartness.”¹²² In this understanding, it was perfectly compatible with Katzew’s prescriptions and what he admired in the Israeli experience. In a 1954 diary entry reflecting on Israeli lessons for South Africa—printed in *Solution*—Katzew wrote that with the domino effect of decolonization beginning in Asia and inevitably ending in Africa, Jews could not “join the world in facile condemnation of apartheid,” as it was the “only” way to ensure Afrikaner survival.¹²³ This global colonial aspect was echoed by an Afrikaner writer quoted by Katzew in his *Record* column, who he did not care to condemn in terms of oversimplification: this writer called on Afrikaners to learn from settler experiences—the Dutch in Indonesia, again the French in Algeria the British in Rhodesia, *and the Jews in Israel*—as proof that South Africa should follow the “apartheid policy” of race separation.¹²⁴ Indeed, Katzew saw apartheid as the only way to ensure Jewish survival too. In a letter he wrote to the Afrikaner newspaper *Dagbreek* in 1955 reproduced in *Solution*—and, before, reprinted by the *Zionist Record*—Katzew proclaimed: “Israel is the latest and most concrete expression of the Jewish practice of apartheid.”¹²⁵ However, the letter and his writing beyond went on to delineate how the Jewish apartheid of Israel—the attempt at exclusive sanctuary and the self-labor involved—differed from Afrikaner apartheid.

With the focus and prescription of self-labor as well as its promise of revitalizing “new labor moralities,” Katzew criticized Afrikaner apartheid for the way it deteriorated white “character” through the place of privilege it afforded whites, at the expense of blacks, not through their “honest work,” but by virtue of their race.¹²⁶ Such privilege was preserved by the discriminatory legislation Katzew opposed not only because he saw it as unjust, but more so because he saw it as futile if the goal was white survival. Echoing his earlier faith in poets as leaders, he asked, “How can mortal politicians achieve [white survival]?”¹²⁷ He saw their work—the “apartheid of the statute book”—as inadequate, as it made “external” a struggle that had to be “internal.”¹²⁸ It was a “negative,” destructive apartheid, rather than a positive one of self-labor that was “creative” in its sanctuary construction. Israeli experience backed this up, as “Jews did not recreate their ancient homeland by marking crosses on a ballot paper.”¹²⁹ Katzew warned that if politicians followed their current course, they would even threaten white survival, as the system of legislated white privilege was “too uncertain” as a basis of government.¹³⁰ To secure white survival through true apartheid, Katzew held, whites—not blacks—would have to “pay the price for it,” a price that was the same as that the Jews’ ostensibly paid for their apartheid: “work, guts, hardihood and a fresh pioneering colonisation effort” in the creation of a white sanctuary based on colonial violence.¹³¹ Indeed, the theme of necessary white “sacrifice”, sacrifice of privileges and sacrifice through labor, repeatedly crops up in his work.¹³² To this effect, he frequently reported on the few Afrikaners interested in making the sacrifice necessary for sanctuary.

On this theme, in the *Record* he reported closely on debates over black labor on Afrikaner farms in the countryside, the “platteland,” and offered his “Jewish” solution.

Some Afrikaners, Katzew wrote, were concerned that white landowners were moving to cities and leaving farms in the care of blacks, but he assured them that if Jews could rediscover manual labor, they could too.¹³³ Some Afrikaners seemed to catch onto this. In one *Zionist Record* article, Katzew at length quoted a letter printed in *Die Transvaler*, an Afrikaner paper, which proposed that farms be established to repopulate the platteland with whites and create a “pure White man’s land” with the “pre-condition” that there would be “[n]o African labour,” just as that of the “Jewish farmers” was “no Arab labour.” Another quoted letter in the same *Record* article, in response to the first letter, was from an Afrikaner former member of parliament who had visited Israel and observed that the Jews, in settling, had achieved what the Christian Crusaders had not, and that from the Jews’ methods the Afrikaners could create a “White man’s territory” to “retain [their] identity.”¹³⁴ In the following months, Katzew reported, several Afrikaners wrote to *Die Transvaler*—some in response to the first letter, which, though uncredited, was likely from him—offering their land or their labor.¹³⁵

Indeed, at least through the lens of Katzew’s reports, it seems that the ideas of separation and racialized self-labor he supported were gaining traction among the Afrikaners—in his words, a “ball that once did not bounce is beginning to bounce”—even if incompletely and in conjunction with the legislated apartheid he so disliked.¹³⁶ In describing a debate playing out in an Afrikaner paper on the use of African labor and the need for territorial separation in the Cape, the very area Katzew designated for a white sanctuary, he observed that such opinions would not have been expressed ten years before, and that the general consensus was pro-separation.¹³⁷ Afrikaner plans to apply this separatism followed familiar colonial patterns. For example, Katzew reported on a study group proposing the creation of a white territory through the removal of 1/50th of the total national black population—about 188,000 people—from the Cape, where they constituted a “Bantu problem.” Letters in response supported the development of a white man’s land, with one invoking Israeli desert settlement as proof it could be done.¹³⁸

The apparent Afrikaner interest in separation Katzew observed at this time paralleled simultaneous government efforts. The study group argued that whites deserved a specially-marked area in part because the government had already given such areas to blacks. This was likely in reference to the development of Bantu “homelands,” or Bantustans—small areas of land designated for the black population—in development under the administration of Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd. These efforts were not new, but built upon a long history of the white government simultaneously and interrelatedly restricting black land and representation in national government.¹³⁹ Such policies led to Verwoerd’s 1959 Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Bill, which provided for the creation of independent black homelands, each defined by the white government through tribal affiliation.¹⁴⁰ To be sure, the intention was not independence on equal terms. Verwoerd himself said the goal was the preservation of a white government, in a sense meeting the desire of the study group.¹⁴¹ And, this preservation would be on undoubtedly *unequal* terms for the Bantustans.

The Bantustans constituted only 13 percent of the land, despite blacks constituting around 70 percent of the population. Blacks outside would have their rights completely stripped, their citizenship tied to their homeland tribal identification, and would require permission to remain in white areas.¹⁴² Outside the homelands, then, was essentially an intensification on the assault on black rights begun through the discriminatory “negative” apartheid which Katzew so disliked. What he may not have realized was that “negative” apartheid was designed as complimentary to the “positive” apartheid, the separate development, represented by the Bantustans: Verwoerd believed that making life as difficult as possible for blacks outside the homelands would impel them to move.¹⁴³ In fact, though Katzew called for a “rejection of Verwoerdian apartheid,” Verwoerd was for years a consistent and outspoken supporter of separate development and “positive” apartheid.¹⁴⁴ And, like Katzew—and some of the Afrikaners quoted in his column—Verwoerd advocated for separate development as a countermeasure of white preservation against not just domestic opposition, but against the sweep of decolonization around the world.¹⁴⁵

It made sense, then, that Katzew was vocal in his support of the creation of Bantustans. The government explained its actions in an obfuscating language of each nation having a right of self-preservation and developing best within itself—with Verwoerd, in this moment of decolonization, framing the Bantustans as the granting of black self-determination in an attempt to stave off global criticism.¹⁴⁶ The language here was quite similar to Katzew’s professed egalitarian views of group development. This egalitarianism indeed seemed to show in his enthusiasm for referring to emigration to the Bantustans as “Bantu Zionism” — apparently the comparison to Israel was not reserved for those whites seeking sanctuary. The term was developed by Paul Giniewski, a French Zionist writer who came to South Africa to study the Bantustans. Katzew positively reviewed Giniewski’s book on the topic, an endorsement of the Bantustans, pointing towards it as proof of his contention that Jews had something special to say to South Africans.¹⁴⁷ Giniewski’s writing, however, made it clear that some comparisons to Zionism were more equal than others. Whatever the implication of empowered nation-building he intended with the Zionism comparison, Giniewski, like Katzew, justified earlier white settlement with the myth of empty land and maintained a sympathy for the struggle of Afrikaners, whom he did not regard as colonists. He understood Afrikaners’ fear of post-colonial annihilation—with Bantustans as a solution—and praised Europeans as a civilizing force in Africa.¹⁴⁸

Moreover, Giniewski’s positive view of the Bantustans seemed to ignore present inequities. Not only did the Bantustans make up a small minority of the land for a large majority of the people, but the land within lacked resources and infrastructure such that they were economically dependent on the nation beyond; full independence would be difficult. In this sense—as the South African Communist Party maintained in its critique—the Bantustans were colonies of white South Africa, the product of land taken away rather than given, never *meant* to be fully independent.¹⁴⁹ The intention, as stated, was to strengthen white government power—Verwoerd’s claim of Bantustans as self-determination was a sham. In fact, in a reversal of the complimentary logic of negative and positive

apartheid, conditions in the Bantustans were so bad that they failed their ostensible purpose of separation, as more and more black residents left in search of work.¹⁵⁰ Contrary to Katzew's hopes, the Bantustans came to prop up the *opposite* of self-labor, as they became a pool of surplus black workers, a means of labor control by the white state.¹⁵¹ The goal of ethnically or racially demarcated self-labor à la Israel was unfulfillable in a country so dependent on native labor to begin with—granted, white South African settlement had several centuries to develop to this point, in contrast to the only decades-old Zionist settlement of Israel. Unlike Israel, where the initial colonial process was realized through settler exclusion of native labor and subsequent native displacement, in South Africa, settler colonial dreams of native erasure clashed with an extractive, exploitative reality.¹⁵²

Katzew, like Giniewski, also overlooked the inequities of the Bantustans, and his attitude toward blacks showed his embrace of the Bantustan-Zionism parallel to be on unequal footing with his other, more well-developed identification with white separatism. Responding to Verwoerd's announcement in 1962 that the process of implementing full independence for the Transkei homeland, set aside for the Xhosa people, would begin, Katzew framed the Xhosa as inept stewards of the land, just as he did with the Palestinians in *Solution*. He remarked that the Transkei was inhabited by a "primitive people with bad farming methods which the present government has tried hard to correct."¹⁵³ And, he condescendingly interpreted a quote from a Xhosa journalist emphasizing the need for whites and blacks to "work together" in creating the homeland as a call for whites to "stand by the Xhosas and teach them until they can do everything themselves."¹⁵⁴ Here was a colonial developmentalism, a deferred self-labor: while Jews could independently make the desert bloom, and Afrikaners could repopulate the platteland, the Xhosa needed assistance. Katzew also dismissed a black critic of the Bantustans and head of the African National Congress Albert Luthuli, who saw Verwoerd's decision on the Transkei as a revocation of democratic rights for blacks and called for a single, multiracial government. Katzew replied with a questioning of Luthuli's experience, stating that because Luthuli did not speak Afrikaans, "certain sincerities in those who believe in separate development have never reached him."¹⁵⁵ Whatever Katzew may have meant, the sincere goal of Afrikaner separation was the preservation of inequality. In any case, Katzew here implied that the ideology and supposed benefits of separate development—just like his specific group-to-group Zionist affection—belonged to the Afrikaner.

Katzew's own considerations, then, seemed to undermine his embrace of the "Bantu Zionism" comparison, if the implication was, in his supposed egalitarianism, that all groups have a right to self-development, such that white sanctuary efforts, the creation of Bantustans, and the establishment of Israel collapsed into the same telos. In his consideration of the Bantustans he employed tropes of ineptitude at odds with the self-labor basis for his identification between the white South African and the Israeli settler situations. Likewise, key elements of the latter identification—the self-initiated push to settle, the racialized fears of minority annihilation, and the right to "empty" land—were absent in the case of the Bantustans. The black homelands were carved out of white fears, created on

white initiative, and built upon black native land long-settled and increasingly constrained by whites. Bantustans were the negative product of the Afrikaner-Jew parallel Katzew developed, fitting in more as the South African mirror to the territories to which Jewish settlers pushed Palestinians than as another mirror of Zionist settlement.¹⁵⁶ “Bantu Zionism” was but the superficial reflection of Katzew’s parallel, the afterthought of his usual focus on white homeland-dispersion. The experience of Israeli settlement, even that related by Katzew in *Solution*, provided a more solid foundation to the Afrikaner comparison. The historical hollowness of the “Bantu Zionism” metaphor—the apotheosis of Katzew’s false egalitarianism and by extension that of Verwoerd—puts both the settler tilt of Israel and the reasoning behind the National Party’s Israel affinity in stark relief.

Conclusion

Let us return to Katzew as the pro-Israel missing link between Jew and Afrikaner. Beginning with an affirmation of South African Jewry’s Zionist orientation and the transmutation of “Jew” into “pro-Israel,” Katzew went on to act upon and formulate—not merely observe, as later writers have—the common logic of Israel and South African settlers. His advice would have been hollow had he not been able to personally articulate and, moreover, positively believe in these commonalities—the myth of empty land and the drive to acquire it—which is precisely why his work is such an invaluable source for their exposition. Katzew’s Zionist eyes looked sympathetically at the Afrikaners; the Afrikaners, fearing the fall of empire around them, returned his gaze, with Israel symbolizing the possibility of colonial perseverance, and Katzew detailing precisely how Israel colonially persevered. There is a certain superficial irony to this, especially at the level of the National Party—a Party that once fostered Nazi sympathizers now placed hope in the Jewish state. Indeed, having a settler colonial state to claim as their own was something of a great assimilatory move for white South African Jews, considering the National Party’s apparent about-face on antisemitism that followed.

This narrative does leave something to be desired, coming close as it does to suggesting antisemitism simply vanished upon the creation of Israel. It was not so. Jewish acceptance by the National Party was as precarious as the Party’s about-face was merely rhetorical. Thus, when in October 1961 Israel voted in the UN General Assembly to censure a pro-apartheid speech delivered by South African foreign minister Eric Louw—joining many African nations while all Western states except for the Netherlands abstained—he addressed South African Jews with the antisemitic specter of dual loyalty, stating that he expected South Africans “who have racial and religious ties with Israel” to disapprove of Israel’s vote. Verwoerd similarly questioned Jewish loyalty to the government in a private letter leaked by the press, originally sent to a Jewish citizen who had written Verwoerd with regret over Israel’s vote.¹⁵⁷ Louw and Verwoerd’s kneejerk antisemitic responses demonstrate that the initial rapprochement was not merely founded upon on the Afrikaner

understanding of Israel as a settler colonial state, but was *contingent* upon Israel's behavior meeting the Afrikaner expectations of a fellow settler colonial state. The antisemitism let loose when Israel voted with newly independent African countries was, in a sense, the geopolitical equivalent of the older racial ire directed at Jewish immigrants due to their proximate association with blacks in the eating-houses. Israel seemed to signify, even to perform, the racial in-betweenness of white-assimilated Jews on an international scale.¹⁵⁸

South African Jews, however, were wont to trade this in-betweenness for whiteness. Their response to the UN and Verwoerd letter crises are telling. Some reader letters printed in the *Zionist Record*, also echoing the stance of the *South African Jewish Times*, went to great lengths to explain why the vote was not a betrayal of South African white interests. For them, it was not Israel capitulating to the post-colonial bloc, but an attempt to turn the bloc away from the USSR and Nasser's Egypt.¹⁵⁹ Jewish institutions took a different route in their attachment to the white government, defending South African Jews while also criticizing Israel's vote. Both the SAJBD and the editors of the *Zionist Record* were sure to counter charges of dual loyalty by separating South African Jews from Israel and emphasizing the former's citizenship. This impulse, however, was further paired with a defense of Louw, as they framed the debate not in terms of a question of apartheid, but a question of his free speech, and expressed their wish that Israel had instead voted with "Western nations."¹⁶⁰ The SAJBD response to the Verwoerd controversy was similarly conciliatory. After Verwoerd issued a brief denial of antisemitic intent, the Board accepted it, and expressed a wish for the controversy to end.¹⁶¹

The crisis in full, from the UN vote to the Verwoerd letter, affirmed that National Party support for Israel did *not* mean the disappearance of antisemitism, that support for Israel and antisemitism could coexist; in the letter, Verwoerd even remarked that even in times when antisemitism in South Africa was at its worse, "everybody" approved of Israel.¹⁶² Moreover, it revealed that even if Israel was the link of white identity through which the government could initially gain tacit Jewish support, white identity would remain regardless of the link's dissolution, *even if it provoked antisemitism from the government*. This contradiction is perhaps best embodied by Verwoerd, in his antisemitic letter, commending the reactions of South African Jewish institutions to the Louw affair, while still threateningly stating that they prevented the possibility of a *greater* antisemitic response.¹⁶³ Verwoerd's commendation, in combination with the SAJBD's quick dismissal of the letter affair, suggests that institutions like the SAJBD would actively tolerate a degree of antisemitism if it meant proximity to white power and would even turn on Israel, which had helped to create that proximity in the first place. As one scholar would summarize, the UN vote crisis demonstrated to white South African Jews that in their combined whiteness and Jewishness, they were "dependent on the South African government," but the government could "do without them."¹⁶⁴ Israel as a settler-colonial state, though at first partially extricating South African Jews from their in-betweenness in its assimilatory power, also opened new avenues for its perpetuation.

Henry Katzew was a man who spent years of his career drawing connections between white South Africa and Israel, building off of their parallel settler-colonial apartheid processes—even if not understanding them as such—and articulating their similarities. So, where did he stand on the UN crisis? As he did with his position on race relations, he postured himself as above the whole situation, in a position to offer advice to *all*. He did express vague support for the UN “barking at us,” but advised against sanctions.¹⁶⁵ But with his philosophizing, spiritual language of group survival, he commented: “Let us not be too bemused by present strains and tensions between Israel and South Africa. Destiny has given both primary roles in Africa, and, by transcendence, we shall one day recognize the fact.”¹⁶⁶ Indeed, Katzew, ever-repetitive, suggested that in the wake of the UN crisis, Israel could be the most help to South Africa through its experience, since it could teach “the techniques of remaining apart yet not discriminatory.”¹⁶⁷

What Katzew did not see, or perhaps chose not too, was the contemporary discriminatory practices integral to building the explicitly Jewish Israel he loved. He did not see the fact that policies allowing any Jew to arrive and obtain citizenship conversely prevented Palestinian citizens from bringing in displaced family members, as actualized by the 1950 Law of Return and the 1952 Citizenship Law, respectively. He did not see the 1950 Absentee Property Law that allowed the state strip Palestinians of their land by classing them as internal refugees; or the national labor union to ban on Palestinian membership so as to preserve the ideal of Jewish labor Katzew so admired—a ban not lifted until 1960. Katzew’s descriptions of Palestinian natives affirmed that he did not, or chose not to, see the prejudice of the settlers.¹⁶⁸ Katzew’s failure to acknowledge these violent facts in the selection of his work used here, whether a product of denialism or genuine lack of knowledge, represents the triumph of settler-colonial myth in his own ideology. It perhaps even represents how this kind of colonial ideology’s reluctance to embrace all of its underpinnings and impacts is necessary for its self-justification. And so Katzew observed, somewhat accurately, that “racial discrimination in South Africa” was “the residue of its colonial heritage, which history is bringing to a close.”¹⁶⁹ Perhaps he was right that history could bring this colonial heritage to a close, but his solution for South Africa, the solution he learned from the colonists of Israel, could only extend it.

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- ³ Gideon Shimoni, *Community and Conscience: The Jews in Apartheid South Africa* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2003), 21-22.
- ⁴ "Editorial Comment: The Government and the Jews," *Jewish Affairs*, July 1948, 2.
- ⁵ James Adams, *The Unnatural Alliance* (London: Quartet Books, 1984), 5.
- ⁶ Edward Feit, "Community in a Quandry," *Race* 8, no. 4 (1967): 406.
- ⁷ Richard Mendelsohn and Milton Shain, *The Jews in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2008), 135.
- ⁸ Richard P. Stevens, "Zionism, South Africa and Apartheid: The Paradoxical Triangle," in *Israel and South Africa: The Progression of a Relationship*, ed. Richard P. Stevens and Abdelwahab M. Elmessiri, foreword by John Henrik Clarke (New Brunswick: North American, 1977), 60..
- ⁹ See M. Horwich, "The South African Government, The Jewish Community of South Africa, and the State of Israel," unpublished manuscript (1976): 27, quoted in Daniel J. Elazar and Peter Medding, *Jewish Communities in Frontier Societies: Argentina, Australia, and South Africa* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1983), 183; Rubin, "Afrikaner Nationalism and the Jews," 30-31; Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, 24-29 (here, the settler colonial aspect can be read into his considerations of South Africa and Israel's geopolitical alliance); Stevens, "Zionism, South Africa and Apartheid," 59-61; Robert G. Weisbord, "The Dilemma of South African Jewry," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 5, no. 2 (1967): 235-236, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/159227>.
- ¹⁰ Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006): 387-388 (quoted from 388), <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623520601056240>; Robert J.C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), 20. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/princeton/detail.action?docID=4451917>; Virginia Tilley, "Redefining the Conflict in Israel-Palestine: The Tricky Question of Sovereignty," in *Israel and South Africa: The Many Faces of Apartheid*, ed. by Ilan Pappé (London: Zed Books, 2015), 307-312.
- ¹¹ Such comparative study of Israel and South Africa is extensive, and an exhaustive list here would be difficult to provide. For the sources of this kind used most in this paper, see especially those taken from the helpful collections *Israel and South Africa: The Many Faces of Apartheid*, ed. by Ilan Pappé (London: Zed Books, 2015) and *Israel and South Africa: The Progression of a Relationship*, ed. Richard P. Stevens and Abdelwahab M. Elmessiri, foreword by John Henrik Clarke (New Brunswick: North American, 1977).
- ¹² A recurring theme in this paper will be the way denial, lack of acknowledgement, or obfuscation of colonial intent is part and parcel to the process of settler colonialism, and how both denial and explicit intent often coexist.
- ¹³ In some sense culminating with the 1960 "Year of Africa", so called by the UN because sixteen African nations became independent that year. This caused considerable anxiety among white South Africans; some of Katzew most revealing writing (in terms of colonial parallels) comes from this year and those around it. On the "Year of Africa" in South Africa, see James Barber, *South Africa in the Twentieth Century* (Blackwell: Oxford, 1999), 163.
- ¹⁴ "KATZEW, Henry," in *South African Jewry – 1965*, ed. Leon Feldberg (Johannesburg: Fieldhill Publishing Co., 1965), 301; Eileen Moon, "Trading Bylines for Stop Signs: Retired Journalist Filling New Post," *Asbury Park Press*, June 20, 1993, BC1215 A2, Henry Katzew Papers, University of Cape Town Library, Cape Town.
- ¹⁵ The Board was a national organization that was meant to publicly represent the Jewish community.
- ¹⁶ Charles Strauss and Leslie Hart, "Biographical Note," in BC1215 Henry Katzew Papers, University of Cape Town Library, Cape Town; Robyn Sassen, "Henry Katzew, Doyen of Jewish Journalists, Retires," *South African Jewish Report*, BC1215 A2, Henry Katzew Papers; Henry Katzew, *Solution for South Africa: A Jewish View* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1955), 56.
- ¹⁷ See his essay "The Case of the Rebel Jews," *Jewish Affairs*, February 1954, 13-16, and the following April and May issues. For short stories, see "Bitter Herbs," *Jewish Affairs*, March 1946, 10-11; "Fighting Fred," *Jewish Affairs*, October/November 1946, 24-25; "Comedy of the Label," *Jewish Affairs*, September 1947, 29-31; "Editor's Dream," *Jewish Affairs*, August 1949, 20; "Answer in 1975," *Jewish Affairs*, June 1950, 9-14.
- ¹⁸ Katzew, "Why is Good News not News?" *Jewish Affairs*, October 1947, 11. See also his speculative story on a future newsroom that met this ideal of reporting, "Newspaperman's Extravaganza," *Jewish Affairs*, February 1950, 14-17.
- ¹⁹ Katzew, "Strong Editors in Vital Role," *Zionist Record*, March 9, 1962; see also "Newspapers Reflect Growing Awareness of Groups Outside Their Own," *Zionist Record*, August 12, 1960. On his preference for the cultural or literary over the political for leadership, see also Katzew, "The Highest Afrikaner Thought on Survival," from the *Zionist Record*, October 19, 1962, in *Apartheid and Survival* (Cape Town: Simondium Publishers, 1965), 38.
- ²⁰ Katzew, "The Puzzled Parents of the King David Schools," *Jewish Affairs*, 8-10; "Grown-ups at Hebrew Classes," *Jewish Affairs*, April 1949, 22. Katzew spoke of the importance of Hebrew education with remarkable frequency; for a sample, see in particular "Learning Hebrew," *Jewish Affairs*, August 1948, 27; "Go Then and Buy That Bible," *Jewish Affairs*, 8-9; "Hundreds Study Hebrew Today: Classes All Over South Africa," *Zionist Record*, March 18, 1960; "Seminary Whose Existence Takes Most by Surprise," *Zionist Record*, November 24, 1961.

