



Crossroads

*The University of Michigan Undergraduate Journal
of Anthropology*

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor — Department of Anthropology

Fall 2020 Edition

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

On behalf of the Editorial Board, it is my pleasure to share with you this volume of *Crossroads*: The University of Michigan Undergraduate Journal of Anthropology. The articles in this volume represent the outstanding anthropological research and writing that is currently being accomplished at the undergraduate level at the University of Michigan and many other institutions across the country. We are proud that this journal represents the diversity of theoretical and methodological approaches at use in anthropology today.

This volume is comprised of six essays which draw on archaeological, biological, sociocultural, linguistic, and evolutionary anthropology to examine social change and cultural transformation across the world. In the first essay, “White Noise and African American Linguistic Discrimination in the American Soundscape,” author Skylar Clark discusses the relationship between language and race to understand linguistic discrimination in American society. Author Emily Rodden then discusses aid organizations working on the U.S./Mexico border in the article “Humanitarian Motivation on the U.S./Mexico Border” and examines the motivations of aid workers in the context of the current border policy. In “Filling the Gaps: Our Neglected Army of Healthcare Workers,” Noelle McNamara next explores how community health workers have been effectively used in past pandemics and how they can alleviate the burden on the U.S. healthcare system caused by COVID-19. Next Josephine Schmidt focuses on how evolutionary psychology supports the feminist movement and how this framework relates to social psychology in “The Discrepancies Between Social Psychology and Evolutionary Psychology.” In “The Moving of Food: The Emergence and the History of Chifa in Peru,” Shihua Lu argues how a Peruvian Chinese culinary tradition reflects the Chinese diaspora in South America and shows how language can be tied to food. Ending this edition of *Crossroads*, author Catherine Cao examines how certain Japanese religious practices use the human body to connect social beings along with secular and sacred spaces in “The Spiritual Athletes in a Mountain of Sorrow: Bodily-Mediated Cultural Performances *Here* and *Beyond* the Kyōto Landscape.”

I would like to thank every member of the Editorial Board, as well as our authors, for the time and effort they have dedicated to the success of this publication. The process would not have been nearly as rewarding without their thoughtful revisions and brilliant ideas. In addition, this issue would not have been possible without the help of faculty in the Department of Anthropology.

Sincerely,

Madeline Topor, Editor-in-Chief, *Crossroads*

Social Change and Cultural Transformation

White Noise and African American Linguistic Discrimination in the American Soundscape

By Skylar Clark

Despite the misleading melting pot mentality attributed to American culture, there is an often-rigid opposition between Anglo-American speech, and any voice, accent, or affectation which does not conform to the former's parameters. Because of this, the voices of BIPOC bodies are racialized due to the disappearing quality of whiteness, as white speech fades into the standard of normality like background static. In this research paper I argue that one of the perpetrators of such racial inequality within language is the subversive concept of "white noise," which is defined as "a particular mode of racialized sound production and audition, modulated and constrained by whiteness" (Tourle 2017, 1). I begin with a personal narrative related to the subject, followed by a critical breakdown of the relationships between voice, language, and race. To establish a relevant theoretical framework, I defer to Nicholas Harkness' conception of the "phonosonic nexus," which divides the voice into a physical and semiotic binary. Using this duality between physical vocalization and auditory social semantics, Harkness constructs the voice as the bodily progenitor of sound whose meaning as a communicative medium is arbitrary until endowed with externally assigned social connotations. Thus, I analyze how interpretations of both the "voice voice" (speech) and "voicing" (vocal identity) are informed by the standard of white noise, and consequently drive linguistic discrimination. In particular, I focus on how this phenomenon transforms language into a distinguishing marker which can be consciously or unconsciously used to discriminate against the African American community within the American soundscape.

Introduction

Growing up, I remember an actor on Saturday Night Live telling jokes meant to make fun of the California accent, which they performed with exaggerated valley girl lifts and additions of vocal fry for good measure. Not only was I confused by these imitations (as someone who was raised in the often-referenced San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles), but more importantly, I was

confused, baffled even.

“But we don’t have an accent.” I said, turning to my mother. “We just talk normally.”

She tried to explain to me that we all grow up thinking we speak “normally,” but that “normal” is a subjective concept which we all attribute to our own way of life; thus, we all think of ourselves as fundamentally normal. She may not have said it in so many words, but even so, this was a bit too much for my eight-year-old brain to grasp. However, one could attribute my assumption of having “normal speech” to the pervasive idea of a standardized white American speech pattern and affectation; this was a group I considered myself to be a practicing member of, and against which I judged the voices of those around me. Although it could be argued that no one views themselves as accented when speaking their own vernacular, I posit that this is an especially prevalent cultural mentality which perpetuates language discrimination and racism in the American soundscape.

My childhood ideation of speech normality serves as a direct example and perpetuation of the idea of “talking white” in America. In the Saturday Night Live “Californians” sketch, I was faced with the idea of a stereotyped “white voice:” the idea of a single undesirable representation rather than White vocal heterogeneity. This highlights the fact that while it is assumed that there are many regional variations of the white American voice (Californian, Southern, Bostonian, New Yorker, Midwestern), the voices of members of marginalized groups are often relegated to homogenous and overly generalized conceptions. For example, the aforementioned accents are indeed regional and are not only relegated to white people; POC speakers also share these accents, particularly African Americans due to the legacies of institutionalized slavery. POC speakers have also contributed to the evolution of these accents over time, and therefore these accents are not intrinsic to any one racial group. However, the broader concept of “white noise”

has historically functioned as a discriminatory backdrop against which the languages and voices of people of color are judged. This is especially true for the African American community. White speech variation is viewed as being geographically distributed, while oftentimes Black speech is perceived as a universal racial marker, since people are reported as “sounding black.” Of course, it is not uncommon to hear that an individual “sounds white,” but there is an important difference between these euphemisms. Sounding white as a white individual is unlikely to result in linguistic discrimination, since sounding white is often equated with standard speech. In this way, the racialization of the Black voice stems from the disappearing quality of whiteness, as it fades into the standard of normality like background static. Through sound in particular, different aspects of identity often get tangled up in a complex web of associations and oppositions in American culture, such as the implied relationship between gender and sexual orientation, or between language and citizenship status, to name a few. Thus, there is an often-rigid opposition between Anglo-American speech, and any voice, accent, or affectation which does not conform to the former’s parameters. For the purposes of this paper, I will focus on how this motivates African American language discrimination in particular.

Defining White Noise

Before we can delve into the myriad ways in which white noise ostracizes Black speech affectations, we must construct a running definition of what white noise is, and how white racial hegemony functions in American culture. Paul Tourle outlines this concept in his analysis of white noise, “White Noise: Sound, Materiality, and the Crowd in Contemporary Heritage Practice,” in which he describes the phenomenon particularly in relation to the Sounds of our Shores sonic archive project in Great Britain. He defines white noise as “a particular mode of

racialized sound production and audition, modulated and constrained by whiteness” (Tourle 2017, 1). While Tourle’s methodology and construction of white noise serves as an important theoretical groundwork for my study, I am particularly interested in how this concept applies to the American soundscape, American public institutions, and American linguistic minorities. In expanding upon this concept of white noise, I turn to commonly agreed upon definitions of *white supremacy* and *white racial consciousness* as defined by critical race theory scholars. According to Christine Malsbary’s critical work on race-driven language policies in high school education, “white supremacy refers to the racialized system and opportunity structure that endows white people with material and psychological benefits.” Meanwhile “white racial consciousness refers to how racist ideologies provide rationalizations that suppress the contradiction between democratic ideals and the existence of people of color under white supremacy” and also “[defines] and [privileges] membership in the white community by creating an Other” (Malsbary 2014, 374). The social construction and performance of white hegemony is substantiated by a framework of reproduced privilege and is supported by a supporting ideology of rationalizations which serve to stigmatize minority groups.

It is this second concept of “white racial consciousness” which I argue maps the idea of white noise, as the foundation of this ideology rests on the idea that white predominance is defined expressly through the creation and alienation of the “other;” thus, this concept establishes a relationship where voices of the “other” are contextualized against the backdrop of white speech precepts. White noise is able to assume its position as a universal backdrop because the relationship between this racial identity and its hegemonic status in social, economic, and bureaucratic spheres renders it “invisible” or “inaudible” due to a “general perception that white representations stand for ‘people’ in general, rather than ‘white people’ in particular” (Stoevers

2010, 66). As such, white people are automatically rendered as sounding fundamentally “normal” in comparison to all opposing linguistic representations.

In her work analyzing language as an identity marker, *Language, Race, and White Public Space*, Jane Hill implicitly expands upon the notion of white noise through the idea of “white public space,” which she argues is constructed through “(1) intense monitoring of the speech of racialized populations such as Chicanos and Latinos and African Americans for signs of linguistic disorder and (2) the invisibility of almost identical signs in the speech of Whites, where language mixing, required for the expression of a highly valued type of colloquial persona, takes several forms” (Hill 1998, 681). Her analysis of “white public space” as both a physical arena and an ideological one reinforces the idea that whiteness is most often defined by what it is *not*, rather than what it is, due to a lack of discernible or strict boundaries between different performances of white identity. Hill solidifies this point in describing how whiteness is indirectly indexed “as an unmarked normative order,” chiefly because its positioning as the majority group in American society allows it to presume associations with standard normality and expected behavior (Hill 1998, 681). As such, the space offered for a variety of interchangeable white identities accentuates the lack of space allowed for identities which deviate from this norm. This contributes to the ostracization of people based on their sonic performances of race, nationality, and ethnicity.

Aside from the socially constructed associations between whiteness and ordinariness, another pervasive connotation of white speech is that of “order” or propriety, which is viewed as being directly challenged by dialectical, affectual, and linguistic deviations. White perceptions of different accents or dialects of English are directly mediated by cultural notions of “correctness” and “good English.” Therefore, “failures of linguistic order, real and imagined, become in the

outer sphere signs of race: ‘difference as inherent, disorderly, and dangerous’” (Hill 1998, 681).

It is true that there are several regionally distributed white-American accents which do not necessarily conform to “good English,” and therefore may be stereotyped as low class or uneducated. However, the fact that such variations are explained through class differences rather than racial identity demonstrates how linguistic discrimination toward people of color is explicitly tied to racism. In this way, we see how negative assumptions around different racial, ethnic, or linguistic identities are transmuted from the visual world into that of the auditory, and how language is transformed from a one-dimensional vehicle for communication to a medium with layers of meta meaning informed by the body which uses it. Because of this, it is also worth investigating the perspective of the African American community, and how they hear and define white noise in society. In interviews KALW reporter Leila Day conducted with black teenagers concerning what it means to “talk white” as an African American, they defined it as:

*“...speaking **proper**, like how most white people talk, or what most **normal** people sound like.”*

*“...to speak **respectable**...”*

*“They are saying you’re **fake**, like a **wannabe** or something.”* (Day, 2015)

According to these interpretations, although they may not be representative of the whole African American community, it seems as though white speech is not only equated with propriety, respectability, and normality, but is also framed as a sign of a higher social strata; this is a linguistic apex which black people are viewed as “reaching for” when affecting a white speech pattern. As Day later describes in her article, “to sound white [is] to sound high quality” and “professionally marketable,” thereby establishing a relationship between white speech affectation, good character, and economic opportunity. The intersection of these attributions is

directly reflective of how we view white racial identity and is thereby reinforced by how people hear it.

Argument

This phenomenon is particularly interesting because for a country of such purported diversity, there seems to be a lingering monolingual bias mindset which (literally) colors the way we recognize those who are “normal” and those who are “other.” Julie Thorpe-Lopez articulates this well in her work analyzing workplace language discrimination in the U.S.:

America has long struggled with its identity as a melting pot of many peoples.

Americans recognize multiculturalism as a great strength of their country and embrace differences among individuals on the whole. Coexisting with this appreciation of differences is a long history of the use of language as a tool of subjugation. This springs largely from the majority's fear of domination by the very minority groups that comprise our valued diversity (Thorpe-Lopez 2007, 1).

As Thorpe-Lopez points out, America continues to embody a living cultural contradiction through both its prized patchwork of cultural diversity and its deeply ingrained exclusionary instincts. As such the U.S. takes on a sort of Jekyll and Hyde personality type, with words of iconic nationalist poems like “Give Me Your Tired, Your Poor” ringing hollow against the blare of an oppressive and imperialistic history. But this personality split is not restricted to the pages of antiquity; like everything within our cultural memory, the legacies of these injustices bleed into our present. This social incongruity is especially relevant discourse given that the U.S. is currently in the midst of social upheaval and racial tensions following the murder of George Floyd and the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement. The continuation of systemic

violence against Black people through police brutality is proof that our current society is far from post-racial.

I would argue that one of the perpetrators of such racial inequality within language is the subversive concept of “white noise.” Colloquially and acoustically, white noise refers to “the sound of the sum-total of all possible frequencies;” we often think of it as a blaring background static, or just a sum total of chaotic auditory input that fades into the background of our daily activities (Connor 2002, 6). However, this turn of phrase also applies to a more socially complex and racially informed concept within the American soundscape, in which that very same indiffereniable background noise consists of the normative quality of white-sounding speech. In essence, white noise effectively serves as a proto-lingual aspect of speech, meaning it is more metacognitively focused than concerned with strict grammar or syntax, and it is the medium of communicating which sends a message rather than the content of the message itself; as media theorist Marshall McLuhan posited, “the medium is the message” (McLuhan 1964, 1). I argue that the standard of white noise contributes to the function of language as a distinguishing marker which can be consciously or unconsciously used to discriminate against the African American community in the American soundscape.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

To establish a theoretical framework for how the voice informs both language and identity I defer to Nicholas Harkness’ conception of the “phonosonic nexus,” which he uses to divide the voice into a physical and semiotic binary. He explains, “I treat the voice as an ongoing intersection between the phonic production, shaping, and organization of sound, on the one hand, and the sonic uptake and categorization of sound in the world, on the other” (Harkness 2014, 12).

In this proposed duality between physical vocalization and auditory social semantics, Harkness constructs the voice as the bodily progenitor of sound whose meaning as a communicative medium is arbitrary until endowed with externally assigned social connotations. If we view the voice in this light, it becomes one of the many identity markers with “which persons and groups situate themselves in worlds of significance” (Harkness 2014, 13). This harkens back to Clifford Geertz’s appropriation of Weber’s assertion that “man is an animal suspended in **webs of significance** he himself has spun” (Geertz 1973, 5). Essentially, through man’s own semiotic fashioning, the voice has transitioned from a mere physical tool, and language from a simple evolutionary adaptation for communication. The social relationship between language and identity is now very much part of the fabric of our own signifying web, as it characterizes a large part of both our personal and collective identities.

For our analysis of white noise, the plane of significance which the phonosonic nexus best operates within is known as the “sonic color-line,” coined by Jennifer Stoeve-Ackerman and inspired by W. E. B. Du Bois’s concept of the visual color-line in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903). Stoeve-Ackerman defines the sonic color-line as describing “the relationship between listening and bodily codes of race” and positioning “listening as an interpretive site where racial difference is coded, produced, and policed” (Stoeve-Ackerman 2010, 62). Essentially, we hear race in addition to seeing it. To clarify, this infrastructure will serve as the essential underpinning for our discussion of marginalized voices in relation to white noise, as we analyze how accent and affectation of non-white English speakers encodes signals which both point to their identity and function as a cipher for negative stereotypes. Evidently, although I use the phrase white noise, this concept encompasses more than racial distinction; it embodies the universal normative speech expectations within communication and media of the U.S. Therefore, in order to analyze

how marginalized voices are negatively stereotyped by white noise, I contextualize them within the framework of the phonosonic nexus, and subsequently evaluate where they fall on the sonic color line with white-normative American speech on the one side (white noise), and all linguistic differences on the other (marginalized voices).

