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The Faculty Seminar is an Interdisciplinary initiative to discuss issues relevant to different academic disciplines in an atmosphere of respect for ideas and open debate. Members of the faculty seminar belong to different university departments and present their research at monthly meetings. Under the Direction of Dr. Dennis Klein, the Faculty Seminar has approached a diverse number of topics ranging: Emancipation and Liberation, Diaspora, Human Rights and Reparations, Violence and the State, Empire and Cultural Conquest and this year’s theme: “Representations of Genocide.”

When in Amsterdam, I passed by Ann Frank’s House and a detail in the window attracted my attention. The image is a picture of one of the streets in Amsterdam during the Nazi occupation. This is a very subtle representation of an extreme situation that until this day hunts people with anguish and incomprehension. The representations of extreme situations like genocide can serve many purposes, the main one is to remind and to offer the hope that such violent extremes can be prevented and not repeated.

Representations

Especially in contemporary societies, representations and the visual image have a strong impact. As such they tend to offer, either implicitly or explicitly, significations that influence our way of perceiving what is presented to us in a textual or visual form. Representations, according to the Unabridged Websters Dictionary means ”to symbolize or stand for something.” Representations always convey a message to which its contents are not quite owned by a specific interpretation. They are vehicles that offer open meanings that are based on some assumed reality. Definitely, those representations that deal with genocide pose the challenge of avoid offending specific audiences. As there are
multiple kinds of genocide the history, the events and the context where these happened need to be fully grasped and examined. For the purpose of the specific topic at hand, representations of genocide could be understood and analyzed from two perspectives on absence.

*Lack: Peoples and Context*

Absence could be measured according to that which is lacking and is assumed to be necessary. Genocide is the absence of people by extermination, the void left in the survivors is one kind of absence in genocide. In slavery that which is truncated, an obstacle in development is another kind of absence. Other genocides” and abuses of power share similar conditions where people, traditions, ways of life and places are damaged and/or eliminated.

The second aspect of absence in representations of genocide, is more methodological and analytical. Absence has been defined as a silent aesthetic, a quiet way of seeing that provides a better tool for a comprehensive reading of images (Feinstein, 2005). We need to include in our discipline of seeing ways where absence can be identified as what a lack could provide. By asking ourselves what is lacking in a representation of genocide, we then can obtain and develop a fuller meaning. In trying to find what the visual image does not include, we can articulate aspects that are significant but not included in the visual composition, but that affect meaning. In the representation of genocide, for instance, we can ask ourselves: What is the message these images convey? But also and equally important is to ask for what is not there, what is missing. From those elements that are missing we can speculate about what is outside of a representation of genocide that speaks about context: physical, social, and economic.

In this edition of the Faculty Seminar of Comparative Cultures, we offer an interesting collection of essays that address different kinds of genocide and its representations. Genocide is a concept that has become more and more used to identify the different ways and groups of people around the world who have been exterminated. This selection of
essays provide different perspectives of, for instance, the use(s) of propaganda during the Nazi era, the use of screens as representations that lack in social content, anti-Semitism as a concept used as an excuse to repudiate difference, among others. The selection of essays for this volume of the Faculty Seminar on Comparative Cultures provides for a backdrop to our next Faculty Seminar theme: “Forgiveness.”

“Forgiveness”

Moving to a certain extent, beyond those processes that trigger the conflict from which representations of genocide stem, forgiveness is an important and necessary consideration. The conditions and advantages to “Forgiveness” will be explored in our monthly meetings of the Faculty Seminar 2006-2007. “Forgiveness” will be explored, not as a naïve, simplistic and self-indulging emotional reaction but rather the emotional challenge of a deep understanding of social, economic and political circumstances that trigger conflict and makes its resolution necessary.

References

The century that embraced the last half of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth formed a critical period in the creation of the modern Sudan. For the eastern kingdom of Sinnar, centered in the Nile valley, this “Heroic Age” witnessed the rise of towns and a middle class at the expense of a central government grounded in older principles of political economy.[1] The new middle class continued to flourish under the Turco-Egyptian colonial regime established in 1821, and its prosperity was intimately linked to the acquisition and deployment of slaves.[2] To facilitate its break with the past, it adopted a new Arab ethnic identity.[3] The wide western lands of Kordofan had long been an integral part of successive precolonial kingdoms based on the Nile, including Makuria, Alodia and Sinnar.[4] From the mid-eighteenth century, however, Fur-speaking Musabba’at and Keira intruded from the west, and gradually wrested authority away from the eastern kings.[5] The territory they acquired was vast and diverse. South Kordofan was a hilly region about the size of South Carolina, where some ninety different languages were spoken by diverse communities who clustered on and around low mountains called jabals. North Kordofan was an arid lowland about the size of Texas punctuated at intervals by rocky desert crags. In 1821 the Turco-Egyptians annexed North Kordofan, while the southern realm of Taqali and other mountain districts struggled toward independence.[6] In Kordofan, as on the Nile, the difficult transitional century from 1750 to 1850 was characterized by the rise of a middle class, changes in the rules governing the acquisition and deployment of slaves, and shifts in ethnic identity.

The Nubians

An ancient community of African people entered the historical record in the fourth century CE in an inscription of the Ethiopian emperor Ezana, who intervened in the Nile valley kingdom of Meroe in response to the arrival of a group of invaders known as the
“Nuba” or “Nubians,” and for the next thousand years the Nubians dominated the history of the Nile valley.[7] It was reasonably obvious that the origin of these “Nuba” was Kordofan.[8] Time passed. By the twentieth century, the Nubian language family was seen to include two major languages spoken along the banks of the great river in southern Egypt and North Sudan, Kenzi-Dongolawi and Nobiin. The present author has defended the viewpoint that Nobiin Nubian was probably the dominant language of the Nile Valley as far south as the confluence and beyond until the 16th century CE. At the close of the Middle Ages folk of Christian Nubia became Muslims, but the notion that they should also become Arabs was an idea whose time had not yet come.[9] The twentieth-century Nubian language family also included remote and isolated relict tongues, two spoken in the northernmost jabals of the Nuba Mountains, Kadero-Koldagi and Debri, and two by communities in eastern Dar Fur, Birgid (probably now extinct) and Meidob.[10] But by the twenty-first century, studies by Herman Bell and M.W. Daly had demonstrated the survival into the 1930s of Nubian-speaking communities at numerous mountainous sites in North Kordofan.[11] By the turn of the millennium the vast distances between Aswan and the Nuba Mountains, and between Dar Fur and the Nile, were filled by an extinct Nubian-speaking community hitherto unknown.

“Nuba” or “Nubians”?

With the benefit of hindsight provided by Bell and Daly, surprising new information about the lost nation suddenly leaped from hitherto-neglected pages, not only of Lea, but also the earlier German traveler Eduard Rüppell and the Austrian colonial technocrat Joseph, Ritter von Russegger, who visited Kordofan in the period 1823-1837.[12] At that time at least one Nubian language was spoken throughout the semi-sedentary settlements based on the North Kordofan desert crags.[13] Nubian was the original language of El Obeid and its environs.[14] Only Nubian was spoken west of El Obeid across the wide plains toward the border of Dar Fur where predominantly pastoralist communities relied not upon camels, but upon pack-oxen,[15] and the Nubian language Birgid was spoken not only, as recently, in the corridor between al-Fashir and Nyala, but as far south as the Bahr al-Arab/Kir River.[16] On the other hand, by the 1830s
communities eastward from El Obeid toward the White Nile were already bilingual in Arabic.[17]

Noteworthy was the preferred term used by unsympathetic outsiders to describe the pre-Arab inhabitants of North Kordofan. Lea, who wrote in English, could have called them Nubians, but he did not; the writers in German could have identified them as Nubier, but they did not; all referred to them, through the derogatory Arabic idiom of their guides which does not distinguish, as “Nuba.” In short, the nineteenth and early twentieth-century outsiders associated the pre-Arab inhabitants of North Kordofan not with their linguistic kinsmen and co-religionists who lived along the Nile, but with the non-Nubian and questionably orthodox hill peoples of South Kordofan, dubbed Heiden Neger by a famous anthropologist.[18]

The precolonial Nuba of North Kordofan practiced a mixed economy of cultivation and the herding of livestock. Their lifestyle was transhumant; during the dry season they gathered at permanent villages near the foot of desert crags, where water was available in seeps, rock-hewn cisterns called ghulut, and deep, ancient wells carved into the living rock.[19] During the rains they dispersed far and wide to take advantage of ephemeral grazing ranges and the opportunity of seasonal cultivation through shallow wells in the sandy valleys of seasonal watercourses. When dispersed during the rains, they greatly resembled the Arab herdsmen of the colonial age to follow; when gathered at their home villages, however, characterized by thatched conical dwellings and clay granaries, their settlements differed but little in appearance from those of the Nuba of South Kordofan.[20] They were skilled ironworkers, and particularly active in the southeast portion of their homeland.

A nation seen only in hostile fragments may well be misunderstood, but the scraps of ethnographic information offered by Lea may indeed help explain why nineteenth and twentieth-century outsiders, guided by modern Arab Muslims of North Sudan, viewed the surviving North Kordofan autochthones as “Nuba” rather than “Nubians.” There was first the question of diet; the “more or less sedentary Nuba of the Northern Hills” [21] ate rats
and coney [rock hyrax] “although they say they are Muslims.”[22] Like the linguistically non-Nubian Nuba of the Nuba Mountains, they had *kujjurs* (“The Muslims here have wizards all right.”[23]), and in fact several of their customs and beliefs were highly inappropriate from an Islamic point of view:

“They have a snake [that] lives up on the top of a hill near Soderi to which, if there is a drought, they sacrifice and the old women go and anoint its head. If they have a bumper year, they likewise sacrifice to it; and you can see the fire blazing on the mountain top from afar off. Many other queer things they do, such as slaughtering a bull on a man’s grave and burying the bones after a feast on the flesh. Later they return to the grave and hold the deuce of a blind [drunk] on beer. And yet . . . they are Muslims.”[24]

Lea was correct: they were Muslims. However, their Islam asks to be interpreted in an historical context that differs significantly from that experienced by travelers of the nineteenth and twentieth-century colonial ages.

Both the familiar Nuba of South Kordofan and the newly-discovered Nuba of North Kordofan, before the middle of the eighteenth century, had been subjects of the early modern Islamic Funj kingdom of Sinnar.[25] While the Nuba of South Kordofan were subject to the *manjil* of Kordofal or the tributary ruler of Taqali, the North Kordofan Nuba were politically responsible to the *manjil* of Qarri, the provincial governor of the north.[26] Each crag-based community had its local lord or *makk*, assisted by subordinates entitled *jundi*.[27] These local officials shared in the same Nubian cultural tradition as the Funj sultans themselves; the office of “Lord of the Mountain” (*makk al-jabal*), like that of the high king far away, bestowed the right to wear the distinctive two-horned Funj crown, and passed by heredity through the female line within a ruling matrilineage, identified as the rightful holders of the *nuqara* or kettledrum that symbolized royal authority.[28] The duties of a North Kordofan Nuba *makk* included profound metaphysical responsibilities:

“In times of drought at the end of the summer, the Mek takes a ram to the top of the mountain, and there it is slaughtered, roasted and eaten. Clothes are put on top
of the mountain. This magic brings rain at once. This custom is still followed. In the early rains no one may hoe till the Mek has first hoed. When men sow, the Mek carries milk before them and sprinkles it upon the earth to make it fertile. In the autumn, when the corn is ripe, no man may cut and thresh before the Mek has been enthroned upon an angareeb [Sudanese couch and bedstead] and the tribal drum has been beaten and he has ceremoniously cut and threshed the first ears. These customs are still observed.”[29]

Local lords, like the high king far away, were periodically judged by representatives of their subjects, and in times of hardship rival candidates and rival matrilineages might well seek to supplant the inadequate incumbent lord and his kinsmen.[30] Yet the power of the state itself endured.

**Precolonial Political Economy**

The diverse peoples of Kordofan, both north and south, had long been subject to kingdoms based in the Nile valley.[31] These realms partook in an African tradition of statecraft that allowed an hereditary ruling elite to exact payments from subjects on the premise that the nobility, led by their king, owned the land.[32] During the sixteenth, seventeenth, and early eighteenth centuries the kingdom of Sinnar ruled and taxed both northern and southern Kordofan; however, the prevailing forms of payment differed, and so did the social consequences that ensued.[33] Taxes were universally assessed in terms of the puma, or gold ounce, but could be paid in kind by North Kordofan farmers or herdsmen, who had limited access to gold, at equivalences set by the government.[34] For North and West Kordofan Nuba, and for the government who ruled them, the salient issue was whether or not a fully pastoral lifestyle would be tolerated in the region. The pastoral option was always preferable to the subjects; however, the interests of the government required the reduction of pastoralists to manageable proportions and therefore the preservation of cultivation, however tenuous.[35] (There was one exception to these principles; following a policy based on temporary expediency, any foreign invader could reasonably expect to co-opt regional pastoral elites for a generation by favoring pastoralism at the expense of cultivation.) South Kordofan, in contrast, was a
source not only of obligatory payments in the form of gold, but also ivory and slaves, goods so valuable that they could withstand with profit the cost of export abroad.

The subjects of Sinnar, in principle, were allowed to own neither ivory, gold nor slaves; these valuable potential export goods should pass directly to the nobility as taxes. The possession by commoners of goods restricted by law to the nobility was a crime called sibla, whose punishment included the immediate expropriation of the offending goods.[36] Yet this state command economy had to accommodate a certain amount of leakage; the lords in practice tolerated certain forms and modes of possession of restricted goods by subjects. For example, in the case of ivory, one tusk of every elephant killed belonged to the king; it was the tusk that touched the ground, which belonged to the king, while the other tusk rewarded the hunters. Gold in the Nuba Mountains was produced by men and women who left their fields at the end of the rainy season and flocked to the watercourses that flowed south out of Jabal Liri to conduct placer washing. All gold nuggets belonged by right to the king, while producers were allowed to keep dust. Every lady in the Nuba Mountains had gold earrings.[37] However, one of the most common uses to which subjects put the valuable export goods they were allowed to keep was precisely to discharge their tax obligations to their lords, who thus gathered a larger share than their official prerogatives alone would have granted.[38]

This study is primarily concerned with the third restricted export good found in abundance in South Kordofan, slaves. The primary techniques employed for the extraction of slaves there were political and violent rather than overtly economic. These techniques generated in South Kordofan a permanent state of institutionalized insecurity that distinguished all the southern regions from other provinces. Firstly, tax obligations were assessed in gold but could also be paid in equivalent units of certain other things, conspicuously slaves. Each community thus had an incentive to seize alien individuals as slaves, not primarily for local consumption but to discharge tax obligations.[39] The individuals seized for this purpose were usually the most vulnerable aliens—children and women.[40] Secondly, since the government desired young adult males for deployment as soldiers, and since slaves of this description were the least likely to be generated
through the system just described, the government periodically conducted an official slave raid, or *salatiya*, with the primary goal of filling the ranks of its regiments.[41] Slaves gathered by the *salatiya* went directly to the government. Slaves kidnapped by subjects too were often delivered to the government as tax payments, and sometimes passed as tribute from lesser lords to greater, even the king himself. But if slavery were sometimes a road into government service, it could also be an exit from service at court; in the South Kordofan fiefdom of Taqali, for example, “those who fall out of favor are often sold by the *Mek* [lord], for according to his divine right [of kings] he regards all subjects as slaves.”[42] In sum, the fate of slavery in the southern provinces of Sinnar could befall anyone—male or female, old or young, subject or nobleman, educated or illiterate, devout or secular by orientation—but the odds of enslavement were not necessarily equal. The ultimate destiny of one condemned to slavery also depended upon where that future would be enacted.