²¹ Katzew, "The Puzzled Parents of the King David Schools," *Jewish Affairs*, 8-10; "Grown-ups at Hebrew Classes," *Jewish Affairs*, April 1949, 22. Katzew spoke of the importance of Hebrew education with remarkable frequency; for a sample, see in particular "Learning Hebrew," *Jewish Affairs*, August 1948, 27; "Go Then and Buy That Bible," *Jewish Affairs*, 8-9; "Hundreds Study Hebrew Today: Classes All Over South Africa," *Zionist Record*, March 18, 1960; "Seminary Whose Existence Takes Most by Surprise," *Zionist Record*, November 24, 1961.

²² Indeed, other population groups (particularly the Indian diaspora) do not come up much in Katzew's work.

²³ Katzew, "No Melting Pot, No Pressure Cooker – What?" *Zionist Record*, December 8, 1961; "No Melting Pot, So Group Survival Probe Is Needed," *Zionist Record*, September 22, 1961.

²⁴ Katzew, "South Africa: A Country Without Friends," *Midstream* (Spring 1962): 91; "The Highest Afrikaner Thought on Survival," 47-48.

²⁵ The invocation of Jews to act abounds. On specifically the issue of offering advice on race relations, see Katzew, "'Burger' Writer Speaks to Africans on Passes for omen: A 'Vexation,'" *Zionist Record*, May 6, 1960; "Jews Do Have a Message to Give South Africa," *Zionist Record*, New Year Annual—Supplement to September 16, 1960; "Driftwood or Architects?" from *Zionist Record*, April, 1961 in *Apartheid and Survival*; "The Case of the Rebel Jews," 16. On the call for Jewish action in general (the first here is fused with a survivor's guilt), see "the Six Million Dead," *Jewish Affairs*, December 1949, 9; "Judaism's Voice on the Re-education of Man," *Jewish Affairs*, June 1955, 11-13.

²⁶ As of 1960, there were about 114,000 Jews in South Africa, 3.7% of the white population of 3.1 million, and 0.7% of the total population of 16 million. There was a black population of 10.9 million, a Coloured (a community of diverse racial origins) population of 1.5 million, and an Indian population of 500,000. See Sergio DellaPergola and Allie A. Dubb, "South African Jewry: A Sociodemographic Profile," *The American Jewish Year Book* 88 (1988): 105, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23604148>; and Leonard Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 70, 348.

²⁷ A note on the grouping of Jews as whites: The "white" Jews in mind for Katzew seemed almost exclusively to be Ashkenazi Jews of Eastern or Central European descent. And, the DellaPergola and Dubb study cited here groups "Jews" in South Africa as such as part of the white population group—whether this is a normative or an empirical claim, it is telling. In racially heterogeneous settler societies dominated by white Europeans (the US and South Africa come to mind), Ashkenazi Jews who have assimilated to and benefited from whiteness have often been understood as the normative state of Jewishness, to the exclusion of Jews of color. This assumption is to a degree reflected in the comparably large amount of academic literature on such white Ashkenazi Jews; in my research I encountered nearly nothing about other Jewish communities in South Africa (likely a product of the sometimes unfortunately exclusive reflexivity of white Ashkenazi Jewish scholarship). Questions thus remain about the DellaPergola and Dubb study: Was it counting all Jews? Just Ashkenazi? Were they only counting white Ashkenazi Jews as Jews *as such*? Were they grouping Jews who may not have been considered "white" in South Africa within this banner of "Jews", but still grouping them under "white" with all other Jews? Or, was this study making an empirical (though still exclusive) observation that the vast majority of South African Jews were *considered or identified as white*?

²⁸ Katzew, "The English-Afrikaans Ice Blocks: Can We Jews Help to Melt Them?," *Zionist Record*, June 24, 1960; "Neither English Nor Afrikaans Press Wicked As Painted," *Zionist Record*, December 22, 1961.

²⁹ Sassen, "Henry Katzew, Doyen of Jewish Journalists, Retires."

³⁰ See footnote 27 above on the exclusions wrought by assuming all Jews to be white-assimilated.

³¹ Mendelsohn and Shain, *The Jews In South Africa*, 33.

³² Milton Shain, "Jewish Cultures, Identities, and Contingencies: Reflections from the South African Experience," *European Review of History—Revue Européenne d'Histoire* 18, no. 1 (2011): 89-91, DOI: 10.1080/13507486.2011.543584

³³ Marcia Levenson, "The Enemy Within: Some South African Jewish Writers," in *Jewries at the Frontier: Accommodation, Identity, Conflict*, ed. Sander L. Gilman and Milton Shain (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 244; Shain, "Jewish Cultures, Identities, and Contingencies" 91-92; Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, 6; Joseph Sherman, "Serving the Natives: Whiteness as the Price of Hospitality in South African Yiddish Literature," *Journal of South African Studies* 26, no. 3 (2000): 509-13, <https://doi.org/10.1080/713683588>

³⁴ Sherman, "Serving the Natives" 509-11. Sherman delineates examples provided in contemporary Yiddish South African fiction of the prejudiced, dishonest practices Jewish immigrants would engage in to move up and become owners themselves, for example, purchasing meat as cheap—and thus as spoiled—as possible to serve to their black patrons, because, as one writer Sherman quotes says, "nothing was too bad for the blacks." (511).

³⁵ Mendelsohn and Shain, *The Jews in South Africa*, 35-38.

³⁶ Shimoni, *Jews and Zionism*, 77-78.

³⁷ Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, 3; *Jews and Zionism*, 2.

³⁸ Shain, "Jewish Cultures, Identities, and Contingencies," 91-92; Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, 3.

³⁹ Dan Jacobson, "The Jews of South Africa: Portrait of a Flourishing Community," *Commentary*, January 1957. <https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/the-jews-of-south-africaportrait-of-a-flourishing-community/>

⁴⁰ Katzew, "Jews in the Land of Apartheid," *Midstream* (December 1962): 66.

⁴¹ South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD), "Introduction," *Report to South African Jewry: September, 1962 to June, 1965*, 4; Elazar and Medding, *Jewish Communities in Frontier Societies*, 192; Gustav Saron, "The Long Road to Unity," in *The Jews in South Africa: A History*, ed. Gustav Saron and Louis Hotz (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1955), 228.

⁴² Katzew, "Jews in the Land of Apartheid," 69-70.

⁴³ Editors, "Editorial Comment: The Government and the Jews," *Jewish Affairs*, July 1948, 2-3. Gideon Shimoni points out, however, that in official reports of this meeting, the SAJBD deliberately ensured that Malan's qualification that he was against antisemitic discrimination save for the "question of immigration" was left out. Shimoni argues that this was to avoid creating "more Jewish anxiety", but it could also be that the SAJBD was either trying to express gratitude, or at least trying not to rock the boat, at a time when the establishment of Israel (and the Malan administration's interest in the Jewish state) provided an opportunity for rapprochement with the National Party. Israel as this central hinge is discussed at length below. For Shimoni's contributions, see *Community and Conscience*, 23.

⁴⁴ Katzew, "Jews in the Land of Apartheid," 70. Shirli Gilbert also notes that SAJBD policy was to "downplay" National Party antisemitism during this time, and this tendency is reflected in contemporary South African Jewish historiography, notably in *The Jews in South Africa: A History*, edited by Gustav Saron and Louis Hotz (indeed cited here). See Shirli Gilbert, "Jews and the Racial State: Legacies of the Holocaust in Apartheid South Africa, 1945-60," *Jewish Social Studies* 16, no. 3 (2010): 49-50, <https://muse.jhu.edu>. For an example of this whitewashed narrative from the SAJBD, see also N. Kirschner, "Zionism and the Union of South Africa: Fifty Years of Friendship and Understanding," *Jewish Affairs*, May 1960, 42-46. Kirschner was the former chairman of the SAZF.

⁴⁵ Rubin, "Afrikaner Nationalism and the Jews," 31; Stevens, "Zionism, South Africa and Apartheid," 59. And, one can only imagine that Jews who did not have the ascriptive qualities of whiteness (especially European descent and light skin) would not have been folded in to South African whiteness in the same way, or even at all.

⁴⁶ Katzew, "Jews in the Land of Apartheid," 71.

⁴⁷ Gustav Saron, "The Jew in the South African Scene," *Jewish Affairs*, June 1945, 10. Saron was at the time the General Secretary of the SAJBD, and this piece was a review of the Board's official public relations stances.

⁴⁸ Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, 34-46; *Jews and Zionism*, 277-286; André Ungar, "The Abdication of a Community," *Africa South* 3, no. 2 (1959): 31-32, <https://www.aluka.org/stable/pdf/10.5555/al.sff.document.asjan59>. For more Jewish criticism of the South African Jewish community for its acquiescence to apartheid, see Ronald M. Segal and Dan Jacobson, "Apartheid and South African Jewry: An Exchange," *Commentary*, November 1957. <https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/apartheid-and-south-african-jewry-an-exchange/>

⁴⁹ The late 40s and early 50s saw the laying of the racial apartheid state. Key legislation classified citizens by race, designated areas where each race could live, banned mixed marriages, split public amenities along racial lines, and reserved jobs by race, among a variety of other, similar policies. On the introduction of apartheid legislation, see DM Scher, "The Consolidation of the Apartheid State," in *South Africa in the 20th Century*, ed. BJ Liebenberg and SB Spies (Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik Academic, 1993), 322-325.

⁵⁰ Katzew, "Jews in the Land of Apartheid," 70.

⁵¹ Stevens, "Zionism, South Africa and Apartheid," 60.

⁵² Shimoni, *Jews and Zionism*, 208.

⁵³ A.M. Melamet, "Jews, Afrikaners and Nationalists," *Jewish Affairs*, May 1956, 12.

⁵⁴ Sarah Gertrude Millin, *The People of South Africa* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1954), 237. Millin, with a doctorate in literature, was the author of dozens of novels and plays dealing with Jewish themes, as well as biographies of industrialist Cecil Rhodes and South African leader Jan C. Smuts. See "MILLIN, Sarah Gertrude," in *South African Jewry – 1965*, 340. Millin actually appeared in Katzew's writing, as he relayed parts of her opening speech at the May 1948 Jewish Book Festival in his report for the May 1948 edition of *Jewish Affairs* (See Katzew, "The Book Festival," *Jewish Affairs*, May 1948, 30-35).

⁵⁵ Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, 4-5; Stevens, "Zionism, South Africa and Apartheid," 59.

⁵⁶ Bernard Sachs, "Life On a Volcano: The Jewish Community in a Caste Society," *Commentary*, June 1950. <https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/south-africa-life-on-a-volcanothe-jewish-community-in-a-caste-society/>

⁵⁷ Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, 5.

⁵⁸ "Shekel Day," *Zionist Record*, February 5, 1960.

⁵⁹ On the Boer War, see Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 139-144. On Afrikaner anti-British sympathy for Israel, see Shimoni, *Jews and Zionism*, 203-205; Rubin, "Afrikaner Nationalism and the Jews," 30; Stevens, "Zionism, South Africa and Apartheid," 59-60; Weisbord, "The Dilemma of South African Jewry," 236.

⁶⁰ SAJBD, "'The Jewish Question' In S.A. Politics: A Review of the Years 1947-1949," *Jewish Affairs*, May 1949, 54-55.

⁶¹ Melamet, "Jews, Afrikaners and Nationalists," 12.

⁶² Millin, *The People of South Africa*, 232. On the Voortrekkers, see Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 87-88. This parallel is to be discussed at length below.

⁶³ Katzew, "Jews in the Land of Apartheid," 72.

⁶⁴ During the Boer War, the British put displaced Boers and Africans in concentration camps. Around 28,000 Boers died in the camps, along with a similar number of Africans. See Gail Nattrass, *A Short History of South Africa*, (London: Biteback Publishing, 2017), 127. Katzew draws this comparison with Jews in "A Nation's Duty to Survive," *Judean*, July 1959, BC1215 B2.6, Henry Katzew Papers.

⁶⁵ D.F. Malan, foreword to *The Birth of a Community: A History of Western Province Jewry from Earliest Times to the End of the South African War, 1902*, by Israel Abrahams (Cape Town: Cape Town Hebrew Congregation, 1955), xiii; Rubin, "Afrikaner Nationalism and the Jews," 30; Katzew, "Selected People?" *Evening Post*, December 10, 1957, BC1215 B2.6, Henry Katzew Papers.

⁶⁶ Malan, foreword to *The Birth of a Community*; Horwich, "The South African Government, The Jewish Community of South Africa, and the State of Israel," 27. On the place of privilege held by white-assimilated Ashkenazim, see footnote 27 above. The Eurocentrism of Zionism will be addressed in detail later on. And, for one South African Jewish perspective on the prejudice and obstacles faced by non-European Jews in Israel, see James T. Farrell, "After the Riots," *Jewish Affairs*, February 1960, 50-51, 64.

⁶⁷ Weisbord, "The Dilemma of South African Jewry," 236.

⁶⁸ Katzew, "The Future of Jewry in South Africa," *Jewish Affairs*, June 1949, 47.

⁶⁹ Katzew, "The Community's Finest Bursary Scheme is That of Its Ex-Soldiers," *Zionist Record*, March 25, 1960. It should be noted that this is one of the few times I encountered Katzew quoting a black voice; it is of rhetorical interest that he does so here in an announcement of the fall of white rule in Africa.

⁷⁰ Katzew, "Kenya Afrikaners Ready to Face Challenge of Multi-Racial Society," *Zionist Record*, May 15, 1960.

⁷¹ Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 87-92.

⁷² Katzew, "White South Africa— "A Mere Speck,"" *Jewish Affairs*, January 1950, 9-10.

⁷³ Katzew, "The Afrikaners in Kenya," *The Evening Post*, March 1, 1960, BC1215 B2.4, Henry Katzew Papers.

⁷⁴ Katzew, "Kenya Afrikaners Ready To Face Challenge of Multi-Racial Society."

⁷⁵ Katzew, "Kenya Afrikaners Draw Nearer to Day of Decision," *Zionist Record*, September 15, 1961. For other discussion by Katzew of the white situation in Kenya, see "What does the Next Decade Hold in Store for South African Jewry?" *Zionist Record*, January 1, 1960; "Hundreds Study Hebrew Today: Classes All Over South Africa." The latter touches on Katzew's favoring of the cultural over the political.

⁷⁶ Katzew, "Press Reaction to the Referendum in Rhodesia," *Zionist Record*, August 11, 1961.

⁷⁷ In 1965, the white-black ratio in Rhodesia was 1:20, even steeper than in South Africa. See Ian Phimister, "The Collapse of Rhodesia: Population Demographics and the Politics of Race," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 39, no. 3 (2011): 518, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03086534.2011.598029>; Katzew, "Press Reaction to the Referendum in Rhodesia," *Zionist Record*, August 11, 1961.

⁷⁸ Katzew, "Thoughts on the Referendum in Rhodesia," *Zionist Record*, August 4, 1961.

⁷⁹ Katzew, "White South Africa—'A Mere Speck,'" *Jewish Affairs*, January 1950, 9-10.

⁸⁰ Katzew, "South Africa: A Country Without Friends," 92. On his opposition to racial discrimination, see also Katzew, "When a Writer is Written Out", from *Zionist Record*, June 2, 1962, in *Apartheid and Survival*, 107.

⁸¹ Katzew, "Can We Make a Fresh Start in South Africa?" from *Judean*, 1962, in *Apartheid and Survival*, 53; See also Katzew, "Transvaal Jobs Decree," *The Evening Post*, May 10, 1960, BC1215 B2.4, Henry Katzew Papers; "When a Writer is Written Out", 107; "South Africa: A Country Without Friends," 92; "An Unfreezing?" from *Zionist Record*, July 19, 1963, in *Apartheid and Survival*, 101.

⁸² Katzew, "We, Too, Can Help to Save South Africa," *The Jewish People*, July 1957, BC1215 A1, Henry Katzew Papers; "Jews Do Have a Message to Give South Africa"; "Board of deputies Conference Has Lively Possibilities—But New Ideas Are Needed," *Zionist Record*, September 2, 1960.

⁸³ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, Front matter.

⁸⁴ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 2, 51. On a note of some historical irony, the Semitic Hebrew was adopted by European Zionist settlers over Germanic Yiddish to distance themselves from Europe in a sort of attempt at indigenization, as pointed out by Patrick Wolfe. One can only wonder what the early Jewish immigrants of South Africa, who had fought for Yiddish's recognition as a European language, would think of Katzew's celebration! See Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," 389.

⁸⁵ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 77; Katzew "Apartheid Must Be Creative," from *Die Vaderland*, November, 1958, in *Apartheid and Survival*, 79; "Answer in 1975," *Jewish Affairs*, June 1950, 9-14.

⁸⁶ Katzew, "A Community Without Problems," *Jewish Affairs*, April 1951, 12.

⁸⁷ Katzew, "Answer in 1975," *Jewish Affairs*, June 1950, 9-14, quoted from 12.

⁸⁸ Katzew, "Jews Do Have a Message to Give South Africa"; "South Africa: A Country Without Friends," 92; and "Board of deputies Conference Has Lively Possibilities—But New Ideas Are Needed"; Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 50-51.

⁸⁹ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 66-68; 76-78; Katzew, "Western Province as A White and Coloured Man's Land," from *Zionist Record*, August, 1962, in *Apartheid and Survival*, 50-52.

- ⁹⁰ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 28; “An Unfreezing?” 103. On Katzew’s call for a white rather than exclusively Afrikaner homeland, see “Western Province as A White and Coloured Man’s Land” and “South Africa: A Country Without Friends,” 92.
- ⁹¹ Katzew, *Solution For South Africa*, 76.
- ⁹² Katzew, “Congo in Chaos,” *Zionist Record*, July 15, 1960.
- ⁹³ There were 750,000 such refugees after Israeli victory; Israeli law would soon make their return near impossible. See Jonathan Cook, “‘Visible Equality’ as Confidence Trick,” in *Israel and South Africa: The Many Faces of Apartheid*, 126. On Katzew’s call for settlement and preference for white Jewish settlers, see Katzew, *Solution For South Africa*, 1, 10-11, 25, 41.
- ⁹⁴ Theodor Herzl, *The Jew’s State*, trans. with an Introduction by Henk Overberg (Northvale: Jason Aronson Inc., 1997), 149; on recruitment and more on the white orientation of Zionism, see Abdelwahab M. Elmessiri, “Zionist Apologetics and the White Man’s Burden,” in *Israel and South Africa: The Progression of a Relationship*, 19-23.
- ⁹⁵ Israel Zangwill, “The Return to Palestine,” *The New Liberal Review* 2 (1901): 627, quoted in Oren Ben-Dor, “Apartheid and the Question of Origin,” in *Israel and South Africa: The Many Faces of Apartheid*, 93. On Herzl’s eliminative logic, see Ronnie Kasrils, “Birds of a Feather: Israel and Apartheid South Africa—Colonialism of a Special Type,” in *Israel and South Africa: The Many Faces of Apartheid*, 26.
- ⁹⁶ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 9-13.
- ⁹⁷ Katzew, “Algeria, Federation And Us: Die Burger’s Sombre Mood,” *Zionist Record*, March 16, 1962.
- ⁹⁸ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 15, 19, 22-23, 41, 55.
- ⁹⁹ Katzew, “South Africa: A Country Without Friends,” 91. In this same piece, he objects to South African whites being called “settlers” (80), hinting at a process of settler indigenization functional in the above-described process of native erasure: here, normative settler claims to the land, in combination with their control of governance, are privileged over those of the native. On this process, and especially its expression in Jewish settlement of Israel (seeing Israel as an ancient homeland), see Tilley, “Redefining the Conflict in Israel-Palestine,” 307-308, 311-312.
- ¹⁰⁰ Hermann Giliomee and Lawrence Schlemmer, *From Apartheid to Nation-Building* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1989), 42; Kasrils, “Birds of a Feather,” 29.
- ¹⁰¹ Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 5-29, 37-38.
- ¹⁰² Nattrass, *A Short History of South Africa*, 57-58. Nattrass suggests there may have been some truth apartheid-era politicians’ insistence on historically empty land, as populations in the area were diminished by large-scale violence between native groups in the years before the Voortrekkers’ arrival.
- ¹⁰³ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 77.
- ¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 29.
- ¹⁰⁵ Katzew, “The Highest Afrikaner Thought on Survival,” 38; “A Nation’s Duty to Survive.”
- ¹⁰⁶ Katzew, *Apartheid and Survival*, 109. The quote comes from a speech entitled “Man the Reformer”, which Emerson delivered for Mechanics’ Apprentices’ Library Association in Boston in January 1841; the full speech extolls the virtues of manual labor and self-help— its influence on Katzew is clear. See Ralph Waldo Emerson and Mechanic Apprentices’ Library Association, *Man the reformer: a lecture read before the Mechanics’ Apprentices’ Library Association, at the Masonic Temple, Boston, 25th January, 1841, and now published at their request* (Ratcliff Highway: Luxford & Co. Printers, 1841), *The Making of the Modern World*, <http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/9qSwy0>. Indeed, Katzew quoted Emerson frequently, not just in relation to labor, and cited him as his favorite philosopher. See, for example, Katzew, “No Headlines For Them—“Characters” All the Same,” *Zionist Record*, January 12, 1962; “Repairing Our Lines Of Communication With The World,” *Zionist Record*, March 30, 1962; “Visiting the Sick,” *Jewish Affairs*, July 1956, 44; “In Search of our “Flying Perfect”,” *Jewish Affairs*, March 1957, 42.
- ¹⁰⁷ Katzew, “Algeria, Federation And Us: Die Burger’s Sombre Mood”; “Apartheid Must Be Creative,” 78.
- ¹⁰⁸ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 46.
- ¹⁰⁹ Katzew, “South Africa: A Country Without Friends,” 90.
- ¹¹⁰ Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” 390, building off of Gershon Shafir, *Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882-1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 81-82.
- ¹¹¹ Sara Wurzel (of the Prime Minister’s Office) to Henry Katzew, 10 April 1956, BC1215 A1, Henry Katzew Papers.
- ¹¹² David Ben-Gurion, quoted in Katzew, *Solution For South Africa*, 37. This meeting was not the first contact between Katzew and Ben Gurion. It was the second of two, and earlier, Ben Gurion had replied to Katzew in a letter after Katzew sent him the materials he had prepared for a settlement recruitment society in South Africa. Ben Gurion’s letter praised Katzew’s efforts. See *Solution For South Africa*, 3-5.
- ¹¹³ Ibid, 46, 37, 54. This gendered language associated with the comparison of Israel to the diaspora, to the detriment of the latter, is present elsewhere in Katzew’s writing. He claimed, for example, that South African Jews had “surrendered” their “spiritual manliness” to Israel. See Katzew, “Can We Make a Fresh Start in South Africa?”, 56.
- ¹¹⁴ Katzew, “The Case of the Rebel Jews,” 14.