African American Language Discrimination

To better understand how marginalized voices are judged against the white noise screen, I start with an investigation into African American Vernacular Speech, otherwise known as AAVE or Ebonics. In ensuring a faithful explanation of the origins and meaning of this dialect, I first draw on a definition of Ebonics offered by the Linguistic Society of America:

At its most literal level, Ebonics simply means 'black speech' (a blend of the words ebony 'black' and phonics 'sounds'). The term was created in 1973 by a group of black scholars who disliked the negative connotations of terms like 'Nonstandard Negro English' that had been coined in the 1960s when the first modern large-scale linguistic studies of African American speech-communities began.

As the definition above implies, the very name “Ebonics” for African American dialect is rooted in a resistance to both normative white speech and white academia’s disregard for African American language on the literal and technical level. In order to better understand the root of this linguistic oppression and academic disregard, it is necessary to understand the characteristics of Ebonics which render it a distinct dialect of American English. In offering the reader a more technical outline of the characteristics of AAVE/Ebonics, I draw on the following descriptions:

Ebonics pronunciation includes features like the omission of the final consonant in words like 'past' (pas') and 'hand' (han'), the pronunciation of the th in 'bath' as t (bat) or f (baf), and

the pronunciation of the vowel in words like 'my' and 'ride' as a long ah (mah, rahd). Some of these occur in vernacular white English, too, especially in the South, but in general they occur more frequently in Ebonics. Some Ebonics pronunciations are more unique, for instance, dropping b, d, or g at the beginning of auxiliary verbs like 'don't' and 'gonna', yielding Ah 'on know for "I don't know" and ama do it for 'I'm going to do it.'" (Rickford 2020)

On the syntactic front, AAVE speakers have a more granular tense-marking system. In standard English, for instance, "James is happy" can mean either that James is happy at the moment or that he is habitually happy. AAVE uses the verb "to be" to mark the habitual form, but omits it otherwise:

James happy = James is happy right now

James be happy = James is usually happy/a happy person" (Harris 2020)

While not exhaustive, some other identifying linguistic patterns of AAVE include consonant clusters, postvocalic *r* vocalization, copula/auxiliary absence (e.g., She nice), past tense *be* regularization, past-leveling to weren't regularization (e.g., It weren't me), third person plural -s marking (e.g., The dogs barks), and third person singular -s absence (e.g., The dog bark) (Wolfram and Thomad, xiv). To be clear, these brief descriptions of AAVE are not presumed to universally apply to all African American speakers and are provided only as an introduction to AAVE's linguistic construction. Because of its differences when compared to Standard American English, speakers of AAVE/Ebonics are often socially regarded as using street slang, incorrect grammar, or as having a distinctly "urban" dialect in the shaping of their vowels. However, it is important to be clear that AAVE truly is a dialect of English, not simply an arbitrary collection of slang and random grammar "mistakes." Yet, based on these perceptions which are often informed by a hegemonic linguistic perspective, "black speech patterns are too

often seen as markers of poor education and undesirability” (Harris 2020). In fact, “studies have even shown how some white listeners default to negative feelings and stereotypes when they hear a Black voice. Which is one reason why some Black people will code-switch or change their manner of speaking depending on the situation” (Mackenzie 2018). Evidently, the cultural connotation of the black voice being an indicator of poor character is deeply ingrained, and it is not objectively based in the linguistic construction of Ebonics. Rather, it is an interpretation informed by the social construction of race, and the historical legacies attached to those racialized bodies. As Mackenzie summarizes, the real issue is that people think a “Black sound” is a “bad sound.”

In the context of judging black voices against white noise, we can see how more elongated or open-ended pronunciations, the condensation of multiple words into shorter phrases, and the use of syntactic patterns that are consistent in themselves but conflict with notions of Standard American English are indexed as oppositional to so-called Americanness. Consequently, through the presumed correlation between vocalized dialect/alternate grammar and racially motivated judgments passed on both the speaker and their associated ethnic group, we observe the phonosonic nexus at work. Without the racialized interpretations of certain vocabulary choices or pronunciations, these uses of language are arbitrary. To put it more simply, they have no inherent meaning as racial indicators (since race is also a social construct), or demarcations of innate character quality. They are merely vocalizations and syntactical constructions consistent with a particular mode of speaking (in this case, Ebonics). This bolsters Harkness’ delineation between the “voice voice” and “voicing.” For Harkness, the difference between these two objects takes the following form:

...Literal understandings of “voice” (e.g., a laryngeal setting involving vocal cord

adduction, a material locus of human sound production, an instantiation of a speaking or singing individual, etc.) and more tropic understandings of “voicing” (e.g., a metonym of political position and power, a metaphor for the uniqueness of an authentic self or collective identity, an expression of a typifiable persona, etc.) (Harkness 2014, 12).

To condense this idea, the “voice” involves literal sonic production, while “voicing” represents how this physical act is interpreted as a signal of individual and social identity. If anything, the relationship between “voice” and “voicing” serves to further deepen our understanding of the phonosonic nexus, and how AAVE/Ebonics is informed by this theoretical framework.

Since we have addressed the more technical linguistic qualities of Ebonics/AAVE as they relate to the “voice,” we may now direct our attention to the second aspect of the phonosonic nexus: “voicing,” especially as it relates to the positioning of black identity within and outside of the African American community. Despite our understanding of what the black voice does, we are still faced with understanding what it *is*. We have already, to a degree, defined the white voice as it relates to social hegemony in the American soundscape. So, what is the black voice? I do not ask this question to position the black voice as an object, but to understand how the black voice is situated in the world of significance in which we currently operate as a society; what are its political, historical, and cultural indexes, and how do these contextualize the black voice within the linguistic soundscape? Interestingly, much of the writing done on what it means to “sound” black in the media is offered by black individuals who have been told that they “sound white,” leaving them to sort through exactly what it means to sound black. In his article “Thick of Tongue,” John McWhorter describes his experience as a black individual who has been described as “sounding white” for nearly his entire life, as he has been told he sounds “snobbish”

or lacks “swagger.” These two descriptors alone point to a larger opposition between the white identity as overly sophisticated and pretentious, and the black identity as a confident street dweller.

Because of this stark contrast and the history of racial oppression associated with these connotations, for the black community, the voice can function as “an index of acceptance and warmth in a society that looks askance on black people in so many ways” (McWhorter 2016). Through this lens, dialect is no longer just a proto-linguistic marker of identity, but also functions as a social tool which induces communality and ethnic-inclusive affinity against the backdrop of white noise. However, as McWhorter attests, the commonly held perception of the black voice can also serve to alienate members of the black community who do not conform to it. He explains, “Finding my voice was just painful. At school, being told I ‘sounded white’ meant only one thing. I wouldn’t be eating my corn dog and tater tots at the black kids’ lunch table” (McWhorter 2016). Effectively, being told you “sound white” as a person of color paints you as something of an auditory traitor to the African American identity, whether intentional or not. By speaking in the manner of the oppressor, such individuals are viewed as seamlessly blending into the overpowering feedback of white noise. In this way, black individuals may be othered by their black peers, forcing them into a limbo of racialized identity as their speech does not “match up” with their phenotypic presentation and the vocal traits associated with it.

In a more general sense, McWhorter seeks to further answer or at least investigate the question of the black voice, in describing the black sound as “an accent” that “differs from standard English’s sound in the same way that other dialects do, in certain shadings of vowels, aspects of intonation...grain, huskiness, space.” (McWhorter 2016) This definition would (rightly) cast the black voice in the same class as any other categorical American-English dialect,

such as accents we hear from the South, Midwest, New York, New Jersey, Los Angeles, and so on. However, despite the fact that African Americans share many of these accents, the white perception of the Black voice is subject to far more scrutiny and commercialization. This is pivotal, because as McWhorter points out, “these days the ‘black sound’ has acquired a certain cachet in mainstream society through the popularity of hip hop...Call it stereotyping or call it progress, but a lot of white people happily anticipate a certain hipness, ‘realness,’ from a black person. We’re so ‘down,’ so approachable, so ‘the shit,’ apparently” (McWhorter 2016). As McWhorter indicates, the line between “stereotyping” and “progress,” or more specifically, commodification and celebration, can sometimes be blurrier than we would like. In identifying the black sound with more positive traits such as approachability or authenticity, white hegemony is (at least in part) moving away from negative assumptions of lack of education or intelligence. At the same time, this also makes the black voice into a pop culture monolith which some may ignorantly try to attach to all members of the black community. In this way, white society can fall into the old habits of recognizing white diversity mentioned earlier, but not allow space for the multiplicity of blackness.

In his article, “‘You Talk White:’ Being Black and Articulate,” Keith Powell describes the speech-related microaggressions that he and other black individuals experience on a frequent basis: “All of my black friends have been told at some point or another during their lifetime that they ‘talk white.’ I’ve been told it so many times, I’ve lost count. In some perverse way, though, I believe it’s said as a way to come to an understanding: the person who says it doesn’t know many different types of black people. Black people are generally seen as uneducated thugs. I do not appear to be an uneducated thug. Therefore, I must talk white” (Powell 2017). Here, we see the sonic-color line come to life as it embodies a stark two-sided auditory spectrum for black and

white voices. Because the white half of this line is considered mainstream or “normal,” people often don’t pay much attention to the many variations heard within it. On the other hand, as the black community faces marginalization and discrimination both visually and vocally, their identities are often interpreted through the lens of a negative amalgamation of racial stereotypes. As such, when an individual black voice does not fall under this assumptive purview, there is no space for it within the limits of white-perceived blackness, so it is relegated to the only other possible category in this matrix: whiteness. This shows that in the end the black sound, like all other identities who engage in “voicing,” cannot be pinned down to any one way of communicating. While there can be trackable patterns and accent markers, like other linguistic groups, the black sound is diverse and heterogeneous despite white noise functioning as a social determiner of alternative linguistic values.

It is clear that racial or ethnic presentation contributes to how white American native English speakers may associate speech and identity, and that based on these relationships people may draw negative conclusions about an African American individual’s character, capacity, or intelligence. However, there is one recent court case in particular which may offer some insight into just how this phenomenon occurs and why: the trial of George Zimmerman for the murder of Trayvon Martin, and the subsequent testimony of Rachel Jeantel. I draw on this case specifically because of how Jeantel’s use of AAVE was negatively interpreted by mostly white middle class jurors, and how “because they could not hear, understand, or believe her, [they] disregarded her testimony and acquitted Mr. Zimmerman” (Rickford and King 2016, 949). Rachel Jeantel, a 19-year-old student at Norland High School in Miami at the time of Martin’s death, was initially viewed as a key witness in the trial since she was on the phone with Martin as he was being followed by Zimmerman up until moments before Martin died. However, despite

the clear insight she had into the events that transpired that night in 2012, her testimony was eventually disregarded by the court; she was deemed “not credible” as a witness due to the alleged unintelligibility of her speech. In her book, *Suspicion Nation: The Inside Story of the Trayvon Martin Injustice and Why We Continue to Repeat It* (2014), Lisa Bloom comments that “Jeantel’s speech patterns, because they are associated with poor African Americans, were perceived by many, including the people who mattered most, the jurors, as unintelligent, and worse, evidence that she was not credible” (Bloom 2014, 132). It is essential to note the implied association between African American identity and a lower socioeconomic status, because this assumption only further highlights a longstanding white perception of communities of color as being inherently less capable both opportunistically and educationally. Members of these communities are doubly judged based on their melanin and their means, which translates to inferences made by the dominating class/racial group on their intelligence, skill, and character.

The connection between low economic standing and an assumption of poor character points to a larger social epidemic in the American moral imagination which falsely over-values money as an indicator of hard work, substance, and moral fiber. Furthermore, these assumptions reveal how much the burden of clear communication is shouldered by marginalized voices, rather than by speakers of Standard American English. In the case of the Zimmerman trial specifically, “although jurors did not have access to a transcript of Jeantel’s testimony (this is normal in US courtrooms), they could have requested readback of any parts they were not sure about, but (according to someone closely involved with the case) they did not” (Rickford and King 2016, 974). There were many instances of jurors asking for verbal clarification or claiming that they did not completely understand all of Jeantel’s testimony. Yet, rather than seeking further clarification in order to properly assess the value and credibility of her testimony, they

objectified her voice as part of a greater imagined stereotype informed by both her race and her speech. Therefore, the burden of bridging the gap in understandable communication and advocating for herself falls on Jeantel alone, and when she is unable to conform to the speech standards of the jurors she is deemed not as just speaking a different dialect, but as speaking unintelligibly. The disproportionate responsibility placed on speakers of different dialects is well documented not only in the amount of research dedicated to proving the “productive competence” of AAVE speakers, but even more so by the significant lack of research on “receptive competence” for those listening to AAVE, meaning “eligibility and credibility was placed primarily on the production properties of the speaker” (Rickford and King 2016, 976).

In short, while those researching AAVE have had to go to great lengths to prove the validity of AAVE speakers and the coherence of AAVE as a speech pattern, there has been very little investigation into how non-AAVE speakers hear and interpret it. Moreover, in institutional settings such as public education, the justice system and more, there seems to be a distinct lack of consideration for the fact that there are listeners and speakers outside of those institutions who can understand AAVE and other accents or dialects. Lindemann and Subtirelu summarize this particularly well in their study, “Reliably Biased: The Role of Listener Expectation in the Perception of Second Language Speech,” as they remark on how “speech that certain listeners report as lacking I/C [intelligibility and comprehensibility] may be intelligible or comprehensible to other groups of listeners” (Lindemann and Subtirelu 2013, 583). Basically, because certain dialects or speech patterns are regarded as unintelligible by hegemonic speakers of American English, they are deemed universally unintelligible and irrelevant. If Standard American English speakers cannot comprehend it, it effectively does not count as legitimate, thereby rendering speakers of such dialects even more invisible and voiceless than before. This reveals a pattern in

cross-cultural communication within the American soundscape in which there is a lack of space for the multiplicity of linguistic identities for marginalized groups and a lack of recognition for their validity in general against the backdrop of white noise.

The Sonic Color Line at Work

If we are tracing race as a determining factor in biases regarding what it means to be or sound “American,” then it is necessary to investigate just how much the visibility of racial representation really impacts the way accent is heard, and why. In other words, how much does the visual-color line inform the sonic-color line? In her article, “The Sound of Racial Profiling: When Language Leads to Discrimination,” professor of linguistics Valerie Fridland explains how “a number of studies have looked at how simply telling someone they are listening to an ethnic speaker or showing them a photo of an ethnic face, though actually listening to a standard speech recording, influences the perception of accentedness or non-standardness and lowers scores on intelligibility and competence scales” (Fridland 2020). An interesting study in this regard is Donald Rubin’s 1992 work on how non-language factors like accent influence listener’s interpretations of speech when they are paired with different visual racial identities. In this study, “students [were] played a four-minute speech sample recorded by a PhD student, a native speaker of American English from Ohio. When the speaker [was] represented (through a picture) as Asian rather than Caucasian, he [was] rated as being much more accented and harder to comprehend, even though raters [were] evaluating the same native-speaker accent in each case” (Rickford and King 2016, 976). Based on this, it would seem that in our highly visual society, people have been unconsciously trained to engage more with their eyes than their ears, thereby allowing the social interpretations of the former to color the information input of the latter even

when these assumptions have no foundation in reality. This is demonstrated yet again in a more recent but similar matched-guise experiment conducted by Dixon, Mahoney, and Cocks in 2002, in which they aimed to “examine the effect of regional accent on the attribution of guilt” in the setting of criminal justice trials (162). The study included 119 participants who were asked to infer guilt or innocence based on the sound of a suspect’s voice, and the results suggested “that the suspect was rated as significantly more guilty when he employed a Birmingham [nonstandard, evaluated negatively] rather than a standard accent, and that attributions of guilt were significantly associated with the suspects’ superiority and social attractiveness [including, race: White vs. Black]” (Dixon, Mahoney, and Cocks 2002, 162). The results of these experiments clearly highlight the application of the sonic-color line onto the phonosonic nexus, as hegemonic speakers implicitly create a division between themselves and non-hegemonic speakers based in arbitrary sounds (the voice voice), which translates to reduced ability in comprehension on the part of the listener, and thereby a reduced appreciation of the speaker’s character and moral integrity.