**Precolonial Exchange and Slaves**

The precolonial kingdoms of the Sudan recognized diverse forms of exchange; not all, however, were governed by the logic of the marketplace, but rather operated within a context of encapsulation amidst the broader demands of a framework of social institutions.[43] Several distinct spheres existed, each with its own characteristic locations, participants, objects and media of exchange, terms of credit, and ethical implications.[44] Three spheres characterized the precolonial kingdoms, the local, the regional and the royal; the fate of slaves asks one to distinguish among them.[45] Many kidnapped slaves, primarily children and women, were ultimately destined for incorporation into local subject communities, at a lowly status, as what has felicitously been called “artificial kinsmen.”[46] Once thus absorbed they were no longer “slaves” in the eyes of the state, and were no longer subject to expropriation on the grounds of *sibla*. However, given the possibility of immanent appropriation, rescue or escape, it was often considered judicious to remove kidnapped individuals geographically from the communities of their captors. In the case of slaves delivered to the government in the discharge of tax obligations, the lords assumed responsibility for securing and moving the
slaves; some, indeed, might even find themselves consigned to export abroad with the Sinnar caravans of the royal sphere of exchange.[47] The primary focus of the present study, however, is with slaves retained by members of the subject communities, who transferred their human property via a regional sphere of exchange.

The Nuba of North Kordofan, and the Nubian-speaking South Kordofan Nuba of Jabal Debri, participated in an extensive precolonial regional sphere of exchange that transferred slaves out of South Kordofan into the northern settlements and beyond, in return for iron and a wide variety of other locally-produced goods.[48] While the participants in this exchange network may be considered in some sense merchants, the system was characterized (pace, formalists) by the conspicuous absence of markets. In Sinnar, people were not allowed to travel from one place to another without permission; fundamental to the creation of regional exchange opportunities was therefore the legitimation of geographical mobility. This required first the approval of the political leadership of the welcoming community, which would be obliged to feed and house the outsider, receive his imported goods, supply him with suitable export goods, and support him in and social or legal difficulties that might arise during his stay in alien territory.[49] After initial formalities with the local leader, these duties were then ordinarily delegated to a subordinate local notable, who became the alien trader’s official “neighbor,” “friend” or “protector.”[50] After perhaps numerous visits, a North Kordofan alien trader who became a valuable visitor in a Nuba Mountains community would be encouraged to marry locally; although his profession would require him to leave for extended periods, his southern family would never be allowed to leave their homes, but would serve as hostages for his probity and probable return.[51] The values of goods within the Nuba Mountains were pegged by government fiat to the gold ounce, but no coin currencies existed and the terms of exchange were decided by the leaders of the host community.[52] These time-honored regional exchange arrangements, however, were to be challenged by events of the eighteenth century.

In the Nile-valley kingdom of Sinnar the eighteenth century was an age of town-building that accompanied and testified to the appearance of money, markets, and the rise of an
indigenous middle class. In Kordofan, the participants in regional exchange were by no means immune to the lure of these innovations, and the town they created reveals much about the logic that governed their ambitions. Firstly, would-be merchant capitalists faced a determined opposition from the traditional lords of Kordofan who imposed their own terms of patronage and exchange upon a limited number of favorites. The best surviving contemporary description of how the royally-administered system of exchange across Kordofan functioned, (and how it appeared in the eyes of would-be private merchants), asks one to follow traders from their homes in South Kordofan eastward to Denab on the White Nile, the capital of the Shilluk monarch.

“Les marchands qui viennent de Koroum et de Takali, pour vendre différents objets ou acheter de l’ivoire, sont obligés de s’arrêter à quelque distance du pays et d’envoyer à Sa Majesté un messager avec des présents, afin d’obtenir la permission d’entrer. Quand leur demande est accordée, le roi leur adresse un sauf-conduit qui les fait respecter jusqu’à Denab, où il les loge et les nourrit. Le lendemain de leur arrivée, il fait étaler les merchandises dont il prend ce qui lui convient, et qu’il paye selon l’estimation qu’en font les gens de sa cour. La perte ou le bénéfice des marchands est donc tout à fait dans la dépendance des caprices du roi, ou de la disposition hostile ou bienveillante de ses courtisans.”[53]

Traders who made the journey back to South Kordofanian communities could expect to receive comparable treatment there, and an echo of contemporary elite attitudes resonates through this description of the capital of the lord of Taqali:

“Tassin, the capital of the makks of Taqali, is inhabited only by the sovereign, the big people of the empire and the soldiers who comprise the prince’s guard. It is a true royal residence, you see, where the bourgeoisie and the people are eliminated and where one normally encounters only the people who approach the royal person.”[54]

Given this frigid traditional political climate, Kordofan’s pioneering private merchants founded their first town of Sheibun on the lowlands, at the extreme southern periphery of Kordofan and outside effective royal control. The site chosen also reveals the dominant
form of trade envisioned; Sheibun adjoined the auriferous watercourses that flowed south out of the Nuba Mountains, and her merchants carried their wares eastward to Sinnar and other new urban entrepots of the eighteenth-century Gezira.[55] The closest thing to an eyewitness account of Sheibun was provided by Russegger, who viewed the ruins within a few months of its destruction by the Turks in 1836:

“Until recently the town of Sheibun had a great significance to the trade among the Negroes. Even from the ruins one cannot mistake the previous prosperity. . . . Sheibun was the central base of exchange for the gold trade of southern Kordofan, and merchants from these lands exported--aside from gold--ivory, rhinoceros horn, tamarind and other natural products.”[56]

Conspicuously absent from this contemporary roster of Sheibun’s export goods was the one commodity soon to dominate the commerce of Kordofan totally—slaves.

*The Conquests: Dar Fur and the Turco-Egyptians, 1770-1850*

At the dawn of the eighteenth century the Keira kingdom of Dar Fur had been locked for long generations in an extended struggle with its western neighbor Wadai for mastery of the legacy of medieval Tunjur monarchs who had once united the two realms. In the event, however, the future of Dar Fur would be tied not to the west, but to Kordofan. At mid-century the Musabba’at, a noble faction defeated in Keira dynastic politics, withdrew to Kordofan, where they not only defended themselves against the resident agents of a declining Sinnar but used the province as a staging area for repeated attempts to regain the western throne. In response, by the 1770s the Keira sultan Muhammad Tayrab had made peace with Wadai and transferred his capital east of the Marra mountains to the site of modern El Fashir; then he threw his forces eastward to the White Nile, annexing both North and South Kordofan to Dar Fur.[57] The age of Dar Fur rule over Kordofan introduced important transformations in political economy and culture.

The Keira conquest was achieved not only by the might of Tayrab’s armies, but also by reversing the traditional support of Sudanese kings for subject cultivators and unleashing
at their expense the full potential of specialized pastoral lifestyles. The official encouragement of pastoralism at the expense of mixed transhumance highlighted an ecological division within lowland Nubian-speaking Kordofan; the north was home to camel nomadism, while the west and south were better suited to cattle. In both areas new, Arabic-speaking elites were allowed to rise at the expense of their local Nubian-speaking rivals. Sinnar had long recognized as dominant over North Kordofan’s pastoral potential a group of camel nomads called the Fazara.[58] Through centuries of peaceful but repressive taxation, however, the potential of this group had been minimized in the interest of sedentary and transhumant Nuba society. The eighteenth-century Musabba’at intruders extended their patronage to a Fazara subgroup called the Beni Jarrar, who swept aside their elder kinsmen and achieved an age of regional dominance.[59] With the Keira conquest, however, the Beni Jarrar in turn were crushed; a new confederation called the Kababish was allowed to flourish under Fur aegis, and to run roughshod over the transhumant lifestyle of the North Kordofan Nuba. A new Arabic-speaking regime of complete pastoral dominance was allowed to prevail.[60] In similar fashion, though less conspicuously documented in the source literature, the conquering Keira established new Arabic-speaking specialized pastoral elites within the mixed cultivating and stockraising communities of southwest Kordofan. By the dawn of the nineteenth century many of these communities would no longer be regarded as Nubian or Birgid, but as Baqqara Arabs.[61] It is probable, one may speculate, that once the control of Dar Fur over Kordofan had been consolidated, the Keira kings would have reversed the policy of favoritism toward nomads, useful in conquest but counter-productive in the long run, and reverted to more traditional royal policies of support for cultivators. [62] In the event, however, a new age of invasion and turmoil allowed pastoral dominion to stand; Nubian speech gave way to Arabic, and agricultural activities throughout lowland Kordofan, as time passed, were increasingly transferred from free subject cultivators to imported slaves. Meanwhile, the transition to foreign domination over Kordofan was facilitated by the Keira government’s importation of small but numerous colonies of humble agricultural settlers from the west, immigrant peasants from the various districts of the empire of Dar
Fur itself. In Kordofan, most settled in the central belt best suited to grain cultivation, starting in the west. By the mid-nineteenth century, they would be identified as Daju folk from Dar Sila, Arabic-speaking westerners from Dar Qimr, Beri-speaking people from the north of Dar Fur and Wadai, and immigrants from beyond the western boundaries of Dar Fur, who came from the lands of Wadai, Kotoko or Borno, or even Nigerians from the remote west who spoke Pulaar or Kanuri. [63]

Dar Fur’s late eighteenth-century *Drang nach Osten* bore important economic implications. The sultans opened a new caravan route to Assiut in Upper Egypt along a difficult desert path called “The Forty Days’ Road,” and established or improved an authorized settlement near al-Fashir for foreign merchants from the north.[64] The major export envisioned was slaves, and the sultans greatly expanded Dar Fur’s slave-gathering capability by franchising the official slave-raid to a number of private entrepreneurs both native and foreign.[65] The impact of Dar Fur’s shift toward a private commerce in slaves was soon felt not only throughout Kordofan, but on south into the Dinka-speaking regions of South Sudan beyond the Kir/Bahr al-Arab River.[66]

The Dar Fur *imperium* in the east solicited and drew into Kordofan a new ethnic element, Nubian Kenzi-Dongolawi speakers from the Nile valley. By the last quarter of the eighteenth century, these people in their homelands were no longer under the effective governance of either Egypt or Sinnar, and both were subject to systematic predation by the Nobin- (later, Arabic-) speaking Shaiqiya, who in turn were driven by dynastic ambitions in the older political tradition of Sinnar. The northern Nubians had long participated in a regional sphere of exchange that brought Kordofanian iron into their world in return for dates and other northern products. During the eighteenth century they, like other Nile-valley Sudanese, had been shown the vision of a middle-class Islamic lifestyle in which expendable slaves would perform agricultural labor, while they themselves rose from feudal peasantry to merchant capitalism and a variety of subaltern roles such as mercenary soldier, translator, boatman, holy man, or caravaneer. A new late eighteenth-century trade route opened from the Dar Fur Kordofan provincial capital of Bara to the Nile bend at the southern extremity of Dongolawi speech at al-Dabba, and
Dongolawi-speakers entered the service of Dar Fur sultans as guides along the Forty Days’ Road. But there was more.

Danagla settlers introduced waterwheel-based irrigated cultivation to the environs of Bara itself, and to the ecologically unusual northern Nuba Mountains outflow oasis called the Khayran.[67] They offered leadership and protection to the Nuba of North Kordafan. For example, a Dongolawi-speaking Nile-valley family called the Awlad Dolib asserted control over Haraza, and transformed it not only into a transit point on the Barra-al-Dabba road, but into an Islamic sanctuary.[68] But the most conspicuous activities of the Danagla in Kordofan were commercial; as a group they came to be known as jallaba, or traders, and for a long generation their language dominated the new diaspora.[69] In some cases the Danagla integrated themselves into the older system of regional exchange, but with the support of Dar Fur, and later of the Turco-Egyptians, they often introduced markets and monetary exchange into situations where none had previously existed; these innovations could be made to serve the interests of successive governments. On the plains of lowland southwest Kordofan, for example:

“After the rainy season the Turkish troops go to the Baqqara, from whom they extract tribute in cows. A big market forms. The merchants present buy the cows from the Turkish officials with dollars and sell them back to the nomads for slaves. Everyone is served; the Turks dare not upset the situation [dürften den Anstand nicht verletzen] and prefer the currency; the Baqqara get back the beloved cows from which they are so unwillingly parted, and get rid of their bad slaves from Nubaland whose homeland lies far too near to guard them; the merchants in the end come away with slaves only—the cattle just serve them as currency.”[70]

The jallaba of the late eighteenth-century Danagla diaspora, like their Kordofan Nubian counterparts in pioneering commercial capitalism, founded a town to serve as base for their activities. El Obeid like Sheibun was located on the lowlands near the foot of the economically conservative highlands. Unlike Sheibun, however, it enjoyed the support of the authorities. Also in contrast to Sheibun, El Obeid was created to service a commerce
not in gold, but in slaves.[71] The jallaba followed the repeated government raids undertaken into the highlands, removing slaves and eventually, after the Turco-Egyptian annexation of Kordofan in 1821, introducing modern marketplace exchange and coin currencies even into culturally recalcitrant conservative districts such as Taqali.[72] Few themes in Sudanese history are more controversial than an assessment of the subsequent role of the nineteenth and twentieth-century jallaba; an Islamic nationalist historiography praises their civilizing mission in the south and their contributions to nation-building, while opponents of servitude could not fail to notice that their enterprise was totally dependent upon slavery and the slave trade—an improbable basis for future civic harmony.[73]

The surviving remnants of North Kordofan Nuba also accommodated themselves as best they could to the hostile new pastoralism and commerce-dominated colonial age. Many men emigrated to seek their fortunes in the new towns of the era, while those who clung to their homes now found themselves obliged to hire out for a wage as herdsmen to the hated Kababish.[74] The transition was seen as controversial both from within the community and from without. The traditional economic prerogatives of a North Kordofan Nuba community leader could now be misused for individual gain through private enterprise: “sometimes these chiefs abuse their authority by taking for themselves at rates determined by themselves much of their subordinates’ belongings in order to sell it at a profit to the traders.”[75] Traders who passed the North Kordofan Nuba settlements found their property at risk, for “the present inhabitants have the reputation of spiriting off the slaves of merchants passing through; later they enslave them themselves.”[76] But the “thievishly-disposed” inhabitants of the harsh desert mountains earned the particular moral opprobrium of pious Muslim travelers from more favored lands by offering for sale to outsiders the most precious resource of their rugged and austere homeland—drinking water.[77] By Sudanese independence at mid-twentieth century the Nuba villages of North Kordofan were abandoned and their ancient language or languages extinct.
NOTES


13 Daly, *On Trek,* pp. 37, 94 (Kaja [Katul]), 42 ([Kaja] Seruj) , 51, 94, 133 (Hofra), 65 (Wadi Hamra), 66, 133 (Umm Durag), 94 (Abu Ajaja, Kaja Aried), 133 (Haraza, Abu Hadid), 137 (al-Nihid), . Russegger *Reisen,* II, 2, 3, p. 173 (“They are scattered about like alien colonies in a number of villages, for example at Jabal Haraza at the southern edge of the Bayuda [desert].”), 175 (“In earlier times, before the conquest of Kordofan by warriors from Dar Fur, these Nuba tribes extended much farther north, indeed all over Kordofan
as far as the Bayuda. For this reason we still find remnants of the settlements of these people scattered across the terrain indicated.”); 345 (“The Nuba of Jabal Haraza in northern Kordofan constitute an island of Negroes amidst Arab elements, a remnant out of the time when the free black peoples’ place of residence extended up to southern [riverine] Nubia.”); 348 (“To all appearances Kordofan, at least the largest part up to southern [riverine] Nubia, used to be inhabited by blacks, and specifically by [North Kordofan] Nubians. Testifying to this are the multitude of place and mountain names in Kordofan of Nubian derivation, and above all the island-like linguistically left-behind remnants of Nuba Negroes amidst the Arabs.”) Rüppell, Reisen, pp. 125-127 (Jabal Haraza), 128 (Jabal ’Atshan), 130 (Jabal Filie), 178 (Jabal Surur). . Lea (On Trek, p. 147) confirmed that at least two different Nubian languages were spoken in North Kordofan; that of Haraza differed from that of Abu Hadid.  