¹¹⁵ Elmessiri points out this language of Ben Gurion's in "Zionist Apologetics," 21. See David Ben Gurion, "In Judea and Galilee," in *Rebirth and Destiny of Israel*, ed. and trans. by Mordekhai Nurock (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954), 9; also "The Ideals and Aims of the Jewish State," *Jewish Affairs*, May 1952, 6.

¹¹⁶ Katzew, "Why the Self-Labour Call Among Afrikaners Makes No Headway," *Zionist Record*, April 14, 1960.

¹¹⁷ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 37; "Jews in the Land of Apartheid," 77.

¹¹⁸ For a more general frustration with lack of Afrikaner reception of "self-labor", see Katzew, "Why the Self-Labour Call Among Afrikaners Makes No Headway." Here, he argued the doctrine would only be influential if Afrikaners "throw up a storming labour poet-leader"—see above on his faith in poets as cultural leaders.

¹¹⁹ Katzew, "Algeria, Federation And Us: Die Burger's Sombre Mood." A note on this quotation's decolonial context: The article, grimly urgent, was published just as the Algerian War of Independence was drawing to a close in spring 1962, with French Algeria framed as an example to avoid (with Israel as the example to emulate). In contrast, in an Afrikaner article Katzew quoted earlier in his January 29, 1960 column for the *Zionist Record*, French Algeria and Israel were lumped together in admiration. Israel in this sense was styled as a hold-out of colonialism as the French empire crumbled.

¹²⁰ Katzew, "Algeria, Federation And Us: Die Burger's Sombre Mood"; Katzew, "Apartheid Must Be Creative," 78.

¹²¹ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 30.

¹²² Abnash Kaur, *South Africa and Bantustans* (Delhi: Kalinga Publications, 1995), 11.

¹²³ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 27-29.

¹²⁴ Katzew, "Afrikaans Press Reflects on the Week of Storm: New Day Recognized," *Zionist Record*, April 8, 1960.

¹²⁵ *Zionist Record*, January 14, 1955, BC1215 B2.4, Henry Katzew Papers. This letter was an important step in Katzew's increasingly vocal push for a white homeland—scribbled in the margins of this *Zionist Record* clipping from the University of Cape Town archives is, "The article that launched my crusade."

¹²⁶ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 47; "South Africa: A Country Without Friends," 91. For more on this question of "privilege", see "No Melting Pot, No Pressure Cooker – What?"

¹²⁷ Katzew, "Author's Preface," in *Apartheid and Survival*, 7.

¹²⁸ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 46; "A Nation's Duty to Survive"; On Katzew's skepticism of politics and legislation see also "Creating New Facts," from *Die Vaderland*, October, 1957, in *Apartheid and Survival*, 62; "Press Reaction to the Referendum in Rhodesia."

¹²⁹ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 74; "Apartheid Must Be Creative," 78; "Die Burger's Dramatic Debate on African Labour Use," *Zionist Record*, December 15, 1961.

¹³⁰ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 47. On the precarity of white survival under negative apartheid, see also "South Africa: A Country Without Friends," 91.

¹³¹ Katzew, *Solution for South Africa*, 28, 46-47.

¹³² Katzew, "Hundreds Study Hebrew Today: Classes All Over South Africa"; "Study Group's Plea for a 'White Man's Land'," *Zionist Record*, October 6, 1961; "Die Burger's Dramatic Debate on African Labour Use."

¹³³ Katzew, "Zionist Lessons Learned in 1905 Held Applicable to the S. Africa of 1960," *Zionist Record*, January 8, 1961.

¹³⁴ Katzew, "'Israel's Way' Suggested As Solution For Empty Platteland Problem," *Zionist Record*, June 10, 1960. On Katzew's further reporting on Afrikaner interest in Israeli farming and settlement methods, see "Leading Afrikaner Farmer is in Israel Studying Collective Farm Systems," *Zionist Record*, June 17, 1960.

¹³⁵ Katzew, "Afrikaans Press Lament On Artists 'In Exile': No Scope In South Africa," *Zionist Record*, July 8, 1960; "Board of Deputies Conference Has Lively Possibilities—But New Ideas Are Needed." I cannot be totally sure the first letter was from Katzew, but the writing (especially the white/Jew, black/Arab parallels on the labor question) is strikingly similar to his. The more telling evidence is that one of the letter-writers to *Die Transvaler* volunteering for white settlement stated that he was responding to the suggestion in the first letter for white farms, and volunteered specifically in agreement with *Die Transvaler's* "Jewish correspondent" in reference to the author of the first letter. This "Jewish correspondent" was likely Katzew, considering the content of the first letter, and Katzew's own practice of referring in his *Zionist Record* column (which he wrote under a penname) to the writing he produced under his real name as if it were written by someone else. For example, he reprinted an Afrikaner review of *Solution for South Africa* without mentioning he wrote it. See Katzew, "'Die Burger Gives 2-Column Review to Katzew's 'Solution for S.A.," *Zionist Record*, November 4, 1955, BC1215 B2.5, Henry Katzew Papers.

¹³⁶ Katzew, "Study Group's Plea for a 'White Man's Land.'"

¹³⁷ Katzew, "Die Burger's Dramatic Debate on African Labour Use."

¹³⁸ Katzew, "Study Group's Plea for a 'White Man's Land.'"

¹³⁹ Black farmers who lost their land during the Boer Wars were forced to settle where they were readily available as mine laborers, while Afrikaner farmers had their land returned. The 1913 Land Act relegated black purchasing of land to reserves covering 8% of South Africa; the so called “Native Bills” of 1936 increased the reserve size, while simultaneously removing the right to vote from the few blacks who still had it. Then, 1950 saw the Group Areas Act, restricting residence areas by race and forcing thousands of evictions; the following year, the Bantu Authorities Bill further limited black representation in national government by shifting governmental responsibility to the reserve areas. Nattrass, *A Short History of South Africa*, 136, 142, 155; Scher, “The Consolidation of the Apartheid State,” 323, 346-347.

¹⁴⁰ Scher, “The Consolidation of the Apartheid State,” 356-357.

¹⁴¹ Gwendolen M. Carter, Thomas Karis, and Newell M. Stultz, *South Africa’s Transkei: The Politics of Domestic Colonialism* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967), 46, 59.

¹⁴² Scher, “The Consolidation of the Apartheid State,” 357; Barber, *South Africa in the Twentieth Century*, 174. On black population statistics see note 26 above.

¹⁴³ Scher, “The Consolidation of the Apartheid State,” 347-348.

¹⁴⁴ Katzew, “We, Too, Can Help to Save South Africa,” Scher, “The Consolidation of the Apartheid State,” 346-347 (see here on Verwoerd’s time as Minister of Native Affairs and his introduction of the 1951 Bantu Authorities Bill, described in note above); Carter, Karis, and Stultz, *South Africa’s Transkei*, 36-37.

¹⁴⁵ Scher, “The Consolidation of the Apartheid State,” 355. In a piece covering the Afrikaner press reaction to the Rhodesian referendum discussed above, one of the quotes Katzew provided said that the “only” solution for South African whites is “partition.” (See Katzew, “Press Reaction to Referendum in Rhodesia”). Likewise, just as Verwoerd used the 1960 Sharpeville massacre (the killing of scores of black protestors by police) as partial justification for the push to separate development (see Carter, Karis, and Stultz, *South Africa’s Transkei* 23, 41), an Afrikaner paper quoted by Katzew in a piece covering the press reaction to the unrest following Sharpeville called for a “separation policy” as the way forward. (See Katzew, “Afrikaans Press Reflects on the Week of Storm: New Day Recognized”).

¹⁴⁶ Kaur, *South Africa and Bantustans*, 17; Scher, “The Consolidation of the Apartheid State,” 355, 358-359.

¹⁴⁷ Katzew, “Zionist Editor Looks at Apartheid: Finds Good and Bad,” *Zionist Record*, December 29, 1961. Katzew was quite taken by Giniewski’s writing, earlier quoting a journal article from him, and then using the *Record* column three weeks in a row to laud Giniewski’s book. Giniewski himself would go on to become a regular writer for the *Record*, too, and even had a translated article in *Jewish Affairs*. On Katzew’s quotations and reviews of Giniewski, see “Campaign to Replace ‘Kaffer Werk’ Concept Achieving Results,” *Zionist Record*, September 1, 1961; “South Africa: A Country Without Friends,” 92; “Neither English Nor Afrikaans Press Wicked As Painted,”; “Writer’s Plea for a ‘Bantu Zionism,’” *Zionist Record*, January 5, 1962; “No Headlines for Them—‘Characters’ All the Same,” *Zionist Record*, January 12, 1962. For Giniewski in the *Zionist Record*, see “How Israel Wins the Friendship of New Nations,” March 9, 1962; for his *Jewish Affairs* piece, see “The Problem of the Arab Refugees,” *Jewish Affairs*, December 1961, 4-6.

¹⁴⁸ Paul Giniewski, *The Two Faces of Apartheid* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1961), xvi-xvii, 22, 39, 119-120, image 8 (between pages 173 and 175), 354-362.

¹⁴⁹ Carter, Karis, and Stultz, *South Africa’s Transkei*, 5; Communist Party of South Africa, “The Road to South African Freedom” (Program of the South African Communist Party, 1962) in *South African Communists Speak: Documents from the History of the South African Communist Party, 1915-1980* (London: Inkululeko Publications, 1981), 300, 303-304. See especially section 3, “Colonialism of a Special Type”.

¹⁵⁰ Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 192-193.

¹⁵¹ Kasrils, “Birds of a Feather,” 35; Robert J. Hind, “The Internal Colonial Concept,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26, no. 3 (1984): 545, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/178555>.

¹⁵² Ran Greenstein, “Israel-Palestine and the Apartheid Analogy: Critics, Apologists and Strategic Lessons,” in *Israel and South Africa: The Many Faces of Apartheid*, 348-350. This question of labor and race separation deserves attention outside the scope of this paper. Opponents of separate development saw the impossibility of complete separation due to an economic dependence on black labor; this included Malan (who simply preferred white domination), and also the more moderate United Party. Katzew even opposed the separate development hardliners, recognizing that blacks in cities were there to stay, and even lamented the mass black unemployment that would follow if whites fired their black workers. This is partially why he advocated for mixed areas (as described above) in addition to exclusively black and exclusively white areas. On Malan, see Barber, *South Africa in the Twentieth Century*, 141. On the United Party, see anti-Bantustan ads they ran in the *Zionist Record* during the 1961 election (especially October 6, 1961, page 17). On Katzew and the impossibility of total separation, see “Can We Make a Fresh Start in South Africa?”; “Algeria, Federation And Us: Die Burger’s Sombre Mood”; “Campaign to Replace ‘Kaffer Werk’ Concept Achieving Results.”

¹⁵³ Katzew, “South Africa: A Country Without Friends,” 85. The Afrikaner paper *Dagbreek* viewed Verwoerd’s decision, as Afrikaners did with much apartheid legislation, as a necessary step in the time of decolonization on the continent. See him quoted by Katzew, ““S.A. Revolution Now Underway,” *Zionist Record*, February 2, 1962.

¹⁵⁴ Katzew, “S.A. Revolution Now Underway.”

¹⁵⁵ Katzew, “South Africa: A Country Without Friends,” 87.

¹⁵⁶ On Israeli expansionism and the South African parallel, see Samih Farsoun, “Settler Colonialism and Herrenvolk Democracy,” in *Israel and South Africa: The Progression of a Relationship*, 25-29.

¹⁵⁷ Shimoni, *Jews and Zionism*, 307-312; See also Stevens, “Zionism, South Africa and Apartheid: The Paradoxical Triangle,” 65-66.

¹⁵⁸ For more on Israel's self-understanding of global "in-betweenness," especially in relation to UN votes on South African race policies, see Rotem Giladi, "Negotiating Identity: Israel, Apartheid, and the United Nations, 1949-1952," *The English Historical Review* 132, no. 559 (2017): 1467. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ehr/cex372>.

¹⁵⁹ See the letters "Why Did You... Attack Israel in the Record?" and "As Mr. Yellin Sees It" in *Zionist Record*, October 27, 1961, and "Israel and S. Africa Have Complimentary Roles On This Continent" in *Zionist Record*, November 3, 1961. On the *South African Times*' stance, see Edgar Bernstein, "Israel's Vote in UNO – The Repercussions in South Africa," *Jewish Affairs*, November 1961, 16 (oddly, much of Katzew's article "Jews in the Land of Apartheid" is lifted from this Bernstein piece). Gideon Shimoni indeed points out that Israel, in white South African eyes, did serve as a "bulwark" against the USSR and Nasser— see *Community and Conscience*, 27. However, this view was not held by all South African Jews; other letters in the *Record* on October 27 were critical of Israel's vote, as were the SAJBD and SAZF.

¹⁶⁰ SAJBD, "South Africa and Israel," *Report: September, 1960 to August, 1962*, 10-12; "UNO, Israel and South Africa," *Jewish Affairs*, November 1961, 2; "The U.N. Vote," *Zionist Record*, October 21, 1961; "Loyalty," *Zionist Record*, November 3, 1961.

¹⁶¹ SAJBD, "South Africa and Israel," 14.

¹⁶² Hendrik Verwoerd to S.A. East, quoted in Katzew, "Jews in the Land of Apartheid," 76.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Neville Rubin, "The Impact of Zionism and Israel on the Political Orientation and Behavior of South African Jews," in *Settler Regimes in Africa and the Arab World: The Illusion of Endurance*, ed. by Ibrahim Abu-Lughod and Baha Abu-Laban (Wilmette: The Medina University Press International, 1974), 171.

¹⁶⁵ Katzew, "South Africa: A Country Without Friends," 92.

¹⁶⁶ Katzew, "'The Tragic Figure of the Afrikaner...' Says New Book," *Zionist Record*, November 3, 1961.

¹⁶⁷ Katzew, "Jews in the Land of Apartheid," 75, 78.

¹⁶⁸ Cook, "'Visible Equality' as Confidence Trick," 126, 136; Farsoun, "Settler Colonialism and Herrenvolk Democracy," 28, 32. On Katzew's praise for the Law of Return, see *Solution for South Africa*, 33.

¹⁶⁹ Katzew, "Jews in the Land of Apartheid," 78.

THE ARYAN VIKINGS OF HAITHABU: ASSESSING CONTENTIOUS LINKS BETWEEN NAZI IDEOLOGY, RACIAL PSEUDOSCIENCE, AND MODERN ARCHAEOLOGY

Alexandra Todorova

Abstract: Throughout the 1930s, Nazi-affiliated prehistorians gradually took charge of the Haithabu archaeological excavation in Northern Germany and ensured that any future studies of the site would inevitably rely on dubiously academic works permeated with ideology. This paper examines the normalization of pseudoscientific research under the Third Reich and the long-term impact of such scholarship, which affects European archaeological research to this day. While previous works have emphasized Nazi-sponsored archaeological expeditions in Asia, this case study focuses on the pervasive influence of pseudoscience in a European context. Through an examination of academic publications and correspondence, it identifies three main stages of archaeological politicization, including the normalization of Nazi archaeology, the application of ideology at the site of Haithabu, and the medieval settlement's broader symbolic significance. Ultimately, a look at Nazi-era archaeology encourages a re-examination of political ideology's continued impact on modern academic scholarship.

Key words: Nazi archaeology, history of archaeology, SS-Ahnenerbe, Herbert Jankuhn, pseudoscience, Haithabu

Introduction

On September 30, 1948 German archaeologist Herbert Jankuhn was convicted for his membership in the National Socialist Party and deemed a *Mitläufer* —“‘fellow traveler’ or ‘passive follower.’”¹ Jankuhn appealed this decision and only days later was re-classed as a “non-offender,” which enabled the archaeologist to continue his lengthy career as a prominent scholar and to be recognized as a pioneer in the field of Germanic prehistory.² Jankuhn’s case was not a particularly uncommon one, since more than eight million Germans had become official members of the National Socialist Party by 1945. Faced with the virtually impossible process of German denazification after the end of the Second World War, the triumphant Allied powers had chosen to preserve stability rather than pursue

retribution.³ What made Jankuhn's acquittal and re-categorization striking, however, was the archaeologist's close friendship with prominent Nazi leader Heinrich Himmler and his active involvement in some of the Third Reich's largest archaeological projects. The young archaeologist's rise to prominence had begun when Himmler appointed him the new director of the archaeological project at Haithabu—a Viking Age site, where Nazi-sponsored excavations were conducted from 1937 to 1939 under the large umbrella of the SS Ahnenerbe.⁴ Established by Heinrich Himmler in 1935, the Ahnenerbe was an organization that served to further explore Himmler's own interests in occultism, mysticism, neo-paganism, Germanic prehistory, and folklore. The organization funded scholars with legitimate academic grounding in their respective fields, who were educated in Germany's top universities. In turn, they used their expert training to provide pseudoscientific research that corroborated National Socialist racial ideology.

Most scholars have approached the topic of Nazi-era, pseudoscientific publications by attempting to reconcile the valuable academic contributions in multiple fields with the ideological motivations of the academics involved. Erik Kurlander and Monica Black have notably considered the close relationship between pseudoscientific interpretation of Nordic mythology and neo-pagan, occultist activities that thwarted the post-war treatment of Viking studies as a respectable discipline.⁵ Heather Pringle has further helped renew public interest in twentieth-century ideological scholarship with her book on Himmler's personal motivations for founding the SS Ahnenerbe.⁶ In this general discussion of the inherent issues between science and Nazism, few historians of modern Germany have addressed so-called pseudo-archaeology and its specific relationship to the scientific pursuits of the Third Reich. Most notably, Fabian Link and J. Lawrence Hare have drawn attention to the postwar tendency to label any research activities associated with the Nazi regime as pseudoscience. The two scholars have rightfully claimed that this vehement reaction led to experts within the affected academic fields to either condemn their colleagues or to portray them solely as victims of the Nazi regime.⁷

Furthermore, before the political value of archaeology was recognized by the Nazis, resources available for research into Germanic prehistory were quite scarce. Since earlier scientists had neglected the Middle Ages in favor of the study of classical civilizations, it is an uncomfortable truth that the National Socialists' seizure of power led to the flourishing of Germanic prehistory and its methodical study.⁸ In this context, it is imperative to shed light on the circumstances around Haithabu's acquisition by the SS Ahnenerbe and the appointment of Herbert Jankuhn as the excavation's director by examining the site in the period from 1937 to 1939. The excavations led by Jankuhn and the resulting academic publications invalidate postwar tendency to clearly distinguish between activities termed "Nazi archaeology" and valid scholarly contributions to the field. Even current scholarship, which aims to separate legitimate science from ideology, cannot be used to firmly categorize Haithabu within the pseudoscientific projects of the SS Ahnenerbe. Funded by the SS Ahnenerbe, Herbert Jankuhn's excavation of Haithabu provided contemporary scholars with non-replicable archaeological data, while simultaneously serving as a symbolic

representation of Nordic mythological ideals intended for wider audiences. The archaeologists' scientific pursuits in the 1930s and their long-lasting effects on Germanic prehistory raise the question of how pseudoarchaeology should be studied and treated in a contemporary context. Thus, the archaeological site's dual function necessitates the separation of raw collected data from its ideological interpretation and challenges current classifications of all SS Ahnenerbe activities as inherently pseudoscientific.

Pseudoscience and the SS Ahnenerbe

When the movie "Raiders of the Lost Ark" was released in 1981, the ethical issues of mid-twentieth-century archaeology were brought to the public's attention through an exciting, fictionalized portrayal of archaeological fieldwork that—almost four decades later—is still stirring discussion among real-life archaeologists, passionate movie-goers, and everybody in-between.⁹ Sent to Nepal in order to retrieve the mythical Ark of the Covenant, fictional Major Arnold Ernst Toht became the embodiment of the stereotypical and one-dimensional evil Nazi; portrayed with small round glasses, the character even bore a slight physical resemblance to Heinrich Himmler himself. The German-speaking, evil-grinning Toht was employed by what the Indiana Jones movie universe termed the "Third Reich Special Antiquities Collection"—an unmistakable allusion to the SS Ahnenerbe and the organization's international expeditions in search of mythical relics. By fictionalizing the Nazi regime's specific impact on the field of archaeology, the movies also seemingly justified "the 'loot and scoot' school" so typical during the mid-twentieth century and so despised by contemporary specialists.¹⁰ To this day, many archaeologists see themselves as on a quest to reverse the stereotypes perpetuated by fictional depictions and their long-term consequences for the field. Perhaps, K. Anne Pyburn's description of Indiana Jones as a "white Euro-American stomping into places that are economically dependent on the US and Europe, where he kicks, shoots and punches the anonymous locals, before making off with a priceless treasure, which he plans to 'protect' in a museum" has been the most eloquently expressed criticism of the movies' disservice to academia.¹¹ Combined with the postwar tendency to villainize German scholars, the Indiana Jones franchise has left a permanent mark on the academic study of Nazi science and its sensationalized image in the popular imagination.