“Voicing” in Linguistic Discrimination

How and why has accented English become a signifier for inferiority, be it by non-native speakers, bilingual speakers, or African American speakers? Is it purely racially motivated, or are there other factors at play? E.B. Ryan and M.A. Carranza also touch on this as they describe a series of sociological experiments meant to probe this very question, starting with an accentedness study conducted by E.B. Ryan and M.A. Carranza in 1975. In the course of this study, sixty-three female high school students of Black, Mexican American, and White descent were instructed to rate the personalities of male speakers of both standard English and Mexican

American English. These ratings were also performed in two contexts, home and school, along with two sets of rating scales, status-stressing and solidarity-stressing. The results of this experiment found that “standard English speakers received more positive ratings in every case, and the differences were significantly greater in the school context than in the home context and on status-stressing scales than on solidarity-stressing scales,” furthermore, “Anglo students rated accented speakers significantly lower on status scales than did either Black or Mexican American students” (Ryan and Carranza 1976, 3). According to these findings, one can assume that not only are standard English speakers more consistently associated with positive traits, but there is also a discrepancy between linguistic expectations in private and public settings. In school the speakers received poorer ratings if they spoke with an accent, thereby positioning public education as a site of “white public space,” where conformity is expected in behavior, speech, and even identity. This is accentuated by the fact that white students participating in the study dealt the lowest ratings to accented speakers in comparison to their POC peers, meaning white students retained the highest expectations for linguistic uniformity as unconscious maintainers of white public space. However, as is mentioned in the quote above, the pervasiveness of this concept is not only related to race but is also inevitably tied up in markers of class. The idea that white students specifically “rated accented speakers significantly lower on status scales” indicates that white students implicitly associated ethnic groups of color with a lower socioeconomic stratum based on their speech (Ryan and Carranza 1976, 3). This relationship is further elaborated in another study by E.B. Ryan and R.J. Sebastian, in which “it is hypothesized that listeners assume speakers of standard English to be middle class and accented speakers to be lower class” (Ryan and Carranza 1976, 3). Through these associations, we see another demonstration of the phonosonic nexus, as the “voice voice” (accent) determines

society's interpretation of "voicing" (vocal cues for racial identity, socioeconomic status, and intelligence).

The "Voice Voice" in Linguistic Discrimination

There are still more studies which very clearly articulate the tendency of Caucasian-American native English speakers to associate race/ethnicity and accent, and how this leads to mutually reinforcing negative stereotyping. But what specific aspects of the "voice voice" lead to these breakdowns in cross cultural communication, and subsequent discrimination toward non-native, bilingual, and accented English speakers? The "voice voice," or language at its most basic level, disconnects in communication such as that previously mentioned in Rachel Jeantel's court testimony stem from differences in lexicon, phonetic perception, and syntax, in this case between AAVE and Standard American English (Rickford and King 2016, 970). Lexicon differences between Aboriginal English and Standard Australian English serve as another example of this: "an Aboriginal witness in a judicial inquiry in the Northern Territory, Australia, referred to 'a half moon shining.' A cross-examining counsel, certain there was no literal half-moon that night, tried to impugn his testimony. But an interpreter, aware that, in Aboriginal English (AE) of the north-east Arnhemland variety, *half* means 'small part', hence 'crescent moon', asked the witness to draw the moon he saw, validating his testimony" (Cooke 1995, 91). In this case, one directly observes how linguistic hegemony contributes to the perpetuation of social hegemony in the context of public institutions like the justice system; without translators to bridge gaps in linguistic and cultural communication, or more equitable considerations for marginalized speakers in general, cross-cultural communication cannot improve.

Another "voice voice" aspect which contributes to cross-cultural miscommunication is

misperceptions of phonetic pronunciation, which can subsequently lead to linguistic discrimination by hegemonic native speakers. In his work “On Alternating Sounds,” anthropologist Franz Boas describes the idea of “sound blindness” in relation to language, which describes the “inability to perceive the essential peculiarities of certain sounds,” especially “consonants and vowels.” This idea serves to further inform the central idea of “alternating sounds,” which refers to “the apparent tendency, long assumed to be characteristic of ‘primitive’ languages, to freely vary the pronunciation of words, without any discernible system” (Boas 1889, 47). In striving to disprove this theory, Boas refers to experiments mostly conducted on children, in which they listen to different words and sounds and attempt to spell them based on their auditory apperception. He postulates that there are two possible explanations for the childrens’ mishearing and consequent misspelling: “First, the phonetic elements [one] hears [may be] similar to other phonetic elements...Second, the hearer [may] not know the meaning of the spoken complex of sounds, as there is no context, but he knows that they are intended to represent a certain word” (Boas 1889, 50). Essentially, mishearing, misspelling, and mispronunciation are just that: mistakes and misperceptions, but not evidence of “alternating sounds”, and certainly not of “primitive languages.”

Equating English misperceptions/mispronunciations with a lack of linguistic intelligence/complexity, while no longer considered scientifically valid, is still a pervasive social phenomenon. Rather than labelling a language as “primitive,” dialects are interpreted as signifiers for poor intelligence and low class. For instance, within the public education system there is often disconnect which occurs between student speakers of AAVE and their white/non-African American teachers. According to professors Anne Haas Dyson and Geneva Smitherman, whose research focuses on educational disconnects of African American Language in writing

curriculum, “currently, federal funds for early schooling target the literacy learning of low-income children, who are disproportionately children of color; these programs, though, assume, as a literacy ‘basic,’ a singular correct way of using language. The stage is set, then, for communicative disconnects between teachers and children during literacy instruction” (Dyson, Smitherman 2009, 1). As Dyson and Smitherman point out, “what sounds ‘right’ to young children will vary for developmental, situational, and, as emphasized herein, sociocultural reasons,” meaning that to assume a singular “basic” way of communicating is already inadvertently subscribing to the subtle but powerful social standard of white noise (2009, 1). Such a subtle but impactful nuance to a policy which is meant to benefit students of color reveals why it is important to decolonize public institutions like education by changing what the public considers to be “normal.” Because it is clear that there is no one single “correct way” to speak English; just as there must be space for the multiplicity of marginalized identities, there must also be space for the different dialects and accents of those identities.

Conclusion and Call to Action

With the evidence established for the oppressive nature of white noise in personal interactions, public spaces, and public institutions, the question remains; how to go about dismantling it? It is important to not generalize the issue of decolonizing the soundscape, as linguistic oppression seeps into many public and private spaces and affects more communities than were able to be covered in this paper alone. However, many of the spaces identified in this discourse identify probable areas to investigate and offer more opportunities to question how white noise is operating. As Rickford and King state in their analysis of Rachel Jeantel’s treatment by the justice system, “for linguists [working for justice] should include listening to

vernacular dialects more closely and hearing their speakers more clearly and more fairly, not only in courtrooms, but also in schools, jobs, apartment searches, doctor's visits, and everywhere that speech and language matter" (Rickford and King 2016, 949) Although I would argue that this work extends beyond the academic linguistic community; it is an effort that must be consciously made by the American public in order to identify and dispel the expansive influence of white noise in our eyes and ears.

To expand upon Rickford and King's point, language and speech does in fact matter *everywhere*, at least in the context of our current society where the way one sounds can work against them so dynamically. One channel through which white noise could be dismantled (outside of individualized efforts), is that of establishing a protected legal status for language. In her tracking of language discrimination of the workplace, Thorpe-Lopez explains how language is a class of identity protected against discrimination in the EU and is equally considered along with race or sex. Meanwhile, language has yet to attain a similar status in the U.S., "although a compelling argument has been made for language inclusion under the protected class of national origin [in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act]" (Thorpe-Lopez 2007, 218). In addition to this route, there are many other avenues which may be pursued toward alleviating the burden of white noise on marginalized linguistic communities, whether they be through pedagogical revision, bureaucratic reorganization, or representation in entertainment. Altogether, while white noise continues to be a tool for linguistic marginalization within the American soundscape, there are ways through which to deconstruct this auditory precedent and consciously build more equitable spaces for communication in American society.

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Social Change and Cultural Transformation

Humanitarian Motivation on the U.S./Mexico Border

By Emily Rodden

Humanitarian aid workers have many motivations for providing aid. Workers with the organization No More Deaths, a humanitarian aid organization, based in southern Arizona, provide resources like food, water, clothing, and medical assistance to migrants traveling into the United States through the Sonoran Desert. Humanitarian aid workers' with No More Deaths motivations include spirituality or religiousness, an idea of a "shared humanity" or a "global community," the "right to humanitarianism," the current border policy, and the current administration's criminalization of humanitarian aid.

Declarations

The data analyzed during the current study are available in the No More Deaths repository, at <https://nomoredeaths.org/en/>. There was not outside funding for this research. The funding body of this paper is the author. I would like to acknowledge Brian Best, the director of Borderlinks, for supporting my trips to Tucson, and Michael DiGiovine, for being a great mentor.

The United States v. Natalie Renee Hoffman

January 15, 2019 – January 18th, 2019

I arrived late to the courthouse and proceeded to sneak into the back of a full courtroom, taking a seat in the area for the public. The courtroom was filled with friends, family, and other activists. Waiting for the proceedings to start, I glanced up to the judge, Judge Velasco. He was an older stout gentleman with a kind face. I noticed that he was sitting in front of a United

States flag, a flag that supposedly represents freedom and opportunity and I chuckled to myself about the irony of it all. The land of the free, home of the brave, criminalizing humanitarian work and deporting migrants.

A year prior, I had sat in a similar courtroom in the same building. I watched as seventy migrants were deported or detained in one trial, in a process called “Operation Streamline,” a process carried out by the Department of Homeland Security and establishes a ‘zero-tolerance’ immigration enforcement zone along the U.S./Mexico border. During these proceedings, the judge calls the name of a migrant, the offense they committed, and within seconds, migrants are sentenced to detention or deportation. “Operation Streamline” takes place every day in the Tucson Federal Courthouse.

Now back in that same courthouse, looking at the new defendants, members of No More Deaths, I sat listening to their testimonies, testifying as to why they believed they should provide humanitarian aid. In response, the federal prosecutor, which included officers with the United States Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) and the Border Patrol (BP), gave their sides.

On the third day, the proceedings started with a testimony from the defendant, Zaachila Orozco. Zaachila described leaving water in Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, a wildlife refuge in southern Arizona. She stated that she believed that “Water is life, water is necessary for everybody, we are made of water (and)...I believe that everyone who walks this earth should be able to drink some water.”

The next testimony was given by a United States Fish and Wildlife supervisor of Cabeza Prieta, Juliette Fernandez. Juliette Fernandez said that it was not within her “job responsibility” to keep track of how many people died in the refuge. This testimony mirrored another

testimony given by an officer in Cabeza Prieta, the day before. This officer had testified that officers working within Cabeza Prieta were not informed when individuals die or go missing in the refuge.

At the end of the trial, the prosecution repeatedly asserted that providing humanitarian aid constitutes “criminal conduct” and claimed the defendants had a “choice” in providing humanitarian aid. But, to the workers with No More Deaths, the work they do is necessary to address and alleviate the humanitarian crisis on the U.S./Mexico border. Like their name states, they continue working until there are “no more deaths” on the border.

The defense rested their case with the defense attorney, Louis Fidel, asking Judge Velasco to remember Matthew 25:35: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, for I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” Judge Velasco’s testimony reflects No More Death’s religious roots within the Unitarian Universalist Church.

After the trial, No More Deaths released a statement that stated that the volunteers “may have been found guilty but the real crime is the government’s deliberate policy to use ‘death as a deterrent’ on the U.S./Mexico border” (Corich-Kleim et al. February 2019). Therefore, according to No More Deaths, this trial and conviction was a criminalization of humanitarian aid and of the people acting in solidarity with undocumented people. Even though these four volunteers were convicted, No More Deaths stated that “The humanitarian work that had ultimately brought us here today, will continue to address the border crisis until there are No More Deaths” (Corich-Kleim et al. March 2019).

No More Deaths and Humanitarian Aid on the U.S./Mexico Border

The four volunteers described in the previous narrative are members of a humanitarian

aid organization called No More Deaths, or No Mas Muertes, located in southern Arizona. No More Deaths (NMD) was “created in response to the United States border policy” and is a mission of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tucson (Corich-Kleim et al. July 2020). No More Deaths’ broader goal is to end the death and suffering of migrants on the U.S./Mexico border. A couple ways they do this is by providing food, water, and medical aid to migrants crossing the desert in southern Arizona. They also offer humanitarian assistance to recently deported individuals at migrant aid stations in Mexico and report abuses by the Border Patrol and other agencies.

The volunteers in this trial were charged with federal crimes for placing humanitarian aid, including food, water, and medical supplies, in Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge. Their charges included offenses such as driving in a wilderness area, entering a wildlife refuge without a permit, and abandoning property (Carroll 2018; No More Deaths March 2018).

Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge covers more than 800,000 acres of remote desert along the border between Arizona and Mexico and is known, among humanitarian groups, as one of the most frequently traveled and deadliest migrant corridors in the Sonoran Desert. Cabeza Prieta is a deadly area because it has few natural water sources. In general, the Sonoran Desert is deadly; in the summer there can be weeks with temperatures of upwards of 110 degrees or higher. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or the CDC, adults and children need to stay hydrated while exposed to extreme heat, as the possibility of dehydration in extreme heat is high. In 2017, thirty-two human remains were found in Cabeza Prieta by the Pima County Medical Examiner, which is the office that processes bodies of migrants found in the desert. Out of the thirty-two remains found, thirty were skeletal remains and one had died from exposure (Arizona OpenGIS 2017). The volunteers with No More

Deaths place resources in the desert to potentially alleviate the issue of exposure for migrants crossing into the United States.

In *Natalie Hoffman v. The United States*, the four volunteers with No More Deaths were found guilty. However, in the retrial, they were found not guilty of the charges of driving in a wilderness area, entering a wildlife refuge without a permit, and abandoning property (Carroll 2018; Corich-Kleim et al. March 2018). But, a conviction of humanitarian aid work could threaten aid work in the region, and could conceivably open doors to a broader criminalization of anyone knowingly providing undocumented people with the basics of human life, including families with mixed immigration status (Deveraux 2019).

Even in the face of legal persecution, volunteers with No More Deaths continue to provide aid. Why do volunteers with No More Deaths provide humanitarian aid? What are their motivations? In the trial *Natalie Hoffman v. The United States*, humanitarian aid workers provide their motivations for providing humanitarian aid with the organization No More Deaths. This research will contribute to work done on humanitarian motivation by Didier Fassin, Erica Bornstein, and Peter Redfield.

Methods

For this project, my methods included working with multiple humanitarian aid organizations in Tucson, Arizona (e.g., Borderlinks, Tucson Samaritans, Humane Borders and No More Deaths), attending the three-day federal trial of *Natalie Hoffman v. United States*, utilizing archival research provided by No More Deaths and governmental organizations on the border, participant observation, informal ethnographic interviews, and semi-structured

interviews with volunteers and workers. The project was aimed at answering the research question of why volunteers or workers with No More Deaths are providing humanitarian aid. Answering this question will provide more evidence to the general motivations of humanitarian aid volunteers and workers.