Russegger, Reisen II, 2, 3, p148; Rüppell, Reisen, p. 141  
Rüppell, Reisen, p. 142 (“In Kajikil and other villages west of Obeid people only use the Koldagi dialect.”)  

Rüppell, Reisen, p. 143. In years to follow, under the patronage of Dar Fur and the British, these western Nubian pastoralists like their northern counterparts the Kababish would come to speak Arabic; they would be identified as “cow Arabs,” or “Baqqara.” For an early reference see Russegger, Reisen, II, 2, 3,167. For a study that illustrates the self-imposed absence of history among this community, see Ian Cunnison, Baqqara Arabs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966). For further discussion of the life-style based upon pack-oxen, including practices among the Nuba of North Kordofan, see Pallme, Travels, pp. 68, 88-91  

For the Birgid, who probably shared a similar history and likewise became “Baqqara,” see A. Brun-Rollet, “Brun-Rollet’s Reisen in den Sumpfregionen des Nam Aith westlich vom No-See und dem Bahr el-Abiad, 1856,” Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen, Vol. 7 (1862-1863), 18 (“Binghuich oder Birguit”), 23 (“Berguit”). The Birgid and their neighbors along the north bank of the Kir were subjects of Dar Fur. As recently as 1860, Birgid was the
predominant language among the inhabitants of the west Kordofan plains; see Guillaume Lejean, *Voyage aux deux Nils* (Paris: Hachette, 1865), p. 50.

17 Rüppell, *Reisen*, pp. 141-142. (“The Nuba who cultivate, who inhabit the northern part of Kordofan, prefer to use the Arabic language, though all would seem to know well their mother tongue, almost identical to the dialects of Haraza and Koldagi.”) Russegger (*Reisen*, II, 2, 3, p. 173) explained the terms under which the preference for Arabic speech was growing among the North Kordofan Nuba east of El Obeid: “North of the [Nuba] mountains, in the terrain of the Egyptian Kordofan, live Nuba who, though not treated as slaves, are more severely oppressed than the Arab part of the population.” By the 1930s, Lea was able to find two informants, whom he estimated to be 90 years old: “They talked a little of the old Nuba language (now not known to the younger men and children) for my benefit.” (*On Trek*, p. 147).


19 For a contemporary description of the transhumant lifestyle, see Pallme, *Travels*, pp. 88-91. At Jabal Haraza, Lea viewed a well 16 rajil deep; a rajil (man’s height) was about 5’ 9” (Daly, *On Trek*, p. 135).


Ibid. They also ate tortoises (p. 78).

Ibid., pp. 52 (Haraza, general), 255 (Soderi, Seruj). H. A. MacMichael, who did not recognize the North Kordofan Nuba as a distinct ethnic group, held them in particular contempt. Led in his time by “a rascally and cunning dwarf,” (Tribes, p. 95), these “thievish communities of hillmen” (Ibid., p. 85) formed “a nest of brigands,” comprised of “a dark and evil-featured people with characters to match (Ibid., p. 100)

At Jabal Haraza, Lea had another encounter with North Kordofan Nuba beliefs (On Trek, p. 139): “I went also into another fairly long cave running back into the mountains. The Omda [makk] said there had been a well in front of that and it had fallen in. He told me also that a great snake inhabits this well--Bir Shangul--but appears in the open air only at the beginning of the rains. It does no harm and is given offerings of milk!” MacMichael (Tribes, pp. 98-99) offered a contemptuous but not necessarily false description of how to generate sufficient wind to winnow grain.

“The fact that these empirical deviations [from the conventions of modern Islam] may seem unacceptable to a modern Muslim . . . is quite irrelevant; from the perspective of the Funj king, the customs of his subjects in no way compromised their participation in the corporate Islam of Sinnar,” Spaulding, Heroic Age, p. 125.

Spaulding, “Premise,” and “Early Kordofan.”

Daly, On Trek, p. 148.

Ibid., p. 140 (Haraza). For the Sinnar royal family see Spaulding, Heroic Age, “The Funj.” The camel brand of the ruling lineage of Haraza was IO, while that of the Funj high kings was ♀; both were said to represent the royal kettledrum and the stick(s) with which it was beaten (nuqara wa-`asaiya). For the wearing of the taqiya umm qarayn at Haraza and elsewhere, see Rüppell, Reisen, p.129. For further testimony to matrilineal leadership in northern and central Kordofan, see Lejean, Voyage p. 45 and MacMichael, Tribes, p. 91.

Ibid., pp. 148-149 (Umm Durag).
Ibid., p. 149. As Lea noticed in the 1930s, “if the government would let them, the Nuba would change their Mek when seasons are bad—to change the luck.”

See above, note 4.


See Spaulding, *Heroic Age*, pp. 75-103.

*Ibid.*, p.111. The system of equivalences in the collection of taxes was sometimes preserved into the Turkish period; for representative contemporary Kordofanian examples see Lejean, *Voyage*, p. 42 and Pallme, *Travels*, p. 38.


Spaulding, *Heroic Age*, p. 79.

For royal prerogatives over ivory, see Lidwien Kapteijns and Jay Spaulding, *After the Millennium: Diplomatic Correspondence from Wadai and Dar Fur on the Eve of Colonial Conquest, 1885-1916* (East Lansing: African Studies
Russegger (Reisen, II, 2, 3, p. 313) explained that the elite did everything in its power to gather from the subjects as much gold dust as possible. It seems probable that similar attitudes prevailed in regard to ivory and slaves.

“I was impressed, here as elsewhere, by the hate that Negroes of different tribes have for each other. No one systematically treats black slaves worse than do other Negroes, even from mountains that lie quite nearby” (Russegger, Reisen, II, 2, 3, p. 178).

Rüppell, Reisen, 159. “The Nuba themselves had other blacks as slaves. These they had either exchanged for food, or in part stolen. In the latter case people made systematic hunts for the children who belonged to another, distant mountain, and parents are always in fear of being robbed in this way. It also happens that from time to time a whole district is plagued with famine . . . . In such a situation it is normal for the stronger to sell the weaker as slaves.” “The total lack of political security is probably the reason why the Nuba are no friends of long excursions” (Ibid., p. 160). See also Pallme, Travels, p. 159 and G. Martini, “People and Government in the Nuba Mountains,” in Elias Toniolo and Richard Hill, eds., The Opening of the Nile Basin (London: Hurst, 1974), pp. 297-298.

Spaulding, Heroic Age, p. 72. As Rüppell put it (Reisen, p. 135), “Every year, completely systematically, raiding expeditions are made against the mountains inhabited by [South Kordofan] Nuba, where they surround the isolated colonies. If they do not save themselves through timely flight, they are carried away into slavery by the right of the stronger.”

Munzinger, Ostafrikanische Studien, p. 557.

For an introduction to economic anthropology in the substantivist tradition, see Rhoda H. Halperin, Cultural Economies Past and Present (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1994).

Spaulding, *Heroic Age*, “Exchange.”


The best description of the export of slaves from Sinnar via the royal caravans was composed in 1702 by Theodoro Krump (*Hoher und Fruchtbarer Palm-Baum des Heiligen Evangelij* [Augsburg: Georg Schulter & Martin Happach, 1710], pp. 369-372).

The special role of Debri was noticed by Russegger, (*Reisen*, II, 2, 3, p. 353).

Rüppell, who took an interest in the older trading system of Kordofan, offered accounts of its organization at both the northern and the southern ends. In regard to the North Kordofan Nuba, he wrote: “Each village has its own self-chosen political head, whose status should be hereditary within his family. He has no right to exact [tax] payments. His whole income consists of a sort of tithe in kind {Fruchtzehnten}, in return for which he must provide food and lodging for strangers.” (*Reisen*, p. 143) In regard to the Nuba of South Kordofan he wrote: “People recognize a political head, who resolves disputes in collaboration with the *kujur* [Gross-Fakir], but whose executive authority is very limited. His main influence is a sort of trade monopoly in regard to . . . visiting traders, who buy his protection with presents.” (*Ibid.*, p. 159) For a contemporary example, see the account of S. Carcereri, “In the Nuba Mountains, 1873,” in Toniolo and Hill, *Nile Valley*, pp. 283-292.

For the North Kordofan Nuba, see Daly, *On Trek*, p.143: “the custom of making a stranger here a neighbor (*jaar*) of the tribe he resides with, who is his surety, apparently exists in Haraza.” For Makk Nimr’s handling of merchants in precolonial Shandi see [Georges Thibaut?] “An Anonymous Journal describing Events in the Sudan,” one of the “Two Impressions of the Sudan under the Rule of Ahmad Pasha Shamli” in Paul Santi and Richard
Hill, eds., The Europeans in the Sudan, 1834-1878 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 75. The best description of the institution, however, derives from the sultan’s court in 1700: “On the third [of May 1701] Father Francesco da Salemi sent me and Father Joseph to the viceroy Shaykh `Ali, and also to Shaykh Arbab Adam. We took the latter for our patron, for one should know that all foreigners who come into this kingdom must choose as a protector one of the four highest nobles in the kingdom--Shaykh `Ali, Shaykh Arbab Adam, Shaykh Nayil or Shaykh Isma`il--who is then obligated to help him in all difficulties and distress. To [Shaykh Arbab Adam] we gave as a present a clean mirror, a pair of razors, a sugar hat, a few pieces of soap, some pepper, a handful of little nails, Muscat nuts, cinnamon bark, coffee, and some confectionary. [The shaykh] had a tanned leopard skin spread out on the floor for us, as is customary among the nobility and leading people of the kingdom in these Moorish lands. We sat upon it Turkish fashion with our feet crossed over one another and drank coffee. Our protector Shaykh Arbab Adam said that in the morning he wanted to conduct us to a royal audience, and so it came to pass.” (Krump, Palm-Baum, p. 281)

“The free [South Kordofan] Nuba never allow the wife of the children she bears to follow the [North Kordofan] traveler to the plains.” (Rüppell, Reise, p. 144).

**Spaulding, Heroic Age, pp. 111-112. For admittedly ambiguous eyewitness accounts of such exchanges, from a later age to be discussed below, see Russegger, Reisen, II, 2, 3, pp. 180-190. An unusually heartfelt and perceptive account of the constraints of the royal trade, as perceived by a would-be private merchant among the neighboring Shilluk, see Brun-Rollet, Nil Blanc, pp. 95-96.

Brun-Rollet, Nil Blanc, pp. 95-96.

This commerce could be observed as late as the 1830s, but did not long survive the destruction of Sheibun by the Turks in 1836. Russegger, *Reisen*, II, 2, 1, p. 9.


Spaulding, *Heroic Age*, pp. 391-411. From the perspective of Pallme, the period of domination by Dar Fur was “the golden Age of Kordofan” (*Travels*, p. 13.


Spaulding, *Heroic Age*, pp. 391-411. The Musabba`at turned their wrath against certain of the communities of North Kordofan Nuba; for example, Kaja and Katul were exterminated or enslaved and exported by the Musabba`at. (MacMichael, *Tribes*, p. 98.)

As MacMichael put it, (*Tribes*, p. 86 ), “the Arabs then exterminated all whom they could,” (*Tribes*, p. 86). The Kababish, as Justin Willis has eloquently explained, were thereafter eager subservient clients to successive waves of Turco-Egyptian and British invaders. For a sympathetic anthropological discussion, see Talal Asad, *Kababish Arabs*.

For an introduction, see Cunnison, *Baqqara Arabs*. After the Egyptian seizure of North Kordofan, probably during the 1830s, one important southwestern Baqqara group, the Rizeiqat, successfully revolted against their Dar Fur patrons and asserted a claim to become an independent tribe. See Brun-Rollet, *Nil Blanc*, p.129.

For the unexpected and unwanted assertion of autonomy by the new Rizeiqat Baqqara elite against their Fur patrons, for example, see Brun-Rollet, *Nil Blanc*, pp. 45-47, 129.

Lejean. *Voyage*, pp. 50-52; for the resettlement by westerners of the exterminated North Kordofan Nuba communities at Kaja and Katul, see MacMichael, *Tribes*, p. 98. For settlers in the central zone, see Martin Born, *Zentralkordofan* (Marburg: University of Marburg, 1965), pp. 106-118. For a detailed study of one community, illustrating the emergence of Arab identity

64 An unexpected participant was the English traveler W. G. Browne, who upon his arrival in Dar Fur was largely confined to the authorized entrepot for strangers; see his *Travels in Africa, Egypt, and Syria, from the year 1792 to 1798*, 2nd ed., (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orme, 1806.)

65 The best accounts of Dar Fur’s slaving activities in this period are provided by R.S. O’Fahey. See his “Slavery and the Slave Trade in Dar Fur,” *Journal of African History* XIV, 1 (1973), 29-43 and “Fur and Fartit: The History of a Frontier,” in John Mack and Peter Robertshaw, eds., *Culture History in the Southern Sudan: Archaeology, Linguistics and Ethnohistory* (Nairobi: British Institute in East Africa, 1982), pp. 75-88. The franchise system was revived by the Turks soon after their occupation of North Kordofan, probably upon the counsel of elite Dar Fur advisors such as the exiled Keira princes Abu Madyan and Sultan Demma (Russegger, *Reisen*, II, 2, 1, p. 26; II, 2, 3, p. 139). In Dar Fur, government permission to conduct a slave raid was probably transmitted orally, but the Turks issued an actual written document or *firman*, felicitously rendered “Raubbrief” by writers in German. As Russegger put it, “In earlier times [i.e., 1821-1837] such raids were undertaken at will by whomever had debts or otherwise wanted slaves. Recently, however, the Egyptian government has interposed itself. That is, it restricted this arbitrary plundering and partly undertook [raids] under its own direction, while partly doling out permission to do so to those favored, in return for one-third the booty.” (*Reisen*, II, 2, 3, pp. 227; see also p. 132)


Daly, *On Trek*, pp. 138-139. For the Dowalib family, regionally prominent in late Funj times, see Spaulding and Abu Salim, *Public Documents from Sinnar* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1989), Documents 29, 51, pp. 180-183, 281-286. For the position of Haraza as a sanctuary, see Daly, *On Trek*, p. 144. The significance of a holy man’s sanctuary, in the Funj tradition, was explained by Krump (*Palm-Baum*, p. 254), who observed such a community near al-Dabba in 1700: In the twentieth century, in similar fashion, under the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, a Dongolawi leader named Niama Sirkatti would achieve leadership over all the residual North Kordofan Nuba communities—until they were allowed to expire in favor of the Kababish. (Daly, *On Trek*, *passim*). Further information is supplied by Guillaume Lejean, “Voyage au Kordofan 1860,” *Le Tour du Monde* 158 (1863), pp. 26-30.