That archaeology is a destructive science is a common saying among archaeologists, who have long acknowledged and debated the ethical issues that arise out of excavation's destructive nature.¹² Excavation provides raw data, which is meticulously recorded in field books and day plans, as the original context can never be replicated. When scholars use this evidence, they offer an interpretation of the past, which is inevitably informed by their own biases. Due to the uniqueness of original excavation reports and field notes, archaeology's destructive nature has often led archaeologists to separate between raw data and academic interpretations. Those who study German archaeology deal with this issue either by ignoring Nazi-era digs completely or referencing them without mentioning the scientists'

political affiliations. One good example is Volker Hilberg, whose 2009 article traces Haithabu's excavation history from the site's discovery in 1897 to the present.¹³ The author extensively cites Herbert Jankuhn and many of his colleagues, but never even remotely mentions the site's Nazi sponsorship or the scholars' ties to the Nazi Party. While the fields of history and medieval studies are driven forward by the continuous interpretation of original primary sources, archaeology relies on meticulous recording, which can only be produced by the original excavators. Thus, while the ideas of Nazi scholars should never be considered in isolation from their political beliefs, attempts must be made to separate the available evidence and the raw data from their subsequent interpretation without hiding the source of such data. Such an approach is necessary for the preservation of the data collected by the researchers of the 1930s, which could arguably not have been physically modified for the ideological purposes of the time.

Due to this broader context, it is imperative to not only compare the study of Germanic prehistory to the SS Ahnenerbe's expeditions in regions outside of Northern Europe, but also situate it within the international development of the field at the time. When Heinrich Himmler created the SS Ahnenerbe in 1935, he envisioned it as a think-tank that brought together ethnographers, linguists, archaeologists, philologists, historians, folklorists, musicologists, orientalists, biologists, and even geophysicists. While the goal was relatively straightforward—connecting the entirety of historical human progress to contemporary Aryan Germans—the task of providing academic evidence to support this claim became increasingly hard. When these ancient civilizations were geographically removed from Northern Europe, pseudoscience provided the only justification. Such an approach led to absurd claims that Ancient Rome was built by “blond-haired migrants from the north,” who had also managed to make their way across Inner Asia, conquer the Himalayas, inhabit India, China, Japan, and any other civilizations that the National Socialists seemed to respect.¹⁴ In contrast, the large-scale excavations of Nordic medieval sites funded by the Ahnenerbe are still “generally considered to have been excellent technically” unlike Himmler's quests for mythological objects and ancient relics.¹⁵ Thus, an important distinction must be made between the scholarly projects within Germany and the much more ideological pursuits of the SS Ahnenerbe in the Himalayas and beyond. While the Nazis had to find increasingly bizarre ways to prove the Aryan-ness of regions in Asia or to justify their search for mythical relics, Scandinavia did not provide such an ideological challenge due to its geographic proximity, same language family, and shared medieval oral traditions.

The automatic associations of the SS Ahnenerbe with pseudoscience and political propaganda are particularly problematic when applied to the excavations in Haithabu from 1937 to 1939. Such associations are evidence that discussions of Haithabu's archaeological significance have been overshadowed by the much more sensationalist pseudoscientific enterprises of the SS Ahnenerbe. Since the scholars of the Third Reich saw themselves as the chosen ones “responsible for the entire Germanic region,” they wanted to preserve their cultural heritage rather than to destroy it.¹⁶ Using the most advanced technologies of the

time and relying on their legitimate training as academic experts, the German archaeologists of the 1930s were ultimately not so different from their other European counterparts.

Archaeology at the Site of Haithabu

Haithabu (Heiðabýr), or Hedeby, was a medieval Viking-Age settlement established sometime in the late eighth century. A strategic trade stop, Haithabu gradually developed into a regional capital and captured the attention of Scandinavian rulers further north. Centuries later, the city's destruction at the hands of the King of Norway Harald Hardrada in 1066 became symbolic of the end of the Viking Age itself.¹⁷ By the early decades of the twentieth century, Haithabu had been "rediscovered" by scholars of Germanic prehistory and gained prominence as the most important archaeological site in Schleswig-Holstein—the long-contested region in the German-Danish borderlands, which both countries portrayed as a territory of indisputable national significance.¹⁸ The rise of nineteenth-century nationalism and German unification in 1871 saw the development of Schleswig-Holstein territorial disputes, which were temporarily solved when Schleswig became a Danish territory after Germany's defeat in the First World War. However, the region again changed hands in 1937 due to the National Socialist Greater Hamburg Act, which promoted the occupation of the southern Jutland peninsula. Still, Hedeby—the Danish name for the Viking town—had managed to sustain the interests of Danish scholars, who were involved in the site's research and were interested in collaborating with their German colleagues up until the SS Ahnenerbe's takeover of the project in 1937.¹⁹ While the trade town appeared as an optimistic example of international collaboration and cultural recognition in this earlier period of scholarly interest, Haithabu's three excavation seasons between 1937 and 1939 reveal the competition between various scientific organizations of the National Socialist government and the unprecedented opportunities these tensions provided for ambitious Germanic prehistorians.

Since Haithabu was a site where previous excavations had already taken place since 1900, the SS Ahnenerbe's involvement after 1937 had little impact on the archaeological methods and recording techniques at the dig itself. After the trade town's rediscovery, it had become particularly attractive to rising scholars as no new settlements had been built in the area ever since Haithabu's destruction in 1066. Moreover, the permanently waterlogged Viking-age layers had potentially preserved organic materials such as wood, which allowed for the study of longhouse construction and ship-building.²⁰ Danish and German scholars of the earlier twentieth century even attempted to understand "artifact usage" and "house construction techniques"—facets of experimental archaeology that were among some of the most modern approaches in the field at the time.²¹

The turning point came in 1938 when the SS Ahnenerbe officially began sponsoring the excavation. While Himmler's organization had been involved in the project for several years prior to the financial acquisition, its official sponsorship for the Haithabu project after 1938

directly necessitated an ideological re-evaluation of the trade town's historical interpretation. This official acquisition also led to a structural change with the appointment of German archaeologist Herbert Jankuhn to the position of excavation director. Born in 1905, Jankuhn was only a budding archaeologist when he got involved in the Haithabu project at the age of 27.²² Strikingly, the archaeologist had already joined the SA division of the National Socialist Party in 1934 and had established himself as a prominent political member by the time he became Haithabu's director. In 1937, which coincided with his promotion, the scholar officially became part of the NSDAP.²³ Ultimately, the crucial developments in 1938 when the SS Ahnenerbe began sponsoring the excavation were a result of the need for more funding and the young Herbert Jankuhn's ambitions to establish himself as a promising scholar in the budding field of German prehistory.

Recent research on Nazi-era scholarship has challenged postwar claims that pseudoscience is clearly distinguishable from legitimate research, instead suggesting that numerous respectable and already established academics "entered voluntarily into a mutually beneficial arrangement with the regime."²⁴ In line with this argument, Jankuhn successfully developed a close friendship with founder of the SS Ahnenerbe Heinrich Himmler, which was only strengthened by the latter's personal interests in Germanic prehistory and the Haithabu project. When discussing the nature of their working relationship with Himmler, many in Himmler's immediate circle found their dealings with him quite intimidating. At the time, Himmler's own physical therapist Felix Kersten reminisced on the leader's almost supernaturally malicious nature, stating that "Himmler's mind was not a twentieth-century mind. His character was medieval, feudalistic, Machiavellian, evil."²⁵ Still, it is impossible to measure the extent of Herbert Jankuhn's own National Socialist leanings or to relate them to the archaeologist's opportunistic pursuit of a distinguished academic career. Whatever Jankuhn's personal feelings toward Himmler, the friendship brought undoubtable benefits to both sides. The prehistorian could rely on his respectable position as director to gain academic prominence among his peers and received funding to pursue his own scholarly interests about the historical development of Haithabu, while the SS Ahnenerbe had its scientific authority corroborated through the association with a legitimate archaeological project.

Mid-twentieth-century interpretations of the site were influenced just as much by prevalent notions of nationalism within European schools of archaeology as they were affected by Jankuhn's concessions to Nazi pseudoscience and its search for the origins of the mythical Aryan race. When Haithabu was rediscovered in 1900, the German and Danish archaeologists involved saw themselves accountable to international principles of cultural collaboration and relied on the developing scientific methods of archaeology, which distinguished the field from disciplines that strictly fell into the category of the so-called "softer" humanities.²⁶ Just like many of his European colleagues at the time, Jankuhn had struggled to find funding for his projects; in contrast to other countries, however, Germany and its political leaders of the 1930s realized that a working partnership with Germanic prehistorians would corroborate the regime's ideological aspirations.

Herbert Jankuhn's advantage over the full-fledged pseudoscientists of the SS Ahnenerbe consisted in the prehistorian's ability to adapt his academic interpretations and conclusions to specific audiences. Thus, when his initial excavation report—*Haithabu: A Germanic City of Protohistory*—was published in 1937, the archaeologist made no mention of the SS Ahnenerbe or Heinrich Himmler's involvement. Elements of scientific objectivity could be found in all of Jankuhn's academic works published at the time, despite his growing political affiliation with the NSDAP. During the same period, the scholar was publishing similar materials on Haithabu in respectable, peer-reviewed, English-language journals with no explicit ideological biases or remnants of National Socialist rhetoric.²⁷ However, only a year later he prefaced his new edition of the Haithabu report by writing: "After a relatively short time already a second edition has become necessary. According to the wishes of the publisher, it has been greatly expanded, both by the insertion of new sections and by partial expansion of the old."²⁸ Strikingly, Jankuhn directly admitted that "[t]he deadline of one year, which has elapsed since the publication of the first edition, is too short for new finds in the field to greatly change the image obtained."²⁹ Jankuhn's seemingly vague statement actually signified a critical transition from scientifically objective to ideologically influenced academic work. Proceeding to explicitly thank the Reichsführer—Heinrich Himmler—for making the Haithabu excavation possible, Jankuhn did not even attempt to hide his new connections to the pseudoscientific activities of the SS Ahnenerbe. He called Haithabu's acquisition by the SS Ahnenerbe a "fundamental change," which he believed would bring more resources and recognition to his work.³⁰ Overall, while the scientific facts in the report remained the same, their new ideological framing directly connected the distant medieval past to modern political developments.

In sharp contrast to the preface, however, Jankuhn's report remained largely unaffected by political ideology and racial terminology. Instead, the archaeologist's meticulous recording revealed the technical excellence of his excavation process at Haithabu. The report provided a detailed history of the excavations, beginning with Haithabu's discovery in 1897 by esteemed Danish archaeologist Sophus Müller. The inclusion of excavation plans and artifact images in the report corroborated its legitimacy and scholarly objectivity. The photographs printed in the volume were also evidence of Jankuhn's strong international ties, as many of the images had been provided by Scandinavian museums. In one notable instance, Jankuhn described a peculiar part of the medieval settlement, which appeared to have had three distinct periods of occupation. The German concluded that "a whole series of questions remains open that can only be answered by hypotheses," leaving them for his readers and the broader archaeological community to answer.³¹ Ultimately, Herbert Jankuhn's excavation methods and queries aligned with the general direction of European archaeology in the 1930s.



Abb. 54. Dreifache Hausüberschneidung bei dem Haus I/30 (von Osten).

“Figure 54. Triple House Overlap at House I/30 (from East)” in Herbert Jankuhn, *Eine Germanische Stadt der Frühzeit* (Neumünster, Holstein: Karl Wachholtz Verlag, 1938), 68.

Jankuhn’s relentless ambition to further his career in 1937 had undoubtedly helped him secure his promotion to the prestigious post of excavation director. After the end of the Second World War, similar qualities of perseverance and clever maneuvering allowed the scientist to reclaim his legitimacy as a leading archaeologist of German prehistory, who had advanced the field during his tenure at the Haithabu excavation. In 1943, Jankuhn published the book that arguably saved his career during the uncertain period of denazification trials and his temporary ban from academic research and university teaching—*The Excavations in Haithabu: A Preliminary Excavation Report*. The publication featured incredibly detailed plans depicting the configuration of several Viking-age longhouses and pit-house workshops. The context and exact locations of all finds—arguably the most important aspect in archaeological excavations—had also been meticulously recorded and described in lengthy, systematized lists.³² Undoubtedly, the book was a contribution to the international archaeological community. Despite the continued involvement of the SS Ahnenerbe, Jankuhn seemed to be prioritizing the recording of scientific data over his earlier ideological interpretations found in *Haithabu: A Germanic City of Protohistory*. Edited once more and

republished in 1958, this book-length report allowed Herbert Jankuhn to further solidify his postwar status as a valid scholar. Jankuhn changed the title to *The excavations in Haithabu and their importance for the trading history of the early Middle Ages*—which sounded more scientific than the Nazi-era edition—and removed all remaining traces of pseudo-racial terminology in the report’s more controversial sections.³³ The report’s inclusion of valuable data and the fact that the 1937-1939 excavation context could never be replicated by another team cemented Jankuhn’s status as a respectable postwar archaeologist. However controversial, Jankuhn’s published reports have provided a foundation and even a reference point for subsequent archaeological studies of Haithabu.

Archaeology’s destructive nature can seem especially daunting in the context of Nazi pseudoscience and the perpetual possibility for archaeological materials to simply fall into the wrong hands. On a more positive note, excavation can also be an extremely slow and meticulous process, which Jankuhn certainly acknowledged and preferred over an unsystematic destruction of his own cultural heritage. Even more optimistically, only five percent of Haithabu has ever been excavated, leaving intact an overwhelmingly large part of the site’s archaeological record to be recovered by future generations with more advanced technologies. This has already enabled modern archaeologists to find evidence that Haithabu was a very culturally and ethnically diverse site of occupation during the Viking Age.³⁴ It must always be acknowledged that Jankuhn’s varying interpretations of Haithabu’s archaeological significance were inextricably tied to National Socialist funding and ideological influence. However, the raw data collected during the period—excavation plans, layer reconstructions, lists of finds, structures, and features—was not directly affected by pseudoscientific trends or altered in the subsequently published excavation reports.

Haithabu’s Symbolic Significance

As the SS Ahnenerbe was taking over the excavations at Haithabu and Herbert Jankuhn was fighting to secure his position as director, an imagined version of the Viking Age town took on a life of its own. In 1936, German poet and writer Heinar Schilling published *Haithabu: A Germanic Troy*—an ambitious book that synthesized historical knowledge, racialized ideology, and the imagination of its author to create a cohesive narrative about the trade town’s glorious Viking past. Narrating that Haithabu’s construction was completed by 775 CE, Schilling victoriously called the event “the emergence of the new German Reich.”³⁵

Besides the explicit use of the name Haithabu, the book was virtually unrelated to the excavation site; it seems to have been intended as a popular read for the general public. Featuring illustrations of Vikings victoriously looking out into vast fields, fighting battles to protect the city, and setting out on voyages across the oceans, the book appears as a type of historical novel that romanticized the Germanic Middle Ages. Still, these images were interspersed with maps of the Scandinavian region and even a royal genealogy tree that added a sense of scientific authority or historicity to Schilling’s narrative. Schilling’s semi-fictional book serves as a prime example of how the National Socialists’ ideological

propaganda and the SS Ahnenerbe's scientific projects were presented to general audiences as complementary information that showcased the historical progress of Germanic Aryans.

Unfortunately, no available records provide evidence for the book's reception in the Third Reich. Furthermore, no scholar has ever addressed Schilling's semi-fictional work and related it to contemporaneous developments at the archaeological site. What is certain, however, is Haithabu's symbolic value as the Aryan Germans' link to an idealized past and the site's immense popularity among Nazi supporters. At one point, there were even plans to hold a political rally at the archaeological site in the style of an *Althing*—the annual legal council held by the Viking Age Scandinavians and later continued by medieval Icelanders.³⁶ These circumstances provide all the more reason to consider the book as a crossover into full-fledged pseudoscience.

While the archaeological evidence itself could not corroborate Nazi ideology, the mere existence of the excavation site allowed for a misrepresentation of the past, which conflated this imagined version of Haithabu with pseudoscientific notions of Viking society supposedly found in Old Norse sources. Historian Bernard Mees has highlighted the extremely important distinction between the various projects of the SS Ahnenerbe and the Amt Rosenberg—a rival organization founded by prominent Nazi ideologue Alfred Rosenberg, which much more explicitly dealt with pseudoscience and its various applications to the racialized propaganda of the regime.³⁷ In its official function, the SS Ahnenerbe was not “a place for reform of the educational system, or of propaganda, or ideological pedagogy of a more explicit form,” which were the main occupations of the Amt Rosenberg.³⁸ Due to the competition between these two government organizations, it is essential to distinguish the pseudoscientific representations of Haithabu from the actual archaeological excavations during the period.

This misuse of the then-ongoing research at Haithabu becomes even clearer after a look at Rosenberg and his neo-paganist interpretation of the Vikings found in his magnum opus—*The Myth of the Twentieth Century*. Rosenberg was fascinated by paganism and Nordic mythology from a nationalistic, philosophical perspective and was personally interested in the projects funded by the SS Ahnenerbe. “Odin is dead,” Rosenberg proclaims at one point in his ideological book, channeling Nietzsche's famous assertion and using it to justify neo-paganism as an entirely new form of religion simply inspired by Old Norse mythology.³⁹ While this interpretation of medieval Scandinavian religion does not initially seem related to Nazi archaeology and the Haithabu project, Rosenberg's powerful influence and his pseudoscientific ideology can be directly connected to the excavations. In a 1937 letter addressed to a Swedish colleague, Danish archaeologist Johannes Brøndsted suggested Rosenberg's inescapable influence by writing: “I spoke today with Dr. Mackeprang about the question of German-Danish-Swedish collaborative work at Haithabu . . . One cannot know what, for example, Alfred Rosenberg would undertake or order undertaken.”⁴⁰ Through the pervasive power of political influence, Alfred Rosenberg and his neo-pagan philosophy essentially bridged the gap between the scientific involvement of the SS Ahnenerbe and the refashioning of Nordic mythology into modern propaganda by the Amt Rosenberg.

While the excavations at Haithabu allowed for an unprecedented recognition of Germanic prehistorians, their use for ideological purposes exposes the underlying tensions between the SS Ahnenerbe and the Amt Rosenberg. This competition between various scientific organizations of the National Socialist government initially created the perfect environment of competition for ambitious Germanic prehistorians like Jankuhn. Ironically, less than a decade later these same career-seeking scholars were attempting to distance themselves and their research increasingly further away from Nazi Germany's failed government. These interplaying factors ultimately bridge the gap between the scientific involvement of the SS Ahnenerbe and the pseudoscientific approach of Nazi ideologues, blurring the distinction between the real Haithabu of Jankuhn's excavation plans and the fictionalized Viking-age settlement glorified in Heinar Schilling's semi-fictional work.

Conclusion

Attendees of the 1969 annual prehistoric-themed costume party at the University of Gottingen witnessed quite a spectacle when Professor Herbert Jankuhn appeared mockingly dressed up as then-leader of the People's Republic of China Mao Zedong. Apparently, the controversial arrangement had been the result of a conversation between the academic and his wife, which ended with Mrs. Jankuhn giving her Chinese-inspired costume for the party to her husband instead. Needless to say, the controversial choice of dress angered the socialist-leaning students and scholars in the room, while also implicitly reminding them of the archaeologist's controversial political past.⁴¹ Whatever Jankuhn's intended message for the university-affiliated attendants that day, this short anecdote from his then-student Wolf-Dieter Tempel casts light upon the archaeologist's quite unwavering political leanings.

While Herbert Jankuhn's Nazi sympathies are unquestionable, his archaeological findings at Haithabu are still indispensable and their context *in situ* can never be replicated. Thus, it is necessary to separate the useful evidence uncovered by Jankuhn from his numerous, ever-changing interpretations of that evidence. Moreover, the relationship between archaeology at Haithabu and Nazi pseudoscience was a convoluted one—it passed through folklore, mythology, and glorification of the Germanic Middle Ages. In this indirect modification of scientific information, Jankuhn's personal convictions and his closeness with Heinrich Himmler enabled him to distance the legitimate research taking place at Haithabu from the Ahnenerbe's more pseudoscientists pursuits. More than seventy years after the fall of the Third Reich, modern archaeologists must fairly assess the contentious works of Nazi-era academics, rather than dismiss them as inherently pseudoscientific. For, after all, if that approach is to be followed through and Herbert Jankuhn's publications are doomed to oblivion on the dusty shelf of Nazi pseudoscience, then reruns of Indiana Jones movies would also have to be banned from the small screen. The latter simply happen to be more entertaining.

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“TRY THIS EXPERIMENT”: EMPOWERING BLACK WOMEN REFORMERS AT WASHINGTON’S NATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Bennett Miller

Abstract: In the early twentieth century, black women were thoroughly excluded from America’s growing juvenile justice system. Few states or local governments funded institutions to aid black delinquent girls, while professional black women could not access influential state jobs like their white counterparts. Washington’s National Training School for Girls was unusual in housing an almost-entirely black population, but still operated under white-only leadership. However, an unsuccessful attempt to reform the beleaguered school in the 1930s created an opportunity for African American women to take positions of power in D.C.’s juvenile justice system. By leveraging their racial and gender identity to argue that they alone could bring peace to the school, black female reformers who were previously compelled to pursue welfare efforts outside the state were able to gain influential positions within it. Although ultimately yielding few benefits for incarcerated black girls, this acquisition of power challenges prevailing notions of the relationship between black professional women and the state juvenile justice apparatus.