For participant observation, I participated in office work, coordinating awareness-raising campaigns, procuring supplies, and documenting donations for Borderlinks. I participated in all-day provision drops by hiking in the desert with these humanitarian aid organizations. This is how groups like No More Deaths provide humanitarian assistance. I assisted in searching for the remains of migrant's bodies. I attended the weekly update meetings, which is where I learned about schedule's and the projects these groups are working on. I spent a total of a month, over the course of three years, in Tucson, Arizona, working in close relation with Borderlinks.¹

A Crisis, the Humanitarian, and Humanitarianism

Humanitarianism implies the emergence of *a crisis*. Humanitarianism is a temporal event, in response to a crisis that demands immediate action, and in this, is the spirit that drives humanitarian action (Fassin 2012). Humanitarian aid workers define the recipients of aid and the stipulations in providing aid (Fassin 2012). Agents and organizations within a “crisis” can define a crisis differently. If there is no perceived crisis, there is no need for humanitarian aid. For instance, organizations like the Border Patrol and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service do not consider ongoing migrant death on the border as a “humanitarian crisis.” This

¹ Borderlinks is a nonprofit in Tucson that provides educational programming for the general populace on border policy and other organizations in and around Tucson.

juxtaposes organizations like No More Deaths, who define migrant death on the U.S./Mexico border as a humanitarian crisis, and thus acts in response to address the crisis. Thus, the issue of who determines a crisis is important when considering who is motivated to assist.

The *humanitarian* subject is characterized by their desire to help other people (Malkii 2015). A humanitarian is a person who demands rights for others and expects the rights to be applied universally. They feel an obligation to aid and attend to others (Fassin 2012). “Advocates to humanitarianism” seek to ameliorate and improve aspects of the human condition (Bornstein & Redfield 2011). The conditions of humanitarian aid are the suffering of others and the charity of the giver (Bornstein & Redfield 2011). A narrative of hardship forms the exhibition of suffering, and if believed, the mobilization of moral sentiments (Fassin 2012).

Humanitarianism emphasizes the physical condition of aid recipients, above all else. The humanitarian identifies the recipient’s well-being through species level needs and health; species level needs includes necessities for life such as water, food, clothing, medicine, and comfort (or some level of comfort). Humanitarians turn the simplest objects like food and water into the most important objects. They make the mundane extraordinary because, within a crisis, mundane objects like water, food and clothing, can become difficult to obtain and can mean life or death.

Humanitarianism is thought to have stemmed from a western tradition and is often associated with Christian traditions of altruism and charity, like the story of The Good Samaritan, who dressed the traveler’s wounds and found him lodging (Minn 2007; Fassin 2012). However, there are many religions with traditions of giving, including the Buddhist ‘Mahayana,’ the Islamic ‘Zakat,’ and the Hindu ‘dan’ (Bornstein & Redfield 2011). World religions provide a foundation for charitable actions and an understanding of the act of giving.

Humanitarianism is a form of gift giving. In anthropological theory, the giver does not expect a gift in return for their altruism. Instead, the role of the 'giver' is used to maintain social and moral order within a community. The act of giving mobilizes a distinctively moral category of person (Mauss 1954). Within Mauss' book, *The Gift*, he states that a bond, or a type of social solidarity, is created by the transfer of a possession. Within this bond, the giver of the gift has more power than the receiver of the gift. This creates a power inequality within gift giving and an asymmetrical power relationship within compassion. Altruism is thought to be compassion given when there is no expectation of receiving anything in return. Arguably, 'true altruism' does not exist. One could argue that when one partakes in 'altruistic' activities, one does in fact receive a gift in return: the feeling of accomplishment, the feeling of helping someone out, the feeling of being a good person. There is no physical gift given in return, but there is a metaphorical or emotional reward for giving.

Humanitarianism, similar to anthropology, was born out of the emergence of European and North American colonial and missionary activities (Minn 2007). Arguably humanitarianism, like anthropology, could be contributing to a greater contemporary world order, like postcolonialism, which replicates colonial patterns and contributes to successor global orders (Redfield 2013). There is an assumption that humanitarian aid workers are global cosmopolitans that bring with them their own belief structures and ideas on world order which affect the places they visit.

Humanitarianism is a key component in global postmodern politics. Human rights and humanitarian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have come to be recognized as increasingly important in international policy and public policy (Malkki 2015). Modern humanitarian aid arguably started at the end of WWII, with the illumination of the horrors

committed by the Third Reich. In 1948, the United Nations set a standard for fundamental human rights with the passing of the International Declaration of Human Rights. This Declaration is the basis of modern humanitarianism and modern humanitarians. The first article states that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights... [that] everyone is endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in the spirit of brotherhood” (The United Nations 1948). The formation of the Red Cross, in addition to the United Nations, served as watershed moments to humanitarianism.² These organizations designated the concept of “dignity” as an essential component of human existence (Bornstein & Redfield 2011).

Modern humanitarianism has developed in response to the emergence of destructive regimes, such as the Rwandan genocide or the Yemini Civil War. These regimes are committed to the physical destruction of populations and emerging from this is a political dynamic that determines life or death. Humanitarians “oppose any regime that fosters death” and “are clearly committed to [the] alteration or demise” of the regime (Redfield & Bornstein 2010). One cannot work neutrally if one acts in opposition to a political regime. Since humanitarianism works against destructive regimes, the regime in question being the United States border policy, humanitarians on the U.S./Mexico border work in opposition to the United States border policy.

² Many medical humanitarian aid organizations, such as the Red Cross and Doctors without Borders, claim neutrality, which works because they provide healthcare to at-risk populations, potentially in areas of conflict. Claiming neutrality is essential to the function of these organizations. NMD follows multiple principles from the Red Cross, including “humanity, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality” (American Red Cross, 2020).

Humanitarian Motivation

The decision to provide humanitarian aid is subjective. The giver defines who does or does not need help under the assumption that ‘true altruism’ does not exist. Even though there are monetary motivations for people working with any organization, working for a humanitarian aid organization assumes a lower pay average. This suggests that workers are making a choice to work for specific humanitarian aid organizations, choosing the one that matches their moral compass best. Every volunteer/worker decides to provide humanitarian aid with their own motivations, which may include multiple reasons. The volunteers/workers deem a temporal event, ‘a crisis,’ and then in response to the perceived crisis decides to provide humanitarian aid. The reasons for creating and implementing humanitarian aid are therefore specific to the institution and to the individual.

Humanitarian motivation is an undeniable “neediness” that drives people to do often hazardous work (Malkki 2015). Specifically, in my analysis of the federal trials against the nine No More Deaths volunteers in 2019, or the #Cabeza9 trial, the humanitarians testified to their motivations for providing humanitarian aid in a court of law. I use direct statements from the #Cabeza9 defendants and No More Deaths that provide their reasonings for providing aid. What are the humanitarian motivations within this group?

The motivations of humanitarian aid workers within No More Deaths is religious but also secular, it is in support of a global community, and the rights of humanitarian aid workers. Workers with No More Deaths have subjective reasons for providing humanitarian aid, but they share similar motivations. *They are motivated by an idea of a “shared humanity” or a “global community,” spirituality or religion, the “right to humanitarianism,” the current border policy,*

and the current administration's criminalization of humanitarian aid.³

A Shared Humanity and a Global Community

Humanitarians try to defend an innate value within human life. Within humanitarianism there is a shared attempt to protect human rights and “humanity.” They defend human rights through the maintenance of the physical existence, or the body; therefore, they provide the necessary resources to exist (Redfield 2013). This principle of “humanity” is an attempt to prevent and alleviate human suffering (Malkki 2015). Malkki states that there is a clear “humanitarian sensibility,” a generic calling to help a distant “suffering humanity” (Malkki 2015). Additionally, there is a demand for rights and an expectation of universality in humanitarianism (Fassin 2012).

For example, Zaachila Orozco-McCormick, a defendant, in the #Cabeza9 trial stated that they “believe(d) everyone who walks this earth should be able to drink some water” (Federal trial, *The United States v. Natalie Renee Hoffman*, Tucson 2019). This statement resembles an idea of a “shared humanity” or an “international community.” Zaachila says that “all” people should have a right to water (Personal notes, No More Deaths Trial, 2019). The usage of the word *all* resembles the usage of the word “everyone” in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. This rhetoric implies a *universality* applied to all human life. A statement by Scott Warren, a defendant of the #Cabeza9, provides more reasoning to a universality in providing humanitarian aid, “To me *all life* is sacred, and the places are sacred as well” (Corich-Kliem et al. November 2019). In theory, a humanitarian puts human life above all

³ Although I have placed the motivations of humanitarian aid workers into distinct categories, all motivations are of course intertwined within a single humanitarian aid worker and workers presumably have multiple motivations to their work.

things, and they espouse that all life is equal among different peoples and populations. This point is also supported in a statement by NMD: “In good conscience and with respect to human dignity and basic human rights, we took action to care for others, regardless of their status” (Corich-Kleim et al. December 2018). This exemplifies the idea that not only does human life have innate value, but also that where one is from or one’s legal status does not define one’s right to life.

Religious or Spiritual Motivation

Even though individual members of NMD may not consider themselves to be religious or spiritual, NMD was created as a branch of the Tucson Unitarian Universalist Church. Emphasized in the statement by Reverend Bethany Russell-Lowe, NMD is a ministry of the Unitarian Universalist Church, sharing the church’s core value that “all people are worthy of love, dignity, and respect” (Corich Kleim et al. May 2019).

In a statement by Scott Warren, a defendant in the #Cabeza9 trial, he explains that providing humanitarian aid “constitute(s) such a deep and enduring part of his moral compass” (Corich-Kleim et al. November 2019). In this quote, Warren does not reference his direct religious motivations to provide humanitarian aid, but he does refer to a moral compass which implies a more general idea of spiritual belief, or a belief of universal morality. Warren also states that based on his “spiritual beliefs” he is compelled to act when someone is in need (Corich-Kleim et al. November 2019). Warren therefore believes he has a right and duty to address the crisis on the border.

During the trial, Reverend John Fife took the stand and stated that “No More Deaths volunteers embody faith in action... the life of faith is not simply a matter of belief, it is a

matter of what you do for those who are most in need” (Corich- Kleim et al. January 2019). In this statement, Reverend John Fife is asserting a blanket statement denoting the motivations of all volunteers within No More Deaths to defend the actions of the organization.

In the trial against the #Cabeza9, the accused filed a brief stating that the defendants were within their religious rights. Their claim was based on the Religious Freedom Act of 1993 (RFRA), which protects the rights of people to act on their deeply held ethical and spiritual beliefs and which protects them from federal prosecution. These cases are the first federal cases where an RFRA claim has been raised in the defense of a federal criminal prosecution under immigration law. In the trial, the RFRA is a legal brief that was filed to aid in the defense of the defendants. Even though volunteers with No More Deaths might not claim to personally be driven by religious or spiritual beliefs to provide humanitarian aid, the aid No More Deaths provides is steeped in religion and religious affiliation.

A Right to Humanitarianism

Humanitarian workers are also working in the defense of human rights and humanitarian rights (Fassin 2012). As previously noted, humanitarian aid workers hold the belief that they have “a right” or “a duty” to address a perceived crisis, as exemplified in a statement from Scott Warren where he states that he had a “right” to provide humanitarian aid (Corich-Kliem et al. November 2019). In conversations with volunteers from No More Deaths and other humanitarian aid organizations, various volunteers disclosed that once they knew about the injustices perpetuated by the United States immigration system, they could not sit in silence with a clean consciousness (Personal communication, January 2019).

A volunteer with No More Deaths, Max Granger, stated during the trial that “protections

of the right to give, and to receive humanitarian aid is essential” (Corich-Kliem et al. January 2019). In this statement, Granger expresses his motivation to provide humanitarian aid, which is based on his perceived right to give humanitarian aid. However, a pertinent question to ask is: do humanitarian aid volunteers have a legal right to provide aid in the United States? According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Granger indeed does have the right to provide aid (Article 29, Article 30).⁴

Nevertheless, the criminalization of humanitarian aid volunteers and workers by the federal government exemplifies this contradiction, demonstrating that, according to the United States government, humanitarian aid workers do not have the right to provide humanitarian aid. Not only has the federal government criminalized humanitarian aid provided by No More Deaths, the Border Patrol and the United States Fish and Wildlife Services have created hindrances to providing humanitarian aid on the U.S./Mexico border, including slashing and destroying humanitarian aid, not providing permits to members of No More Deaths, and viewing No More Deaths as kin to smuggling or a trafficking organization (Devereuax 2019).

Working in Opposition to the United States Border Policy

Unlike the Red Cross, No More Deaths does not consider themselves a neutral organization; rather, NMD is a political organization. One of the goals of No More Deaths is in opposition to “prevention through deterrence,” which is a U.S. border policy (Corich-Kliem et

⁴ Although the Universal Declaration of Human Rights creates a foundation for global human rights, it is not a legally binding document. There is a hope that member states will adhere to principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and an assumption that member states are motivated by their dedication to the public, even if that is not the case.

al. 2020).⁵ This plan seeks to deter immigrants from crossing by cutting off the traditional crossing routes, like legal ports of entry, to harsher terrain in order to minimize legal entry (Wolf 2019). Due to the refusal of NMD to accept “prevention through deterrence” as a justifiable border policy, acting instead in response, NMD cannot be defined as a neutral entity.

In response to the condemnation of social justice workers, Fassin writes in his book entitled *Humanitarian Reason: A Moral History of the Present*, that “it is no longer enough simply to save the victims of war, one must also plead their cause” (Fassin 2012). Fassin states that humanitarian aid groups are now asserting their right to speak publicly about abuses, crimes, and breaches of law. Some humanitarian aid volunteers consider humanitarian aid to be witnessing “the truth of injustice and to insist on political responsibility” (Redfield & Bornstein 2011). Humanitarian aid workers within No More Deaths speak out against the violent and unjust actions of the United States government and the Trump administration. In “‘Volunteer Humanitarianism:’ Volunteers and Humanitarian Aid in the Jungle Refugee Camp of Calais,” author Elisa Sandri states that “volunteer humanitarianism [had] turned against the government by creating strong activist networks as a reaction to the void left by institutions.” No More Deaths has turned against the government by creating a strong activist network to fill the void left by the USFWS and the Border Patrol. In a neoliberal society there is an outsourcing of civil society of public services [by] the national government to other institutions” (Sandri 2018).

Through providing aid to migrants crossing into the United States through some of the

⁵ The militarization of the border started within the Clinton era. The Clinton administration introduced the security tactic of “prevention through deterrence” in 1994 on the U.S./Mexico border (Dunn 2010). “Prevention through deterrence” seeks to deter immigrants from crossing into the United States, by cutting off the traditional crossing routes in the southwest and funneling border-crossers into harsher terrain. This has resulted in a “squeezing of the balloon” effect, where operations in key areas have displaced crossings of migrants to other previously less trafficked areas. This policy framework views migrants crossing the border as threats to national security; and in response the United States has militarized their southern border.

deadliest corridors of the Sonoran Desert, NMD is acting as a public service which the government does not provide.

Catherine Gaffney, a member of NMD, called into question the legality of the current administration saying “if giving water to someone [who is] dying of thirst is illegal, what humanity is left in the law of this country” (Corich-Kleim et al. January 2019). In this statement, Gaffney opposes the current administration’s decisions to knowingly contribute to deaths in the Sonoran Desert. Another defendant of the #Cabeza9 trials, Parker Deighan, in an op-ed published by CNN, said that “I hope to walk out in the wilderness in southern Arizona without the fear that I will encounter someone in distress... this will only happen when we no longer have a militarized border designed to funnel people into perilous terrain” (Deighan 2019). Deighan takes a stance that is not neutral, admonishing the actions of the current administration.

Max Granger, another volunteer with NMD, said that “we believe a humanitarian crisis warrants a humanitarian response. The protection of the right to give, and to receive humanitarian aid is essential as long as the government maintains border policies that funnel migration into the most remote parts of the desert” (Corich-Kleim et. al. January 2019). In this quote, Granger is “motivated by the right to humanitarianism” and also opposes the actions of the current administration’s political agenda. The defendant, Logan Holler Smith, states that they are motivated by the “border policy” that continues to force migrants into remote corners of the desert, saying that “as long as border policy funnels migrants into the most remote corridors of the desert, the need for a humanitarian response will continue” (Corich-Kliem February 2019). This demonstrates how volunteers with NMD are motivated by the moral holes created from the United States border policy.