For an appreciation of the scope of *jallaba* activities, see Leif O. Manger, ed., *Trade and Traders in the Sudan* (Bergen: Department of Social Anthropology, University of Bergen, 1984) and El Haj Bilal Omer, *The Danagla Traders of Northern Sudan: Rural Capitalism and Agricultural Development* (London: Ithaca Press, 1985). See also Pallme, *Travels*, p. 16, 171. Men in Dongola itself were normally bilingual in Arabic, while women were not. There existed a strong prejudice against allowing women to leave the homeland, with the consequence that Nubian speech did not long survive in the diaspora, as men took Arabic-speaking mates.


For an extended discussion, see Ignatius Pallme, *Travels in Kordofan* (London: Madden, 1844), pp. 13 (Bara), and 258-259 (El Obeid). See also Lejean, *Voyage*, p. 41.

A contemporary description of late precolonial *jallaba* following government raids into the Nuba Mountains in order to obtain slaves may be found in J.


74 Daly, *On Trek*, p. 94.


76 Ibid, p. 127.

77 Ibid., p. 126; Daly, *On Trek*, pp. 150, 158. Under most interpretations of Islamic law, drinking water must be given to anyone thirsty, and therefore may not be sold; see Joseph Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 143. For contemporary references, see Pallme, *Travels*, pp. 91, 96; Lejean, *Voyage*, p. 54.
Hitler's Propagandist Reign - Gina Musco

With the Weimar Republic’s end a new history was beginning for Germany. The Nazi’s were the reigning power of the now Third Reich. Hitler had been granted limited power in its initial stages but soon came to dominate through the “power of appeasement” granted by his Socialist Party. The dream of a renewed German nation was part of Hitler’s appeal thus blinding the German people from the evil propaganda and predisposed notions of racial and political domination. His policy apparently harmless at first glance held an underlying secret of cruelty and terror hidden behind a political zeal so promising in its entirety that it was difficult for the majorities to resist, their choices however, limited. Hitler controlled the state of Germany in every way imaginable, a master manipulator; it is difficult to not see him as having been brilliant; had his genius been put to better use.

Years before Hitler came to power his dreams for German supremacy were evidently presented in his manifesto, Mein Kampf. Obtaining power, according to Hitler, could be achieved in reversing mistakes made during the First World War. Hitler stated, “In this case the most cruel weapons were humane if they brought about a quicker victory; and only those methods were beautiful which helped the nation to safeguard its dignity (Hitler, 179).” It was apparent that propaganda would be the driving force to Hitler’s domination and would be carried out in all aspects of German culture. In referring to past mistakes by the Germans Hitler states in Chapter 6 titled, “War Propaganda”, “The form was inadequate, the substance was psychologically wrong: a careful examination of German war propaganda can lead to no other diagnosis (Hitler, 177).” He believed there was a formula and praised his English enemies, a first for Hitler, in succeeding to carry out this process when his own people could not. “The art of propaganda lies in the emotional ideas of the great masses and finding, through a psychologically correct form, the way to the attention and thence to the heart of the broad masses. The fact that our bright boys do not understand this merely shows how mentally lazy and conceited they are (Hitler, 180).” It is nearly impossible not to credit Hitler on his expertise in the scientific technique of propaganda, as he carefully crafts a comprehensible analogy to the
art of a poster and what it should intend to accomplish, “The poster should give the masses an idea of the significance of the exhibition, it should not substitute for the art on display. Anyone who wants to concern himself with the art itself must do more than study the poster; and it will not be enough for him just to saunter through the exhibition (Hitler, 179).” It was understood that these images, when placed before the masses needed to be simple in form because according to Hitler, “The receptivity of the great masses is very limited, their intelligence is small, but their power of forgetting is enormous (Hitler, 180).” He goes on to explain the main points of the process in his very own propagandist technique, stating, “In consequence all of these facts, all effective propaganda must be limited to a very few points and must harp on these slogans until the last member of the public understands what you want him to understand by your slogan (Hitler, 181).” It was a theory of genius in that he succeeded in conquering the majority of Germany into believing Nazism was their only alternative.

The Nazi party had precise ideas on how to manipulate the country and as an artist Hitler personally oversaw many designs of the Third Reich. The Chambers of Culture was devised and oversaw that all visual designs were carefully choreographed in order to loose your individual self. Film at this time was an overwhelming use of propaganda, though that theory obviously was denied by the Nazi’s. According to film maker Eric Rentschler the early Nazi regime in which propaganda hit its peak in the film industry could be known as “The Movement”. According to Rentschler, “The National Socialists had become the masters of public life. Whether they would also become the masters of popular imagination remained to be seen (Rentschler, 54).” Two films in particular became a prominent form of propaganda, Hitler Youth Quex and Jew Suss, produced in 1933 and 1940, respectively.

Joseph Goebbels led the creatively named, Chamber of Cultures during the Nazi regime, this committee was what led film to become propaganda, Rentschler wrote in Chapter 2 titled, “Emotional Engineering” that, “Repeatedly Goebbels stressed that film should exercise a discernible effect, that it must act on hearts and minds. Its calling should be that of a popular art (Volkskunst), an art that simultaneously served state purposes and
fulfilled personal needs (Rentschler, 54).” In other words, he believed in using media as a tool in brainwashing the German people into believing that Nazism was the only just form of government.

“Hitler Youth Quex did precisely that, intensifying life to the point of devivification. It focused on a human subject and transformed him into a political property (Rentschler, 55).” Hitler’s youth, or the future of Germany, is portrayed by Heini a German boy living in a communist family. Heini’s father is portrayed as a drunkard and a degenerate, this in turn, deliberately stating that communists are degenerates and simply no good. Heini, fed up with the Communist youth party he was forced to join by his father retreats into the forest where he later joins the Hitler youth parade. The forest itself is symbolic of the German people in that it depicts order and the military in its clean rows of trees. According to Rentschler, “It is not nature, but an extremely domesticated nature that overwhelms Heini, a mass shaped as a larger body, compact columns of human potential, energy, and purpose fueled by a mysterious force (Rentschler, 62).” In joining the Hitler youth parade Heini is in a sense, replacing his own family, or Communism, with a new family, Nazism. It is pointed out in The Ministry of Illusion, that the film, “…in its systematic structuring of oppositions between the NSDAP and KPD, illustrates the projective workings of Nazi subjectivity. Communists appear as unbearable self-images, what Nazi’s think they ‘would be like without their discipline or-psychologically speaking-what they are like under the veneer of that discipline (Rentschler, 64).”

Just seven years later Germany was approached by another film offering the same portrayals, only now the film focused on the regime’s original endeavor, racial persecution. “Conceived as a hate film Jew Suss provided a preview of coming atrocities, preparing the German populace for ‘final solution,’ the deportation and mass murder of European Jewry (Rentschler, 149).” Jew Suss was a deeply anti-Semitic film produced by the Nazi party. A story told as how the Germans saw themselves, where Jews are depicted as being villainous. The fact that the story itself takes place in the year 1733 is a nod to the medieval life that Germans had so desired to retreat. In the film Suss, who is a Jew, exploits the duke of Wurttemberg, a German, for his desire of a luxurious lifestyle.
Suss ingratiates himself into the city transforming roads and bridges into sources of revenue all the while plotting taxation schemes and convincing the duke to allow Jews into the city. Dorothea Sturm later drowns herself after being raped by Suss. Jews are then banded from the city and Suss hung in front of an audience all the while claiming innocence.

The aim of Jew Suss was obviously to show Jews as evil, whose only goal of their culture is to assimilate themselves into the German world by any means necessary. “An anti-Semitic exhibition, Jew Suss portrays a shifty figure and his shifting image. Unrooted and nomadic, the Jew is all over the map, a man without a homeland, a dandy whose preferred countenance is the masquerade (Rentschler, 154).” Denied of course was the focus of this film by Goebbels in which he said, “that every effort had been expended to bring them true history in the guise of a spectacle, as well as suggesting that the research for each film was, for the first time, bringing to the screen a true portrait or at least a singularly true version or the accurate characterization of a person (Rentschler, 151).”

Once Nazism was in place and propaganda brainwashing all of Germany the regime could continue full steam ahead onto its ultimate goals of racial and political domination. The focus of power shifted to the “final solution” that apparently majority of the German people never saw coming.

Before Hitler came to rule Germany his ideas and theories were already set in place and he wrote of them rather graphically in Mein Kampf. It was his true belief that the Aryan race was the only true culture and that the races should never intermingle. This provocative idea and others are assimilated in Chapter 11, “Nation and Race,” “Any crossing of two beings not at exactly the same level produces a medium between the level of the two parents. This means: the offspring will probably stand higher that the racially lower parent, but as high as the higher one. Consequently, it will succumb in the struggle against the higher level (Hitler, 285).” Hitler’s goal was just that, to eliminate this from happening and let only the higher race exist, the higher race being German, Aryan; not Jewish. A culture meant creativity that which Jews lacked immensely as well as
idealism. In his own words, “No, the Jew possess no culture-creating force of any sort, since the idealism, without which there is no true higher development of man, is not present in him and was never present (Hitler, 303).” Jews according to Hitler are unchanging; they borrow from other cultures because they lack the genius to create their own. Therefore, they are not needed. It thus became his duty to rid the world of a culture that would only bring them down!

As he came to power he found men who felt the same as he and they together proceeded to wreak havoc amongst those not worth living in Germany, and aptly titled it the “Final Solution.” Secret meetings amongst them took place and since they had been preparing for years for total war they were successful in having it believed that they’re goal was simply to reverse the outcome of the Treaty of Versailles. Realistically Hitler’s war was for racial domination. This was clear and dated back to an addendum to the Law Regarding the Restoration of Professional Service from 1933 which stated, “(1) A person is to be regarded as non-Aryan, who is descended from non-Aryan, especially Jewish parents or grandparents. This holds true even if only one parent or grandparent is of non-Aryan descent. This premise especially obtains if one parent or grandparent was of Jewish faith (First Racial Definition, 642).” It could not have been made clearer to the Germans of the Nazi Regime’s intentions, dating back before action had even been taken, of what their true intentions would be.

Backing Hitler to every decree was Heinrich Himmler who’s speech given to 100 SS Group Leaders, in secret, in 1943 made very clear the destructive intentions of the Nazi party and their plan of the “final solution.” “We shall now discuss it absolutely openly among ourselves, nevertheless we shall never speak of it in public. I mean the evacuation of the Jews, the extermination of the Jewish race. It is one of those things which is easy to say. ‘The Jewish race is to be exterminated,’ says every party member. ‘That’s clear, it’s part of our program, elimination of the Jews, extermination, right, we’ll do it’ (Himmler).” He, as other Germans believed that the Jews were the first to declare war on the German’s that the Nazi’s were innocent and only trying to protect themselves from the “evil” that is Jewish.
And they were successful. The Nazi’s attempt to ‘keep the blood clean’ was helped by the mass murder of 6 million non-Aryan, mostly Jewish, Germans during WWII. If it can be called ‘success’, the Nazi party was successful in portraying themselves as strong leaders who would bring hope and power back to the lives of Germany, instead their powerful leader could do nothing but cower and was forced into suicide, which in hindsight came much too late in the regime.

The question remains, even in the present day, how innocent were the Germans during WWII and their final solution. The signs were obvious that the intent was not all good so why were they ignored. W.G. Sebald addresses this issue prosaically in his book titled, “On the Natural History of Destruction.” Referring to the last heavy air raid that took place in 1942, and was supported by the Royal Air Force since 1940, destroying German civilian life he writes, “As far as I know, the question of whether and how it could be strategically or morally justified was never the subject of open debate in Germany after 1945, no doubt mainly because a nation which had murdered and worked to death millions of people in its camps could hardly call on the victorious powers to explain the military and political logic that dictated the destruction of the German cities (Sebald, 14).” It is thought that these air raids have been overlooked by writers and historians because maybe Germany deserved to be bombed to stop the massacre of innocent people who have done nothing but to have been raised non-Aryan. “This intoxicating vision of destruction coincides with the fact that the real pioneering achievements in bomb warfare-Guernica, Warsaw, Belgrade, Rotterdam-were the work of the Germans (Sebald, 104).” Suggests Sebald, these air raids that caused major destruction and cost thousands of civilian lives may have been overlooked but may have been caused in fact by the Germans themselves. “And when we think of the fires that raged in Cologne and Hamburg and Dresden, we ought also to remember that as early as August 1942, when the vanguard of the Sixth Army reached Volga …an influx of refugees, was under assault, and during this air raid alone, which cause elation among the German troops…forty thousand people lost their lives (Sebald, 104).”
This is not to say that all the German people should be held responsible for what took place during this 12 year regime. The Nazi party did not rule by terror alone. Hitler was, suffice it to, say a brilliant man who excelled and succeeded in the art of coning an entire nation. He swooped into the arms when the nation sat at their lowest point with the promise of power and success. Had they only looked beyond his utopia, towards his blatant hatred maybe he could have been stopped, although history has proven that the leader will stop at nothing, in order achieve the goals that are embedded in the mind of a tyrant.
“The Nazi Era” - *Subtle Propaganda, Devastating Consequences* -
Sara Beherdite

“Nature remain(s) mute and unexpressive unless captured by a camera…the unconscious life in nature to conscious expression’...(the) synthesis of mountains and machines, of natural force and technological power, of bodily energy and spiritual endeavor, its impressive merger between the physical world and the sophisticated scientific devises that measure and elaborate it” (Rentschler, 36). The Nazi Party personified these characteristics in not only their beliefs, but through their propaganda as well. The core of their principles evolved from the foundations of nature. They took these theories a step further, though, into modern day and applied them specifically to the German cause. Their propaganda created an image of simplicity and beauty, though it was crafted through direct purpose – much like the *Novellen* films of the late nineteenth-century, in which seemingly natural rolling landscapes were the product of deliberate design. Film, a chosen medium for the Nazi party, helped to carry out their message; it spoke of nature and community in an appealing and almost innocent fashion, while at the same time had subtleties of Hitler’s ultimate purpose.

Nature was an obsession for Hitler because it represented the fundamental idea of our being. In his mind, “(Man) never creates anything. All he can do is to discover something. He does not master Nature but has only come to be the master of those living beings who have not gained the knowledge he has arrived at by penetrating into some of Nature’s laws and mysteries” (Hitler, 264). Hitler believed he had penetrated those laws and mysteries. He felt as though he had discovered secrets that had helped the Jewish race prosper and the Germans suffer. It was now his job, or so he thought, to spread this knowledge through propaganda and in turn “master” those who were unaware.

Hitler preached that it was unnatural for the “crossing between two breeds which are not quite equal” (Hitler, 262). The results would produce offspring inferior to the higher race. The solution, he proposed, was to “allow the complete triumph of the higher order. The stronger must dominate and not mate with the weaker, which would signify the
sacrifice of its own higher nature” (Hitler, 262). This sacrifice was key in his beliefs, for it was “a precondition of human civilization” (Hitler, 275), or idealism, which he also refers to it as. The highest race, being superior in intellect and reason, understand this concept of idealism and as a result are willing to forgo their desires for the benefit of the community. As a result, the community can prevail, since all of its members support its well-being. Lower races, however, do not fully understand idealism. They are therefore, in Hitler’s mind, egocentric, only out for themselves, and unable to have a true sense of community.