Key words: National Training School for Girls, juvenile justice, juvenile delinquency, Washington D.C., African American education, Carrie Weaver Smith, Rachel Galloway, waywardness, incarceration, progressive reform

Introduction

On May 2, 1938, Elwood Street testified before Congress to protest the defunding of Washington D.C.’s National Training School for Girls. As Washington’s Director of Public Welfare, Street warned that eliminating the recently renovated school would leave the city with nowhere to house the 60 black delinquent girls incarcerated there. Senator Royal S. Copeland, a conservative Democrat from New York, interjected with a suggestion. “We could take them down and push them off the dock, couldn’t we?” The audience laughed, but the joke was on them.¹

Among all senators in 1938, Copeland was perhaps most concerned with the care of delinquent girls and his quip alluded to the Washington elite’s growing frustration over the status of the National Training School. After a two-year attempt to improve conditions through progressive reforms and facility improvements backed by considerable federal funding, the institution hardly showed any sign of progress since its founding 40 years prior. But in this moment of general exasperation, the city’s African American community seized an opportunity. Black activists argued that designating the school for the exclusive treatment of black girls and turning its administration over to professional black women would lower costs and stem the rampant racial conflict that kept splashing onto the pages of the city’s newspapers. After concerted lobbying, the National Training School became an all-black institution run entirely by black women.

This paper places the National Training School story within a broader narrative of race in America’s juvenile justice system. Most literature covering juvenile justice in the first half of the 20th century focuses on state-controlled reform institutions run by white professional administrators that primarily served white adolescents.² While many studies have meaningfully engaged with work done by African American reformers through the National Association of Colored Women and other organizations, they primarily attend to how black reformers functioned outside of the purview of state reform efforts; how they set up their own private institutions when government did not meet the needs of the black community.³ The evolution of the National Training School for Girls connects these two threads, demonstrating how a breakdown in Washington’s white-run system for rehabilitating delinquent girls enabled black women to assert claims to state power and gain access to leadership positions in government from which they were previously excluded. In charting the resulting experiences of black female reformers working under state auspices, this paper also discusses the structural racial and gender barriers that kept them from achieving transformative change.

Building a Racialized “Maternal State”

The state-run juvenile justice apparatus that black women in D.C. fought to enter in the 1930s grew out of the Progressive movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As with other aspects of the Progressive cause, motivations behind the growth of a juvenile justice system generally stemmed from America’s rapid industrialization and urbanization that seemed to threaten morality and decency. For the middle and upper-class white women who represented the activist base of the Progressive movement, these issues posed particularly acute threats to young women and girls. In the crowded tenements of America’s cities, progressives worried that poor conditions, lack of privacy, and overworked parents impeded proper female development. Urban centers appeared rife with temptation and vice, drawing women toward dangerous promiscuity and creating openings for sexual abuse and trafficking. When “unadjusted” girls came in contact with the penal system,

progressives were incensed that they received little institutional support and were often sent to prisons and workhouses with hardened adult criminals.⁴

In conceptualizing these dangers, progressive reformers developed and clarified the construct of delinquency.⁵ In the broadest sense, progressives conceived of the delinquent child as the aberrant product of the inadequate society surrounding them. Because of the conditions of their upbringing, delinquent children did not conform to what progressives perceived as appropriate moral or legal standards; they engaged in criminal behavior and, in the case of girls, promiscuity and prostitution. These activities put youth at risk of becoming part of the criminal class which progressives viewed as disruptive to any society. Thus emerged the category of delinquency—what reformers constructed and presented as self-evident in order to identify those who embodied the dissolution of prevailing values and beliefs of the time. As Anthony Platt argues in *The Child Savers*, progressives “invented new categories of youthful misbehavior which had been hitherto unappreciated,” basing these categories in legal and social standards that reflected their well-to-do backgrounds.⁶ In all, progressives envisioned the delinquent, wayward, and fallen young people of their era as both a sad failure of American society and a serious threat to it, representing a moral wrong needing compassionate remedy and a practical danger needing appropriate attention.

As with other issues, progressive reformers sought to address these concerns through the application of state power. Initially, these efforts focused on shielding women and girls from abuse and exploitation, exemplified by crusades against urban “white slavery” and successful attempts to implement age of consent laws across nearly all jurisdictions.⁷ As notions of female agency broadened, however, reformers sought to build a comprehensive system for correcting wayward and delinquent girls through government interventions. Beginning with Illinois in 1899, progressives secured the creation of juvenile courts that would address children’s issues and adjudicate with an eye toward rehabilitation and redemption rather than punishment. As an extension of this system, reformers lobbied for police and probation officers who would be specifically trained and assigned to handle delinquent cases. For cases in which these efforts proved insufficient, progressives called for state-run reformatories, structured around more charitable than penal values, to remove girls from dangerous influences and provide a secure place to educate and carefully guide them through the dangerous years of adolescence and into productive adulthood.⁸ Though a loose patchwork of juvenile reform institutions arose during the mid-19th century, reformers sought to consolidate them under the auspices of government and cohere them into a “maternal state” that could raise girls when parents and communities had failed them.⁹

In positioning the state to address the needs of young women, female progressive reformers also established themselves to be the individuals putting that state power to work. Private efforts to build youth support systems in the 19th century were typically spearheaded by female reformers, and as they lobbied for the state to take charge of such systems, they simultaneously argued that their positions of leadership and authority should be maintained. In a 1911 speech, Chicago progressive leader Louise de Koven Bowen argued

that women should not have “the door shut in their faces” when their longtime efforts were “taken over into the halls of the state,” but should rather be allowed to bring their unique insight into the needs of children and families within government.¹⁰ The idea of women as “natural caretakers” was commonly held during the period and progressive women took advantage of this more conservative view of women to argue that they were better fit to take charge of certain maternal tasks involving the education and correction of children.¹¹ Educated white women secured jobs as juvenile court judges, police and probation officers assigned to female and juvenile issues, and staffers and administrators in reform schools for female delinquents. The result was an unprecedented increase in the number of women employed in government, giving female professionals access to levers of power that were previously reserved for men alone.¹²

But for black women and girls, the rehabilitation options and employment opportunities created by the burgeoning Progressive juvenile justice system were almost uniformly inaccessible. In the northeastern and midwestern cities where Progressive reform efforts were most pronounced, African Americans typically represented only a small sliver of the population. Most reformers focused on the seemingly larger and more pressing needs of impoverished and immigrant white girls. In *The Delinquent Child and the Home*, a 1912 examination of Chicago’s youth that became a central text within the Progressive juvenile cause, black children were never addressed as a specific group needing attention and instead dismissed as representing less than 5 percent of young people in the city.¹³ In Southern states, where most African Americans lived, the advent of juvenile justice programs in the 1890s coincided with the rise of Jim Crow and adhered to its ethos of unequal racial segregation. State governments created reform schools and programs that were open solely to white girls, while typically providing few alternatives to black children other than penitentiaries and workhouses.¹⁴

Just as black children were kept from receiving benefits from most Progressive juvenile justice advances, middle-class and upper-class black women were prevented from helping to shape them. Black activists were almost entirely excluded from white-led Progressive groups, and black civic and advocacy groups were refused recognition from national organizations like the Child Welfare League of America.¹⁵ In northern and western states that made limited reform facilities available to black girls, some black women served as matrons and teachers for black incarcerated, but were shut out of significant leadership roles.¹⁶ In the Jim Crow south, where few if any state-founded juvenile institutions served African American girls, not even those limited roles were available to professional black women.

In response to the state’s unwillingness to aid or protect black delinquents and their own exclusion for existing avenues for advocacy, black women built their own institutions. Groups like the Colored Women’s League of Washington D.C. and Alabama’s “Ten Times One is Ten Club” built on the tradition of post-emancipation mutual aid societies to raise money from black communities to build facilities that housed black children in need. These institutions were typically created for boys first and only later, if financing permitted, for

girls as well. Though drawing support from across the black community, these institutions were typically run by educated, well-to-do black women who, in many ways, paralleled the white female leaders of the mainstream Progressive movement.¹⁷ Many leading black reformers attended prominent universities like Howard and Oberlin; they also came from and married within the black community's socio-economic elite. Much like their white counterparts, these black women supported the rehabilitation of delinquent children through compassionate, if paternalistic, care provided in reform schools. By curbing delinquency, especially instances of promiscuity among black girls, African American reformers hoped to undercut stereotypical depictions of the black race as criminal and unruly and thereby expand their access to wider American society.¹⁸

The preeminent example of private black facilities for female delinquents was the Virginia Industrial School For Colored Girls. The school was created by Janie Porter Barrett, a Hampton University-educated cofounder of both the Virginia Federation of Colored Women's Clubs and the National Association of Colored Women. Though Virginia's black community established a private school for dependent African American children, neither it nor the state government created any facilities for housing delinquent black girls, causing child offenders as young as eight-years-old being sent to adult prisons for minor offenses. To stem this problem, Barrett raised money to purchase a small farm to use it as a reform school for wayward girls. Opening in 1915, the school provided education up to grade eight and trained girls for careers as domestic workers, the main avenue of work available to black women in the period. Beyond educational and vocational training, Barrett sought to instill racial pride by covering topics in African American history and celebrating black cultural accomplishments.¹⁹

Schools like Barrett's maintained tenuous relationships with the state governments whose inadequacies they arose to address. Many schools, upon being opened with private funds, received some degree of state funding, though often the amount varied considerably year-to-year or was hardly anything at all.²⁰ Without consistent funding, many private black institutions struggled to stay afloat; for instance, North Carolina's Efland School for delinquent girls collapsed in the 1930s amidst a crippling lack of financial resources.²¹ Black institutions also relied on the state to provide them with effective guardianship over delinquent girls. While most states were eager to offload the costs of incarcerating children, some, including South Carolina, continued to commit young girls to the penitentiary despite the availability of black-run rehabilitation facilities. Though eventually some reform schools, including Barrett's Industrial School for Colored Girls, became entirely financially integrated within state juvenile systems, most struggled to persist along its margins.²²

Progressive Reform at Washington's National Training School for Girls

At the start of the Progressive Era, the racial landscape and power structures of Washington D.C. were unlike those of any other American city. In contrast to Chicago and other prototypical centers of progressive reform in the north and west, Washington was

home to a substantial African American population. Already a major hub of the free black community in the antebellum period, Washington's African American population grew rapidly in the years following the Civil War as thousands of freedmen poured into the city in search of housing and employment. By 1900, the nation's capital was over 30 percent black, making it the largest African American community in the U.S.²³ At the same time, D.C.'s limited industrial development gave little impetus for the growth of the sort of immigrant populations that defined Chicago, New York, and other major urban areas.²⁴

While the district's large black population and scarcity of European immigrants was relatively similar to other southern metropolises, the distinct dynamics of its racial and political systems made it wholly unlike other cities below the Mason-Dixon line. Fundamentally, Washington did not strictly adhere to the racial caste system of Jim Crow South's *Herrenvolk* democracy—a social democracy for the favored race. In fact, Washington did not operate under a democratic system at all. Though the city functioned as a kind of an interracial democracy during much of Reconstruction, conservative leaders succeeded in having Congress assume direct control over Washington in 1874. The city's local institutions were eliminated in favor a three-man commission whose members were presidentially-appointed. Although such a system denied Washingtonians a direct say in the functioning of their own government, it also effectively eliminated the possibility of Jim Crow policies comparable to those of the Deep South taking root in the city, since preventing the formation of black political power, unfortunately, meant far less whites would vigorously push for further dispossession of black citizens.²⁵ While the city was hardly free of racial segregation or division, much of it created through the efforts of southern congressmen, Washington was much less repressive toward its black population compared to cities of similar demographics.²⁶

This relatively tolerant climate enabled D.C. to become the preeminent center of black political and socio-economic power in turn-of-the-century America. In the years after white redeemers regained control of the south in the 1870s, scores of prominent African American politicians and leaders, including Mississippi senator Blanche Bruce and Louisiana governor P. B. S. Pinchback, moved to Washington and intermingled with the city's leading black families, like that of Frederick Douglass. Under Republican administrations and a relatively friendly business environment, this class of elite black men enjoyed access to well-paying federal jobs and started prosperous businesses. The upper crust of black society organized to fund quality public schools and, though denied political power like all other Washington residents, formed influential civic associations.²⁷ However, this freedom and opportunity was only available to a slim sliver of the broader black population, which neared 90,000 in 1900. The majority of Washington's black residents lived in crowded, squalid conditions, often in alleys snaking behind the city's grand boulevards. Disease, infant mortality, and police persecution were commonplace, while avenues for economic and educational advancement were generally inaccessible. Besides these disparities of condition, the poorer black population was physically distinguished from Washington's African American elite, almost all of whom were fairer-skinned and mixed race.²⁸ Though commonly

living just blocks apart, the strata of black Washington were highly disparate communities united by an imposed racial designation and little else.

The unique racial dynamics of Washington D.C. contributed to the development of a juvenile justice apparatus for delinquent girls that differed in many ways from those of other major cities. The city’s primary institution for housing male delinquents, known starting in 1908 as the National Training School for Boys, evolved from piecemeal accommodations created by private interests in the 1860s to care for and incarcerate wayward boys. Later in the century, the institution was brought under state auspices, specifically those of the federal Department of Justice. With a program emphasizing military discipline, the school housed both federal and local delinquent offenders on more penal than charitable principles.²⁹

In the 1880s, many of Washington’s prominent citizens, including Alexander Graham Bell, moved to create an equivalent institution for girls.³⁰ The leading advocates for the new institution were not Progressive reformers so much as the city’s central governing figures, including the police chief and chief justice of the D.C. court. They argued that existing deficiencies in corrective options turned girls into criminals and that the city needed a place where wayward women could be “controlled and disciplined and taught good morals.” Though concerned with improving girls, the proponents of the new reform school intended it to be run by the Department of Justice along penal lines. While testifying in support of funding the school, Mills Dean, the secretary of the Department’s board of trustees, clarified unironically to a House committee that the school “is not a charitable institution at all; it is a prison.”³¹

Unusually for the era, the proposed school was not intended to serve white girls exclusively. However, this characteristic speaks more to the specific motivations of the school’s advocates than to a wider notion of racial egalitarianism. The Washington leaders who lobbied for Congress to create a reform school were concerned about limiting crime and proposed creating an carceral institution to do so. While a greater focus on uplifting and helping girls might have produced more dissent on the school’s potential interracial makeup, marking the school as an available destination for any delinquent girl was a logical policy in keeping with its intended goal of limiting crime. Regardless, the black community backed the project as a key step toward protecting young girls. In the *Washington Bee*, African American editor William Calvin Chase instructed “every member of the race [to] urge upon [Congress]” to fund the school, voicing hope that the new facility could meaningfully keep black youth who are “poorer and less able to defend themselves” out of the criminal justice system proper.³² After a lengthy legislative process, Congress allocated funds to open the Reform School for Girls—later renamed the National Training School for Girls—at Conduit and Loughboro roads in Northwest D.C. in 1893.

Although open to white and black girls, the National Training School (NTS) quickly fit into a racialized juvenile justice system in Washington that provided unequal care for delinquent children of different races. Even before the opening of the school, D.C.’s judicial system treated girls of color much more severely than their white counterparts. In 1890,

1,112 girls were arrested by Washington police. 340 of them were sent to an adult workhouse; all 340 were black.³³ This disparity was caused in part by the other options available for housing white delinquents, specifically two small, private institutions dedicated to aiding wayward white girls. In the years after NTS opened, though, the number of institutions treating white delinquents multiplied dramatically. The D.C. government opened an industrial school for white girls and developed an extensive foster care system geared toward placing others in local homes. Other private institutions, including the Florence Crittenton Home and the Catholic-run House of the Good Shepherd, accepted large numbers of white girls, but not girls of color.³⁴ Though a handful of white girls were housed at the National Training School at any given time, they were mostly those convicted of more serious crimes or sent to the school by federal judges from outside of Washington.³⁵ Still, white female reformers in the Women’s Christian Temperance Union lobbied the District to build another training school for exclusively white girls to make sure none were ever “crowded out” from NTS by black girls.³⁶

While white delinquent girls could be held at a variety of institutions, the National Training School was effectively the only place where the city could send black delinquent girls. Likely because the state provided some base level of care for African American girls, the city’s black population did not establish their own private institution for black delinquents.³⁷ With no other places to be sent by the city’s juvenile courts, black female girls typically made up between 85 and 95 percent of the NTS population at any given time. Black girls could be sent to the school for felonies like assault, but most were incarcerated by the juvenile court for what were classified as petty offenses like truancy, running away, or having a venereal disease. Because of the paucity of housing options for black girls in need, the school also contained unwed mothers and people with mental illness.³⁸ The mismatch between white and black residents of the school led to common misconceptions that black girls committed to NTS were sent there after committing offenses as serious as those of their white counterparts. Many political and civic leaders dismissed black girls at NTS as thoroughly incorrigible “prostitutes and thieves,” when in fact many could be and were sent to the school after “for even the smallest offense.”³⁹ Though integrated as an institution, the school was internally segregated, with black girls committed to NTS having separate housing, dining, educational, recreational facilities than white girls, as well as a partially-black support staff.⁴⁰

From its founding in 1893 through the 1930s, the mostly black population of the NTS received persistently terrible care. Girls received little education or vocational training, and were so poorly clothed that they could not venture outside during winter.⁴¹ The number of girls escaping annually from the school frequently exceeded the number being committed to it. D.C. police officers were regularly called to quell violent episodes, including a 1922 riot during which nearly every girl in the facility temporarily escaped.⁴² Several attempts were made to improve the school’s condition, including transferring its oversight from the Department of Justice to the D.C. Board of Public Welfare, but they resulted in little practical progress. Another plan to move the school’s few white incarcerateds to a facility in

Muirkirk, Maryland was carried out but swiftly undone in the face of cost overruns. In the 1931 Wickersham Report, a comprehensive accounting of the federal criminal justice system, the school was criticized for its lack of meaningful rehabilitation programs and for maintaining a “dismal restrictive appearance that reflects its spirit.”⁴³ By July 1935, the dire situation led the D.C. juvenile court to halt all non-essential commitments to the school, sending only two girls to NTS over the eight months that followed and reducing its population from just under a hundred to seventy-one.⁴⁴

As conditions at the NTS reached a seeming nadir, the D.C. government took a major step toward reversing the school’s fortunes. After the retirement of longtime female superintendent Lottie Richardson in February 1936, the city’s Board of Public Welfare hired Carrie Weaver Smith to head the institution. At forty-one, Smith was born in Georgia in 1885 to a well-to-do family with a long slave-holding tradition.⁴⁵ When she was twenty-five, she had earned a medical degree from the Women’s Medical College in Philadelphia and, having shifted her plans away from international missionary work, found her calling in aiding disadvantaged women and girls. After working as a physician at a women’s “rescue home” in Dallas, Smith lobbied to create and was selected to lead the State Training School for Girls in Gainesville, Texas.⁴⁶

A highly-educated, professional woman from a comfortable background, Smith thoroughly embodied the principles and characteristics of progressive juvenile reform and reformers. Through journal articles and speeches before organizations like the National Conference of Social Work, she promoted a theory of delinquency that placed blame for youth offenders’ misdeeds on the situations of their upbringing, from incompetent parents and poor diet and housing to failing public schools and court systems that were inept at addressing juvenile concerns. Like many other progressives, Smith demanded that the state intervene to correct these issues by regulating housing standards and constructing and maintaining reformatories based on modern best-practices. Although she never personally worked to implement them, Smith also shared a common progressive willingness to enforce eugenic standards, encouraging government to ponder preventing “idiots, epileptics, syphilitics, and tuberculars” from breeding inevitably-delinquent children.⁴⁷ At Gainesville, Smith received the chance to put her progressive ideas into practice. The all-white girls at the State Training School were housed in small cottages, received quality classroom education, domestic science training, and sex hygiene instruction, and were encouraged to pursue sports as well as different leisure activities. Smith’s efforts were praised by the Progressive community for effectively translating the benevolent ideas of juvenile justice reform into productive practice.⁴⁸

After garnering further acclaim for her later work at Maryland’s Montrose School for Delinquent Girls and time in the federal government, Smith came to D.C. to implement progressive standards at the National Training School. With the encouragement of city welfare director Elwood Street, Smith embarked on a campaign to raise awareness of the facility’s decrepit state.⁴⁹ She invited senators and representatives assigned to committees handling District affairs to tour the facility and made no attempt whatsoever to hide its

woeful state. After visiting NTS, the aforementioned Senator Copeland declared it was “barbaric, disgraceful, and antediluvian” and remarked that he would “send a girl to hell before I’d send her there.”⁵⁰ Other visitors included First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who in one of her “My Day” columns described how ashamed she felt to tour the rat-infested facility.⁵¹ Days later, Roosevelt invited the girls housed at NTS to attend an afternoon picnic on the White House lawn, an invitation which made national news and further highlighted the need for reform at the school.⁵²

Smith quickly moved to leverage the publicity generated to bring about change at the school. With the support of Copeland and other legislators who had witnessed the school’s conditions firsthand, she secured a \$100,000 appropriation for considerable capital improvements at NTS. These projects, to be constructed by the Works Progress Administration, included a new heating system, auditorium, and additional small cottages that would allow Smith to better replicate the setup that brought her success at Gainesville. When the Board of Public Welfare and the federal Office of Management and Budget attempted to replace the cottages with larger dormitories, Smith wrote to Eleanor Roosevelt, who used her influence to preserve Smith’s plans for smaller housing units.⁵³ Within the school, Smith ensured the girls received classes and vocational training on a daily basis and organized concerts, sports, plays, and outings in D.C. to keep the girls occupied. Girls were paid in brass discs for their work around the school, minus deductions for room, board, and healthcare, and were able to spend their surplus at a small store Smith established.