No More Deaths, as an organization, finds motivation by standing in opposition to the current administration. In a report released by No More Deaths in 2018, they will continue to resist the criminalization of migration and humanitarian aid, fighting for a world in which peace, justice, and human dignity are held sacrosanct (Corich-Kleim et. al. August 2018). Moreover, they have also stated that they condemn the targeting of community organizers by the U.S. Border Patrol and ICE. Members with No More Deaths and other aid organizations witness the death of migrants on the border, understand the cause of this suffering, and demand policy change to alleviate suffering.

Federal Opposition to Humanitarian Aid

The federal trial of humanitarian aid workers with No More Deaths marks a precedent for criminalizing humanitarian aid in the United States. The volunteers with No More Deaths are motivated by the criminalization of humanitarian aid by the Border Patrol and officers with the United States Fish and Wildlife Services.

Volunteers with No More Deaths faced multiple obstacles to provide humanitarian aid in Cabeza Prieta. One obstacle was that officers with the United States Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) would not allow volunteers to obtain permits to enter Cabeza Prieta. In a testimony from an officer with a USFWS officer, they testified to adding No More Deaths to a “no permit” list. In an Op-ed written by Scott Warren in *The Post*, the United States Border Patrol was and currently is “denying permits to enter the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge and (is) kicking over and slashing jugs” (Warren 2019). This claim is supported by a report released by NMD entitled *The Disappeared Report*, which illuminates the amount of humanitarian supplies that Border Patrol has destroyed, along with a viral video revealing the Border Patrol

actively destroying humanitarian aid.

The Disappeared Report details the U.S. Border Patrol's involvement in the destruction of humanitarian aid supplies (Corich-Kleim et al. March 2018). These arrests came a week after The Disappeared Report was released. Some think that the arrests were in a retaliatory nature. No More Deaths has stated that "The(se) charges ... come during a nationwide crackdown on immigrant right organizers" and has reflected a pattern of interference in humanitarian aid efforts (Carroll 2018).

Additionally, in 2019, there was evidence released in a pretrial filing that Dr. Warren's arrest was retaliatory in nature (Corich-Kliem March 2019). There is evidence of communications between Border Patrol and United States Fish and Wildlife agents showing the agencies collaborated to surveil Scott Warren for many months before his arrest. In Scott Warren's case, his attorney Kuykendall said that there were "deeply rooted biases held by border patrol agents to cause them to perceive humanitarian aid work as criminal" (Corich-Kliem November 2019). These biases led to the surveillance, arrest, trial, and retrial of Scott Warren's case.

However, even after the criminalization of humanitarian work by the United States government, No More Deaths is still committed to the end of migrant suffering on the border. In a statement released by No More Deaths they stated "they would continue to resist the criminalization of migrants and humanitarian aid." They will continue to do the work they think is necessary to have "No More Deaths" on the U.S./Mexico border.

Conclusion

In conclusion, humanitarianism is defined by the agents involved in the act of giving.

Humanitarian motivation changes depending on the individual or the organization. The motivations of No More Deaths can be summarized as being religious, dedicated to a shared humanity, the “right” to humanitarianism, and taking a non-neutral stance on the United States border policy and regime. The importance of humanitarian motivation is to answer the question of why people provide humanitarian aid. There is an assumption that humanitarian aid is only given to people in distant countries from international cosmopolitan travelers, which is a common type of humanitarianism or humanitarian aid. However, organizations such as No More Deaths exemplifies the need for humanitarian aid and humanitarianism within the borders of the United States.

The anthropology of humanitarianism can hopefully contribute to the understanding of the lived experiences of aid, both on the receiving and the giving ends (Minn 2007). There is emerging work on the anthropology of humanitarianism, an example being The Network of Humanitarian Assistance, which provides a master’s program in the Anthropology of Humanitarian Action taught by Dr. Kristina Roepstorff.

The changing geopolitical climate after the end of the Cold War created even more walls and increasingly dangerous borders, resulting in more displaced peoples and an even greater need for migration. With the onset of a global pandemic, No More Deaths is still working to provide humanitarian aid on the U.S./Mexico border. During this pandemic NMD has continued their work at their desert stations, providing direct aid to migrants in the desert. However, they have moved their focus to the issue of detention centers and freeing the people who are detained within. They started a hashtag, #AZFreeThemAll. Through this work, No More Deaths, in coalition with the Detention Watch Network and the Puente Human Rights Movement, are demanding the mass release of people in ICE custody. Detention centers are

incredibly dangerous places during a global pandemic. Being that the detainees cannot practice social distancing; they are at higher risk of contracting COVID-19. In correlation with the Detention Watch Network, No More Deaths published a Toolkit to Support Local demands for the mass release of people.⁶

⁶ Find the Toolkit here:, <https://nomoredeaths.org/freethemall-toolkit-from-detention-watch-network>.

Appendix



Image 1: Water Drop in Sonoran Desert. Taken January 2019 by Emily Rodden.

“This is a photo I took on a hike with the Tucson Samaritans, a humanitarian aid group on the U.S.-Mexico border. They take hikes into the desert to place resources, like water, food, and clothing along known migrant trails in the Sonoran Desert. Thousands of migrants have died attempting to cross through the Sonoran desert; groups like the Tucson Samaritans hope stop this death.”

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Social Change and Cultural Transformation

Filling the Gaps: Our Neglected Army of Healthcare Workers

By Noelle McNamara

Community health workers (CHWs) are non-medical professionals working to assist their communities and local healthcare systems. CHWs increase access to health services, communicate health concepts in a culturally appropriate fashion, and reduce burdens within formal healthcare systems. CHWs accrued monumental success in pandemic preparedness during the Ebola and Zika epidemics. CHWs have already been deployed across the globe to help combat COVID-19, most notably in Rwanda, South Africa, and India. However, there has been a severe lack of CHW usage in wealthy nations. After the initial outbreak of COVID-19 in the United States, CHWs were sidelined due to a lack of coordination and overwhelming confusion within the US healthcare system. CHWs have proven themselves to be effective and cost-efficient during pandemics, so why hasn't more of the US jumped at the opportunity to use them? We have an untapped and growing army of over 60,000 CHWs ready to help across the nation beckoning to be utilized.

The coronavirus pandemic undoubtedly exposed gaping holes within our healthcare systems. Frontline workers were overwhelmed by a continuous influx of patients, with little idea how to treat them. Crippled supply chains left healthcare workers without proper personal protective equipment (PPE). Testing malfunctions forfeited any advantage on flattening the curve. Contact tracing was errantly nonexistent. The United States (US) healthcare system proved itself woefully inadequate at handling a pandemic efficiently or effectively.

One of our biggest mistakes was sidelining community healthcare workers (CHWs). Initially, the Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency included CHWs in the list of "essential critical infrastructure workers who are

imperative during the response to the COVID-19 emergency.” Yet, according to a recent informal member poll by the National Association of Community Health Workers (NACHW), community-based organizations chose to lay off CHWs rather than organize this readied army. According to respondents, some CHWs working in clinical settings were told to “find something to do” because their supervisors were too occupied with patient care (Smith and Wennerstrom 2020). Our 58,950 certified CHWs constitute an army of health workers waiting to fill these now self-evident gaps (Occupational Employment and Wages 2020). In the few areas where CHWs have been employed, they operate as “boots on the ground” operatives tasked with food drop-offs, housing arrangements, patient advocating, mask collection and distribution, education, and contact tracing (Kangovi 2020). These services go beyond physical care and advocate for holistic wellbeing.

CHWs have been highly effective across the globe as well. Within the first month of their outbreak, South Africa deployed 28,000 CHWs focused on HIV and TB and retrained them for COVID-19 screening. CHWs were provided proper PPE to go door-to-door and look for COVID patients. By not waiting for patients to come to clinics, South Africa screened 7 million South Africans in the first month – 1 out of 10 South Africans (Ravelo et. al. 2020). This mode of screening limits exposure, prevents unnecessary hospital influxes, identifies infected populations, and isolates the infected from the general public.

Rwanda initiated a similar program with approximately 60,000 CHWs. Public awareness campaigns air on the radio and television to reach the most remote areas of the nation, while home visits from CHWs provide further details on accessing care when symptoms are present. If someone has symptoms, the CHW contacts the health center, which then gets in touch with the hospital to come pick up the patient. Again, we see minimal exposure to patients and healthcare

workers, isolation of those potentially infected, and prevention of hospital influx (Andresen 2020). To date, Rwanda has had 1,113 cases, 575 recoveries, and 3 deaths since March 2020 (Coronavirus (COVID-19) Rwanda 2020).

Several Indian state governments, such as in Punjab, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and Maharashtra, have also deployed CHWs. They have been tasked with tracking down returnees, monitoring symptoms for them and their families for 14 days, and going door-to-door teaching people how to practice social isolation. India's ASHAs (Accredited Social Health Activists) are the nation's first line of defense against coronavirus. However, state governments continually fail to take the safety of ASHA workers into account. Prior to the pandemic, ASHAs had gone on strike for being severely underpaid, not having worker rights because they are considered "honorary volunteers," and constantly on the frontlines of both disease and violence. Susana Barria of the global union federation Public Services International argued:

"It's never been clearer that public healthcare needs community health workers. The skills and the capacity these women have, the way in which they are familiar with each community's members — the sick, the elderly, the children — the ASHAs are the most likely to know when someone is displaying symptoms of coronavirus, has been traveling abroad or is missing from the home. Without them, doctors will be operating blind" (Jha 2020).

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like Last Mile Health have even begun ramping up CHW training for developing nations. Last Mile Health is committed to "supporting governments and local partners to leverage their health workforce to safely prevent, detect, and respond to the coronavirus." They are working with the Ministries of Health in Liberia and Malawi to contribute to their national COVID-19 response efforts by training 5,000 CHWs in Liberia's National Community Health Assistant Program (Last Mile Health's COVID-19

Response 2020).

As we know, COVID-19 has disproportionately affected the poor and vulnerable. These are the same populations where we see high mistrust of healthcare and government. CHWs are positioned to play a pivotal role in fighting COVID-19. As social mobilizers, CHWs could supervise communities at risk while providing timely, accurate, and culturally relevant information. CHWs accrued monumental success as pandemic preparedness promoters during the Ebola and Zika epidemics. Prior to the epidemics, CHWs increased access to health services and products within communities, communicated health concepts in a culturally appropriate fashion, and reduced the burden felt by formal healthcare systems. During the epidemics, CHWs acted as community-level educators and mobilizers, contributed to surveillance systems, and filled gaps (Boyce and Katz 2019).

CHWs are a critical human resource beckoning to be taken advantage of in the US. Some nonprofit organizations have jumped at the chance to utilize this resource to aid the surge seen in communities across the nation. Volunteer Surge, for example, a nonprofit consortium in conjunction with the Yale School of Public Health, launched a new initiative in April to recruit, train and deploy 1,000,000 volunteer CHWs to aid in the fight against COVID-19. According to the Yale School of Public Health Dean, Sten Vermund, MD, Ph.D., an epidemiologist and pediatrician:

"Task-shifting, which allows tasks to be delegated from doctors and nurses to trained health workers, can reduce the burden on our system and save lives by allowing scarce medical workers to focus on the more serious COVID-19 care operations while trained health care volunteers pick up other tasks" (PR Newswire Association LLC 2020).

Volunteer Surge is still recruiting and training CHWs today (Volunteering for the Future

2020).

CHWs have proven themselves to be effective and cost-efficient during pandemics. They have already been deployed in other areas across the world. So why hasn't more of the US jumped at the opportunity to use them? Why have we not listened to our current healthcare workers? They need help. They are overwhelmed. And we have an untapped army ready to help them.

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Social Change and Cultural Transformation

The Discrepancies Between Social Psychology and Evolutionary Psychology

By Josephine Schmidt

In this article, I discuss the viewpoints of social psychology and evolutionary psychology in regard to feminism and the differences between males and females. I argue that a lack of understanding of evolutionary psychology and of the consequences of accepting evidence from the field has led many social psychologists to disregard findings produced by evolutionary psychologists. Contrary to what some may believe, evolutionary psychology does not conflict with the feminist movement, and can be used in support of social psychologists' fight for gender equality.

I begin by outlining the basic principles of evolutionary psychology to provide a framework for understanding the field and to clarify potential misunderstandings. Next, I contrast the ideas of social psychology to those of evolutionary psychology and show how evolutionary psychology actually supports the feminist movement. Finally, I provide a few thoughts on the interplay between feminism and evolutionary psychology.

Introduction

Because science as we know it is relatively new on the human evolutionary timeline, it is not surprising that we have a tendency to not fully and immediately understand scientific theories, and on occasion can be misled in scientific contexts. Humans also have natural biases that affect scientific work and understanding. Biases such as confirmation bias and overconfidence can interfere with gathering accurate data and reporting well-supported conclusions. For example, “folk biology” describes the way people think about plants and animals in special ways and is present in every human society. This natural way of thinking allows people to classify organisms into common species but can be consequently led to view

species as unchanging when, in reality, organisms are constantly changing and evolving (Atran 1998). The application of evolutionary theory, and evolutionary psychology specifically, to human behavior has generated a lot of controversy due to these natural human tendencies combined with fear of inappropriately excusing discriminatory behavior. Because ideas from evolutionary psychology are often exaggerated in popular culture, and the premises of evolutionary psychology are often misinterpreted by both scientists and the general public (Smith 2001), evolutionary psychologists face a lot of additional challenges in trying to get the attention and respect they feel their field deserves. Over the past few decades, there has been contention between social psychologists and evolutionary psychologists especially regarding feminism. In this paper, I argue that the field of evolutionary psychology actually supports the goals of the feminist movement and makes the arguments for gender equality stronger by providing evidence of the origins of certain behaviors, how these behaviors can be changed, and why certain behaviors should not be accepted in society today.

Overview of Evolutionary Psychology

There are five widely-agreed upon, fundamental principles of evolutionary psychology:

- (1) Manifest (observable) behavior depends upon the interaction of neural circuits in the brain and environmental factors such as culture, ecology, and physiology,
- (2) Natural selection produces complex adaptations,
- (3) Evolved neural circuits are designed to solve recurring complex adaptive problems,
- (4) Natural selection has designed evolved neural circuits to be adaptively responsive to specific information from the environment, and
- (5) Human psychology is based in and emergent from a large number of evolved neural circuits, “each sensitive to particular forms of contextual input, that get combined, coordinated, and integrated with each other and with external and internal variables to produce manifest behavior tailored

to solving an array of adaptive problems” (Buss 2011, 769).

Misinterpretations

A common misinterpretation of evolutionary psychology is that it claims that behavior is solely genetically predetermined. However, when looking at the fundamental principles of evolutionary psychology, it can be seen that the field actually supports the idea of behavioral flexibility. As evidenced by points (1), (4), and (5), manifest behavior is contingent upon the interaction between the environment and evolved neural circuits meaning that behaviors are subject to change. Furthermore, there is a notion in social psychology that humans are born with a ‘blank slate’ mind and are influenced solely by their environment. Although most psychologists would not actively support this notion today, implicit positions are still held across the field. For example, the Stanford Prison Study is seen in most social psychology textbooks despite the fact that the study was highly flawed.

The Stanford Prison Study was set to take place within a two-week time period. Healthy college students from around the country were selected as participants and were assigned to play the role of either a prisoner or guard. However, the study was terminated on the sixth day due to the behaviors of the participants. The guards quickly became cruel and degrading to the prisoners, and the prisoners became docile and many experienced extreme emotional distress (Chin 2004). Additionally, there were no control groups, subjects’ behaviors were influenced by an experimenter, and everyone was aware of their positions and expected behavior. Despite its flaws, a potential reason for its continued presence is that the study supports the belief that behavior is solely situational-- a prevailing ideology in social psychology. Furthermore, the study supports another prevailing ideology in social psychology that people are inherently good until they are put in an evil place. In this case, social psychologists would argue that

those who behaved poorly, the guards, only did so because they were placed in a bad situation and not because they are bad people. Consequently, some social psychologists may not like to accept the idea from evolutionary psychology that humans are born with evolved mechanisms for both good and evil which provides an explanation as to how seemingly healthy, young adults could behave so poorly in such a short amount of time (Buss 2018, 153).