According to Hitler, those in the Jewish race (even though they have lasted for thousands of years) are an example of this egotism. He claims that the reason for their longevity is not idealism, but basic animal instinct: “bring(ing) individuals together for mutual protection only as long as there is a common danger which makes mutual assistance expedient or inevitable” (Hitler, 278). In other words, the Jewish race does not stay together out of a sense of community, but because they feel it is necessary for their own individual survival. And as egoists, they will stop at no means to exploit others. Their lack of community, ease to exploit, and ego all contribute, in Hitler’s mind, to the reason why the Jewish race has no State, or territorial bounds. Without these bounds, the race is left to “(batten) on the substance of others” (Hitler, 280), namely their culture. Since “the Jews have not the creative abilities which are necessary to the founding of a civilization… the Jewish intellect will never be constructive but always destructive” (Hitler, 279). This race that lacked idealism, creative thought, and in turn culture and community, was a threat to Hitler. He believed they were going to infiltrate and destroy German culture through their penetration of the Aryan community. This, to Hitler, could not happen. He believed in order to perpetuate his community (the Aryan race and German nation), the Jews must be stopped; and that is exactly what he intended to do. Under Hitler’s direction “(Germans) had the moral right, (they) had they duty to (their) people, to destroy this people which wanted to destroy (them)” (Himmler, 108). He first proposed, “to contain the problem through legislative measures” (Hitler, 100), knowing full well that when “this attempt fail(ed) it will be necessary to transfer the problem, by law, to the National Socialist Party for a final solution” (Hitler, 100). He ultimately
passed a law that allowed his party to hold the Jew’s fate in their hands - a fate that would be devastating.

And while “the evacuation of the Jews (and) the extermination of the Jewish race” (Himmler, 107) was Hitler’s ultimate objective, propaganda, through film, was his vehicle. In order to effectively carry out his plans, he needed to teach others what he felt enlightened to know. Since he saw his those many in his community as intellectually inferior, he could not simply use reasoning. He needed to “awaken the imagination of the public through an appeal to their feelings, in finding the appropriate psychological form that (would) arrest the attention and appeal to the hearts of the national masses” (Hitler, 168). In other words, he needed to appeal to their emotions. He would give hope to an anguished nation through a sense of community and most importantly, a solution. He would present it “so clearly and forcibly before the minds of the people as to create a general conviction regarding the reality of a certain fact” (Hitler, 168), while at the same time be awe inspiring, leaving people fascinated. Film, for Hitler, incorporated all of these things. It gave people an example to follow: his example. As a visual medium, it presented ideas as facts - for seeing is believing. It was simple, beautiful, and appealed to the masses.

Nature, as seen through technology, was best represented in Leni Reifenstahl’s *The Blue Light*. Like many films of its day, *The Blue Light* “probe(s) the mysteries of nature with the tools of modernity” (Rentschler, 36), not only through the depiction of maps, bridges, and images of a modern couple, but also the way in which the film was created. By presenting nature through a camera, one can choose particular shots, colors, and features to make a landscape look its best. “In this way, mediated effects become natural presence, formal will imparts to raw material its true identity, man-made machines render the real authentic” (Rentschler, 37). This is precisely what Hitler, and the Nazis, did themselves. As stated earlier, they took a complicated series of ideas and presented them in a neatly formed box of ideas. Hitler also wanted to take nature, the essence of all being, “to create a new man – and to recreate woman in the service of the new order and the new man” (Rentschler, 57). This new man was a man of the Nazi party: a loyal,
willing member of the community. A recreated woman “in the role of martyr, whose sacrificed body saves lives, (and) indeed ensures a community’s well-being” (Rentschler, 37). Sacrifice was a large part of Hitler’s agenda, for “posterity will not remember those who pursued only their own individual interests, but it will praise those heroes who renounced their own happiness” (Hitler, 276). Placing the needs of the community first was a prerequisite for a race to prevail. One must be willing to do anything, including die a martyr, for the benefit of the whole. These films, and in turn Nazi propaganda, portrayed the sense of a community as a positive - unifying a disjointed nation and giving them a sense of solidarity. To the Nazi regime, “facts, things, feelings, and persons do not exist for it in their own right, but only as parts in a working relationship to other parts” (Rentschler, 57). Each person was seen as another willing to die for the Nazi cause, but this idea of community made Germans feel like a family. As a result, Junta, the main female character, was seen as a martyr. When she plummets to her death, after her crystals and in turn dreams are stolen, it is a “rational solution” (Rentschler, 42) (and foreshadows the final solution) in which the townspeople ultimately benefited from her death.

*Hitler Youth Quex* is a more blatantly propagandist film that also suggested the idea of martyrdom. The main figure, young Heini, gets killed while defending the Nazi party - which he has become loyal to. He was the ultimate symbol of the Nazi party, willing to die for his beliefs and the community. This community, although portrayed in a simple way, is a complicated idea. The Nazis portray the idea of a family in this movie from the beginning: Heini, his mother, and his father. But throughout the film, the parents disappear: “the dead mother briefly mourned, the father having surrendered his son to the brigade leader” (Rentschler, 58). But by the end of the film, Heini is no longer dependent upon them; he is committed to the Hitler Youth. The Nazi party is Heini’s new family – a subtle suggestion of German’s new family. Portrayed in a positive way, Germans saw the Nazi party with “impressive composition, a striking choreography, a binding power” (Rentschler, 62). This power was so strong, in fact, that Germans felt a loyalty to the party that is hard to comprehend. They felt that “(they) must be honest, decent, loyal, and friendly to members of (their) blood and no one else” (Himmler, 107). So just as the
Nazis modernized nature with technology, they modernize family by promoting the image of mother and father and transposing those loyalties to Nazi ties.

While this film inspired many, children were particularly taken. “Youngsters who partook of this film found themselves overcome by its audiovisual enticements” (Rentschler, 60). They often saw themselves as Heini, peering upon the Hitler Youth meetings, idolizing the members. This was precisely Hitler’s goal: “to bind a nation’s youth to a party’s cause” (Rentschler, 68). They would be among the most loyal of his constituents. This, and other Nazi films, however, took the mass, because “the film appeals to a feeling rather than a thinking spectator. If the party member prevails, it is not because of what he says, but because of how he speaks. And what convinces is the personal touch” (Rentschler, 65). This was the goal of Nazi propaganda: to appeal to the emotion. And that it did.

The story also made a lasting impression on the Germans, for it was portrayed as factual history - another tactic of Nazi propaganda. Hitler understood that “propaganda must not investigate the truth objectively and, in so far as it is favorable to the other side, present it according to the theoretical rules of justice; yet it must present only that aspect of the truth which is favorable to its own side” (Hitler, 170). So while Hitler Youth Quex was based on an actual event, it was fabricated to appear as a non-fiction film.

This was also the case for Jew Suss. “Jew Suss’s claim to truth sets up the film and sets the viewer straight in keeping with biopic convention” (Rentschler, 151). The viewer now believes that they have seen a historically accurate film, telling them that the Jewish race bolstered their downfall. Jew Suss, being the most blatantly anti-Semitic, gives us a glimpse at Hitler’s final solution. In this film, the stage is set to present the Jewish race as the enemy. To Germans, they see themselves as the victims, having been manipulated by the deceitful Jew. The film, in turn, “tells us how Germans in the Third Reich saw the other and how they defined themselves in relation to that other” (Rentschler, 154). This film told Germans that there was a reason for their fallen prosperity: the Jewish race; and
that as a now strongly built community it was acceptable, as a community, to blame the newfound enemy.

Hatred for the Jewish race intensified with the controversial rape scene, in which Suss violates a prominent member of the community’s wife. Dorthea, in this scene, is seen as making the ultimate sacrifice: being attacked to save her husband. This reinforces Hitler’s idea of idealism, in which the community thrives off of the commitment of its members; and Dorthea showed a strong commitment. All of the acts of sacrifice, however, inspire the audience to do the same. Junta, Heini, and Dorthea are all seen as heroic members of their society, their community, and their family. To the audience, these characters made the right decision, a decision that defined and marked their place in “history” and allowed them to prevail over the Jewish race.

And to prevail was Hitler’s ultimate goal. He sought to destroy a race that he came to despise. “The question is not so much one of constructing a plausible etiology of terror as of achieving some ultimate understanding of what it means to be marked out as a victim, excluded, persecuted, and murdered” (Sebald, 148). Hitler did define, in his own way, why he marked the Jews. While he acknowledges they had intelligence, he denied their creativity and right to succeed. “Nazism had to ‘define outsiders to safeguard its own illusions.’ To secure the substance of Aryan identity, they reduce the Jew to an abstract identity” (Rentschler, 158). Hitler’s propaganda techniques stated that issues should be one-sided and lack objectivity, otherwise known as truth. And he did exactly that: he altered the truth in order to promote the elimination of a race that he saw as a threat. “The bourgeoisie needed the Jews so as not to have to despise its own attitudes, so as to feel proud and ground and strong. The ultimate result of such unconscious self-hatred was the mass extermination of the Jews in the Third Reich; actually the bourgeoisie was trying to wipe out what it did not want to acknowledge in itself” (Rentschler, 165). The Jewish race had a comprehensive understanding of economics and was successful in many aspects of society. The Nazis needed an outlet for their insecurities and found it in the Jews. The desired to be successful and resented the success of others. Just as in their propaganda, they wanted the German people to feel part
of a whole, a community, the Nazis, too, needed to feel whole. Their bolstered their own morale by projecting hate onto another group, obsessing, and ultimately trying to destroy them. The “dark riddle of Nazi Fascism, one in which the common explanation of it as a national perversion has no place…the practice of persecuting, torturing, and exterminating an arbitrarily chosen adversary not as a lamentable but incidental feature of totalitarian rule, but unreservedly, as its essential expression” (Sebald, 153). The power that Hitler strived for called for extreme measures, and he took them.

In retrospect, we can draw a finely precise timeline and try to grasp Hitler’s mindset, but to be a German citizen in the 1930s; it may have been easier to fall pray to this propaganda that subtly, not always blatantly, promoted seemingly innocent ideals. While family values, community, and nature are things that most countries value and prioritize, the Nazis distorted them in a way that ultimately led to devastation. “For all its idealized landscape painting and blood-and-soil rhetoric, German fascism pursued the domination over nature through a vast technology that extended from the rationalized way in which an entire country was organized to an elaborate bureaucratic mechanism to a military machine, a world war, and ultimately the death camps, vast factories that recycled bodies, pressing out of human material every possible commercial gain” (Rentschler, 43). Subtleties now become less faint, for we understand their painful consequences. They can grow and spread into a harmful weed, when the original advertisement was for only a flower.

References


*Hitler Youth Quex.* Dir. Hans Steinhoff. 1933.

*Jew Suss.* Veit Harlan. 1940.


*The Blue Light.* Dir. Leni Riefenstahl. L.R. Studio Film. 1932.
The term "antisemitism" emerged in the European 1870s not only to express a growing repudiation of emancipated Jewry but to signify the germination of a movement commensurate with what its exponents believed was a considerable, and noxious, Jewish influence in public affairs. The term, however, suggests something much larger. Its primary enemy wasn't Jews, but modernity. Antisemitism served to give expression to a parallel repudiation of the "open society" that appeared to permit Jews a role in modern society, especially the professions, avant garde culture, and the then-new economy. It was the visible tip of a culture war waged progressively forcibly against a world that placed a premium on inclusion and social integration. Antisemitism, in short, was a counter-modern narrative - an assault on new ideas, the ascent of cities, the influx of immigrants, and the unexpected power of mass media and mass suggestion - that transformed a traditional target into a mighty opposition demanding a "deep-structure" cultural response.

The story of antisemitism is really a counter-narrative of the modern world. Deflecting to another time the much-debated question about why Jews were and are the target of cultural resentment, antisemitism is a modern displacement of internal group conflicts. (The term “displacement” is a bit misleading, for it implies that Jews were merely scapegoats.) What commonly fuels the resentment is a grim awareness of a creeping modernity that threatens to extinguish premodern traditions, igniting an uncompromising resolve to arrest and defeat it. What is important to remember is that antisemitism, at least in the West, was not primarily about Jews until the rise of National Socialism and, even then, arguably not until the Kristallnacht pogroms.

Perhaps the key, defining expression of modern, antisemitic contempt is “The Protocols of the Elders of Zion.” Though proven a hoax in the 1920s it appears to have evoked “an inner truth”: Jews represent the extent to which the world has changed, for if so few in number could achieve so much power, then surely vested traditional interests are losing their cultural and political stakes. The Protocols, which were fabricated in the 1890s
against the background of the Dreyfus Affair in France, the First Zionist Congress in Basel, and the Westernization of politics in Czarist Russia, are at the root of Henry Ford’s anti-Jewish diatribes in the American 1920s and Hitler’s “Nation and Race” antisemitic invective in the mid-1920s. They are also fundamental to antisemitic contempt in the Arab world today. This is apparent in a 2003 speech given by Malaysian prime minister, Mohathir Mohammed, to the Organization of the Islamic Conference, who, in reference to Jews, said, “This tiny community has become a world power.” The Protocols are a pillar of the 1988 Hamas charter: “Today it is Palestine, tomorrow it will be one country or another. The Zionist plan is limitless.” Their influence is discernible in the Saudi press, which has maintained that “Jews...are trying to weaken our national identity, and thus to take over and direct our affairs to serve their interests.”

These examples expose something in addition to anti-Jewish resentment: If Zionism is limitless, then the Arab world cannot assume that it is self-contained or self-generating. If a nation feels weak, if Hamas invokes a “loss of one’s country, the dispersion of citizens, the spread of vice on earth, and the destruction of religious values,” then the Arab world has come to see how susceptible it is outside, foreign influences, indeed, how tenuous it feels its ability is to defend itself. These are expressions of contempt toward an open society whose relentless global ambitions breaches so easily traditional national and religious boundaries. They are also aimed at those among them whose western sympathies have betrayed native interests.

The “Protocols of the Elders of Zion” point back in time as well as forward, for they seem to have crystallized thinking in circulation since the period of the French Revolution. In a triptych of historical examples, it becomes clear that during a span of some 150 years antisemitic rhetoric evolved as a wake-up call, as a warning against the destructive seductions of freedom – including the emancipation of serfs, women, and Jews as well as the migration of refugees – that threaten to reverse the traditional balance of power.
Richard Wagner’s much-discussed and frequently misunderstood essay “Jewry in Music” exemplifies the antimodern deployment of antisemitic calumny. Written just months after the 1848 revolution, it admonished Germans for permitting political liberalism to advance as far as it did. He summoned the term “Verjudung” to evoke a mighty invasion: the Judaization of German culture. By equating Jews with money, his disquiet sprung from a concern that German culture was becoming hopelessly materialistic. Jewish emancipation was a colossal mistake. He exhorted a different kind of emancipation – an emancipation from Jewish materialism. That required what he called “self-annulment,” an exercise of abject self-regeneration affirming pure, spiritual German culture.

Henry Ford’s specter of an “international Jew” is integral to his xenophobia at the end of World War I – a fear that an era of U.S. isolationism was over. For him, the startling phenomenon of imminent national and cultural decline could be restated as the enigma of the Jew: “Poor in his masses, he yet controls the world’s finances.” What was it about the United States, he wondered, that can explain the Jew’s dramatic ascent? U.S. Jews, newcomers after all, have assumed an unfair advantage by conspiring with international Jewry for loans and influence. To correct the problem he invoked traditional American virtues: Americanize Jews by transforming their labor into something “honest” and “creative.” Sensing the globalization of the United States, Ford reaffirmed indigenous American values – individual initiative, hard work, and self-discipline.