To ease overcrowding, reduce overhead, and simplify the reform process, Smith also organized the parole and transfer of as many girls as possible from NTS. While white girls could be transferred to other institutions when needed, D.C. had no facilities other than NTS to house black female delinquents. Given this constraint, Smith consistently petitioned the city’s Board of Public Welfare to parole girls from the school. Initially the Board was compliant, paroling eighteen NTS girls, sixteen of them black, within Smith’s two months on the job. By the end of her first year, twenty-two more were released by the Board.⁵⁴ But the Board also pushed back against Smith’s plans for the blanket paroling of older girls and the permanent removal of all pregnant, married, and “feebleminded” girls from the school.⁵⁵ In spite of this rejection, Smith issued day passes freely and paroled five girls without authorization.⁵⁶ She also bucked the Board’s dictum that no girl with a venereal disease should be allowed outside of the school. While these decisions would come back to haunt Smith when she petitioned to get her job back in 1939, they enabled her to reduce NTS to just twenty-one black girls, rendering the school’s population effectively black-only.⁵⁷

As a white woman administering a state-run, effectively all-black female reform school along progressive principles, Smith had little precedent to draw on.⁵⁸ Broadly, the goals she outlined for the NTS—from progressive education to individualized care that emphasized treating girls with dignity and respect—remained constant from her time running the all-white State Training School in Texas. However, Smith was conscious of the racial difference at play at NTS and attempted to tailor her program to meet what she saw as the needs of black girls. For instance, Smith wrote and directed a morality play that sought to instruct

the school's African American girls about the importance of hard work, with a “southern mammy” character played by black NTS teacher Catherine Robeson teaching a group of young black characters that the world is not “made only for dancing and music.”⁵⁹ While working internally to leverage racial notions in an effort to connect with the Nationals Training School's black girls, Smith defended the school's population from external racist criticism. When a *Time* magazine reader called NTS girls visiting the White House “revolting,” Smith wrote an emphatic letter in reply that denounced such a racial “anachronism” and was signed as “a born southerner, but aspiring Christian.”⁶⁰

Though conscious of the racial complexities at play within the NTS, Smith ultimately proved unable to stem racial tension and anger. In her first year on the job, Smith received widespread praise for her work, with Eleanor Roosevelt remarking on a return visit to NTS that the school was remarkably improved and that Dr. Smith “should be very proud of what has been accomplished.”⁶¹ As construction wrapped up, seven white girls and three black girls were returned to the school as the first steps toward restoring its full, multi-racial population. But on June 24, 1937, a black NTS resident who had been allowed to leave the school on an errand returned drunk and began arguing with a white girl about a boxing match from two days earlier in which black fighter Joe Louis won the heavyweight title over white star James Braddock. After the white girl reportedly used a racial epithet, a wider conflict broke out between eleven black and seven white girls that required police to subdue. In her public response to the incident, Smith emphasized the centrality of the racial issues at play, arguing that that “there is no problem more urgent than understanding and sympathy between the two races.”⁶²

Though order was briefly restored to NTS, violence returned three months later. On September 29, a class of black students rioted after their African American sewing instructor was replaced with a white woman. The ensuing struggle lasted over 90 minutes and again required police action to resolve.⁶³ The *Evening Star's* report of the event claimed that windows were smashed, police attacked with bricks, and that NTS attendants were scalded when girls threw hot soup on them. Smith denied the sensational account of the disturbance and attributed the cause of the violence to the “presence of colored male workers” who were finishing the school's new cottages.⁶⁴ The D.C. Board of Public Welfare deemed Smith's explanations unsatisfactory and asked her to resign. When she refused, D.C. Board of Commissioners fired her “for the good of the service.”⁶⁵

Professional Black Women Take Charge

For many, Smith's firing landed like a declaration of failure for the well-publicized and well-funded progressive reform effort at the National Training School. On Capitol Hill, legislators who had voted to appropriate funds for the school's betterment were incensed that their expenditure had seemingly come to naught. In January 1938, Representative Ross Collins of Mississippi, an ardent segregationist who chaired the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the District of Columbia, moved to defund the school entirely. Given

renovation costs and the temporary removal of girls during Smith’s twenty-month tenure at NTS, per capita costs had risen dramatically and Collins railed against such wasteful expenditures that, at least superficially, dwarfed any comparable institution in the area.⁶⁶ In a meeting with Elwood Street, the congressman declared that “my constituents wouldn’t stand for spending all that money on niggers.”⁶⁷ Collins argued that the failed school should be shut down and “these criminal girls” moved to the penitentiary at Lorton, Virginia.⁶⁸

The District’s child welfare establishment assertively fought to prevent the closing of the NTS but struggled to offer any path toward improving it. Street told Congress that the city had neither the space to house the black girls currently held there, nor the legal authority to void juvenile court orders. City law also banned the detaining of minors in adult prisons, as Collins proposed to do. Testifying as a private citizen, Carrie Weaver Smith declared that the school’s segregated setup would continue to create “constant irritation and friction” and that there was no viable path toward reversing its “miserable tradition,” but cautioned against arbitrarily closing it. Other prominent activists, including future NAACP executive director Roy Wilkins, petitioned Congress to keep the school open.⁶⁹ Despite being included in a budget that passed the House, Collins’ attempt to close NTS was ultimately rejected. Neither the D.C. nor federal government, however, proposed long-term plans for the future of the school.

Amidst this period of crisis and uncertainty, Washington’s black community began a concerted effort to designate the NTS exclusively for black delinquent girls and have it run by professional black women. This effort was led by organizations like the Ministers’ Alliance of Washington, whose members’ churches were prominent settings for activism in the African American community. Speaking before Congress, activists like Reverend R. W. Brooks emphasized the severity of the problem at NTS—for instance describing the intractable “sex perversion” of the school’s “subnormal” girls—before positioning black leaders as the only people able to possibly resolve it. Much as white progressive women had leveraged their perceived maternal qualities to gain positions of authority, Brooks presented the black identity as an indispensable attribute needed to resolve the school’s racial crisis. In his testimony, Brooks argued that, by virtue of not being black, it was “impossible for a white executive to have the sympathetic interest in, or have a knowledge of, all the problems pertaining to a colored delinquent girl” in the decisive way a black administrator could. Asserting that there was little to lose given the present state of the school, Brooks called for D.C. to “try this experiment” and place an “outstanding colored woman executive” in charge of the National Training School.⁷⁰

Although initially unsuccessful, black activists persisted in attempting to assert African American control over NTS. In 1939, one year after rejecting efforts to defund the school, Congress moved to cap its expenditures at \$500 per girl per year, well below the minimum operating costs of the facility. When a congressional delegation led by Rep. George Mahon visited the school soon after, they found conditions had deteriorated and the school’s educational and vocational programs had been effectively suspended. In this environment, black activists again pressured Congress to make the school exclusively black, arguing that

by eliminating the wasteful redundancy required by a segregated facility, a black-led NTS could accomplish meaningful rehabilitation work at minimal cost. The Federation of Civic Associations, a coalition of black support organizations and aid societies in D.C., led the campaign, presenting a fourteen-point plan for reforming the school that was centered around the appointment of a black educator to lead it and the removal of the six remaining white girls. This time, their efforts came to fruition.⁷¹ The D.C. Board of Public Welfare approved a plan to make the population and staff of NTS entirely black, and by September 15, 1941, the last white girls and employees were removed and a black superintendent installed.⁷²

The black woman appointed to lead the National Training School was Rachel H. Galloway. Much as Carrie Weaver Smith embodied the educated, well-off white women who drove the Progressive movement and took positions of power within the state juvenile justice apparatus, Galloway reflected the educated, well-off black women who worked outside of the state to care for African American delinquents. A graduate of Miner Teachers College—one of the leading training centers for black educators—Galloway, in 1915, helped set up a reform school for black children at Croome, Maryland, where she worked for thirty-three years.⁷³ The Croome School, which opened despite violent opposition from residents of southern Maryland, was the only institution other than the National Training School that accepted black delinquent girls in the D.C. area. As its head, Galloway worked almost single handedly to keep the school funded through a mix of private and public sources and to provide care for a diverse group of girls that included delinquents, orphans, and other classes of dependent children.⁷⁴

Galloway’s stature as the Washington area’s leading black juvenile justice advocate made her the obvious choice to lead the NTS once it was made all-black. In fact, she was offered to accept the position in the summer of 1941 without even having applied for it.⁷⁵ After gaining entry into the state-run juvenile system, though without relinquishing her leadership of Croome, Galloway implemented a progressive program similar to that which Carrie Weaver Smith promoted. In handling NTS girls, Galloway followed Smith’s precedent and made the simple principle of “treating them like human beings” her preeminent focus, while further working to provide adequate educational and vocational opportunities.⁷⁶ Galloway also leveraged her office to forcefully lobby Congress to maintain or expand funding for the school. During one hearing, Galloway opened her remarks by telling a House committee “Here is the situation you people do not understand” before attributing the struggles at NTS to Congress’s failure to adequately fund and maintain the school.⁷⁷ Her efforts took NTS out of the headlines and seemed to stem the succession of violence and rioting, leading the black-run *Pittsburgh Courier* to declare that Galloway had solved a problem that made “professional [white] social workers throw up their hands in holy horror.”⁷⁸

Galloway’s appointment as superintendent of the NTS was only a temporary one; at age sixty-three, she was deemed by the Board of Public Welfare to be too-old for long-term hire.⁷⁹ But Galloway’s successor as head of NTS was a comparably distinguished black

reformer. Rose Cooper Smith, who took over the school in 1944, was a graduate of Virginia Union University and what is now Columbia University’s School of Social Work. Before coming to NTS, Smith led the Friends Association for Colored Children, one of Virginia’s leading black child welfare organizations, and organized its successful push to become the first black group ever recognized by the white Child Welfare League of America.⁸⁰ Like Galloway, Smith used her leadership position to advance progressive efforts and rally congressional and community support for NTS girls. She publicly criticized Catholic organizations for refusing to accept black delinquents, testified for greater funding for both the NTS and preventive measures to reduce delinquency, and established partnerships between NTS and black community pillars of education like Howard University.⁸¹ These efforts blended the network-building endeavors that made up Smith’s career outside of government with new avenues of influence afforded by her leadership role within a state-run juvenile justice system. In 1948, D.C. commissioner Guy Mason called her “the best we have ever had.”⁸²

Despite the remarkable history of the acquisition of state leadership positions by Galloway, Smith, and their successors, within the broader history of America’s juvenile justice system, black women could ultimately do little to transform conditions for black girls incarcerated at the NTS. While small steps of progress—started under Carrie Weaver Smith’s tenure—were continued by Galloway and more, the NTS facilities remained outdated and in varying states of disrepair, with little money made available to better them. Although some buildings on the NTS campus were improved, those in the best condition were transferred for the use of Washington’s Receiving Home to alleviate overcrowding in that institution.⁸³ Even after black women took control over its leadership, the extant tension that Smith described since the days prior to the deintegration of NTS did not dissipate; rioting remained commonplace at the school. And when three police officers were injured in a January 1953 clash—the fourth serious incident in fifteen months—the D.C. Board of Public Welfare “washed its hands” of the school and shut it down for good.⁸⁴

Conclusion

The ability of Rachel Galloway and Rose Cooper Smith to acquire leadership positions within D.C. government represents a remarkable deviation from how professional black women typically interacted with the state-run juvenile justice system. In D.C., both white women and black men held prominent positions in government, typically overseeing institutions treating people of similar demographic backgrounds, but until the reconfiguration of the National Training School, black women did not. Although black women did participate in state juvenile justice as matrons and teachers, those positions’ influence paled in comparison to the executive authority Galloway and Smith were able to secure. And while other black women like Janie Porter Barrett held significant executive roles at private institutions that received state backing and funds, they themselves never

accessed comparable roles within the formal state apparatus itself. Galloway, Smith, and the black women who followed them achieved their positions not by working outside a historically unwelcoming government structure, but by finding a way to enter it.

This unlikely success challenges the prevailing understanding of how black female leaders interacted with the state. Because literature on juvenile reform efforts by black women primarily focuses on their private enterprises, the apparent connection between the state and professional black women is reduced to one of general indifference. But Galloway's story demonstrates that, under certain extraordinary circumstances, black women could win and wield state power in their own right in addition to traditional private institutional roles. Similarly, the arc of the NTS challenges existing notions of how connections between private reform schools and state-run juvenile justice systems evolved in the mid-twentieth century. In her analysis of Barrett's Virginia Industrial School For Colored Girls, Wilma Peebles-Wilkins argues that many private African American reformatories “were subsumed under state auspices” in the 1940s.⁸⁵ But far from having their independent efforts passively absorbed by government, Galloway and Smith brought their work into the state's purview to better advance their welfare objectives.

The disregard and disrespect with which D.C.'s juvenile justice system treated black female lives makes the success of Galloway and Smith even more remarkable. The black delinquent girls of Washington D.C. had far fewer resources available to them than their white and male counterparts. What they had access to, the National Training School for Girls, failed to meet rehabilitatory standards at just about every moment in its sixty-year lifespan. By housing all black girls with the most egregious white delinquents at NTS, Washington's juvenile system conveyed a false sense that the black girls at the school were thoroughly incorrigible criminals, bolstering legislative attempts by prejudiced legislators like Ross Collins to gut the school altogether. Though better-off and better-educated black women like Galloway and Smith certainly occupied a higher social position than the impoverished, poorly-educated girls they worked with, they still shared common racial and gender identities. The fact that any black women were able to gain influential roles in a system so hostile to them highlights the gravity of Galloway and Smith's accomplishments.

As impressive and surprising as the achievements of women like Galloway and Smith are, it is impossible to meaningfully discuss them without considering their ultimately limited positive impact on the lives of delinquent girls. While the all-black National Training School of the 1940s and 1950s was likely an improvement from the squalid conditions of the 1930s, it was still wracked by violence, chronically underfunded and understaffed, home to few educational or vocational programs, supported by inadequate and dilapidated buildings, and eventually shut down for lack of path toward improvement. Moreover, the nature as well as comparative lack of source material makes it difficult to access the perspectives of girls incarcerated at NTS and understand their experiences; it is, therefore, hard to imagine that the school achieved its rehabilitatory aims with any degree of consistency. While this reality does not at all refute the argument made by African American activists that black leadership is inherently necessary to aiding black youth, it does

demonstrate that empowering black women leaders and deintegrating the school were not the only necessary solutions to NTS’s woes. The black superintendents of the school struggled with the same handicaps of limited resources and state neglect that their predecessors faced, while making the school’s population all-black did not bring an end to the frustrations of its girls that often manifested in what they state perceived is unmanageable violence. The difficulty in translating the advancement of black women leaders to positive outcomes for black delinquent girls speaks to a broader failure of D.C.’s juvenile justice system, one that could not be neatly resolved even through a significant shift in its racial power structure.

Furthermore, the National Training School presents a valuable case study in the class and gender contours of change-making in black America. For Washington’s African American community, winning positions for even prominent, educated black women like Galloway and Smith required tremendous effort. Seizing a rare moment when the unusually tolerant city’s governing bodies were both aware of and frustrated with conditions for black delinquent girls, African American activists engaged in two concerted efforts that eventually secured black female leadership at NTS. Community leaders like R. W. Brooks argued that their success would bring corresponding benefits for incarcerated girls, arguably the most vulnerable and powerless stratum of Washington society. Yet translating these gains down the social ladder proved extremely difficult. Although Galloway, Smith, and other black women leaders at NTS worked earnestly to improve the lives of their charges, their ability to change the broader justice system within which they worked—a system in which treating black delinquent girls “like human beings” represented a break from precedent—was minimal. While well-connected white female reformers like Carrie Weaver Smith could leverage their credentials and connections in government to secure additional funding, newspaper articles, and legislative changes, black women had no such social capital to draw upon. And regardless of Washington’s anti-democratic constitution that prevented the entrenchment of Jim Crow policies of the Deep South in the city during the early twentieth century, it also left them without any means of adding electoral weight to their lobbying and advocacy. These structural hurdles meant that few of the gains won for elite black women could trickle down to the disadvantaged girls they served. In all, this narrative of the National Training School indicates that, even in a uniquely free city where black women could access avenues of power closed off to them almost everywhere else, their ability to make transformative change through a racialized state power structure was unshakably constrained.

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GUILT OF THE DAY, INNOCENCE OF THE NIGHT: *DE MEDICINA* AND EARLY IMPERIAL ROMAN MADNESS

Leah Borquez

Abstract: *De Medicina* by Roman encyclopedist Aulus Cornelius Celsus is a medical treatise from the early Roman Empire that contains one of the most detailed descriptions of insanity. In analyzing the section of the text on insanity as well as the author's examples of madmen, this paper considers socio-cultural, political, and literary contexts of the empire—particularly the practice of declamation and Greek tragedies—to better illuminate how madness was understood in the ancient world.

Key words: Celsus, *De Medicina*, ancient medicine, madness, mental health, Ancient Rome, Greco-Roman culture, Greek tragedies, Sophocles, Ajax, Euripides, Orestes

Introduction

Madness has captivated many types of authors over the years—from medical practitioners and philosophers to novelists and playwrights. Humans have always been interested in what they do not understand, and madness, in its basic sense, is a lack of understanding and logic. Some of the oldest and most popular depictions of madness come from ancient Greco-Roman culture and these include: Agave, who tears her son's head off his body; Medea, who kills her own children for revenge; or Caligula, who decides fighting the sea would be a good idea. Just as many patients of various mental illnesses present mysteries to modern doctors, ancient madmen presented incomprehensible phenomena to healers; to them, madmen acted as though societal values of acceptability were turned on their heads. Michel Foucault perhaps best distills their perspective, as he writes, "madness sum[s] up the whole of unreason in a single point – the guilt of the day and the innocence of the night."¹ In order to attempt to understand this unreason, in the early years of Imperial Rome, an encyclopedist named Aulus Cornelius Celsus took on madness in his medical text, *De Medicina*. Alongside medical diagnosis and treatment, Celsus drew on knowledge of declamation and tragedies in order to help his readers create a fuller picture of a madman, exploring the tragic figures of Orestes and Ajax as examples. As this socio-cultural approach to medicine only appears in the discussion of ancient insanity, this paper will analyze the parts of the text dealing with

madness by not only focusing on Roman medicine, but also theater, literature, as well as public performance of law.

Approaching Ancient Medicine

De Medicina is first and foremost a medical text, though understanding Celsus requires a broader definition of medicine as it was practiced and understood in Celsus' time. Medicine is a science which intermingles with other disciplines as it evolves and modern thought about science emphasizes progress and innovation. One discovery leads to another, which leads to another, and so forth. However, when studying the history of science, it is dangerous to think in this way. Scientific history, like all other types of history, is not a linear journey of progress.² Although it is tempting to point to 1543, the date usually given for the start of the scientific revolution, as the beginning of modern science, this approach would discount thousands of years of scientific work and discovery. Even taking ancient history into account, there is no linear progression of science. Cultures interact with each other, local customs affect how people learn, and information is conveyed or destroyed in a variety of ways. With medicine specifically, ancient history tends to be more readily embraced, as many know Hippocrates as the "father of medicine." This too, is a misleading name. Medicine was not defined as a discipline for many years and did not exist in the way that modern people think of medicine until well into the Middle Ages.³ It also leads people to believe that Hippocrates rejected religion in the pursuit of what scholars call "rational science." Hippocrates, or the Hippocratics, did not reject religion as they did not see religion and medicine as being in conflict with each other.⁴ The first time that there is a clear break between religion and science does not occur until the early Christian period, when powers of a single god challenge methods and understandings from the polytheistic culture from which it emerged.⁵

The first issue that modern historians of ancient medicine must face is the coexistence of religion and science. They are not in contradiction, but rather work with each other quite harmoniously. Medicine did not emerge as a single field, but rather as an amalgamation of a wide range of techniques and skills that attempted to heal the human body. The Hippocratics were only one sect of ancient medical practitioners within a larger web of geographically or temporally based groups of healers like those who followed Methodist, Pneumatic, or Asclepiadean teachings.⁶ A specific sect was common in an area in which a teacher of that group's method resided and a movement was created when that method spread outward from there. These sects often interacted with temple medicine, perhaps most notably with that of the god Asclepius, whose temples were common throughout the Greek and Roman world.⁷ Within this tradition, a patient would visit the temple, and while sleeping there, would receive a dream from Asclepius with information about a cure. This cure would work with the recommendations from a healer to be implemented so that the patient might be cured. In essence, the god and the healer often worked together, as

evidenced by ancient medical authors' credit to Asclepius and dedications to healers or physicians found in temples.⁸ Thus, to discount religious healing or to dismiss religion as an "irrational" way of approaching science would be to remove an important dimension to both ancient life as well as the study of ancient medicine.

Studies on ancient medicine also tend to either focus on the Hippocratics or on Galen, as they are the two largest sources of medical texts that have survived. However, in between the two existed 700 years that included the birth of *De Medicina*. Therefore, the text deserves a closer study in understanding ancient medicine, as Celsus documents the changes in the medical field between the time of Hippocrates and Galen. Moreover, Celsus is cited by various other authors around his time, and was a key source for early modern medical writers and even Galen himself.⁹ His writing suggests that healers after Hippocrates were not all simply Hippocratics and were certainly not mere precursors to Galen; the period, in short, cannot be seen as a monolith. During this time, dissection was legalized and then banned again, doctors looked inside the human body, and there was a greater exchange of information between Greece, Alexandria, Pergamon, Rome, and other hubs of intellectual activity in the west and near east.¹⁰ It is not a basic linear projection from Hippocrates to Galen, but rather a collection of distinct sects and schools of thought, each approaching the practice of healing from specific points of view. A complete picture of ancient medicine cannot ignore these and assume a full narrative. Ancient medicine must be approached as a multifaceted and complex issue that does not simply revolve around two authors.

Madness and or in Civilization?

Definitions of mental illnesses have never been objective and they continue to change with the passage of time. This complicates the ways in which a modern historian can approach insanity in the past. Medical texts are certainly helpful to analyze, as madness has almost always been considered a medical issue. However, they cannot be analyzed alone as a singular objective source. It is also important to understand the contexts in which they operated and how those contexts may have influenced the text itself as well as its readers. Scholars of medicine up until the early twentieth century primarily focused on a linear narrative—that, over time, physicians refined the idea of insanity based on empirical and unbiased data. However, in 1961 with the publication of *History of Madness*, more commonly known by its 1964 title *Madness and Civilization*, Michel Foucault changed the way in which historians approach ideas of madness and insanity. Although his historical timeline is faulty, Foucault introduces social subjectivity into the discussion of madness. Insanity, he claims, is society's way of producing a constant "other" to whom the populace is able to identify themselves as a contrast. He expands on this idea with his interpretation of the history of science. Medicine is not constantly refining itself, as "there is no certainty that madness was content to sit locked up in its immutable identity, waiting for psychiatry to perfect its art, before it emerged blinking from the shadows into the blinding light of truth."¹¹ To Foucault, it is impossible to create a history of insanity without also considering societal factors that

are innate to the creation of identity. Insanity is not just a medical condition or diagnosis, but also a social identity that a person would carry with them. Madmen did not only receive differential treatment in medicine. They also received differential treatment in the social realm because of their label as “mad.”

Foucault goes beyond simply stating that insanity must be understood as having a social dimension and describes madness as a “superimposed grid of exclusion” that society uses as a way to understand something outside of the norm.¹² Madness cannot be understood with reason; rather, it can be with unreason. The agreed upon ideals that a society takes as rational serve as the grid onto which people map their lives. So, when an individual deviates from this, society must create a new grid in order to make sense of what is happening. This does not mean that unreason is madness. But it creates a space “where all unreason was merely a form of the irrational, while in the other the unreason of the heart bent the discourse of reason to its own unreasonable logic.”¹³ Foucault asserts that madness was not random or volatile, but self-assured and marching to the beat of a different drum. And since society is often incapable of handling multiple ideas of reason, people identify who they are by what they are not. The madman is thus created so that people may self-recognize via antagonisms—seeing who they are not.