Additionally, the naturalistic fallacy is an error that is often committed by critics of evolutionary psychology. Many people are afraid that if they accept the ideas of evolutionary psychology, it excuses individuals' unfavorable actions. For example, empirical evidence shows that men tend to want more sexual variety than women. Some people worry that this could be used as an excuse to justify a man's sexual infidelity; however, just because there is a tendency does not mean there ought to be a tendency. As explained previously, behavior is not solely genetically determined. Environment plays a significant role in manifest behavior, and through changing the environment, individuals have the ability to change their behaviors as well. Calluses on the hand provide an excellent comparison to better illustrate this concept. Calluses form in response to friction. If someone does not want calluses, then they can create a frictionless environment, and the calluses will go away. The same notion applies to behavior (Buss 2011, 769).

Evolutionary Psychology in Support of Feminism and Social Psychology

This leads to the issue of feminism in relation to evolutionary psychology. Some feminists believe that evidence of differences between the sexes will hinder their movements for gender equality and provide an excuse for the male patriarchy to continue and are consequently against evolutionary psychology. In reality, social psychologists can, and should, use the findings from evolutionary psychology to strengthen their fight for gender equality.

Interestingly enough, critics of evolutionary psychology actually agree to most of the premises.

Almost all scientists and many individuals in the general public support the theory of evolution by natural selection which, as evidenced by the name, is a major aspect of evolutionary psychology. One of the postulates of natural selection is that individuals vary in a population. The most favorable traits-traits that enhance fitness-will continue to persist in subsequent generations through the process of natural selection. The traits that are most favorable will depend upon the environment in which the organism lives in since different environments present different adaptive problems. In humans, natural selection has led to physical traits such as large brains, relative hairlessness, and bipedal posture. Males and females share these physical characteristics because these traits solved environmental problems that both sexes had to face.

Sexual dimorphism between the sexes, however, suggests that males and females have faced different selective pressures in regard to mating (Buss 2011, 769). For example, males are on average taller than females. One evolutionary explanation for the average height difference relates to intersexual competition in which females may have tended to prefer taller mates. In human's evolutionary past, height may have been highly correlated with social status meaning that taller men had higher social status (Barber 1995) and, consequently, a greater access to resources. Another evolutionary explanation for the average height difference relates to intrasexual competition in which larger males were likely better able to fight for and defend mates.

To the extent that evolution through natural selection and differing selective pressures has led to some observable physical differences between the two sexes, there should be no reason that evolution, again through natural selection and differing selective pressures, would not also lead to differences in brain function as well. This is where feminist critics of

evolutionary psychology, understandably, begin to feel uneasy regarding the relationship between natural selection and gender equality. After all, the differences between sexes could be misunderstood, mis-used, and taken wildly out of context to construct and perpetuate arguments that are sexist and unsupported.

In order to combat this uneasiness, an important distinction needs to be made between equal individuals and equal opportunities: “equality is not the empirical claim that all groups of humans are interchangeable; it is the moral principle that individuals should not be judged or constrained by the average properties of their group...If we recognize this principle, no one has to spin myths about the indistinguishability of the sexes to justify equality. Nor should anyone invoke sex differences to justify discriminatory policies.” (Pinker 2003) With this distinction made, people should no longer ignore empirical evidence regarding differences between the sexes. The ultimate goal of the feminist movement is to achieve equal opportunities for both sexes and stop gender discrimination. Accepting and studying these differences can lead to social change because it will allow scientists to understand the causes of certain behaviors, and policies can be put in place to prevent them. Additionally, feminists will no longer have the significant roadblock of trying to argue something that is not supported by scientific studies. Instead, their argument will become stronger and will be backed by science.

For example, studies have shown that cross-culturally, men value physical attractiveness more than women in mate selection (Buss 2011, 776). Despite this gender difference being universal, social psychologists have argued that these beauty standards are solely socially constructed. However, evolutionary psychology has argued quite the contrary. From an evolutionary perspective, because males’ reproductive success is constrained by access to mates, they must look for fertile mates in order to ensure their mating efforts are worthwhile (Buss 2011, 776). This is a somewhat difficult endeavor in humans compared to other primates

because humans do not have any noticeable sexual swellings to indicate fertility like chimpanzees do, for example. Subsequently, human males have had to resort to other cues in order to determine fertility. These cues have developed into the beauty standards seen today.

In today's society, beauty standards have caused women around the world severe harm as women feel like they have to compete against one another in order to receive male attention. The fact that evolutionary psychological studies have shown that men value physical attractiveness more than females does not mean that the resulting beauty standards are supported by the field (Buss 2011, 776). Once again, the naturalistic fallacy – a logical fallacy in which anything 'natural' is viewed as good -- is an error. Social psychologists, as proponents of gender equality, view beauty standards negatively and choose to explain their existence through social construction to support the notion that they are bad. However, just because evidence shows that beauty standards arose through natural means does not mean they are good nor that they should exist. Additionally, a major goal of the modern feminist movement is to stop the objectification of women. Evolutionary psychology provides scientific evidence that men often objectify women and can neglect the other ways in which women differ such as in talents and personality. Understanding the ultimate cause for a behavior does not excuse it. Rather, the information can be used to create societal change because real solutions are difficult to find without understanding the root cause (Buss 2011, 777).

Furthermore, another major aspect of the feminist movement today is dismantling the male patriarchy. Evolutionary psychology can be used to understand the origins of the male patriarchy and can be used to support the movement of dismantling it today. To begin, the male patriarchy describes the societal construction in which men predominate in leadership roles and, consequently, control many aspects of society. As explained by findings from evolutionary psychology, this societal construction originates from a difference in reproductive

constraints in humans' evolutionary history. Women's reproductive success has been generally constrained by access to resources while male's reproductive success has been constrained by access to mates. These different constraints have led to the co-evolution of different mating strategies. Females preferred males who were able to provide enough, thus males who were concerned most about resource control had higher reproductive success and more offspring. Because males' reproductive success is not constrained by resources, they did not place the same pressure on females. Consequently, over evolutionary time, males were generally more concerned about controlling resources than females, and the male patriarchy was founded (Buss 2011, 771). Today, males still hold a lot of leadership positions and dominate many industries. For example, there has never been a female president of the United States, and the first female Vice-President has just been elected after 244 years of United States history. Arguably the most important job pertaining to the control of resources, the role of President has been dominated by males for the entire history of the country.

However, the environment today is very different than the environment in which these adaptations developed. Money, technology, and medical developments have all allowed for both men and women to provide for themselves and their children without necessarily needing help from a partner. Women are less constrained by their biology than they have been in the past. The energetic costs of pregnancy and lactation can be decreased through improved medical care in which women are able to maintain a normal life later into pregnancy as well as recent developments such as baby formula in which women can choose not to breastfeed. Additionally, organized units in our society such as supermarkets and daycare allow for women to easily access resources and help. While the traditional set-up in which the male works to obtain resources and the female raises offspring is valid and still works today, it is no longer a necessity. Therefore, the male patriarchy is no longer needed today as well. As stated

before, one of the principles of evolutionary psychology is that behavior is not solely genetically predetermined. The environment plays a key role in the expression of behavior, and genetic predispositions can be overcome. This means that although there may be evolutionary explanations as to why the male patriarchy exists today, it does not mean it should continue to exist today.

Final Thoughts

Female evolutionary psychologists are helping to connect the feminist movement with the ideas of evolutionary psychology. I assume that most female evolutionary psychologists are feminists in that they support equal opportunities regardless of gender. I doubt any of them would be okay with being discriminated against at work because they are female. If this is the case, then they serve as examples of feminists that support the notion of differences between the sexes. Once feminists start accepting this idea, their movement will only get stronger. It is hard to fuel an argument when there is looming scientific evidence against it. I understand the worries some feminists have, but I believe their worries come from being misinformed and lacking proper education in the field. The presence of differences between the sexes does not imply that one difference is better than the other.

The Olympics provide a prime example of these differences. Males and females are separated in every sport for a reason. Based on my observations, on average, men tend to be able to run faster than women. This does not mean that every man is faster than every woman. It also does not mean that women are any less than men because men run faster, on average. Lastly, it does not mean that any single woman should be judged to be slower than any single man solely based upon the fact that she is a woman. No one should be judged upon the average traits of their group.

Natural selection has worked on our morphology; therefore I see no reason as to why evolution has not acted upon our psychology as well. Once again, some important points need to be made. First, just because evolution has acted upon our minds does not mean that behavior is solely genetically predetermined. Environment plays a significant role in our manifest behavior. Second, there are many similarities between the sexes as well. When both males and females are exposed to the same problem, similar traits will be selected for. It is important to not focus solely on the differences between the sexes when there is a plethora of similarities as well. As a society, we should start focusing on bringing ourselves together rather than constantly forcing ourselves apart.

I believe that more research in this field is essential. Many people are misinformed on the research being conducted in evolutionary psychology and, therefore, are afraid of the implications of the results. We cannot ignore scientific data forever.

Josephine Schmidt is a sophomore at the University of Michigan majoring in Evolutionary Anthropology. She is interested in the similarities and differences between primate and human behavior and physiology and how these relate to human evolution. After graduation, she hopes to pursue an MD/PhD degree with a PhD in biological anthropology. This paper was inspired and written during an honors conversion in Professor Rosenbaum's biological anthropology course. She would like to express her gratitude to Professor Rosenbaum for her suggestions and support, and to everyone who has contributed to this paper.

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Social Change and Cultural Transformation

The Moving of Food: The Emergence and the History of Chifa in Peru

By Shihua Lu

From Guangzhou to Lima, what is the story of Chifa? This paper focuses on the topic of the Peruvian Chinese food, Chifa. It is a type of culinary tradition based on Chinese Cantonese elements fused with traditional Peruvian ingredients and traditions. Its name comes from Cantonese “吃饭,” which means “go/ come and eat.” The character “饭” is directly translated as “rice”; however, when it is used with the character “吃” (a verb meaning “eat”), this combination, though it should be directly translated to “eat rice,” is often used to mean “eat” alone. Another word closely related to Chifa is “Chaufa,” a Chifa-style fried rice-also called Arroz Chaufa. “Chaufa” comes from Cantonese word “炒饭,” which could be directly translated as “fried rice.” These two words show the close relationship between Chifa and Chinese cuisine and Chinese culture. They also imply that Chifa was first created due to the Chinese diaspora.

This paper is divided into two parts. In the first part, I will introduce the history of Chifa and that of Chinatowns in Peru. In the second section, I will discuss the topic of Peruvian national identity. In this part, I will also concentrate on the experience of Chinese immigrants in Peru and link the emergence of a type of food, Chifa, to its greater importance, such as influence on politics and culture. I will argue that Chifa, as a type of cuisine, reflects the history of suffering of Chinese immigrants. The history of Chifa contains the process of Chinese diaspora in Peru. Therefore, its prevalence does not only mean its success as a type of food, but also shows how Chinese immigrants are accepted by the mainstream Peruvian society.

I. The History of Chifa and Chinatown In Peru

As Hugo Capella Miterique indicates in the work “Fusion in Multicultural Societies:

Chifa Food as a Means of Spreading Chinese Culture in the Hispanic World,” the beginning of

Chinese immigration to Latin America started in the 19th century. Chinese laborers came to

Latin American countries to remedy left by the abolition of slavery. After the abolition of slavery, Latin American countries needed cheap labor to do the work once done by slaves. These immigrants in Latin America are known as Culi (coolie).

Hugo Capella Miterique says, as of 2014, Chinese descendants "represent eight percent of the population in Lima" (Miterique 2014, 648). This is the largest population of Chinese descendants out of the whole Latin America. Because of their heritage from Guangdong and Fujian, these immigrants did not consider themselves as "Han (汉)" which is currently (by 2020) the majority in China. Han is also the majority ethnicity group of China after the Qing Dynasty. Instead of Han, they considered themselves as "Tang (唐)." Chinese people who moved overseas during the Qing Dynasty usually referred to themselves as "Tang Ren/Tung Sen (唐人)." Chinatown in Chinese Mandarin is called "Tang Ren Jie (唐人街)" meaning Tang/Tung People Street (Miterique 2014, 649). More specific details about why Chinese laborers started to work in restaurants will be further explained in part two.

After finding a position in the industry, Chinese immigrants started to establish their community around the local market. This could ensure that they always get fresh food and sustain their restaurant business. The local demand for cooks in private houses was also high during this time. By hiring Chinese cooks, Peruvian people started to get used to this type of Chinese cuisine and at the same time, the immigrants also adjusted the recipes based on the local eating habits to attract more local eaters. Chinatown in Lima was reduced to only being able to sell Chifa-style food, while there were also some other activities linked to the Chifa industry. For instance, the production of pasta became important in Lima Chinatown. "One can count more than 35 restaurants between block Six of Ucayali Street and Capón and Pauro

Streets. The importers, wholesalers and manufacturers of Chinese foodstuff belong to this sector too and are also big employers. The restaurant-patisserie Fung Yen employs a total of 55 people in its two stores; the Capón salon owned by new Cantonese residents opened in 2001 and employs sixty on its staff” (Lausent-Herrera 2011, 82). Though these restaurants were majorly owned by Cantonese, people from Fujian started to take over them recently. People from Guangzhou (Canton) and Fujian provinces were the main groups of immigrants in history and nowadays they are also considered as majority groups overseas. This is also why the names “Chifa” and “Chaufa” are originally from Cantonese instead of other regional dialects or Mandarin.

Lima’s Chinatown is one of the oldest ones in Latin America. The beginning of Chinatown or China quarter in Peru traces back to 1860, when the first Chinese merchants from California settled in Peru. They soon opened a Chinese grocery store. Most of the goods were imported from places such as San Francisco which has large Chinese populations. This, as Isabelle Lausent-Herrera mentions, was the first big event in Lima Chinatown. These merchants opened businesses such as Wing Fat Co., the Wo Chong Co., and the Wing On Chong Co (Lausent-Herrera 2011, 72). Hugo Capella Miterique also mentions that Chinatown in Peru resembles those in other North American cities (Miterique 2014, 650); “A country slaughterhouse and a few chickens and pigs: this apparently gave the name ‘Capón’ to one of the streets running along the market, which rapidly became the symbol of the Chinese occupation of this quarter.” This beginning decided the atmosphere of Chinatown in Lima.

Isabelle Lausent-Herrera mentions the occupation of the Chilean troops between 1881 and 1883. During this period of time, there was a spike in the number of commercial stores. At the same time, other traditional Chinese activities became prevalent at local temples and

theaters. Becoming more prevalent made Chinese culture more visible in Lima, which was the reason for being attacked by the Chilean troops. Some workers in these commercial stores and merchants joined the Chilean invasion army when Chinatown was under attack. Because of this experience, Chinese immigrants realized the importance of solidarity. Therefore, they created in 1881 an association, the Sociedad Colonial de Beneficencia China, backed by the Peruvian church and the political authorities. Strong local businesses also united together to further strengthen this bond. Then they fundraised and established another association, the Tonghuy Chongkoc, in 1886. “The establishment of the Tonghuy Chongkoc marked the creation of a real community and the takeover of the quarter by the Chinese community. The association, located in Hoyos Street (Paruro Street),” further became the symbol for Chinatown (Lausent-Herrera 2011, 72-73).

However, at the end of the war between Peru and Chile, the living condition in Chinatown was not desirable. Chinese immigrants in Chinatown were also under discrimination. They lived in poverty and their living conditions became shabbier. The outbreak of “yellow fever” in Lima made their condition even more miserable. “The year 1909 was the most tragic for the Chinese. On May 10, during the elections, parliamentary candidate, F. Cáceres, aroused members of the workers party by demanding lodgings for the workers and education for their children... A large number went to the central market and began attacking the Chinese, shouting ‘Vive Piérola and Durand, death to the Chinese!’” (Lausent-Herrera 2011, 72-74).