The response to David Friedlaender’s 1799 “open letter” proposing a mass Jewish conversion to Christianity reveals Christianity’s self-doubts at the beginning of the modern era. On the surface the prospect of such a conversion would be a Christian triumph and the beginning of the end of Jewish history. But Friedlaender, a member of Berlin Jewry’s economic elite, believed that by yoking Judaism’s rational essence to Christianity’s enlightened commitment to common humanity, not only would the two religions share common ground but Judaism could help Christianity purge itself of dogmatic anachronisms, such as the divinity of Jesus. Wilhelm Teller, an enlightened Protestant leader who received the letter, assailed the idea as arrogant and over-ambitious. His contemporary, the more-famous theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher,
also suspected a Trojan horse, regarding conversion as a “disease” of “Judaizing Christianity.” In hopes of preserving Christianity’s sovereignty, he proposed, in return, to quarantine Jews in their own subjective religious experience.

These three examples make clear that the purpose of a counterattack against Jewish successes was to fortify traditional interests – Church, privilege, Wagner’s “historical community,” Ford’s American industry – not just diminish, much less destroy something Jewish. In short, until the Nazi era, antisemitism was fundamentally not a Jewish problem but a German problem, an American problem, and a Christian problem. It may well be an Islamic problem today.
Art and social displays in the branding of the city: Token screens or opportunities for difference? – Dr. Julia Nevárez

Introduction

Even though urban screens can be seen as digital substitutes to public space image display, it is my contention that they are additional public spaces that as windows offer the potential of broadening use and participation. Most urban screens such as billboards, have the purpose of displaying products for consumption within a cultural logic designed to address consumer audiences. The different strategies used to entice the consumer individual are varied, relying on culturally informed responses that advertisement agencies research. These strategies are also included in the way in which cities – through urban development initiatives – seek to generate a brand that will provide a competitive edge in attracting both a professional class of residents and tourists, to the city. This chapter seeks to illustrate the uses of screens designed for the display of art in Times Square, NYC, their content as well as their role in the branding of the city with the aid of the Times Square Alliance that exemplifies trends in the privatization of public space. By looking at the Panasonic Screen used by Creative time to display video art in that part of New York City, this chapter will: 1) determine the content, purpose and possible meanings that emerge from the use of screens to display art and social issues as well as possibilities for other kinds of community and cultural contents different from the sole purpose of advertisement. A critical assessment of the content these images might offer, the inclusion of context and other pertinent information that could provide a broader perspective in the understanding of the images can be – it is my contention – acquired through the conceptualization of screens to include the public spaces where they are located as an extension, a physical site for dialogue and public engagement.
The centrality of the image and urban development

Urban development initiatives -- fitting within the contemporary cultural logic of image ridden landscapes -- seek to increase the appeal of spaces as sites for the consumption of art and entertainment, but also that the space itself becomes a good where experience is also packaged and delivered as one to be consumed. The emphasis on visual images on display which epitomizes Times Square, explicitly entices individuals to consume goods. The presence of art, as a new component delivered by the private management of the area, adds to the area’s appeal. Art is then also included to enhance the experience of place: as both, another good to be consumed and as part of the experience of the city.

Contemporary urban development has been characterized by the marketing of sites for the consumption of leisure and entertainment. Times Square has not remained untouched from this kind of initiative. To the contrary, efforts to improve and strengthen the character of place now include art displays in the mediascape that is so peculiar to Times Square’s geist and raison d’etre. The juncture of place branding and art falls in a very ambiguous interstice. Therein lies the additional emphasis on art content in Times Square. Ads per se have acquired a high standard of aesthetics, therefore insinuating an overlap with art. This, however, is not the same as the lack of consumer oriented purpose art is expected to offer. Branding can help strengthen the image of an iconic space such as Times Square. There, the most recent addition to the urban development initiative includes video art as part of a somehow expected content displayed in the site’s screens (for those who know or have noticed) where art is branded as a strong component in the overall representation of the city. In a post-industrial advanced economy, cities seek to insert themselves competitively to attract a professional service class and tourists for the consumption of goods in the form of culture and entertainment. Seeking higher standards in their quality of life for residents and exciting and entertaining travel destinations for tourists, urban development initiatives cater to these two groups.
The marketing of sites through branding manufactures the idea of the city according to those preferences of the market. In the case of Times Square the new professional class and tourists attracted to the global city: the center that coordinates finance at the global level (Sassen, 1991). New York City attracts the professional class that provides the services that characterize the global city: finance, advertising, banking, insurance, and legal services, among others. For this professional class the attractiveness of the city lies in the enjoyment of exciting leisure events and spaces that are safe, clean and appealing according to the sensibilities of the professional class. Times Square and the Times Square Alliance provide this quality of life and leisure in the city to the professional residents as well as tourists by the privatization of public space. Moreover, by adding the art component to the displays of Times Square, a more comprehensive content is integrated into the urban development initiative through branding, Times Square’s representation is also included in New York City’s allure as the mecca for entertainment and art, traditionally defined -- something missing in the media driven screens of Times Square.

*Visual pollution*

Within the visual saturation of images, designed advertisement for consumption of goods and ideas, art has also become part of the packaging of Times Square’s experience. Virilio introduces the notion of a visual ecology, since environmental movements have made us aware of ecological pollution, he argues for a sense of balance within the pollution of images to which we are exposed (1997). Debord’s notion of the society of spectacle alludes to the power and control images exert in a society guided by consumption and where social life is relegated to the predominance of appearances (1970). Therefore, the spectacle generates a passive role in the consumer as spectator. Despite the fact that most of the images presented there are consumption driven, video art content is a first step in displaying contents different from consumption oriented ones, an altering effect to the cultural logic of consumption. Screens can be considered a key vehicle in the rendering of images both visual and textual by providing narratives not only of consumption but narratives that fracture or even alter meanings. Moreover,
screens and the physical context in which they are placed could help simultaneously articulate spaces for dialogue, historical awareness and critical examination of the contents presented (Giroux, 2005). Screen displays should also be linked to physical places where dialogue and critical engagement could take place.

The function of these screens within the environment of Times Square does not only serve to display consumption contents but in doing so, constructing a peculiar character for that area. Imbued in the urban development initiative of branding, issues of representation are key and lead to question: who manufactures the images, for what purpose(s) and who has access to them. Rather than single units, the grouped effect of these images represents Times Square as exciting. The representation of Times Square – similar to other areas of the city -- is manufactured with the intention of attracting tourists and the professional class to the city. Understanding the connection between the city as a representation, branding as a marketing strategy to develop areas in the city such as Times Square and privatization as a reaction to government retrenchment (a mechanism that allocates private funds to maintain public space) is a strategic triad that functions in most cities nowadays. The global homogeneization of landscapes through contemporary urban development initiatives such as branding is also a global trend. This global trend homogeneizes development where maintenance, surveillance and aesthetics is the formula for “successful” public spaces --what Reichl (1999) refer to as cleanliness, security and visual coherence -- is at the core of urban development.

The role of art content as well as other contents such as social and/or community issues that are different from those prescribed to entice consumption practices could be considered part of the careful orchestration of structural components such as maintenance and surveillance that within the context of urban development initiatives help market an area as a desired destination for the consumption of cultural goods such as entertainment and the experience of the city. Despite the fact that these contents could contribute to the marketing of the area, art and other contents could also generate spaces for a critical engagement, and could fracture the seamless display of messages for consumption with which -- in this instance -- Times Square saturates its visitors’ experience of the city.
It is important to also mention that the quality of contents and high standards of displays also socialize visitors into art contents that are designed for a sophisticated, culturally savvy professional class audience (Creative Time Staff Interview, July 29, 2005). There is just a thin line between the possibility for other ways of seeing in which art impacts both the quality of ads in billboards (highly artistic and skilled) and the art content per se. Between the content and quality of the ads, the difference about the intention to which art and ads are produced and displayed deserves attention.

Art’s intention is usually explicitly non-commercial. The aesthetic experience that art seeks to provide falls outside the boundaries of the intentionality found in for instance, ads that seek to entice the desire for consumption. Even though art has and could become a critique and even a good to be consumed, it does not necessarily follow the explicit intention and functionality of advertisement, at least in its most traditional interpretation. Others have argued otherwise and pinpoint that “Even art, by its contemporary marketing strategies, has been secluded from its actual social context, and seems mainly to have left socio-political criticism for mere tourist attraction” (Cupers and Miessen, 2002, p.24). Despite this possible interpretation about the role of art in public space, the fact remains that in Times Square, the screens have been the characteristic that has given this site, the iconic character it still enjoys. Art, social and/or non-for profit, and other different possible contents presented on screens still lay within the frames of the signscape peculiar to Times Square. There, the screens stand by themselves and there is no space designed for a critical engagement where conversations and dialogue about the meaning of the screens, their content and purpose is encouraged. Everyone seems to be in a hurry to buy or to be entertained.

**Times Square: The Great White Way, Crossroads of the World, Broadway, Disney, Open sky**
Times Square has been known at different moments in different ways amalgamated into the peculiarity it has to offer residents and visitors. The drama is in the streets, according to a writer from Tom Beller’s Neighborhood as “theater on the streets” (Jill Dearma, Cruising Times Square in the 70’s, 12-07, 2005). The environment that generates this dynamic interplay of layered experiences developed historically. According to Scott and Rutkoff in Times Square, art and entertainment in the Great White Way, created an ambience for festive, safe amusement (1999). The Great White Way, represented Times Square as the place filled with neon lights and where vice and drugs are abundant. The “Crossroads of the World” characterized Times Square as the place where all roads meet, alluding to the different ethno-cultures that traverse through the streets. The most recent transformation of Times Square has been the designation of the Family Entertainment District lead by the Disney Company. This transformation has tamed previous more dangerous depictions of the area. It is evident that a place such as Times Square does not necessarily retains one identity but rather an overlapping of different representations required to portray new functions of the city within the latest trends in urban development. Safety and specific moral values have taken precedent over “negative” ones in the most recent urban development of Times Square.

Virilio refers to screens as mediating our experience of reality, a skin or layer between us and the world where physical presence and abstract remote data coincide (1997). For Luke (1989), billboards and screens are symbols of data processing, I might add that they also represent the surfacing of information to be processed. The content of these screens play a crucial role in the outcome of how we process the information offered, the sense we might make of this information in the way the messages are designed, similar to the marketing of a site, information is also marketed as a good. Moreover, the vehicles to market the information -- specifically in Times Square’s mediascape -- are different kinds of screens or billboards.

The billboards in Times Square are: spectacular, spinning spectacular, vinyl, led display, vinyl with blinking border, and neon which display ads for: USPS, Skechers, Planters Nuts, AT & T Wireless, Con Edison, Washington Mutual, Roxy Deli, Hershey’s, Cup
Noodles, Coca Cola, Cadillac, Target, Showtime, Nasdaq, and Discover among others. Five thousand ads are displayed per day. ARMY owns Times Square Real Estate, therefore their ad is for free. Media prices depend on spot volume frequency and customization (Klassen, 2005). Examples of the prices are for instance, HBO, $150,000 per month, Kodak, $175,000, and Target $850,000, to name a few. Times Square is the only place in New York City where zoning regulations are designed to protect the image of the buildings in the area.

The result of this proliferation of signs, screens and billboards produces what Virilio refers to as the standardization of vision, a visual ecology where most displays function along with other factors, for the consumption of the city as a cultural good. They epitomize the experience of the city as a good. This experience is branded through urban development to constitute a space as iconic, a site charged with a highly symbolic meaning. Ward and Park (2004) studied from a marketing perspective how the development of a building as a marketing site altogether generates what they call an iconic place, one that characterizes specific meanings emphasizing people, products and activities. Iconic space is to capture the essence of a site and the way it is represented and identified.

According to Mavrick (2004) a brand name is a cornerstone for expansion through franchising. These brands are developed following the basis of efficiency and streamlining, to differentiate themselves from the competition. Here again the notion of uniqueness remains a basic and most important component in the development of a brand for a product, for a city as well (Hill, 2004). A great design needs to be attained and a ubiquitous distribution, the development of name and brand recognition through advertising that provides the site with visibility for an audience. In the case of Times Square, its history and the new developments and meanings attached to the area make it unique, specifically regarding the proliferation of screens and billboards.

The result of this experience of the city is one that corners people to a less and less active, more contemplative role as consumers, citizens and clients where the product is
marketed, the intention of consumption is to seduce the passive spectator (Debord, 1970; Giroux, 2005; Luke, 1989). In achieving this goal, the private sector has also contributed to generate the iconic space that characterizes many urban areas and public spaces. From the Great White Way display of lights, to the years of neglect, the Crossroads of the World and the family entertainment district most recently developed by Disney, Times Square has followed a similar path in what now constitutes a trend in urban public space: privatization.

*The Times Square Alliance: privatization of public space*

Founded in 1992, the Times Square Alliance works to improve and promote Times Square so that it retains the creativity, energy and edge that have made it an icon for entertainment, culture, and international urban life for a century. The Times Square Alliance provides safety and sanitation services to the area. Similar to other privatized attempts in the city such as The Central Park Conservancy, Bryant Park and the Grand Central Partnership, The times Square Alliance manages and brands Times Square. The emphasis has been placed on strengthening what I like to call the aesthetics of order: surveillance, maintenance and aesthetics to produced a space that is perceived to be safe and clean. The Times Square Alliance provides sanitation and public safety with The Times Square Alliance’s Public Safety Officers (PSOs), unarmed but fully trained officers that patrol the district on foot seven days a week and who are linked by radio to the NYPD (The Times Square Alliance.org). Moreover, they also have created the Midtown Community Court which handles only quality-of-life defendants: turnstile jumpers, graffiti artists, illegal peddlers, prostitutes and some small time drug dealers.

The Street to home initiative, a bi-annual survey designed by Common Ground accounts for the number of homeless people in the area, no indication is offered of other kinds of services provided to the homeless population besides this survey, that seeks only to identify that population. In the hygienic attempt to clean and make Times Square safe, homelessness should remain invisible to non-existent. This is a generalized trend in the development and maintenance of urban public spaces.
This is the private initiative and organization required to handle the estimated 80% of visitors to New York City who come to Times Square, with an estimated 31.4 million in 2004 (The Times Square Alliance.org). Another most recent initiative within the Times Square Alliance is the Art Times Square which provides ongoing public program that seek to “recognize and celebrate the diversity of Times Square, reinforce the area’s authentic and historic character, and creatively express Times Square unique qualities” (The Times Square Alliance). Art in this context fulfills the quality of life standard and sensibilities of an educated professional class and tourists.

Art Times Square purpose is to incorporate diverse elements of art into Times Square’s streetscape, thereby expressing the area’s uniqueness and enriching the pedestrian experience with different kinds of public art. The art initiative in Times Square pales in comparison to the ones implemented to make the area be safer through surveillance and maintenance. More emphasis is placed on the aesthetics of order regarding issues of safety and maintenance rather than art content. However, it is from this initiative that the collaboration with Creative Time emerged to provide the opportunity for video art to be viewed in the media capital of the world.