Many historians take issue with Foucault’s analyses of madness. Some point to his timeline, for his history concerning institutionalization is not completely accurate.¹⁴ Others disagree with the emphasis he places on social values and structures. Recently, Andrew Scull, a prominent historian of psychiatry, published a book aptly titled *Madness in Civilization*, in which he de-emphasizes the role of the social in differing notions of madness that arose throughout history and focuses on philosophies as well as politics that underlie each variant notion. Contrasting writers like Foucault, he also notes that structures to identify and punish madness transformed out of necessity for a structure rather than a necessity to identify a “madman.”¹⁵ While Scull’s work is commendable, however, he has a tendency to allow modern ideas of madness to project onto the past. This impulse is problematic, especially when dealing with ancient medicine, because of how differently ancients viewed their world and their place in it. It is incredibly important not to take modern ideas of ethics, science, or society into account since a modern lens can often hinder us from accurately understanding how ancient definitions of madness emerged and evolved. As the impressive yet insufficient analyses of Foucault, Scully, and many others prove, the relationship between madness and society is a complicated one. But to successfully study ancient madness, one must carefully consider societal context; this coexistence must be taken into account and studied with care.

Medicine in the Early Roman Empire

As neither society nor medicine can be claimed as the singular factor responsible for a definition of madness, it is important to analyze *De Medicina* in the contexts of both Ancient Rome as well as Roman medicine. Born 25 BC, Aulus Cornelius Celsus lived during the

early years of the Roman Empire, most likely under the rule of Augustus and Tiberius.¹⁶ When Augustus effectively ended the civil war between his forces and those of Mark Antony at the Battle of Actium, he subsequently reestablished the Republic and ushered in the dawn of the Roman Empire. This period that witnessed Augustus rearrange the social order of the Republic was one of great uncertainty. Although the civil war had ended, dissent against Augustus did not die with Marc Antony. Thus, once in power, Augustus began to make several key changes to Rome's governmental and social structures.

One of the first tasks Augustus had to accomplish was securing Rome's borders and, to do so, he established a standing army, which created more jobs for Roman citizens and gave civilians a sense of security for their grand empire. During this Republic, if a legionary got injured on the battlefield, the army relied on local knowledge for recuperation.¹⁷ One benefit of this system was that it collected a vast amount of knowledge about plants and healing methods from all areas of the empire through the legionaries who returned home. However, it left the lives of Romans in jeopardy depending on their surroundings and their proximity to villages. There was no way to guarantee swift and effective health care. Augustus solved this problem by finding Roman healers and assigning them to a legion to act as an army doctor.¹⁸ This person would still learn from local healers but accrue and apply this knowledge specifically for the army.

In order to satisfy the need for army doctors, Augustus created a system in which healers could register themselves as physicians, whom the Roman army could contact and hire. Paralleling systems of hiring already in place for other non-combative needs of the army like the one for textile workers, the system of hiring physicians streamlined the process for legions to acquire medical assistance.¹⁹ In general, these physicians were of both sexes and they were trained in, or familiar with, the Greek system of medicine that was widely adopted by various parts of the Roman Empire. During this time, both men and women practiced as established physicians throughout the empire. In fact, women were crucial to ancient medicine, and this is evidenced by numerous dedications to female physicians. They were particularly important because male healers often did not attend to childbirth, as many determined that they could not know a woman's body like women did. As such, female healers who also worked with childbirth were honored and considered even more advanced than their male counterparts.²⁰ Along with the importance of women, medicine in the Republic, and to some extent during the imperial period, was considered a predominantly Greek profession. However, Celsus was Roman and wrote in Latin. Therefore, his interpretation of the medical texts he based *De Medicina* on are colored by Roman reception of Greek intellectual culture. When there was a resurgence of interest in Greek culture, medicine, too, became more popular throughout the empire. The Romans used the Greek system for medicine in towns and cities, where the local governments paid for a healer to live in the city and act as physician for the residents.²¹ Healers would have to prove their skills in some way, usually by gaining the trust of the citizens, who would ultimately decide if they could stay. With the establishment of army doctors, these healers,

along with others in their community, would register and assist any soldiers passing through the vicinity when necessary.

Many healers in the Roman Empire were not natural-born Roman citizens and, as non-citizens, they had less rights, status, and options for career and social advancement; owing to the lack of Roman healers, Augustus began to incentivize healers to serve Rome. A recognized healer would be granted citizenship along with tax exemption.²² As a result, more physicians began entering politics and continued to subsidize medical practitioners. It is important to note that there was no official standard that designated a healer or physician. The healer would need proof from their community or patients that they were a healer, but there were no requirements set by the government to what qualifies a healer. While Augustus' policies were effective and Roman citizenship grew along with the number of healers available to local civilians as well as to the army, Celsus helped spread and standardize the practice of medicine at a time where there was a demand for a handbook that could be applied for personal or for military use.²³

Scientific Literature in the Early Roman Empire

The early years of the Roman Empire saw a renaissance in scientific literature and epics. Celsus was one of the authors of this movement that included Pliny the Elder, Varro, Vitruvius, and Ptolemy. The period witnessed huge advances in medicine, engineering, and mathematics and the number of scientific texts from this time remained unrivaled until much later on in the empire's history. One possible explanation for this development points to the relative freedom from politics that came with scientific literature.²⁴ Under the new imperial regime, popular poetry and histories were expected to support the emperor and show him in the best light. Augustan literature was not only a form of art and entertainment, but a way to sway public opinion and support his reign. It was used to glorify Caesar and Augustus' relationship to him, as well as reaffirm Rome's history and stability. However, scientific literature bore no such burdens. Medicine, architecture, and other natural sciences were more neutral as manuals or instructional texts took no political stance. While some writers used texts a tool to appear in a favorable light—like Vitruvius who dedicated *De Architectura* to Augustus—the general lack of politics in scientific literature gave its writers security, as they could not be punished for their works.²⁵

In addition, medical works were in higher demand during the Roman Empire and, with the army requiring a constant flow of medical practitioners, medicine became a profession in its own right.²⁶ Although most Roman citizens knew basic healing skills, the increasing relevance of the battlefield for the early empire rendered specialized practice for treating a variety of combat-related ailments like infections to deep wounds requiring major surgery more necessary. An encyclopedia of medical issues and cures, Celsus' *De Medicina* offered a standard for the advanced knowledge of medicine required on the battlefield, effectively functioning as a handbook for army doctors.²⁷ It was a portable text that could be consulted

if something new became an issue or if a doctor just needed to check something. As medicine became a more defined career, along with other scientific professions, there came a demand for more manual-style scientific texts. This satisfied the need of the *paterfamilias* to take care of his family as well as the need for a starting standard text for an emerging field.

De Medicina by A. Cornelius Celsus

Aulus (or Aurelius) Cornelius Celsus was a Roman encyclopedist and *De Medicina*—one section of his larger encyclopedia—is his only writing that survives today. Separated into nine parts *De Medicina* is most frequently studied through the *Proemium*, or the preamble, which introduces the history of medicine before the eight books that follow. From the beginning, *De Medicina* references several prominent medical practitioners, including many Hellenistic healers from Alexandria; as such, *De Medicina* is the only surviving account of many healers and their works up until the early years of the Roman Empire.²⁸ The text also covers a vast spectrum of medical fields, including, but not limited to, pathology, disease, anatomy, pharmacology, surgery, and orthopedics. Moreover, as mentioned before, *De Medicina* was cited by many of Celsus' contemporaries, including Pliny the Elder. Praised in its own time, *De Medicina* most likely coexisted as a common handbook in the realms of both family and military uses. It continued to be a central text for medicine for centuries and was printed for the first time in 1478, just twenty-five years after the first evidence of printed books.

Apart from its thorough content and lasting reputation, *De Medicina* stands out from other medical works of the time-space in several ways. The first and most obvious trait that marks it unique is that it is written in Latin. In fact, as David Langslow points out in *Medical Latin in the Roman Empire*, 73.5 percent of *De Medicina* is in Latin, while the other 26.5 percent is in Greek.²⁹ Along with the unusually high proportion of Latin, despite the fact that many medical terms had Greek names, *De Medicina* clearly displays Celsus' attempt at the Romanization of medicine. When the author uses a Greek term, he often adds a Latin description and Latin form of the term, which is then used throughout the rest of the work.³⁰ This suggests that Celsus made an effort to make his text accessible to those outside of the medical "profession," since most Roman citizens, unlike those in medicine who were well-versed in Greek, had little knowledge of Greek. By explaining the Greek in Latin, Celsus had a larger audience in mind that fit the dawn of the Roman Empire.

Throughout his work, Celsus also focuses on the relationship between the healer and the patient, as well as the need for effective communication. Before Celsus, most notably in the Hippocratic corpus, texts were written by healers with little information about the patient-healer relationship outside the contexts of medicine. But in *De Medicina*, the ideal relationship between the healer and the patient is made quite clear. Celsus stresses the healer's need to have close relationships with patients—that one must not only act as a healer but also as their friend.³¹ He recognized that friendship, or the patient's trust, was

essential even for basic medicine. A patient's anxiety, Celsus believed, affected the body of the ill or injured, which would alter its reactions to anything the healer does and thereby influence the accuracy of diagnosis or treatment.³² However, if with patient-healer friendship, a patient was less likely to experience anxiety that could affect the body, which allowed for a more objective view of the body and thereby a more accurate diagnosis as well as treatment.

Furthermore, along with friendship and resultant trust, Celsus stresses the importance of consent and the role of the patient throughout the process of acquiring consent. Patients were to be given options for treatment and allowed to choose the one they were most comfortable with. Celsus believed this would then help build the patient's trust toward the healer and create the best environment for the treatment to be successful. *De Medicina* was the first medical text to take such a stance on patients and their agency. Consistent with contemporary philosophical movements in medicine "towards the consideration of the individual as an independent and worthy value," Celsus recognized the importance of the individual's choice in cures.³³ Patients' identity and how they relate to others create the environment that their healing takes place. Celsus' philosophy in medicine is clarified in *De Medicina*: in order to get the best results, attention must be paid to the patient and how they relate to others.

Another aspect that makes *De Medicina* unique is the fact that, unlike other medical authors of the time, Celsus was not a physician himself. As far as scholars can tell, he gathered sources and synthesized them in order to write the text.³⁴ He makes very few personal comments or observations from experience, and mostly writes in the third-person. This, of course, neither invalidates his contributions to the canon of ancient medicine, nor does it make the text less authoritative.³⁵ In fact, because of his distance from the practice and his method in gathering information, he was able to draw connections between medical sects that are not usually shown in other works from the time. He also gives credit where credit is due when he explains his writing process in the *Proemium* and references specific physicians within the text.

Although *De Medicina* is the only evidence of some physicians' careers, it is important to note that Celsus' references to them reveal one of the major pitfalls of his text: he traces a linear path from a few men to specific aspects of medicine during his time.³⁶ Most of the physicians he refers to by name are founders or prominent members of their particular sect of medicine; most notably, he points to Hippocrates as a key first physician, despite tracing the founding of medicine to Asclepius. As both modern and ancient historians do in their works, a result of this desire for a single founder or origin creates large gaps in the historical record and silences many voices that unfortunately get lost in the process. While *De Medicina* suffers from this practice and may have failed to illuminate the importance of unnamed figures in ancient medicine, his text remains important as its descriptions of disease and treatment are meticulously detailed and, in identifying ancient insanity, such exactitude is inarguably useful.

De Medicina, On Insanity

In Book III of *De Medicina*, Celsus discusses his understanding of insanity. He introduces the concept first by differentiating it from delirium that occasionally accompanies a fever, although physical illness may be a symptom of insanity. There are three types of insanity—acute, melancholy, and chronic. He sets madness apart from other types of diseases, as it is not identified by an imbalance of humors or change in physique—“*sed exitu deprenduntur*”—but detected as a result of their acts.³⁷ Here, the word *exitu* more directly translates to “outcomes,” and for Celsus this is not outcomes in regard to symptoms such as fever. The outcomes are of what the patient is doing; not particularly the action itself, but what that action’s effects are on others. Because of this, *depredere* is passive since the action is done by the insane, however it is noticed, and its results are determined by others. While a person may become physically ill while insane, their actions are what identify them as mad, not their physical symptoms, which are relied upon to identify somatic diseases. Celsus then describes each type of insanity and what should be done to treat it. For acute insanity, he explains that it is generally accompanied by a fever.³⁸ However, to treat it, a healer should not just treat the fever but rather the actions of the insane. In order to cure acute insanity, it is important to treat them with the exact opposite of their actions to calm them. If they react badly to darkness, keep them in light; if they are raging, tie them up; and so forth. Sleep is also incredibly important. If this does not work, he notes, purging by hellebores, a genus of flowering plants, is also an option.

The second type of insanity is melancholy. To treat this illness, Celsus recommends what could be called a type of “philosophical therapy.”³⁹ It is important for a madman to have good friendships, a key concept in Roman philosophy, in order to better himself. It is, simply put, beyond medical control and environment is key for this type of insanity. Along with white hellebore and a proper diet, a melancholic is to be uplifted as much as possible. He is to be surrounded by friends who support him. They are all to play games, and the friends are to reassure the melancholic that he is, in fact, a good person and good at what he does.

Lastly, in *De Medicina*, chronic insanity is perhaps the most dangerous and ambiguous of the types of madness. Celsus states that it usually affects those who are otherwise strong or healthy. It affects the insane the longest and:

of this type there are two species: for some are deceived by some sorts of phantoms, not their mind, the poets say that this sort of insanity entirely seized Ajax or Orestes; others are foolish in respect to their soul...Therefore even if one dose of the hellebore has little effect, after an interval another should be given. It should be known that a madman’s illness is less serious when accompanied by laughter than by gravity.⁴⁰

Chronic madness is dangerous because the madman is not in control of his actions. No one is able to predict what he will do. Because of this danger, it is important for Celsus that his

readers are able to identify it. In terms of a cure, Celsus states there is no way to cure this invasion of the mind for good. He expands on his philosophical therapy options, even if there are not as many medical ones. There is a specific environment and state in which the madman should be kept. Celsus writes, “*non oportere esse vel solos vel inter ignotos, vel inter eos, quos aut contemnat aut neglegant,*” which translates to “they should not be left alone or among those they do not know, or among those whom they either despise or disregard.”⁴¹ Again, those who surround the madmen are incredibly important. As this type of insanity is so prolonged, it makes the madman more vulnerable to dangers. This type of insanity takes over the mind—it entirely seizes its victim and takes over. A person’s entire perception is altered. With chronic insanity, the insane is not just a danger to others, he is a danger to himself. The insanity is keeping him from seeing how he is destroying himself.⁴²

Chronic insanity is also notable because Celsus offers examples of those suffering from it mentioned in tragedies. Because someone’s insanity is detected through their actions, Celsus invokes these examples from tragedies to not just provide his readers a sense of what those actions, but also indicate how they may affect those around the madman. Implicit in these examples is Celsus’ belief that as long as readers are able to identify a madman, they can decrease the danger of the insane’s future actions. As stated earlier, Celsus was not a physician and, in the text, he does not draw examples from his personal experience in treating the insane; in fact, with the exception of insanity, he never uses examples. However, because of the severe danger he associated with chronic insanity, Celsus includes them—Ajax and Orestes as they are depicted in Sophocles’ *Ajax* and Euripides’ *Orestes*, respectively.

Roman Drama and Spoken Performance

The presence of Ajax and Orestes in *De Medicina* raises the question on why the author might have chosen the Greek characters as examples of madmen when the majority of the text, written in Latin, clearly indicates the author’s intent to Romanize medicine. Why did he choose the two and how were these figures known in Roman society?

Although there were many Roman depictions of Ajax and Orestes, it is most likely that the ones Celsus mentions in *De Medicina* refer to the Greek versions, owing to several reasons. The popularity of Greek tragedies is one. While Roman entertainment is perhaps best known for games and gladiatorial fights, there was an active theater culture that presented numerous tragedies, both Greek and Roman. The former was incredibly popular and effectively understood by all Romans; this is well-documented through Cicero, who commented on the popularity of plays concerning the House of Atreus during the late Republic.⁴³ The greater appeal of Greek tragedies to the Roman public arguably came from the fact that many Roman tragedies present the ideal person through protagonists while Greek tragedies tend to emphasize the fallibility and the resultant humanity of heroes, which render the Greek more relatable. Moreover, many Roman tragedies, few of which survive today, were based on Greek tragedies that remained popular, like some by Seneca—one of the significant Roman tragedians and a contemporary of Celsus—which centered

around Ajax and Orestes.⁴⁴ Thus, for Celsus, Ajax and Orestes probably appeared to be apt examples for portraying the insane. The figures' actions in the tragedies identify them as mad as they negatively impact those around them; considering the widespread knowledge of their stories, they would have been—at the very least in the eyes of Celsus—helpful for the healer in identifying chronic insanity.

In many instances, tragedies, especially those written by writers like Seneca, were performed in the form of declamation—a popular genre of dramatic oration that based expression on articulation; the prevalence of declamation, as a medium, may partly be responsible for Celsus' choice of including Ajax and Orestes considering its prevalence in not just Roman performance culture, but also education.⁴⁵ During the early empire, declamation enjoyed a revitalization and became more commonplace in both realms. As a type of performance, declamation bombastically dramatized the tragic figures and the notion of madness—as defined by Celsus—would have been graspable for the readers of *De Medicina* with prior knowledge of Ajax and Orestes.

Perhaps more importantly, in the realm of education, declamation initially functioned as a way for young men to learn how to prosecute someone under Roman law through fictitious scenarios; many declamations that survive reveal that madness was certainly central to several of these cases. The linchpin of Roman higher education, declamations often considered the roles of the citizen and the father.⁴⁶ And within these written accounts of fictional courtroom exercises emerge Romans' understanding of insanity. For example, in the lesser declamations of Quintillian—a major source of Roman declamations from the broader corpus—one case discusses “Mad Father of Three Sons.”⁴⁷ Other examples include those titled, “Disowner of a Son Brought Back by Reason of Insanity” and “A Madman, from Chains a Hero.”⁴⁸ These declamations were, in essence, products of an interest in the social consequences of paternal power defined by Roman law. Indeed, just as declamations proposes the possibility of the insane patriarch—Roman law, as seen through the Twelve Tables, included considerations of what a family might do in case of an insane *paterfamilias*, a term frequently used in legal literature that connotes the property-owning patriarch; for instance, if a man were declared insane, he would lose all his rights as a citizen and became subject to the authority of his eldest son, who would then become the *paterfamilias*.⁴⁹ The idea of the madman was, in essence, a considerable topic discussed through the declamatory format, whether in performance or legal education. Aware of the Greek tragedies of Ajax and Orestes, the Roman public would have been further exposed to re-written narratives of the same tragic figures by writers like Seneca through the form of declamation, a rhetorical practice in legal education that often dealt with the topic of insanity. As the literary figures considered aptly insane by Celsus were presented to the public through a medium that already often dealt with the question of insanity, it certainly makes enough sense that the writer includes Ajax and Orestes as examples of madmen.

Ajax in Rome

In explaining insanity, *De Medicina* first mentions Ajax, the great Greek hero from the Trojan war; during the period, the story of the death of Ajax—more so than that of his life—dominated Roman culture and popular imagination. As told in the tragedy, after Athena plagues the hero with madness, Ajax kills many sheep, thinking they are Odysseus and his men. When he realizes they were not, Ajax feels an incredible amount of shame and finally decides to kill himself by falling on Hector's sword. His contemplation of committing suicide captivated the Roman people, as it was not deemed to be a shameful act, but rather an irrational act that was aimed at preserving the legacy and honor of the his own accomplishments in the Trojan War. Owing to this prevalent understanding of the hero of insanity, many Roman tragedians like Seneca, Andronicus, Ennius, Pacuvius, and Accius wrote their versions of the hero's death, which inevitably reached much of the public.

Even Roman leaders were fascinated by his tale. Augustus wrote a version of the hero's death, which the Roman historian Suetonius deemed to be the emperor's unfortunate attempt at dramatic literature.⁵⁰ Julius Caesar—who adopted his nephew Augustus as his son in his will—also understood the prominence of Ajax. After his victory over Pompey Magnus, Caesar began construction on the Forum Iulium as a celebration of his greatness and to garner public support for his dictatorship. For the Temple of Venus Genetrix within the Forum, he commissioned a Byzantine artist named Timomachus to create two paintings: one of Medea and one of Ajax.⁵¹ Although these paintings do not survive today, there are numerous records of their purchase.⁵² The painting of Ajax was incredibly influential in its sadness and depiction of his madness. It was well-known and admired in its time, thereby easy for Celsus' audience to recall. Flavius Philostratus—a Greek sophist of the imperial period—describes the power of the piece in the second book of his *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*:

Nor again could one admire a picture of Ajax, by the painter Timomachus, which represents him in a state of madness, unless one had conceived in one's mind first an idea or notion of Ajax, and had entertained the probability that after killing the flocks in Troy he would sit down exhausted and even meditate suicide... For there are crowded together in that work too men slaying and slain, and you would say that the earth was stained with gore, though it is made of brass.⁵³

These works were meant to stir strong feelings in the hearts of the Roman people. Recent scholarship suggests that Caesar chose Ajax as the subject of this painting as an allusion to Pompey as the Temple of Venus Genetrix was dedicated in 46 BCE close to the anniversary of Pompey's triumph.⁵⁴ This unprecedented move was possibly made to overshadow Pompey's achievements in light of his defeat.⁵⁵ In addition, Plutarch later compares Pompey to Ajax in the wake of the former's defeat at Pharsalus. After losing the glory that he had won in many battles, he lost it all in a moment, just as Ajax had. Plutarch wrote that Pompey embodied the verses that had been written about Ajax in the age of the heroes.⁵⁶ However, it remains unclear whether these views were held at the time of the temple's

dedication, as Plutarch wrote *Lives* over one hundred years later. No matter the intention, it was clear that Caesar and those close to him understood the power of Ajax. The Greek hero was even quoted at his funeral, which probably stirred Romans to lament, as their sympathy toward the pain of the hero is evidenced by the popularity of his story.⁵⁷

Celsus and Sophoclean Ajax

As noted previously, the representations of Ajax in Roman culture mostly drew from the character depicted by Sophocles and the reason why Celsus decided on the Greek hero as an example of a madman is effectively trifold. First, in the tragedy, the cause of madness in Ajax is an outside agent, implying the hero had no choice. Within the first hundred lines of the play, Athena explains how and why she drove Ajax mad. She says she altered his sight so that he was operating in a different version of reality in which the sheep were human; in short, the insanity of Ajax was, much like in reality, involuntary. In light of her manipulation of Ajax, Athena tells Odysseus:

It was I who held him back from his irresistible delight, casting on his eyes mistaken notions, and I diverted him against the herds and the various beasts guarded by the herdsmen and not yet disturbed. Here he fell upon them and hacked the horned beasts to death, cleaving their spines all around him; and at one time he thought it was the two Atreidae whom he held and was killing with his own hand, at another that he was attacking now this chief, now that. And as the man wandered in the madness that I had afflicted him, I urged him into a cruel trap.⁵⁸

Identifying herself as the source of madness, Athena notes that she cast “on his eyes mistaken notions.” It is implied here that the alteration of sight involves a prevention of proper knowledge production or perception, as Sophocles uses the Greek word “γνώμας”—the root of which is knowledge; to see correctly is to be able to properly gain and use knowledge and Athena’s deprivation of sight prevents Ajax from properly produce any knowledge of rational action.⁵⁹ The goddess does not change his choices, but rather his reality altogether, which maps onto the definition of madness in *De Medicina*.