All of these chaotic situations made the numbers of Chinese-born immigrants diminish quickly. Chinese neighborhoods then established their basis around Calle Capon. It is also interesting to note that many Chifa restaurants in America offer sushi and Chaufa at the same

time: while one is a traditional Japanese dish, the other is a Peruvian Chinese dish (Miterrique 2014, 649). Beginning in the small area in Lima, now Chifa restaurants can not only be found in places like Chinatown but also in various neighborhoods in Lima. Hugo Capella Miternique emphasizes, “it is important to remember that Peruvian cuisine is already in itself a fusion of various culinary traditions” (Miterrique 2014, 653). Interestingly, Hugo Capella Miternique distinguishes the differences between each type of Chinese cuisine and Peruvian cuisine. As he concludes in his work, Peruvian cuisine is divided into six types: Coya, Seafood, Jungle, Creole, Spanish and Jungle (Miterrique 2014, 653).

It is crucial to mention that Cantonese cuisine is indeed a significant aspect of Chinese cuisine. Nowadays, Chinese cuisine is divided into eight styles of cooking: Chuan (川), Lu (鲁), Yue (粤), Xiang (湘) and more. Yue, which is Cantonese cuisine, is a crucial style of cooking in Chinese history. Cantonese food has its precious feature: species are used in a very modest amount in order to keep the original flavor of the primary ingredients and their freshness and quality. Dim sum, as a popular style of Chinese cuisine in America, is mostly Cantonese cuisine. This marks the uniqueness of Chifa since it is a combination of Cantonese food and Peruvian style.

Hugo Capella Miternique is careful with the nuances between each type of food. He also mentions the difference between the title “Chinese food” and “Chifa.” He says, “it goes without saying that despite being self-defined by Peruvians or foreigners as Chinese food, Chifa cuisine is far-removed from that idea.” He also mentions that Cantonese tradition defines Chifa as Kuei,

which means “of the devil” (Miterrique 2014, 653).” This distinction is crucial: It reminds people that there is a stark difference between each type of food. Though they may

look similar, different recipes and traditions are attached to different types of food.

This nuance also marks the unique feature of Chifa. That is, it represents neither Peruvian culture nor Chinese culture. Hugo Capella Miterique mentions that Chifa is a hybrid for Peruvian people. Chifa cuisine represents Chinese food, while for Chinese people, Chifa represents foreign cuisines. “A Cantonese person would struggle to recognize his own tradition in Chifa dishes prepared with guinea pig or in the important role played by beef and the use of freeze-dried potato, just as Peruvian tradition does not recognize sweet and sour sauces, or the predominant presence of rice” (Miterique 2014, 654).

When Chinese immigrants developed this new cuisine, they had to find ingredients locally to substitute the original ingredients. Chinese immigrants also needed new ways to adapt to western conditions such as the eating habits. Precisely, according to Chinese tradition, all food on the table is supposed to be shared so that everyone could have the chance to try each dish. While in western countries, people tend to choose their own dishes instead of sharing. In the U.S, for instance, Chinese immigrants developed a unique way to solve this problem: Chinese buffet. Chinese buffets then become one of the most famous types of Chinese restaurants in America. Given this background, it is possible that Chifa should never be considered “Chinese cuisine” by Chinese people as Chinese people are proud of their rich food traditions.

However, we could also question if Chifa needs to be accepted by any of them. Hugo Capella Miterique mentions that because of its amazing capacity for adaptation, Chifa could easily spread in many other traditions. “Nowadays, Chifa food is beginning to find its place, with its own name and because of its inheriting a history of migrants who knew how to adapt and blend in, without losing sight of their origins” (Miterique 2014, 655). It spread widely in

many other Latin American countries while the expansion of Chinese food in these countries was later than other countries such as the U.K and the U.S. The later opening-up for communications, trades, tourism and transportations encouraged more cultural exchanges between Asia and Latin America.

There are also differences between the Chifa restaurants in different countries. Daniel, a PhD student at the University of Michigan, was from Columbia. Being in the same class with him, I asked him about his experience with Chifa during class break. Daniel mentioned Chifa restaurants were also prevalent in his hometown (Personal Communication/Informal Conversation 2020). However, he also said because Peruvian cuisine was more sophisticated, Chifa restaurants he went to in Peru offered better food than he had in Columbia. In Columbia, Chaufa was mostly the only dish the restaurants could offer while Peruvian restaurants had a great variety.

II. Chifa and Peruvian National Identity

There is no doubt that Chifa is an excellent representation of the fusion between Peruvian culture and Chinese/Cantonese culture. In this section, I will introduce in detail how Chifa is not only a representation of this fusion, but also shows the changes in Peruvian national identity.

As Alberto Fujimori became the president of Peru, something changed quietly. Though Fujimori was born in Lima, Peru, he still has dual citizenship in both Peru and Japan. He is not only the first president of Peru who has Japanese heritage, but also the first Japanese heritage president in all of the Latin American countries. This was undoubtedly breaking news, as it is quite rare for a minority to become the president of a country. It is therefore clear that the fact

that Fujimori became the first Japanese president of Peru is a crucial milestone. More importantly, this event shows that people who have Eastern Asian heritage (Chinese, including people originally from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, Japanese, and South Korean) became widely accepted by the general public in Peru.

This acceptance is not easy. For Japanese and Chinese immigrants in Peru, Ñusta Carranza Ko concludes in her paper “Comparing the Effect of Chinese and Japanese Migration Experiences on Peruvian National Identity” that there is transition from discrimination to acceptance (Ko 2017, 87). Ñusta Carranza Ko says that “before the arrival of Asian migrants, mestizaje represented the national identity of Peru” (Ko 2017, 74). Indeed, for people who do not have much knowledge about Latin America, it is natural for one to think that the national identity of any Latin American country should be “Latin American” or “Hispanic.”

The experience of Chinese migration and its effects on Peruvian society can be divided into a phase of discrimination that incentivized migrants to integrate followed by a phase in which migrants’ culture impacted Peru’s national identity (Ko 2017, 73). On November 17th, 1849, a new law, the Chinese Law (Ley Chinesca) allowed Chinese laborers to enter Peru. This is considered the beginning of Chinese migrants’ history. However, at that time, the racial problems in Peru were still quite aggressive. Though Latin American countries nowadays are generally known as having a comparatively equal racial relationship, when the Spaniards first arrived at this land, they created strict racial systems such as the caste system to differentiate people of different racial backgrounds. This historical background is a part of the reason why Chinese migrants were discriminated against when they first arrived in Peru. As Ñusta Carranza Ko mentions, elites persisted with their ideology of whiteness; therefore, they regarded Asians as a second-class race and a challenge for their “whitening plan.” She

mentions, “Chinese laborers were treated like animals and subjected to physical inspection by the sanitation bureau. Afterwards, they were taken to the Mercado de carne Humana (human meat market), where they were displayed for purchase.” She also mentions many other examples such as: “plantation owners burned the bodies of Chinese workers who committed suicide,” “the newspaper *El Peruano* reported concern by the Chinese government,” and “many Chinese escaped and committed suicide” (Ko 2017, 76-77). There is a lot of evidence showing the prevalence of discrimination against Chinese immigrants during the first period of their arrival.

The ability to speak Spanish was considered a way for Chinese immigrants to blend in Peruvian society. Soon, they found an easy way to solve the language problems and joined the Peruvian community. This magical way was interracial marriage. Interracial marriages between Chinese men and Peruvian women were prevalent and these gave them opportunities to learn Spanish in a family and join the local communities. These marriages provided them with chances to use Spanish in various situations and enough exposure made them be able to learn this language much faster. Marriage, in history, is one of the most common ways that people choose to establish a closed relationship between the two people or two parties. Interracial marriages were extremely prevalent before the Chinese arrivals. The most obvious and common example is the *mestizaje*. The *mestizaje* was considered the “national identity” of Peru. It refers to the descendants of Amerindian and Spanish people. Undoubtedly, the word *mestizaje* also implies the existence of interracial marriage between Amerindians and Spaniards. As Ñusta Carranza Ko mentions, interracial marriage also solved another problem. During that time, Peruvian society was still not ready to fully accept these Chinese immigrants as parts of their society. Chinese blood was still considered as “weaker blood.” However,

because of these interracial marriages, people found it became easier to accept them since they united with Peruvian women which were considered to have “more novel blood.” And more importantly, their kids could be accepted by the society since these kids shared many physical appearances in common with other kids and at the same time, these kids grew up speaking fluent Spanish, which allowed them to quickly blend into society. Ñusta Carranza Ko also mentions that these kids usually adopted an Amerindian name and were highly influenced by Amerindian cultures through their mothers. Therefore, these kids were considered as part of the Peruvian society with less difficulties.

Religion also played an important role in this process of how Chinese immigrants got accepted by the Peruvian society. Ñusta Carranza Ko mentions, “the Chinese child baptized and introduced to Catholicism had a relationship of dependency on the padrino, who had a footing in society through his religious role” (Ko 2017, 77). These Chinese immigrants were willing to follow other religious conventions which fostered the interaction between two ethical groups. Becoming a godfather, like getting married, was also an effective way to maintain a close relationship and helped bring Chinese communities closer to the Peruvian identity and culture.

Chinese immigrants then found the importance to establish their own identities to show their differences from Japanese immigrants, because of the anti-Japanese sentiment in Peru and China (as Japan joined World War Two). Ñusta Carranza Ko notes that “Chinese migrants from Hong Kong in the period 1890-1930 created export and import companies that served the interests of both the Chinese and Peruvian communities” (Ko 2017, 78). Getting involved in business was an effective way to make a good impression and at the same time to create a crucial “value” in Peruvian society.

At the same time, Chinese culinary culture started to show its importance. Ñusta Carranza Ko concludes, “Given this struggle to preserve Peru’s culinary culture, the Chinese influence on Peruvian cuisine was all the more remarkable” (Ko 2017, 79). Chinese workers started to take care of the Peruvian kitchen, and “by the 1900s, as anthropologist Rodríguez Pastor remarked, there was no household in Lima without a Chinese domestic worker” (Ko 2017, 79). This finding is definitely astonishing and shows how food helped Chinese workers to get involved in Peruvian society. Rodríguez Pastor concludes that this was called “chinización” (Chinese-ization) of Peruvian cuisine. Chinese cuisine started to become popular among Peruvian restaurants and some Chinese words related to food also became popular Peruvian vocabularies. The most obvious example is the word “Chifa.” This becomes the symbol for Peruvian Chinese restaurants.

Conclusion

It is clear that even though Chifa is of great success today, its process of acquiring fame is not as simple as it appears to be. It marks the settlement of Chinese immigrants who first came as laborers in Peru, the discrimination they have faced in a foreign country, and the solidarity they have when facing difficulties and the efforts they have put to integrate into the society. On the one hand, one can say that Chifa is a type of sad cuisine. It represents a period of tough history. The stories behind it are closely bonded to it. On the other hand, it is also a happy cuisine—most eaters of Chifa enjoy these dishes and may not know anything about this period of history. Their enjoyment comes from the incredible taste. This is the charm of food—it has no borders, no bias, and no hate. Ironically, people could discriminate against those of different racial backgrounds, but they may still be impressed by their food. For Chinese

immigrants in Peru, even though they could not be easily accepted by Peruvian people, Cantonese food was easily accepted and loved by the general public.

Neither its history nor its taste should be ignored by people. However, it is also necessary to consider the power of food—what kinds of responsibility should food take? Does Chifa have the power to educate its eaters and remind them of history? It is very possible that Chifa is only a product of society and history. More responsibilities should still be given to the education system while the existence of Chifa always reminds people of what happened during this period of history.

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Social Change and Cultural Transformation

The Spiritual Athletes in a Mountain of Sorrow: Bodily-Mediated Cultural Performances *Here and Beyond* the Kyōto Landscape

By Catherine Cao

This research paper investigates the Japanese religious practice kaihōgyō, a mountain asceticism maintained since the ninth century BC on Mount Hiei in Kyōto. As a cultural performance representative of the Tendai School of Buddhism in Japan, the kaihōgyō involves a group of Tendai monks called the gyōja, who pursue Buddhahood by engaging in physical ordeals and disciplinary trainings on Mount Hiei. The gyōja are considered to be an embodied vehicle of the great saint Fudō Myō-ō, a reincarnation of the cosmic Buddha, for their power to not just transform themselves by reaching enlightenment, but also bestowing merits to the masses of the Kyōto community. Seeing this dynamic process of religious experiences that oscillates between the individual gyōja and the Kyōto collective, this paper examines the two-way interdependent relationships between the gyōja and the divine Buddha, as well as between the gyōja and the laypeople in Kyōto. I propose that these two mutually constituting relationships are facilitated by the human body, which is the most naturalistic medium that bridges the gap between not just the secular and the sacred, but also between social beings within the sphere of mundanity. At the end, the essay addresses how the traditional practices of Tendai are not disappearing, but rather re-emerge to take adaptive forms to the changes and needs posted by modern society.

INTRODUCTION

The *kaihōgyō* 回峰行, a unique form of mountain asceticism maintained since its earliest form in the ninth century BC on Mount Hiei 比叡山 in Kyōto, has recently caught both popular imagination and scholarly attention. In this practice, the *gyōja* 行者 (“monks on-the-path-becoming-Buddha”), now known as the “marathon monks,” undergo a seven-year training period to complete a 1,000-day challenge (*sennichi kaihōgyō* 千日回峰行) walking a route

around Mt. Hiei and its surrounding environs, eventually covering a distance approximate to the circumference of the globe. In his book *The Marathon Monks of Mount Hiei*, Japanese religions scholar John Stevens sees the *gyōja* as “spiritual athletes,” walking sages who merged with the landscape of Kyōto to transform not just themselves, but also the laypeople as an embodied “vehicle” of the great saint *Fudō Myō-ō* 不動明王 (a reincarnation of the cosmic Buddha Dainichi) (Stevens 2013, 77).

The body of the *gyōja* is both a “sign” and a “site” (Zito 2020, Lecture 2/11). It ongoingly projects transcendental messages to others, via his never-depleted well of wisdoms, which are self-cultivated through asceticism. Through experienced enlightenment esoterically within his body, the *gyōja* takes on a performative, dialectical process of *darshan* (“religious seeing”) as he bestows merit on his followers along the journey. Concerning this highly dynamic process that bounces between the individual and the community, the *kaihōgyō* traditions manifest a two-way interdependent relationship between the divine and the mundane, as well as between social beings within the circle of the secular society. Such a way of interacting with a higher being and meanwhile with a community, in essence, concretizes the duality of religion — that it can be operated both “vertically” and “horizontally” (Zito 2020, Lecture 5/5). In investigating this dual network of human-divine connections allowed through the bodily-mediated *kaihōgyō*, this essay will move from a microscopic perspective exploring the vertical link between the realm *here* and *beyond* tangible through the *gyōja*’s body to a macroscopic discussion of the horizontal connection between the transformed Self and Other in the Kyōto community. Ultimately, the essay will delve into the contemporary implications of the *Kaihōgyō* traditions by discussing the new forms it may take in modern society.

THE PRE-DOIRI KAIHOGYO: THE SOLITARY QUEST FOR ENLIGHTENMENT

The day begins at midnight. Dressing himself up, the monk is ready to set off. At 1:30 AM, after offering prayers in the Buddha Hall and consuming one or two rice balls or a bowl of miso soup, he embarks on the journey in pursuit of enlightenment. He covers 40 kilometers (25 miles) per day, running through stations of worship as he prays to both supernatural and natural entities: from stones and waterfalls to gremlins and hungry ghosts to Buddhist and Shintō deities. With strict times set for meals, hall services, and sleep, such a disciplined regime — regardless of snowy weather, physical pain, or injuries — is repeated without fail for seven-hundred days (Stevens 2013, 67).