*Creative Time and the 59th Minute*

Creative Time originated in 1973, and it describes itself as an organization that commissions, produces and presents “adventurous artwork for all disciplines. It identifies artistic production with a movement towards the public realm from galleries and museums and artists experimenting with new forms of media” (www.creativetime.org). According to their website, “Creative Time derives its values from the historic impetus to foster artistic experimentation, enrich public space and the everyday experience, and forefront artists as key contributors to democratic society” (http:www.creativetime.org/about/history/html). Along with The Times Square Alliance, Creative Time has produced and developed The 59th Minute: Video Art on the Times Square NBC, Astrovision by Panasonic Screen. Acknowledging art’s need for discretionary fund for operation from corporations and private funding, Creative Time has
ventured into public-private collaboration where the 59th minute is presented, the last minute of every hour. This arrangement provides opportunities for artists to present their work to a large audience in a public space (Creative Time Staff Interview, July 29, 2005). The NBC Astrovision by Panasonic is a visual centerpiece in Times Square, one of the first screens in Times Square, also called the “Times Square TV,” a classic tv image, on a high definition screen that is changed every five years. According to a Creative Time staff member, it is a unique place to display art outside a museum. The ownership of the screen belongs to Panasonic and the cost of for the art presentation is of 1.7 million dollars a year for the minute the art video lasts. Measuring three stories high, the screen (which contains 1.5 million emitting diodes – leds) is capable of displaying more than one billion shades of color. Panasonic is the bestknown brand of New Jersey-based Mitsishita Electric Corporation of America.

One might argue that the video art presented in the Panasonic screen in Times Square could function as an ad for Panasonic, only if more people knew about this arrangement or about the Creative Time video art installation. On the other hand, Creative Time staff identifies Panasonic as reaching out to the community and offer, in addition to the art content presented in The 59th Minute, technology to schools with the program “Kids Witness News” (Creative Time Staff Interview, July 29, 2005).

The 59th Minute was launched in 2000 with the work of Tibor Kalman’s “Tiborisms,” displaying text in a video presentation, such as “Everything is an experiment.” Since 2000, The 59th Minute project has presented five video animations, two videos with a combination of text and images, and twelve videos – movies, portraits, and digital composition of colors. The images and text displayed only once addressed explicitly a political and social issue, AIDS. The videos presented by The 59th Minute are of short duration and seem to get lost in the media forest of Times Square. Even though the 59th Minute is difficult to spot, it is certainly embedded within the representation of the city and of Times Square as significant place for art and culture in its broadest sense. Art in this context seeks to convey, according to a Creative Time staff member, elements of regularity, consistency and surprise, “Art as ephemeral, that finds you…” (Creative Time
The same staff member also pointed out that what distinguishes Creative Time’s view of art is that “We still want to preserve the purity of the experience of art, even though with consumption everything has a purpose, in New York there is more of a sophisticated audience that expects art to still preserve itself outside commercial contents” (Creative Time Staff Interview, July 29, 2005).

**Screen Art Contents: The 59th Minute**

The messages displayed in Times Square’s screens are part of other factors that also contribute to the character of the area, the brand to which Times Square is recognized. The uniqueness of the art content among other ads for products is somehow diluted in the sparse number of screens with art and/or other contents, at this point only The 59th Minute provides a different content. Many of the videos shown in The 59th Minute show contents that depict aspects and conditions of urban living. These art videos address issues of anonymity, the city as tamed and playful, overcoming the city, flying over the city as in a dreamscape, as well as contents allegorical to dwelling and movement.

In Marc Brambilla’s “Superstar” a man flies over the city, there is an element of overcoming the city by flying, almost floating over the city. There is a contrasting message embedded in Gary Hill’s video between a mechanical object and nature a scientific looking object traversing an apple. The city is represented in a playful manner, therefore easier to learn about in the survey of questions on places known in the city, in PDPAL’s animated video by Maria Zurkow, Scott Patterson and Julian Bleecker. Nature is represented in a butterfly in Mary Lucier’s video “Monarch.”

Other urban contents can be found in Cowboy Waltz by Jeremy Blake where a building turns into ephemeral beautiful images of color and light. The bed as a site for rest, love making, dwelling in Dream Sequence 1 by Janaina Tschape, explodes with water against a rustic wall. The theme of movement is trapped inside an apartment, offering a stark contrast between inside and outside in Hiraki Sawa’s “Dwelling.” Small airplanes fly inside an apartment, under the light fixture in a room, in the bathtub and over a bed.
Dwelling and movement allude in this video to the dweller and the nomad in all of us. Contemporary times begets travel as a condition -- either in real time or virtually through the internet. The here and there are confounded with our perception and experience of place. Safe and dangerous spaces are counterpoised to the different contents Sawa’s show in the video art “Dwelling.” In a society so concerned with terror and the possible agoraphobic reaction to urban living (Carter, 2002) especially towards the increasing militarization of public space, airplanes flying inside an apartment could be a subtle reminder of possible interpretations where different contexts overlap: inside/outside, safe/unsafe.

Kin Soja’s “Conditions of Anonymity” reminds us of the Chicago School of Sociology observation that the city, urban living where high population density are conducive to social disorganization, social anomie, estrangement. The anonymous urban dweller is a sea of unrecognizable faces is confronted with the paucity and slowness that observation can offer. This space for reflection in observation is one that screens could help develop, therefore expanding the ability of the screen to generate a critical engagement with the content in the spaces of the city where the video is shown. These spaces should then be also designed to accommodate this kind of engagement. Kim Soja’s video, “Conditions of Anonymity” offers a good opportunity to reflect about the spectacle of the urban street on the screen. Conversely, Times Square also frames conditions of anonymity.

The video art contents in The 59th Minute sometimes display a nostalgia for innocence, a playfulness as that which cannot be bought but that is however, part of the manufacturing of experience branded through urban development in Times Square. As such, screens proliferate and can be found in many other cities. A kind of traveling public space nomad art (photography exhibits) have appeared in Montreal’s markets, Vienna’s Museum Quarter and in the Luxemburg Gardens in Paris, to name a few. At this point, however, art, social and not-for-profit content or even content that addresses community issues is not that visible. It could be considered tokenistic in that it is still a minimal effort in comparison to the overwhelming presence of commercial content in most screens and billboards.
Conclusions: Ephemeral Screens

Even if what is advertised is not as good as such, video art screens might help sell the experience of the city as a representation of excitement, sophisticated taste that addresses the sensibilities of a professional class and tourists. Other kinds of contents, such as political, social, not-for-profit and/or community issues could also be part of the screen’s content. A higher quantity of those and an opportunity for dialogue and critical engagement (that at this point is non-existent in the video art experience of Times Square, for instance) needs to develop. Not all art is necessarily critical nor does it necessarily generate an alternative viewpoint. However, art screens should at least attempt at disrupting or altering the consumer logic prevalent in advertisement. By offering possibilities to question everyday life and current working ideologies, urban development could begin to support a broader and more intelligent experience of the city. As such, screens that display art as well as other social, not-for-profit and/or community contents could provide a critical eye into the different ways of seeing and thinking about what is seen to then consider that which is absent, missing and or lacking (Feinstein, 2005). Art on screens should provide – even if interactive – spaces for what Giroux (forthcoming) calls: “dialogue, critical discourse and engagement and historical awareness.” The screen’s impact can be extended to the physical location where it is situated and provide a “real” physical space for critical discourse and engagement. Through the historical awareness that emerges from knowing the origin of the images, multiple possible meanings, the purpose and intentionality of the images’ content and context, a more active experience of the city and of the images could be acquired, one that is critical of both content and context. Screens could extend, in a meaningful manner, the experience of the city. Screens could provide opportunities to tackle issues of representation, branding and urban development, and also provide a better grasp of what
lacks to critically help articulate a broader understanding of society’s functioning and trends.

Art and social issues are some of the uncommon uses of screens in public space. In the branding of the city, art and social issues employ, it is my contention, a politics of difference that is tokenistic at this point. Despite the limited uses of art content in the billboards and screens, at least two observations seem appropriate: 1) the visual lexicon provided by urban screens is still mostly limited to contents designed to generate desires for consumption, rather than art, social, not-for-profit and/ or community issues related content, 2) the trend to increase the number of screens in public spaces should include more possibilities for art and other contents that could disrupt the prevalent cultural logic of consumerism. A critical engagement could be attained by extending the screen’s impact to the physical site where it is located, turning the adjacent space into one that is public in that it offers possibilities for dialogue and interaction.

Virilio (1997) argues that there is an industrialization of images to which art and advertisement – for different reasons – produce. Art and other contents such as social, not-for-profit and community issues could be considered a possible solution to what Virilio calls the “standardization of vision,” the automation of perception of the world, a standard way of seeing (1997). Art images and the possibility for critical engagement, dialogue and interaction extended to the public spaces that screens occupy could offer an alternative and opening to a different experience from the ones the images alone could support. The production of desire through the seduction of constantly shifting images, the excitement and thrilling experience they trigger in spaces such as Times Square, or elsewhere for that matter, tend to induce the role of a passive spectator. The praise of the technological sublime through state of the art screens and art content could be enhanced by the critical engagement of broader and more extensive ways of seeing that seek to ask for what is absent (Feinstein, 2005).
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The Perils of a “Useable Past:” History and memory of World War China and Japan– Dr. Sue Gronewold

One definition of history is that it is our “stories of the past.” We all are keepers of our own stories, including those of our families, our communities, and our country, and we continually rework, reinterpret, and reorganize them. As teachers, we constantly move back and forth between the past and the present, trying to make sense, make relevant, make interesting the story of the past we are fashioning for our students. Both as individuals and nations, we search our past for that which is relevant or “useful,” often doing what the historian of China, Paul Cohen, has called “mythologizing the past” in the process.

Sometimes, we look to our past in order to celebrate or create community, which explains much of the perennial attraction of anniversaries, museums, and memorials. Yet museums and memorials are also constructed to promote a selective memory of the past and a particular interpretation of history. Because we look to the past to figure out what and who we are by basing ourselves in some notion of what we were, shaping the collective memory of the past is also shaping current politics.

We also remember—with nostalgia or trauma—“what we have lost,” or more accurately, what we think we have lost. Much of this latter remembering is not celebratory but instead deals in pain, humiliation, and loss. The memories dredged up might be as recent as the September 11th World Trade Center attack and the WWII Holocaust, or they might have happened as long ago as 1389 when Serbia was defeated by the Turks at Kosovo. It doesn’t seem to matter. We apparently need to see our past refracted in our present to make order and sense of ourselves and the world. Likewise, politicians often find it convenient to use—and abuse—the past in the service of the present, from Kosovo to Rwanda. In East Asia, it is the events of World War II that are current politics.

In East Asia today, the World War II past is being aggressively recalled by both individuals and governments. In the spring and summer of 2005, newspapers were filled
with photographs of Chinese youth attacking Japanese businesses in Shanghai while shouting about war atrocities that happened seven decades ago; of Japanese defiantly defending government officials’ visits to the Tokyo shrine to war dead which include those convicted of war crimes; of Koreans angrily withdrawing from regional talks because of unaddressed memories of the forced prostitution of Korean women in Japanese wartime “comfort” stations. Exactly what is being remembered (and what is being forgotten) and why it is being revived at this moment is shaped by current politics, not historical scholarship. These uses—and abuses—of the past are the subject of this article.

I will focus on one particular instance of the manipulation of remembering: the events in Nanjing (Nanking), China, at the end of 1937 and first months of 1938 as they are memorialized in China’s Nanjing Massacre Memorial Museum and Japan’s Yushukan war museum. The Nanjing Museum was built in 1985 by the city government and it contains the remains of some of those killed plus exhibits that extensively document atrocities committed by Japanese soldiers during the 1937-38 occupation. The Yushukan is the historical war museum attached to the Yasukuni Jinja or Shinto war shrine in central Tokyo (private since 1945) which honors two and a half million Japanese and colonial soldiers killed in war since its founding in 1869 and which now controversially includes 1000 Japanese executed for WWII war crimes and, since 1978, fourteen Class A war criminals. Both sites have recently been extensively reworked and remodeled, both have generated extensive scholarship, and both have actively sought to promote their view of history with websites, brochures, and advertising (much of it in English, which suggests an attempt to influence an international audience). The Yasukuni shrine receives over 5 million visitors a year; the Nanjing Memorial has received more than 8 million since its opening, offering free visits since 2004. On a trip to Asia in the summer of 2005, I was able to visit both sites. Together, they broach the issues of history and memory that are on the cutting edge of East Asian historiography and regional relations today.
It is clear that the memory of Nanjing 1937 has become a major component of the modern identity of the states of East Asia and key in particular to Sino-Japanese relations. Recent anniversary commemorations reinforce this sense of identity: 2005 marked both the 60th anniversary of the ending of the war in East Asia and the 100th anniversary of the end of the Russo-Japanese War when a victorious Japan first emerged as an international power. (2006 marks the 125th anniversary of the Kanghwa Treaty, when Japan followed Western examples and “opened” Korea, challenging China’s traditional tributary claim to Korea in the process.) The first image that greets visitors entering the main exhibits of the Yushukan is a large display with a map of Asia under the heading, “The Western Powers Encroach on Asia.” Two full rooms early in the exhibit at the Yushukan are devoted to the Russo-Japanese war, beyond any doubt the centerpiece of the museum, celebrating in great detail Japan’s ability to defeat one of those Western imperialist powers that had so humiliated Asia in the course of the previous century, and setting the tone for the entire exhibit.

1945 is a more complicated anniversary on both sides of the sea: in Japan the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and Peace Memorial Museum were clearly safer sites for commemoration. In the summer of 2005 I also spent a full day in Hiroshima. Extraordinarily powerful texts and images there quite movingly but, I would argue safely, portray Japan only as a victim, both of the A-bomb-dropping US and, perhaps more importantly, of its own militarists. Hiroshima, texts at the museum argue, was a victim of unnamed “militarists” many times in its modern history: as a port for warships in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-95 and then again in 1945 when its military facilities made it an important target for Allied forces. The exhibit stresses that the people of Hiroshima, by contrast, have always been peace-loving.

Yet Koizumi Junichiro, the current conservative Prime Minister of Japan, clearly felt that he could not satisfy his multiple constituencies with Hiroshima’s images of Japan as victim; he also felt it politically necessary to pay his respects to the war dead at the Yasukuni shrine, an exercise in historical nostalgia. His annual visit to the Yasukuni shrine (he has visited more than any other prime minister, attending at least once a year
since 2001) was not in mid-August of 2005 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Japanese surrender of August 15, 1945 (when over 200,000 Japanese, including many cabinet members, went, sparking outrage throughout the region), but later in the fall.\textsuperscript{vi} Japanese are clearly divided on the war. Whereas much of the postwar rhetoric has been dominated by the pacifist Left who emphasize peace and international understanding (and whose views are ensconced at Hiroshima), now the militarist right (whose voice—and wealth—dominate at Yusukan) is in ascendance and constitutes a powerful force with which the conservative Japanese government must reckon.

1945 (and 1905 in Japan) may be the official dates that were commemorated in 2005, but in China 1937 is never very far from view. In East Asia, commemorating the end of the Second World War has called into relief its beginnings in the Japanese invasion of Central China in 1937.\textsuperscript{vii} The 60th anniversary of the end of World War II in 2005, ostensibly devoted to thinking about peace and the end of war, instead offered the Chinese government and other interested parties a fresh opportunity to draw more complicated lessons from the history of the war. In 1997, little official attention was paid to the events of 1937 except by activists like Iris Chang who published her book that year and academics who used it as an opportunity to discuss recent scholarship in conferences, articles, and assembled volumes.\textsuperscript{viii} This would not be true in 2005, when the Nanjing massacre would become an international controversy.