Second, the play provides ample descriptions of the hero’s insanity through other characters, primarily Athena and, perhaps more importantly, Tecmessa.⁶⁰ As the setup of the play begins with the hero’s fit of madness, the audience only learns of the event through the retellings of those who witnessed it. In this sense, the audience receives what is like a healer’s diagnosis of Ajax’s madness, as they learn of how other figures interpret his actions.⁶¹ The audience becomes the spectator to the spectatorship of Tecmessa, the Chorus, and Athena. This arrangement fits well with Celsus’ instructions in how to identify a chronically insane person—a man’s actions, especially how they affect those around him,

identifies him as a madman. For Ajax, this action is his violent butchering of sheep, which causes distress among many, including his family. Tecmessa's descriptions of Ajax's actions right after the killings, for example, is full of detailed descriptions. When the hero's mistress and the only witness to his acts of unreason retells what she saw to the concerned Chorus, his men, she says:

At the dead of night, when the evening lamps no longer burned, he took his two-edged sword and made as though to start out, for no reason...What happened there I cannot tell you; ... At last he darted through the door and rapped out words addressed to some shadow, denouncing now the sons of Atreus, now Odysseus, laughing loudly at the thought of what violence he had inflicted in his raid. Then he rushed back into the hut and at last with difficulty came to his senses; and when he gazed at the room filled with ruin he struck his head and uttered a loud cry, then fell among the fallen corpses of slaughtered sheep and sat there, grasping his hair and tearing it with his nails.⁶²

In her descriptions, Tecmessa implies that her Ajax getting up at night and taking "his two-edged sword...for no reason" is the first action indicative of his insanity; here the fact that he would go out at night to murder not just anyone but his allies is depicted as an act of unreason. To her, his madness is violent and animalistic.⁶³ His actions clearly demonstrate that he has no sense of rationality and is simply operating on a non-human level. As Tecmessa's story tells, madmen cannot see how they destroy themselves and only their peers can define the appearance of madness; there is an inherent and abnormally expansive disconnect between what the insane sees and what others observe.⁶⁴ This is why Sophoclean *Ajax* serves as an apt exemplum. Much of the Roman public, having seen or heard *Ajax* through the original or re-works, were, in turn, familiar with the double-view of, or the disconnect between, the madman's mind and his peers' perspectives; Celsus likely deemed this cultural knowledge to be useful in the medical realm for diagnosis of insanity.

The third and final reason that Sophoclean *Ajax* functions well as an example of the insane is his social environment after the butchering and its lack of remedial factors that ultimately leads to his suicide. As discussed earlier, Celsus notes that a large part of alleviating or curing the madman depends on the environment of the treatment; he is to be surrounded and supported by loved ones, along with other medical remedies. In the case of *Ajax*, the tragedy exemplifies the outcome of inhabiting the wrong environment.⁶⁵ Although he is surrounded by those who depend on him, none of them are able to offer substantial support; rather, they look after their own interests. The Chorus are his men, or subordinates, who depend on him for their reputation and safety thereby unable, or unwilling, to act as sources of comfort and love. Tecmessa, his mistress and mother to his son, also acts out of self-preservation; not legally married to the hero, Tecmessa had no binding reason for compassion as his death would not yield any form of compensation or protection. Although all of these people know *Ajax* and on a basic level care about his well-

being, none of them offer the type of friendship or support that Celsus suggests in his work.⁶⁶ The lack of philosophical therapy that Celsus suggests leads Ajax to take his own life. Just as Celsus writes in *De Medicina*, while madness itself does not shorten life, the burden from not receiving adequate treatment leads to death.

Orestes in Rome

After Ajax the Great, Celsus mentions Orestes, who similarly enjoyed an honored spot in Roman mythology; in fact, Orestes might have arguably been a better known hero. Even during the Republic, Orestes' fame was undeniable, as Cicero noted that audiences adored plays about Orestes as well as the House of Atreus.⁶⁷ Orestes also appeared in Republican philosophy—in texts like Cicero's *De Amicitia* and Maenius' *Astronomica*—as an example of someone who maintained a perfect friendship with Pylades.⁶⁸ Roman tragedians like Pacuvius and Valerius Flaccus also wrote their own versions of Orestes' story; moreover, famed Roman writers like Virgil, Ovid, Juvenal, and Longinus also featured him in poetry and literature in the early Empire. Considering the positive aspects of Orestes—like his friendship or his commitment to his father—that were so well-known to the public, Orestes becomes more significant as an example of the insane, as the tale of his extreme transition from rational to irrational would have marked him as, at least for Celsus, an ideal subject of study madman.

Along with the arts and philosophy, physical remains and memorials of Orestes also contributed to his renown, evidenced by the works of several important writers of the empire. According to Herodotus, there were many sites attributed to Orestes around Greece owing to his famed trip from Argos to Athens for his trial on the Areopagus. The father of history suggests that his bones, which were moved several times, inarguably carried his fame, like when the Spartans moved his remains during the Persian Wars.⁶⁹ Pausanias, a Greek traveler and geographer, also details the story of Orestes through his works. In *Descriptions of Greece: Arcadia*, he mentions “a sanctuary of certain goddesses” and a nearby structure called the Tomb of the Finger in Arcadia, on the road from Megalopolis to Messene.⁷⁰ The Greek geographer explains that the former belonged to goddesses who “bear the name of Μανίας,” which means “madnesses,” and that the latter owed itself to Orestes, who had bitten off his finger in a fit of madness when he was plagued by the Furies, who were driven by the spirit of his mother after he killed her. Visitors to the Tomb of the Finger were expected to sacrifice to the Furies and to not anger them. These sacrifices were thought to protect against the wrath of the Furies, especially if someone close in the family had recently died.

Similarly, in his book on Corinth, Pausanias mentions Orestes again when discussing the Sanctuary of Hera at Argos. Considered to be one of the most important Heraions, the Sanctuary of Hera, according to Pausanias, showcased statues of the goddess' priestesses as well as those of important heroes, among which included a statue of Orestes who was

originally from Argos. Pausanias notes that the base of the statue featured an inscription, which indicated that the sculpture represented Emperor Augustus.⁷¹ While there is no evidence that Augustus personally funded this statue, it is highly likely that it was created early on during his reign, as Augustus had a particular affinity for Orestes. In 29 BCE, for example, he moved the bones of Orestes from the Sanctuary of Diana at Nemi to the Temple of Saturn.⁷² The Roman historian Suetonius attests that Orestes' bones were considered one of the seven pignora, the assurances of Rome's Empire.⁷³

When Augustus assumed the role of consul and later princeps after concluding a bloody civil war, he needed to convince the Roman people that his wartime actions were not simply ruthless and irrational murders of his fellow countrymen, but rather justified and necessary steps toward peace; as such, Augustus sought to align himself with the image of Orestes.⁷⁴ Like Orestes, he had murdered in order to avenge Caesar, his uncle-turned-father; he sought to portray his actions as just, that he was simply trying to avenge his father's unjust death at the hands of those closest to him, just as Orestes, with Apollo's order, had to kill Clytemnestra. Augustus used this idea to justify his actions in saying he was only seeking justice. He pushed for the similarity between him and Orestes, especially during his early years before his rule was well-established.

Thus, much like Sophocles' *Ajax*, Euripides' *Orestes* also enjoyed popularity in the Roman Empire as one of the most famous tragedies; in fact, arguably the most popular, the original Greek version would have been an appealing exemplum for Celsus owing to several important characteristics. Unlike the plays of Sophocles or Aeschylus, Euripides' *Orestes* offered a more "realistic" view of madness, as the author uses more medical terms and allude to medical works contemporary to the tragedy. In addition, the play departed from preceding depictions of the hero's myth by Homer and Aeschylus, in part, through a more mythical setting. This allowed *Orestes* to be relevant no matter when or where it was performed as it did not espouse a particular time-space.⁷⁵

Celsus and Euripidean *Orestes*

Incredibly popular among Romans, Euripidean *Orestes*, for Celsus, would have seemed an apt choice as an example of a madman for different reasons than Sophoclean *Ajax*, partly owing to several differences in the structure as well as content of the narrative.

First, while the madness of the hero occurs before the beginning of the play in the *Ajax*, the insanity of the hero unfolds on the stage in *Orestes*. In one of the most iconic scenes, Orestes goes insane when he sees his Clytemnestra's Erinyes—vengeful spirits that curse the hero for the murder of his mother—who remain invisible to the audience and the other characters on stage; he chases invisible monsters in front of the audience's eyes.⁷⁶ During this fit of madness, Orestes pulls out a bow and defends himself from the invisible spirits and the audience witnesses everything, including the following words of panic that the hero utters:

Some goddess is going to be struck by a mortal hand if she doesn't move out of my sight! Aren't you listening? Don't you see the feathered arrows darting from my far-shooting bow? No, no! No more delaying! Mount up to the upper air with your wings: it's Phoebus' oracles you should blame! By what is this? I'm raving and out of breath. Where ever have I leapt to from my bed? After the storm waves I once more see calm.⁷⁷

Evidently, the Erinyes completely take over Orestes' mind and he loses control of his reality. His madness is not just an alteration of sight, but a whole separate world where even those closest to him fall away, as it forces Orestes to see Electra as one of Erinyes sent to plague him, not loving sister.⁷⁸ This is what makes chronic madness so dangerous according to Celsus in *De Medicina*—the complete loss of control. The popularity of this particular scene would have helped those readers who had seen the play to understand this danger as well as the meaning behind Celsus' words when he writes—“*si imagines fallunt*,” which means “if by phantoms mislead”—in describing insanity.⁷⁹

Second, in the play, Orestes also displays physical symptoms of madness that Ajax does not. His sister Electra describes the state of Orestes' body in detail:

...poor Orestes here, his body wasting away with a cruel disease, has taken to his bed, whirled in madness by the blood of his mother. I shrink from naming the goddesses, the Eumenides, who work to create this fear. This is now the sixth day since our slaughtered mother's body has been purified by the pyre. During this time he has neither swallowed food nor bathed. He lies covered in a blanket, and when his body finds relief from his malady, his is sane and weeps, while at other times he leaps from the bedding and runs about like an unyoked colt.⁸⁰

Here, the hero's physical appearance is discussed, as the storyline repeats the fact that he had been sick for six days since his mother's murder throughout the tragedy. This sickness mirrors the physical symptoms of insanity that Celsus mentions in *De Medicina*, namely fever and fatigue.⁸¹ Moreover, other parts of the tragedy indicate that sleep helps the tragic hero calm down; the importance of sleep is also emphasized by Celsus, who notes that the physical symptoms which accompany insanity can often be relieved through it.

Third and finally, *Orestes* features a hero who seeks and remains open to care from his family and friends like Electra and Pylades, who, in turn, also display a willingness to help; in these instances, the role of the caretaker is better defined in the Euripdean tragedy than the Sophoclean one. While her brother's insanity renders his actions unpredictable, Electra nonetheless strives to be useful as the sole caretaker of her brother. She first takes care of his physical body before his mind—reflecting one of the principles of ancient medicine that the outer body reflects the state of the inner mind. Moreover—just as Celsus instructs his readers to never leave the insane alone—she does not leave Orestes unattended, because when he loses his sanity he is unpredictable and volatile.⁸² Much like

Electra, Pylades, who helps Electra kill Clytemnestra, shows support for Orestes throughout the tragedy as his close friend. When the hero is expelled from his home for killing his mother, Pylades travels to Argos, where he finds Orestes in the thick of his madness. There, Pylades proves his friendship to Orestes by saying:

Wrap your body, sluggish with your illness, about mine. I will carry you through the city, paying slight attention to the crowd, feeling no embarrassment. Where else could I demonstrate that I am your friend if I do not come to your aid when you are in direst trouble?⁸³

The devotion that Pylades shows to Orestes is what Celsus means when he writes about the proper environment for an insane person to heal. An ideal friend is someone who the madman trusted before becoming mad—someone who will show care for the madman, encourage him, and help him to function. For Orestes, Pylades is exactly that. As the friendship between the two was well-known and celebrated in Roman culture—as evidenced by widely-read Roman texts in which Pylades stays at Orestes' side to help and protect him—it makes sense that Celsus chose Orestes as an example of the insane.⁸⁴ To Celsus, while complete cure for insanity likely seemed elusive, better treatment was simple, as he deemed a close friendship to be central to exemplary care.

Therefore, with a more explicit and intimate portrayal of insanity as well as its treatment, Euripides' *Orestes* would have appeared to Celsus as a helpful tool in expanding upon the breadth of symptoms and issues involving madness.⁸⁵ Whereas *Ajax* would have been most useful only in terms of diagnosis and showing a failed case of treatment, *Orestes* as an example in *De Medicina* would have presented a more positive model for Roman healers and caretakers.

Conclusion

Science and society interact and intertwine with one another in numerous ways and their entangled interactions inevitably influence the ways in which people look at the world around them. Madness, in this sense, does not solely belong in the former or latter. Just as the terminology has changed from madness to mental illness, what defines and categorizes the problems within the mind is always changing. As such, Celsus is one of many ancient scientific authors who warrant further research, especially in the realm of mental health and society. It is imperative to look beyond the realm of science and consider the socio-cultural contexts when evaluating the ancient history of madness as well as its treatment. Each lens through which a person from the past viewed a madman is significant and each must be analyzed with the particular circumstances surrounding it.

Thus, while Celsus' account of madness in *De Medicina* may seem brief and exclusively scientific, there is certainly more to it than meets the eye. Along with its instructions and recommendations, it presents a set of cultural contexts to help Romans understand the

processes involved in diagnosing and treating madness. In the field of ancient medicine, Celsus is certainly a major figure and *De Medicina* is a magisterial medical text, but he did not produce it out of the blue. Other preceding images and portrayals of madness helped him sharpen his thoughts and put them on paper, just as he affected the ways in which those who followed him interpreted insanity. Simply put, context is everything. The world outside of ancient medicine that molded Celsus and his study must not be overlooked, as doing so would be a disservice to the document as well as the messy web of history that has been expanding since its authorship.

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- ² This is part of a larger trend in history known as Whig History. Taking its name from the Whig Party of Great Britain, Whig History posits that everything has led up to the present moment, and that now is the best that humanity has never been.
- ³ T. Clifford Allbutt, *Greek Medicine in Rome* (London: Macmillan and co., 1921) 176-191.
- ⁴ A good example of religion and medicine working together is *On Dreams* in *Regimen IV*. Dreams are used to direct the medical care.
- ⁵ For further information on the departure of religion and science in the early Christian period, see Nadine Metzger, “‘Not a *Daimon* but a Severe Illness:’ Oribasius, Posidonius and Later Ancient Perspectives on Superhuman Agents Causing Disease,” in *Ancient Medicine from Celsus to Paul of Aegina*, ed. Chiara Thumiger and P.N. Singer (Boston: Brill, 2018), 79-109.
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- ⁸ Ido Israelowich, *Patients and Healers in the High Roman Empire* (Boston: Johns Hopkins, 2015), 52-63.
- ⁹ Most notable of the authors who cite Celsus is Pliny in his *Natural Histories*.
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- ¹¹ Foucault, *History of Madness*, 79.
- ¹² *Ibid*, 80.
- ¹³ *Ibid*, 99.
- ¹⁴ As instrumental as French theorists are to how historians approach social history, they are not historians themselves. The history in Foucault’s writing is simply incorrect, most notably in regard to his discussion of the ship of fools. No such thing existed, but the theory behind separating and sending the insane wandering retains its merit through the ways it manifests in actual historical events.
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- ¹⁷ Israelowich, *Patients and Healers*, 92.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid*, 95.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid*, 15.
- ²⁰ *Ibid*, 76-84.
- ²¹ *Ibid*, 46-52.
- ²² *Ibid*, 27.
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- ²⁴ T.P. Wiseman, *The Roman Audience: Classical Literature as Social History*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 169-72.
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- ³³ Ibid, 120.
- ³⁴ Heinrich von Staden, “Celsus as Historian?” in *Ancient Histories of medicine: Essays in medical Doxography and Historiography in Classical Antiquity*, ed. Philip J. van der Eijk, (Boston: Brill, 1999), 252-53.
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- ³⁶ Von Staden, “Celsus as Historian?” 259.
- ³⁷ Celsus, *On Medicine*, 291.
- ³⁸ Ibid, 291-301.
- ³⁹ Christopher Gill, “Philosophical Psychological Therapy: Did it Have Any Impact of Medical Practice?” in *Mental Illness in Ancient Medicine From Celsus to Paul of Aegina*, ed. Chiara Thumiger and P.N. Singer (Brill: Boston, 2018), 370.
- ⁴⁰ Celsus, *On Medicine*, 301-303. Original: “Huius autem ipsius species duae sunt: nam quidam imaginibus, non mente falluntur, quales insanientem Aiace vel Orestem percepisse poetae ferunt: quidam animo desipiunt...Ergo etiamsi semel datum veratrum parum profecerit, interposito tempore iterum dari debet. Neque ignorare oportet leviores esse morbum cum risu quam cum serio insanientium.”
- ⁴¹ Ibid.
- ⁴² Simon Goldhill, *Reading Greek Tragedy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 194.
- ⁴³ Elaine Fantham, “Pacuvius: Melodrama, Reversals, and Recognitions,” in *Myth, History, and Culture in Republican Rome*, ed. David Broun and Christopher Gill (Exeter: University of Exeter, 2003), 105.
- ⁴⁴ Wiseman, *The Roman Audience*, 33 and 35. Accius, Ennius, and Pacuvius were some other tragedians who also wrote significant plays based on the Greek narratives involving the House of Atreus.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid, 79, 134-138. As opposed to Greek tragedy, Roman tragedy was read as well as performed. Greek tragedy was usually staged in a competitive setting and had a type of high status attached to it. Roman tragedy was purely for entertainment, and was more often looked down upon instead of being a sign of high status.
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- ⁶⁰ David Seale, *Vision and Stagecraft in Sophocles* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 147.
- ⁶¹ Charles Segal, *Sophocles' Tragic World: Divinity, Nature, Society* (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 1995), 16-26.
- ⁶² Sophocles, *Ajax*, 285-310. Original: “κεῖνος γὰρ ἄκρας νυκκτός, ἡνίχ’ ἔσπεροι / λαμπτήρες οὐκέτ’ ἦθον, ἄμφηκες λαβῶν / ἐμαίειτ’ ἔγχος ἐξόδους ἔρπειν κενάς... / καὶ τὰς ἐκεῖ μὲν οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν πάθας... / τέλος δ’ ἀπάξας διὰ θυρῶν σκιᾶ τι / λόγους ἀνέσπα, τοὺς μὲν Ἀτρειδῶν κάτα, / τοὺς δ’ ἀμφ’ Ὀδυσσεῖ, συντιθεὶς γέλων πολύν, / ὅσῃν κατ’ αὐτῶν ὕβριν ἐκτείσαιτ’ ἰών / κᾶπειτ’ ἐνάξας αὐθις ἐς δόνους πάλιν / ἔμφρων μόλις πως ζῶν χφόνῳ καθίσταται, / καὶ πλήρες ἄτης ὥς διοπτεύει στέγος, / παίσας κάρα ἑθύξεν ἐν δ’ ἐρειπίοις / νεκρῶν ἐρειφθεὶς ἔζειτ’ ἀρνείου φόνου, / κόμην ἀπριξ ὄνυξι συλλαβὼν χερί.”
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- ⁷⁶ Euripides, *Orestes*, 268-274.
- ⁷⁷ Ibid, 271-279. Original: ““βεβλήσεται τις θεῶν βροτησίᾳ χερί, / εἰ μὴ ᾿ξαμείψει χωρὶς ὀμμάτων ἐμῶν. / οὐκ εἰσακούετ’; οὐχ ὀρᾶθ’ ἐκηβόλων / τόξων πτερωτὰς γλυφίδας ἐξορμωμένας; / ᾗ ᾗ / τί δῆτα μέλλετ’; ἐξακρίζετ’ αἰθέρα / πτεροῖς* τὰ Φοίβου δ’ αἰτιᾶσθε θέσφατα.”Εἰ / τί χρῆμ’; ἀλύω, πνεῦμ’ ἀνείς ἐκ πλευμόνων. / ποῖ ποῖ ποθ’ ἠλάμεσθα δεμνίων ἄπο; / ἐκ κυμάτων γὰρ αὐτὶς αὐτὴ γαλῆν ὀρῶ.”
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- ⁸⁰ Euripides, *Orestes*, 37-45. Original: “έντεῦθεν ἀγρία συντακεῖς νόσῳ δέμας / τλήμων Ὀρέστης ὅδε πεσὼν ἐν δεμνίοις / κεῖται, τὸ μητρὸς δ’ αἵμα νιν τροχηλατῇ / μανιαῖσιν· ὀνομάζειν γὰρ αἰδοῦμαι θεᾶς / Εὐμενίδας αἱ τόνδ’ ἐξαμιλλῶνται φόβον. / ἔκτον δὲ διὰ τόδ’ ἡμᾶρ ἐξ ὅτου σφαγαῖς / θανοῦσα μήτηρ πυρὶ καυήγνισται δέμας, / ὧν οὔτε σῖτα διὰ δέρης ἐδέξατο, / οὐ λούτρ’ ἔδωκε χρωτὶ· χλανιδίων δ’ ἔσω / κρυφθεὶς, ὅταν μὲν σῶμα κουφισθῇ νόσου / ἔμφρων δακρύει, ποτὲ δὲ δεμνίων ἄπο / πηδᾶ δρομαῖος, πῶλος ὥς ὑπὸ ζυγοῦ.”
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