The *kaihōgyō*, practiced in the headquarters of the Tendai school of Buddhism (*Tendai-shū* 天台宗) in Japan, is unique to the Tendai traditions. Since the early ninth century, when the monk Saichō 最澄 brought inspirations from China to found the Tendai sect, to the time of Sōō (the founder of *kaihōgyō*), Tendai practices have long emphasized the adherence to the Vinaya (“disciplines”) and the role of asceticism in reaching enlightenment (Covell 2004, 260; Robinson 2005, 247). With the *Lotus Sutra* as the central text of their practices, the Tendai lineage deeply believes in the idea of “original enlightenment” (*Hongaku Shishō* 本覚思想) — namely that enlightenment can be accomplished in the present life. To achieve that, they “affirm ... [and] ‘return’ to the actual world” through persistent, disciplinary practices (Tamura 1987, 204). Such Tendai philosophies carry anthropological significance; as put by Talal Asad, they treat the human body as a “self-developable” site, as opposed to a passive recipient of cultural and linguistic imprints (Asad 1997, 47). In the *kaihōgyō*, the body is experienced,

cultivated, and inhabited. It is through the intimate engagement with the surrounding Nature, as well as the ongoing communication with the agonizing body, that the *gyōja* takes on their self-agency, in terms of an “affirmation” of and a “return” to the “actual world” (Tamura 1987, 204). By doing this, the *gyōja* enters a communion with not just his inner self, but beyond that — he also *vertically* aligns himself with the Buddha.

Asad’s theory on the body as an assemblage of learnable *habitus* comes with an important presumption, however. As he cites Marcel Mass, he reveals that the body is “the man’s first and most natural technical object,” a site that signals meanings to the surroundings through a variety of natural expressions — from physical movements to even material expressions such as clothing (Mass 1997, 47; Zito 2020, Lecture 2/11). In this sense, two details within the *kaihogyō* are noteworthy in the analysis of how the body operates naturalistically to communicate with the supernatural: the *gyōja*’s outfit, along with the the *mudrā* (“symbolic and ritual gestures”) and *mantra* (“sacred utterances”) they repeat. Their all-white uniform — created in the color of death and accessorized by the “cord of death” (*shide-no-himo*, 死出の紐) around the waist and a sheathed knife tucked inside — serves as a living reminder of his duty to commit suicide if he fails to complete the task (Stevens 2013, 63). Attached directly to the monk’s body to accompany his daily quest, the pure-white robe thus mediates the relationship between the living and the dead, propelling the monk to “live each day as if it was [his] whole life” (Covell 2004, 272). The *mudrā* and *mantra* which the practitioner performs during his worships, on the other hand, speak volumes about the idea of the body as a natural instrument of mediation as well. As anthropologist Angela Zito puts it: “language and the gesturing bodies that speak it may be the most naturalizing media,” the various hand gestures and the mystic phrases the monk makes serve as the most naturalistic

means to engage with the spiritual entities he encounters, which are embedded in the tombs, shrines, and rivers (Zito 2008, 727). Such naturality, according to Zito, plays a key role in religion and spirituality because it helps fulfill humans' intrinsic "longing for immediate, authentic experience" (Zito 2008, 727). Dressing up in the pure-white, unadorned robe while communicating with the divine through verbal and body languages, the *gyōja* are thereby on their path climbing up to that eventual moment of unmediated clarity and spiritual authenticity.

However, the elevation of immediate experiences to their utmost limits occurs through the *dō-iri* 堂入り, a nine-day fast at the end of the seven hundred days of the *kaihōgyō*. Literally meaning "entering the temple," *dō-iri* functions as a living funeral for the practitioner, in which he spends nine consecutive days indoors without sleep, food, drink, or the ability to lay down, supervised by two monk assistants. Since it is scientifically proven that humans can only survive about seven days without water, this fast brings the practitioner to the brink of death. But it is interesting to note that during *dō-iri*, practitioners develop extraordinary sensitivity to their surroundings. One former practitioner reported that he could hear ashes fall from the incense sticks within the hall and could see beams of sun and moonlight seeping into the dark interiors of the temple (Stevens 2013, 75). Here, sensory perceptions become the medium of the body, whereby a mutual constitution exists between the body and its environments that turns the senses into "more primary [loci] for world making" (Plate 2017, 103). This process seems to spur a construction of another Self through a recreation of the environs. As Professor Robert Rhodes of Otani University comments, it is instilled with a ritual sense of "death and rebirth," through which the practitioner "dies to his old egocentric self" (*jōgubodai* 上求菩提) and is "reborn as a bodhisattva," who desires the salvation of all beings

(*genkeshujō* 下化衆生) (Covell 2004, 259; Rhodes 1987, 197).

In this regard, *dō-iri* facilitates a rather self-transforming process that brings the monk in line with the bodhisattva by moving him from the stage of self-master to that of aiding those further back on the path towards enlightenment. The temple one entered thus provides a “fruitful darkness,” which is metaphysically correspondent to what Victor Turner named as a “betwixt-and-between” period called *liminality*, encapsulated in one’s overall religious experiences (Turner 1967, 105). According to Turner, one’s liminality period is marked by heightened self-consciousness while accompanied by an expansion of the self horizon to the immediate and spiritual environs. Herein, the individual is driven to think about “society ... cosmos, and the powers that generate and sustain [him],” approximating the microcosm of the self *vertically* to the macrocosm of the universe (Turner 1967, 105). The *gyōja*’s body has thus become what Zito termed “a set of boundaries” between his internality and the universe’s externality (Zito 2020, Lecture 5/5); through *dō-iri*, he can now extend the boundary of self to that of others. There turns out to be a dynamic shift from a one-dimensional, *vertical* integration with the beyond (the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas) to a dual-dimensional, *horizontal* fusion with the here and now (his immediate and social environments). Such understanding of the *gyōja*’s self, which oscillates between his inward spirituality and his outwardness to join the rhythms of the world, invites another important point to delve upon: the sphere of his social life in Kyōto, which comes as a motif of next section.

POST-DOIRI KAIHOGYO: A SHARED PILGRIMAGE OF COLLECTIVE TRANSFORMATION

Upon finishing his death-defying fast at 3:00 AM on the ninth and concluding day, the

severely weakened *gyōja* makes his final trip back to his quarters with the assistance of two attendants. With a large crowd of three hundred Tendai priests and lay devotees gathered to attend the grand finale, the dialectic *darshan* (“religious seeing”) begins. The mutual seeing is a rather painstaking one. When the believers gaze into the glazed eyes and to the shivering, skeleton-thin body of the “living dead” *gyōja*, they engage in a painful visual confrontation with death — perhaps the biggest fear of humans. This type of seeing, as historian James Elkins notes in arts and religion professor Brent Plate sees in cinema, is essentially “an act of violence,” which not only creates pain but also triggers “doubt” (Elkins 1996, 27, 29; Plate 2017, 113). It evokes a kind of self-doubt, emerging out of one’s suffering in their action of seeing, that keeps reminding viewers of their own vulnerability. Whatever it is, the saint *gyōja* or the laypeople, the viewers are both humans: vulnerable beings who live, suffer, and die. In this respect, the moment of that dialectical seeing, with the *gyōja* stepping outside while the laypersons crowded around the temple hall, has brought them together into non-dual oneness. It is a shared moment of elevated pain and ambiguity that puts humans in an imagined yet direct dialogue with death, which, through Turner’s theory of “liminal period” (1967) introduced in the last section, marks the very start of a collective self-transformation. Within this process, there exhibits a transition from the *gyōja*’s vertical alignment with the divine — self-isolated in the temple — to the horizontal bond established between the *gyōja* and the laypeople. Both the saint *gyōja* and the mundane devotees, now in this moment of reciprocal seeing, have come to be well-prepared for the collective transformative process to take place. It comes with a transference of self-transforming power, which is no longer limited to the *gyōja* himself but will also be channeled to the social, the public.

The post-*dō-iri* practices take on a culturally performative nature. In contrast with the

mountain marathons of the first six years, the running routes of the seventh and final year are set within the city limits of Kyōto, namely the *Kyōto ōmawari* 京都大周り. Running through the environs of Kyōto, the *gyōja* blesses hundreds of people each day (thousands on weekends and holidays) with his rosary. The assembled believers either sit bowing along the road or follow the walking sage on the sidewalks. Welcomed by crowds of admirers, the practitioner is considered to be a symbolic representation of a living *Fudō Myō-ō*, through his capacity to bestow merits on others (Rhodes 1987, 194). His highly encoded body, using Martin Jaffee's terms, is itself a "wordless text" serving as "a model of transformed individual," whose "embedded" attributes can be transferred to somebody else (Jaffe 1997, 538, 542). As an active human mediator, he preaches by his own actions running across the city of Kyōto, beyond any empty words. He takes on the agency to transform not just himself and also others, predicated on his duty — as a transformed saint, an intermediary between the Buddha and the people — in bridging the gap between the sacred and the secular.

This aspect of human-mediated communication between the two realms is further manifested in the *goma* fire ceremony. In this ceremonial event, lay believers flock the hall and write their wishes on small pieces of wood, asking for things like success in business and good exam results for their children. Hosting the ceremony in the shrine of the *Fudō Myō-ō*, the *gyōja* is claimed to be "purified" by *Fudō's fire*, responsible for "feeding the wish woods to *Fudō*" and asking him to grant the devotees' wishes (Hayden 2002, media 00:29:29-00:31:08). Here, the *gyōja* serves as an intermediary between the mundane and the divine, to "contact *that* realm safely" by carrying out complex negotiations and contracts with the supernatural world (Zito 2020, Lecture 3/24). The power of *Fudō* now is no longer private to the *gyōja* himself, but is shared by all — young and old, rich and poor. Predicated on Turner's definitions of a

ritual and a *ceremony*, the *gyōja*'s religious responsibilities have transitioned from the more "individualized" ritual in the pre-*dō-iri kaihōgyō*, to the now collectivized ceremony in the post-*dō-iri kaihōgyō* (Turner 1967, 95). People are divested of all conventional "outward attributes" that used to demarcate them from their fellows, instead empathetically sharing this purifying moment, mediated by the monk, the fire, and the statue of *Fudō* (Turner 1967, 100, 110). As a result, the pre-*dō-iri kaihōgyō* creates a sense of *communitas* (McAlister 2002, 110), or a communal synchronization of religious experiences. Dissolving those political-social boundaries that exist between individuals across different spectrums of the society, it strives to incorporate all the rhythms of the mundane world into this self-transforming, ritualistic symphony.

CONCLUSION: MODERN IMPLICATION OF THE TENDAI ASCETICS NOWADAYS

With its recent "boom" in public interest sparked by NHK, a renowned Japanese national public broadcasting company, the esoteric ordeal practices of the Tendai *gyōja* have been brought into the public eye (Rhodes 1987, 185). Pictures of them can now be found on Tendai sect webpage, in magazines and newspapers, on travel brochures, and on the covers of books about Mt. Hiei. With such materialization of the sacred, Tendai Buddhism is confronted with its secularization in modernity. This elusive issue has sparked a number of debates among anthropologists and social scientists; however, many have taken an optimistic stance. Scholars such as Charles Hirschkind, Margaret Miles, and Jean Comaroff theorize that religious traditions — represented in elements from "cultivated modes of perception and appraisals" to negotiations of values in filmmaking — can coexist within, constitute, or even "reinvent"

modernity (Comaroff 1994, 307; Hirschkind 2001, 624; Miles 1996, 21). Traditional practices are, in this sense, not disappearing; rather, these practices re-emerge and take on new, adaptive forms to the constellation of changes and needs posted by modern society.

Indeed, humans have developed ways other than religion to establish connections with the horizons above our mundane experiences — say, Nature (Zito 2020, Lecture 5/5). In Japanese indigenous beliefs, people revere mountain ranges and forests as “the adobes of deities and spirits,” in the sense that those who undergo meditative practices in the mountains are transformed into exceptional beings (Miyake 2009, 86). Every year, Japanese people and tourists from all over the world pay visits to sites like Mt. Kōya, Mt. Hiei, and the Katsuragi mountains for a walking meditation to receive *darshan* from the sacred. I too went for a one-day pilgrimage in Mt. Hiei last winter with my family. Among all the religious sites in Kyōto we visited, our trip to Mt. Hiei was the most physically exhausting one. It already took a whole day, from the early morning to the late afternoon, to walk past the main temples and shrines distributed within the mountain, yet still with lots of minor places left unvisited. Along the way of our walk, there were tourists — either in groups or alone — carrying professional hiking equipment and marching forward rather quickly. Though the bare mountain slopes in the ancient times have now been paved with stone stairs, they remain steep and craggy, to the extent that one might start panting heavily if trying to climb up twenty or so stairs at a time. However, surrounded by the towering cedar trees along the walking trail that form a dense forest, with the gentle breeze and mountain birds singing and chirping, all those exhaustions seemed to disappear immediately. Instead of fatigue, one becomes immersed in the environs and feels blessed by Nature. Engagement with Nature, therefore, can be ritualistic and even religious. Herein it is through performing physical activities, which simultaneously mobilize

the body and mind, that modern travellers come to revive the historical memories embedded in the Mt. Hiei geographies — those “spiritual athletes” who once ran and hiked here, joining the company of Nature.

In addition to Nature, there is also the co-location of the sacred empowered by modern technology — from a virtual tour around Mt. Hiei to scenes of waterfall meditation in anime. Now available on the official website of Tendai Buddhism and YouTube, the VR video created by the Department of Affairs of Tendai Sect navigates the viewers in meandering through the landscape of Mount Hiei (“The Path of *kaihō-gyōja*” 2017, media). The video tour, guided by a Tendai monk and a narrator, covers the trail of physical and spiritual adventure undergone by the ancient *gyōja*. It consists of 360-degree screenings of the main temples, shrines, and old forests along the path of the *gyōja*’s pilgrimage, accompanied by detailed descriptions of each site being visited.

While this VR tour attempts to re-enliven the religious history of Tendai ascetics, anime scenes of waterfall meditation, on the other hand, reenact the individual memory of Sōō, the founder of the *kaihōgyō*. According to historical records, Sōō, when continuing his meditation intensely near a waterfall in order to achieve enlightenment, got a glimpse of the deity *Fudō Myō-ō* appearing in the waterfall, enveloped in a raging fire (Rhodes 1987, 189). Thereupon he leaped into the waterfall to embrace the image of the *Fudō Myō-ō*. Although in reality what he embraced was instead a log of the katsura tree, generations of Japanese people have come to enshrine this moment to symbolize one’s hard work, strenuousness, and commitment to particular missions, just as Sōō was devoted to pursuing Buddhahood to an extent of visual hallucinations. In a plethora of Japanese anime, including the most famous ones such as *Naruto*, scenes of meditations or physical training under a huge cascade are presented to

emphasize the characters' dedication to certain tasks they are undertaking. Indeed, Sōō's actions, along with the ascetic practices of *gyōja* as a whole, have turned into a container of the modern Japanese values, which are instilled with the cultural appreciation for hard work and efforts. The VR tour and the anime, in this sense, both serve as living reminders of the past conventions and the present values. Despite having its origin deeply ingrained in the soil of history, the fruitful Tendai culture which is tangible through the screen has evidenced how technology can continuously reengage audiences in the modern era.

The modernization of religion thus calls for a reimagining of the relationship between Religion and Culture: that Religion *is* Culture. One fascinating aspect about this is that modern people can now undertake a series of cultural traditions without even noticing — whether through taking a walk deep in the mountain forest, trying a virtual pilgrimage online, or witnessing waterfall meditations in anime. In this sense, the interdependency and mutual modulation between ourselves and religion allowed through media has become deeply embedded in the layer of unconsciousness. Such an unconscious aspect about the cultural practices of religion, as Zito puts, is what we “study ... as anthropologists,” due to the enrichment that analyses of “the machinery of cultural performances” can offer (Zito 2020, Lecture 3/24). It remains intellectually profound to contemplate on how people create those conventions yet forget they have created it, and how power and agency are invested in an Elsewhere — beyond the Kyōto landscape in the palms of Buddha and now, in the gazes on the internet.

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