Many of the issues surrounding the Japanese conquest of Nanjing, the Chinese Nationalists’ capital, in 1937 can be illustrated by the disagreements over definitions.\textsuperscript{ix} For a start, the very words used to describe what happened in Nanjing are contested. Whereas many Japanese sources tend to use such terms as “event” or “incident” (\textit{jiken}, the term used in the Yushukan), the museum in Nanjing commemorates the Nanjing \textit{datusha}, “massacre” or “slaughter.” Other sources, primarily Chinese and Western, go further, proclaiming the “Rape of Nanking”\textsuperscript{x} and labeling it an “atrocità,” “genocide,” and the site of innumerable “war crimes.” The Far East International Military Tribunal (commonly referred to as the Tokyo Trial) from 1946-48 did in fact convict a number of individuals of war crimes due to their heinous behavior at Nanjing.
Differences (both within Japan and among international scholars) extend from the issue of nomenclature to encompass disagreements about the geography, timing, and extent of the Nanjing massacre. Differences over the spatial dimensions of the massacre range from the narrowly defined “Safety Zone” in the center city set up as events unfolded, to the entire walled city, to six districts surrounding the city, to the region, including the cities of Wuxi, Suzhou, or even as far away as Shanghai (320 kilometres away), all of which were sites of mass deaths. There are also debates about the time frame of the massacre, from those who limit it to a few weeks in December to those who extend it from the end of the summer, when war was first declared and Japanese forces began their attacks on central China, until March.

Most controversial of all is the issue of casualties. Significantly, much of the literature on Nanjing seems obsessed with the issue of numbers, with different schools of thought in Japan often referred to by the numbers they use (from “Illusionists” who claim under 1,000 to “Great Massacre” or “Corpse Maximizer” theorists who argue for a number of 200,000 or over). Numbers of course depend upon space and time. They also require clear definitions of whom to count as casualties, with disagreements especially strong about what the literature calls “plainsclothes” soldiers—unarmed soldiers out of uniform—and also disagreements over what to count as atrocities—should looting, burning, and pillaging be counted along with raping and murdering? In most of these instances, the Nanjing Museum uses the largest upper bound estimates. The first thing one sees upon arriving at the museum is a large sign (see illustration) defiantly proclaiming that this is a site dedicated to the 300,000 “Victims” (in both English and Chinese) killed by the Japanese in the region from mid-December, 1937, through the first of January, 1938. The Yushukan text, by contrast, dismisses the event as part of the larger “China Incident” and makes no mention of casualties or costs. It is as if the battle continues, but now over its history.

Then what did happen at Nanjing? According to the Yushukan narrative, Japan at Nanjing continued to follow its historic mission in East Asia, made clear from its successful modernization and routing of both Chinese and Western imperialist forces at
the turn of the century: in 1937 Japanese forces “liberated” the Chinese in Nanking, and after its fall, the museum notes, “Chinese citizens were once again able to live their lives in peace.” No bodies, no civilian casualties, no raping, no atrocities. The language suggests the main theme of the entire museum: the Japanese role as liberators of the rest of Asia from Western imperialism and ancient Chinese domination. On the other side of the sea, both the text and the images at the Nanjing Museum describe in great detail a horrific trail of wanton destruction and large scale butchery that apparently went on without stop for weeks. Not only do the extensive texts and photographs tell this story; the museum is filled with larger than life statues of victims, including a frieze which portrays the apparently common practice of roping together and then executing groups of Chinese. (See illustration). The website is also extensive, reproducing the many photographs and hundreds of pages of text in the exhibit that were taken from contemporary accounts by journalists and other bystanders, oral histories gathered from survivors, memoirs, and page after page of testimonies from the Tokyo Trials.

These strikingly divergent claims cry out for explanation. But sufficient explanation depends, on the one hand, upon primary sources (which in this case are problematic), and, on the other hand, on proper historical contextualization. Newspapers at the time were filled with stories of the events as they unfolded, but even today there are more primary sources in Japanese than in English, which is paradoxical since some of the earliest eye witness accounts were written by Western journalists who confirmed the Chinese claim of extensive Japanese killing, pillage, arson, and rape, if not necessarily the larger numbers that journalists were unable to see. Both Chinese and Western newspapers, articles, and books fully covered the events as they were unfolding, with searing testimony of people hacked, buried and burned alive, women raped and tortured before being killed, babies bayoneted, groups of men roped and beheaded. Thousands of documents have been collected: Japanese field reports and testimony from the Tokyo Trial, oral histories, burial records, letters, diaries—particularly of two Western observers that have surfaced since the 1990s, John Rabe, “the Schindler of Nanjing” a German Nazi who worked tirelessly to set up and enforce the Safety Zone, and Minnie Vautrin, an American teacher at the Ginling women’s college who single-handedly kept Japanese
away from her part of the campus. But because the Japanese controlled Nanjing from 1938 until 1945, most sources were gathered and even written at some remove from the events. Issues of history and memory are always messy, and controversial traumatic events only heighten the possibilities for distortion. It is on these grounds that many historians have labeled much of Iris Chang’s work “fiction.”

Although much of the debate on the Nanjing events has been dominated by activists rather than scholars (except in Japan where there has been a vigorous intellectual discussion since at least the early 70s), that tendency appears to be changing, with both Asian and Western scholars now actively involved in attempting to put these events in their proper historical context. What is emerging from their new historiography is that the situation was out of control on both sides. The Japanese were not adequately prepared for war against as large and populous a country as China but pressed their timetable after 1936, when the Nationalists and Communists joined forces. Central China, the site of both the capital and most Chinese industry and resources, was the key to the country, and Chiang purposely lured the Japanese there under the illusion that he could defeat them more easily in China’s heartland. Japanese forces, the argument goes, met far more resistance than they expected, arrogantly assuming they could easily “punish the delinquent Chinese brotherhood,” were fatigued from constant battles since landing in Shanghai, and were outside their navy supply lines and air support drops so they had to “live off the land.” Added to these problems, the command structure apparently broke down on both sides: the Chinese commanding officer left before the Japanese arrived, and both Japanese and Chinese officers struggled to maintain communication and discipline amid the chaos of hundreds of thousands of Chinese soldiers and refugees trying to flee. The city walls which seemed to offer protection before the Japanese attack now became a trap, while the lack of Chinese ships to transport either military or civilians heightened the panic.

A month before Nanjing fell to the Japanese, Chiang Kaishek had already decided to abandon it for Chongqing to the west, and the nearly 100,000 soldiers who had not been able to leave often took off their uniforms and tried to blend in with the refugees and
other civilians. Some sources assert that Japanese commanding officers ordered soldiers to “correct and discipline” i.e. kill Chinese POW’s. With command lines and military discipline gone, hungry and exhausted, Japanese soldiers overreacted with particular ferocity towards those Chinese who remained in the capital: men of military service age who had not been able to escape, but, more generally, less mobile older men, women, and children. This Japanese behavior, of course, was judged inexcusable by the postwar Tokyo Trials and resulted in many war crime convictions.

But much warfare on the field of battle differs from its planning and does not result in atrocities like those at Nanjing. Was the behavior of the Japanese soldiers in Nanjing an aberration? Here there is no consensus, and much of the anti-Japanese literature (such as Iris Chang’s book) argues for an essentialist brutal, militarist Japanese character. Others argue that modern warfare is filled with atrocities, especially against civilian populations, from the world wars and Vietnam to Croatia/Serbia and Iran/Iraq. Others argue that modern Japanese soldiers were particularly harshly treated, from their training to their rules of war--expected to commit suicide instead of surrender. They were known for their brutality to Chinese as early as 1900, when the Japanese formed the largest contingent among the Eight Nation Alliance that intervened to defeat the Boxer Rebellion in China and again in the early 1930s in their takeover of Manchuria. The jury, however, is still out on sufficient explanations for the massacre.

The larger contextualization for the current controversy among East Asians about the events of 1937, I would argue, lies not in the events of 60 or even 100 years ago, but is more properly placed in the current context of both Pacific Basin geopolitics and international economics. Today when the Chinese economic juggernaut seems to be sweeping all before it--China’s share of world trade has recently jumped of Japan’s--and China seems intent on building up its military capabilities along with its economy, Japan is clearly concerned about its future both in East Asia and in the world. It may still hold the title of second largest economy after the US, but its dominance of world trade has been eclipsed by its giant neighbor and its own economy is still moribund. Koizumi seems dedicated to playing a risky game. Allying himself with the more conservative,
pro-military forces in his own Liberal Democratic Party and supporting their calls for changing the post-war Constitution to allow for an active military, Koizumi seems to be using nationalist appeals versus China to cement his popular support. His visits to the shrine blatantly urging Japanese to remember the millions of their war dead in the Asia-Pacific war are frank appeals to nationalism, which helps bolster national pride and the identity of a Japan caught between the two superpowers: China and the US.

China has its own reasons for rekindling nationalist sentiment, and the past also serves its purposes quite well. By reviving festering memories of Japanese atrocities, the Chinese government can unite its population—and perhaps distract people from more troubling internal crises like population imbalances, a rotten health care system, official corruption, environmental degradation, and deflect the growing public outrage that resulted in at least 74,000 officially recognized “incidents” (riots and demonstrations in both rustbelt cities and poor rural areas) last year. Debates over contested territory in the name of nationalism, from the Senkaku (Chinese Diaoyu) Islands with Japan to the Paracel and Spratly islands with Vietnam and others, mask China’s insatiable demand for resources, especially energy, to run its cities and industries. Last, reviving images of Japanese war atrocities also serves to reorient other nations in the region away from Japan and towards China, reinforcing its role as the new regional hegemon.

There are many memories of pain and untold suffering still inadequately addressed in East Asia. But these memories have not been kept constantly in the forefront, their presence or absence depending more on politics and economics than on principle. Although the Tokyo Trials of 1946-48 brought international attention to issues like Nanjing, they were soon glossed over during the Cold War, when Japan became America’s most important ally in East Asia and Chinese were more interested in criticizing Western “capitalist roaders” than their neighbors. In the early 70s, during the Chinese/US rapprochement, Japanese feared for their security and loudly questioned new geopolitical arrangements, which dredged up questions in the region about its past. Concerns over the war in Vietnam in particular helped fuel the ongoing discussion among many Japanese academics and scholars, particularly teachers, concerning public
information about Japanese wartime behavior. The 80s witnessed the first vocal concern, first inside Japan and then in the region, that some Japanese textbooks were erasing the heretofore dominant image of Japan as victimizer. The construction of the Nanjing Memorial Museum developed out of concerns at this time by local Chinese governments, scholars, and artists who began to write their own histories of the events in order, in the words of the exhibit, to “remember history, safeguard peace, and mourn the victims of the Nanjing Massacre”\textsuperscript{xix}. The late 90s, with the end of the Cold War and the death of Emperor Hirohito in Japan, saw a continuation of the textbook controversy, the publication of Iris Chang’s \textit{The Rape of Nanking}, and discovery of important documents and oral histories, while at the same time Japan’s economic stagnation helped fuel “revisionism” of mid-century events and a concomitant rise of the right.

The past persists in the present; it is always available for uses and abuses. It is there for us—and our politicians—to appeal to, to apply to the present, to selectively remember and to selectively forget. Forget it at our peril, we are told. But, as the debate about the Nanjing massacre shows, we also can remember it at our peril.

\begin{itemize}
  \item Paul Cohen, \textit{History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth} (New York: Columbia University, 1997) xiii. Cohen’s book adds to the extensive debate about history making that heated up particularly in the 80s and 90s around the theme of “history and memory.” Coming out of earlier discussions about “collective memory” and linked in Western history to issues about remembering the world wars and, of course, the Holocaust, this literature forms the backdrop of much that is discussed in this article. For particularly incisive overviews of these debates, see Patrick Hutton’s “Recent Scholarship on Memory and History” in \textit{The History Teacher}, Vol 33, No. 4 (August, 2000), pp. 533-548, and the special Winter, 2000, issue of \textit{Representations}, No. 69: “Grounds for Remembering,” especially the “Introduction” by Thomas W. Laqueur, pp. 1-8, and Kerwin Lee Klein’s “On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse,” pp. 127-150.
  \item See Marilyn Ivy’s discussion in about Japanese tourism today that celebrates aspects of “traditional” Japanese culture just as they are disappearing in her \textit{Discourses of the Vanishing: Modernity, Phantasm, Japan} (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995).
  \item The websites are easily accessed: for the Yasukuni shrine see \url{www.yasukuni.or.jp/english} and the Yushukan museum, see \url{www.chinajapan.org/sites/yushukan/index.html} ; for the Nanjing Memorial, see \url{www.nj1937.org} in Chinese and \url{www.nj1937.org/English/default.asp} in English. An excellent article on the Yasukuni shrine by John Breen, “Yasukuni Shrine: Ritual and Memory” is on the Japan Focus website: \url{www.japanfocus.org}, identification number 293.
  \item See exhibit text quoted on \url{www.chinajapan.org/sites/yushukan/meijitorjwar.html}
  \item See the excellent catalogue in both English and Japanese written by the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, \textit{The Spirit of Hiroshima} (Hiroshima, Japan: City of Hiroshima, 1999).
  \item Perhaps his late visit was a response to an earlier Osaka court ruling that had declared his visits as head of state unconstitutional (he usually signed his name and added his official title), violating the separation between religion and the state.
\end{itemize}
Museums and memorials dedicated to remembering the Anti-Japanese War 1937-1945 are proliferating in China, including a new museum in Shenyang to commemorate the even earlier Japanese attack on the northeast on September 18, 1931. See News item on Nanjing Memorial Museum website “Sirens mark Anniversary of Japanese Invasion” dated December 12, 2005.

There were two major conferences in 1997: the International Symposium on the Nanjing Massacre in Tokyo attended by over 770 people which collected and discussed Japanese scholarship to date and another at Princeton with its excellent collected volume *Nanking 1937: Memory and Healing*, Fei Fei Li, Robert Sabella, and David Liu, editors (Armonk, NY: ME Sharpe, Inc, 1997).

For an exhaustive and dispassionate discussion of issues surrounding Nanjing, see the article by David Askew of Monash University, “The Nanjing Incident: Recent Research and Trends” on the electronic journal of contemporary Japanese studies April 4, 2002, www.japanesestudies.org.uk/articles/Askew.html

First used, ironically, in a very early description and of course, the book by Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), intended to forever describe and define the event.

For an exhaustive and dispassionate discussion of issues surrounding Nanjing, see the article by David Askew of Monash University, “The Nanjing Incident: Recent Research and Trends” on the electronic journal of contemporary Japanese studies April 4, 2002, www.japanesestudies.org.uk/articles/Askew.html

See the excellent discussion on historiography in the article by Takashi Yoshida, “Refighting the Nanking Massacre,” 155-166, and in the volume edited by Joshua Fogel, *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000). See, in particular, Askew’s discussion of the literature available in Chinese, Japanese, and English. The Japanese have focused particularly on collecting primary documents; to date nine different collections of historical materials have been published in Japan, with many sources, including those of Westerners, first published in Japanese. Askew, “Nanjing Incident”, 5-7. Notice his extensive bibliography, 22-27.

Chang’s book accounts for much of the public knowledge about the event and indeed her sections on the massacre itself are the strongest, although difficult to read. Her attempts at explanation, most reviewers agree, are much weaker. See especially reviews by David Kennedy in *The Atlantic Monthly*, April 1998 at www.theatlantic.com/issue/98apr/horror.htm and Robert Entemann “The Rape of Nanking” on H-ASIA November 16, 2004.

For a scholarly Chinese explanation of the massacre, see Sun Zhaiwei, “Causes of the Nanjing Massacre” in *Nanking 1937*, 35-46.


This slogan is repeated multiple times in both the exhibit and the online materials.

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


